oolagen



The **Opportunity** to prevent mental health problems and illnesses appears to be greatest among children and youth. We know that most mental health problems and illnesses – estimates suggest at least 70% – have their onset during childhood or adolescence. Early intervention at this stage offers an opportunity to address problems before they become entrenched.



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Centering people as "the experts in their own lives" is a cornerstone of Oolagen programs and services. We listen to the unique stories of young people and families, assist them to identify challenges, engage them in an exploration of their skills and knowledge for resolving life's difficulties and empower them to move forward in their lives.

Partial Donor List >

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Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon -**Team Oolagen Members**

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A message from Chip Pitfield, President >

Anxiety, depression, domestic violence, risk-taking and law-breaking behaviours, substance abuse, physical or verbal abuse and suicide are not reserved for "adults only"

Being a teenager has never been easy.

During these delicate years, young people forge new friendships, can experiment with drugs and alcohol and engage in other risky behaviours. New challenges and responsibilities are also thrust upon them. Some of these life pressures have existed for decades: school or team competition, bullying, racism, divorce, family violence. But others are very new: social media, the internet and real or perceived pressures to be constantly "plugged in" or be a winner in everything they do.

We know from research that young people are at the highest risk for mental illness. Ages 15 to 24 are when the first episodes of psychiatric disorders are most likely to occur.

As our youth continue to be challenged in old and new ways, we need to be reminded that there is help. Look no further than Oolagen. For more than 45 years, Oolagen has served youth and their families at the most pivotal time of their lives, helping them build bridges to happy and healthy futures. Whether it's our Walk-In Clinic, Wraparound, Residential or School programs, leading edge prevention and treatment or providing tools and resources for families, Oolagen helps young people get and stay well.

The past year has been a time of change for our organization. We have rebuilt and re-invigorated our strategic plan and Board of Directors. We have expanded our services and found new ways to generate revenue and collaborate with our community partners. With great change comes great opportunity; we continue to enhance our service offerings and use technology to reach more youth and deliver more value to our clients and partners. I am confident that Oolagen is well positioned to achieve new growth and success in the year ahead.

Another significant change is that Bob Engel, our dedicated and highly respected Executive Director will retire in 2013 after 25 years of passionate service. An energizing force both inside and outside Oolagen, Bob leaves a purposeful, measurable footprint on Oolagen. Our Board, management and staff have all benefited from Bob's vision and we are grateful for his commitment to work alongside our incoming CEO Lydia Sai-Chew to ensure a seamless transition.

On behalf of the Board, *I offer* a heartfelt thank you to Bob for his numerous accomplishments and the legacy of leadership he leaves behind. It's been our privilege to work with Bob and we will all miss him!

We also sincerely thank our dedicated team, their families, our community partners, sponsors and volunteers for their unwavering support of our mission: to listen, engage, assist and empower youth and families in recognizing their strengths, expanding their capabilities and enhancing their wellbeing and mental health.

A message from

Bob Engel, Executive Director >

I have observed many changes at Oolagen over the past 25 years.

The majority of these changes have come about because of a heightened awareness of mental health within our society, an emergence of organizations committed to advancing and supporting mental health and a greater understanding of the role mental health plays in our quality of life, our physical health and our ability to navigate work, school and relationships.

For Oolagen, these changes have created opportunities to form new partnerships, alliances and better respond to the diverse needs of youth and their families.

Although this change is positive, we continue to see increasing numbers of young people struggling with mental health challenges. Oolagen has come a long way, but there is still so much more work to be done.

I am pleased to report that during the past year, Oolagen made great progress enhancing our programs, extending our community partnerships and expanding our services. For example, we partnered with East Metro Youth Services and Yorktown Family Services to offer no cost, no appointment necessary Walk-In counselling services at 3 locations, five days a week.

We continued to make strides toward becoming a national Centre of Excellence in Narrative Therapy by publishing academic articles and delivering training for mental health professionals. We invested in additional research, evaluation and evidence-based practices and activities. Our ongoing succession planning partnership with Turning Point Youth Services, Central Toronto Youth Services, Hincks-Dellcrest and George Brown College is bearing fruit. We also ramped up our efforts to grow and diversify our sources of funding.

Being Executive Director of Oolagen is a responsibility that I have never, for one moment, taken for granted. I have dedicated my mind, heart and soul to that responsibility every day. I remember reading somewhere that "anyone can make a difference and everyone should try." I can tell you I have faced some of my greatest challenges at Oolagen, but so too have I experienced some of my greatest rewards.

As I look forward to my retirement, I know I will miss the camaraderie and talent of my colleagues, staff and Board of Directors, each of whom were singularly focused on Oolagen's vision, mission and values. The lion's share of the credit for Oolagen's success rests with my extraordinarily hard working, dedicated management team: Dorothy Winton (Controller), Caroline Sneath (Director of Development), Chuck Nagle (Residential Manager), Marilyn Vasilkioti (Supervisor of Community Services), Cathy Blocki-Radeke (Supervisor of Wraparound) and especially Ruth Pluznick (Director of Clinical Services). Their loyalty, their undying love for Oolagen and their tireless compassion for young people are just three of the reasons for the success we've achieved.

There are still significant challenges to be faced; when it comes to youth mental health, there will always be challenges. However, I am confident in the knowledge that I am leaving Oolagen in the trustworthy and capable hands of Lydia Sai-Chew, my successor. Oolagen has never been better positioned to face challenges, seize opportunities and reach even greater heights in the years to come.

It has been my greatest honour and privilege to serve Oolagen.

A message from

Caroline Sneath, Director of Development >

Young people between the ages of 15 to 24 have the highest incidence of mental illness of any age group in Canada.

Youth mental health is everyone's business. It impacts the home, school and work life not only of young people, but also their families, friends and peers. Without prevention programs, specialized support and treatment, youth mental illness can cause long lasting, irreparable harm.



Although awareness and understanding of mental illness has been steadily increasing, many families touched by youth mental health challenges still lack knowledge or are stigmatized; therefore they do not access or are not even aware of Oolagen and how we can help.

That's why during the past year we continued in our resolve to accelerate who we are, what we do and how we help. In 2010 and 2011, we revamped and revitalized our image, website and annual report; we also launched our well-publicized Leave Them Laughing signature fundraising gala. In 2012, we expanded our online presence to include social media: you can now find Oolagen on Facebook and Twitter. Because of these efforts, many organizations and individuals are discovering Oolagen and engaging with us in new ways.

While our 2010 and 2011 galas were very successful (collectively raising more than \$400,000 net), we decided to reflect and regroup during 2012. During the planning stage, we were fortunate to meet a dynamic young woman who is not only making her mark on the Toronto social scene but putting philanthropy first and foremost in her life. After attending our 2011 gala Brittany Kuczynski was so impressed - with the quality of our work and the fact that 90% of every dollar goes toward Oolagen programs - that she was inspired to get involved. An angel in her own right, Brittany introduced Oolagen to some other angels – like Sandra Gerges and Mary Throop, who helped chart a new course for our gala event and recruited a Volunteer Dream Team: Christina Mogk, Elena Semikini, Tanja Jirov, Vicki Milner, Sebastian de Kloet, Justin Young and Brandon Milner.

So I'm thrilled to announce a brand new event in a brand new venue for 2013: Night of Light - Engage the Child, Unite the Family. Ken Taylor (the storied former Canadian ambassador to Iran) has graciously accepted the role of Gala Committee Chair. And there's more gala good news! Our Honourary Patrons Colin Mochrie and Debra McGrath are returning as celebrity emcees for what promises to be a splendid evening on May 30 at the remarkable Ritz Carlton Hotel. We've not only upped the excitement factor... we've also upped our fundraising goal to \$300,000.

For the third consecutive year, a team of Oolagen management, staff, families and friends participated in the Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon, proudly raising \$23,000.

All of the money we raise and donations we receive are critical to providing much-needed services to at risk youth and families. We rely on our volunteers, third party event organizers, individual donors, corporations and funding partners. My deep, heartfelt thanks to you for sharing our values and making it possible to help more than 50,000 young people find their way back to good mental health!

A message from

Ruth Pluznick, Director of Clinical Services >

2012 was a very positive and productive year at Oolagen. In addition to our ongoing services and programs, we developed new partnerships and initiatives. Here are some of them:

The Walk-In Service

In 2012 we entered into a partnership with Yorktown Child and Family Centre and East Metro Youth Services for an initiative called "What's Up". This collaborative project is intended to extend the availability of walk-in service for young people and families in our communities. Each of the three agencies now offers this service 5 days a week and share research, quality assurance and staff training resources.

Collaborative projects with Toronto District School Board (TDSB)

Oolagen has a history of providing on-site services at local schools and continues to offer these programs at Marc Garneau, Parkdale and Forest Hill Collegiate Institutes. This year we partnered with TDSB to offer cross-sectoral responses to concerns identified by students and/or school staff at Inglenook Community High School and Bendale Business and Technical Institute. At Inglenook, Oolagen and TDSB workers consulted with 50 students about their experiences with anxiety, its effects on their lives and relationships and the strategies they'd developed to manage. This was compiled into a document and will be circulated to help other students. Another peer helping peer initiative at Inglenook involved the collaboration of Oolagen and TDSB workers with students to develop a guide "How to be a Peer Helper". At Bendale, young people who have experienced and/or engaged in violence are helping to create a public awareness initiative with Oolagen and TDSB.

The Intergenerational Alliance at St. James Town

Building on our success with the Tamil community in St.

James Town, Oolagen entered into a partnership with Family
Inter-Generation Link (FigLink) to offer the program to families
from mainland China. The intergenerational alliance promotes
culturally relevant practices for raising children in Canada, and
aims to facilitate the development of a network of support which
provides participants with opportunities to learn from in their
own communities. Participants from the Tamil intergenerational
alliance from our previous project were consultants for
this initiative.

Working Life Anti Stigma Documentary

Oolagen partnered with Sky Works Charitable Foundation, a non-profit documentary organization dealing with contemporary social issues to produce a documentary video and teaching tool kit. The video and tool kit are currently travelling the province and being used for education, job training and awareness initiatives.

Saying Farewell

This year Bob Engel will retire after 25 years as Executive Director. His leadership at our agency made possible the development and sustenance of forward thinking projects and programs. When Bob came to Oolagen, we had a downtown counselling service and one residential program. Today we offer two residential programs, three on-site school programs, a downtown counselling program, intensive services, a 5 day walk-in, wraparound services for three client groups and the intergenerational alliance with the Tamil and Chinese communities in St. James Town. Throughout, Bob has been personally engaged with staff and programs. He will be greatly missed by all of us at Oolagen.



Oolagen is proud to recognize the generosity and loyalty of our major supporters:

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Savoy Pitfield Foundation

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Profile

Oolagen Adolescent Walk-In Clinic >

Total visits 362 Total unique clients 217

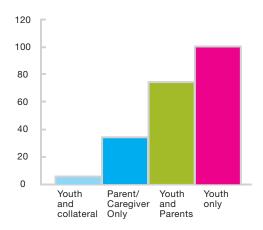
Oolagen's Walk-In Clinic is open:

Monday, Thursday, Friday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Tuesday 12 p.m. to 8 p.m. Wednesday 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Service is provided on a first come first serve basis; the last session is one hour prior to closing time on each individual day. Please note, on Tuesdays the last appointment starts at 6:30 p.m.

Client Initial Visits



The clinic provides quick access to counselling services for youth aged 13 to 18 years old and their families. This is an opportunity for immediate problem solving and therapeutic conversations, as well as referral to other services if needed. In many cases, a single appointment is sufficient, although if necessary the clinic can be accessed more than once.

Parents and caregivers are welcome to attend the clinic on their own. Many caregivers find it helpful to consult a professional therapist without their child present.

We are sincerely grateful to Winners Merchants International and the Royal Bank Foundation. Their support has made it possible for the clinic to be open 5 days a week.





RBC Foundation

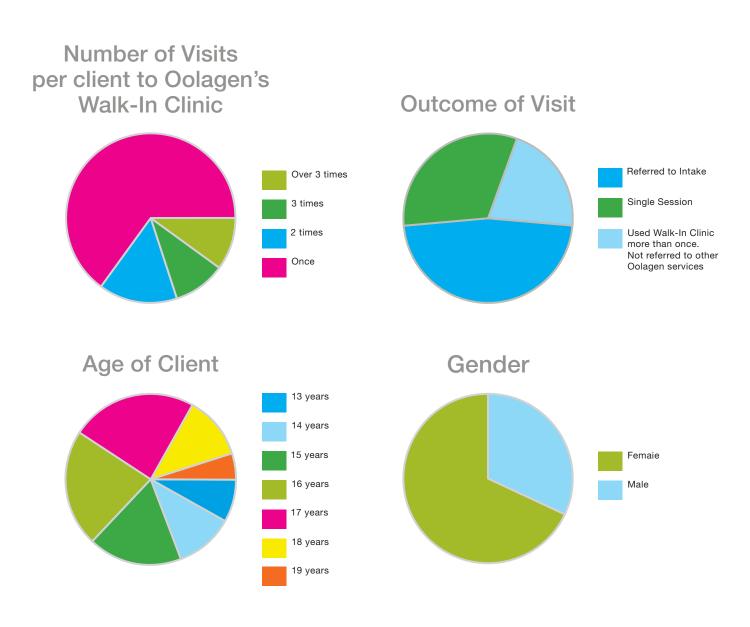
We are also grateful to the Ministry of Children and Youth Services.



MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH SERVICES

Our "What's Up" partnership with East Metro Youth Services and Yorktown Family Services means that identical walk-in clinic services are also available 5 days a week at two other GTA locations – no appointment necessary, and at absolutely no cost.

Five most common problems presenting as primary issue: **Parent and Youth Conflict Depression** School/Work Performance **Stress Anxiety**



"....Teenagers are facing a complex set of pressures – to succeed in a bad economy, to manage divorced parents, to navigate social media, to deal with celebrity culture bombarding them with a fame and fortune ethos (as well as death, disease and doomsday predictions)."

DR. KATHARINA MANASSIS, DIRECTOR OF ANXIETY DISORDERS, HOSPITAL FOR SICK CHILDREN, TORONTO

From "The young and the anxious" by Erin Anderssen, The Globe and Mail, January 22, 2013



Oolagen is well managed.

Our overhead costs are uniquely and stringently managed to remain below 10%.

This means that 90 cents of every dollar donated to Oolagen goes directly toward helping at-risk youth in Toronto.



How you can help

Your generosity can improve the lives of young people and their families. There are many ways to support our work in the community.

Make a Monthly Gift Your monthly pledge will make it possible for a young person to get the help they need to overcome mental health difficulties. Monthly giving is easy, cost-effective and respectful of your time and privacy.

Leave a Legacy Making Oolagen a part of your estate planning will ensure that at-risk youth and their families get the help they need. A bequest in your Will or a gift of stock, securities or real estate will bolster our Endowment fund.

Host an Event Have fun and make a difference by hosting a fundraiser for Oolagen! Forge a family tradition or mobilize your workplace to help young people and their families.

Adopt a Teen Your generous annual gift of \$2,500 will help a young person stay in school while on the road to recovery from mental health challenges.

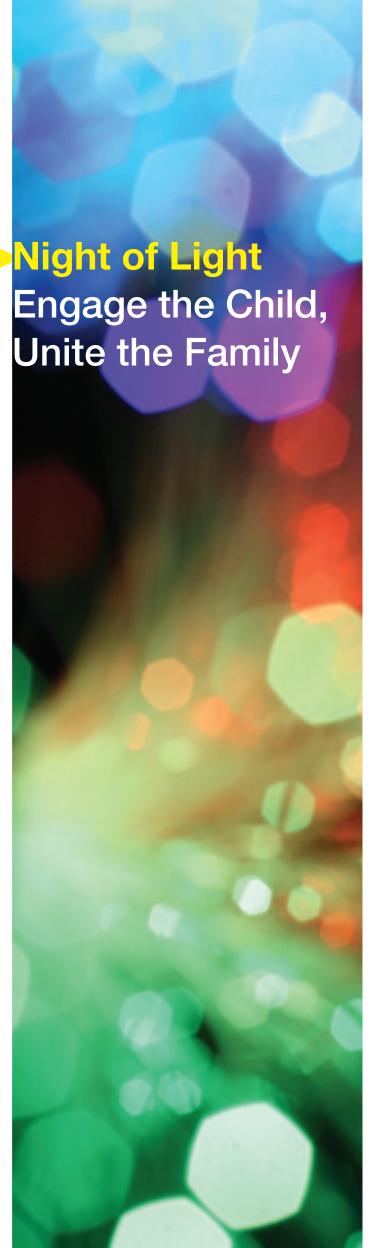
Adopt a Family for the Holidays Many of our families struggle financially. Each year we help our families enjoy a little holiday magic by pairing them with generous donors who contribute gifts and food.

Designate your United Way donation to Oolagen Oolagen is not a United Way member, but you can designate your United Way gift by including our registered charity identification number BN 11906 8625 RR0001 with your donation.

Donate online Visit www.oolagen.org and click on "Donate Now".

Write a cheque Make your cheque payable to Oolagen. Mail to 65 Wellesley Street East, Suite 500, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 1G7

Call/Email Caroline Sneath Caroline is Oolagen's Director of Development and she'll be happy to answer any questions you have about donating or our immediate needs. carolinesneath@oolagen.org | 416 395 0660 Ext 230



Oolagen's 3rd
Annual
Fundraising Gala
Dinner and
Auction at the
Ritz-Carlton
Hotel, Toronto

Thursday, May 30, 2013

Hosted by Oolagen
Patrons Debra McGrath
and Colin Mochrie





Please join me and our Honourary Patron Celebrity Emcees Colin Mochrie and Debra McGrath as we celebrate the incredible work of Oolagen. All event proceeds will go directly to helping Oolagen develop, enhance and sustain their leading edge prevention and treatment services for youth who are struggling with mental health challenges, as well as support and resources for families and caregivers.

Help us make this a night to remember for our guests – and the youth and families that will benefit for a lifetime.



The Oolagen 2013 Award Of Excellence Recipient: **Michael Landsberg**

Noted Canadian sports journalist

The Oolagen Award of Excellence was established in 2010 to recognize the achievements of individuals or organizations that have made a difference in our community by raising awareness and diminishing the stigma of mental illness.

Past recipients:

2010: Inaugural Award: The Honourable James K. Bartleman, former Lieutenant Governor of Ontario for his work in the area of mental wellness, reducing stigma and promoting literacy among First Nations children in Canada

2011: Singer, songwriter and former Barenaked Ladies front man Steven Page, in recognition of his mental health advocacy and speaking out about his own struggles with depression and manic episodes.



COLIN MOCHRIE, STEVEN PAGE, DEBRA MCGRATH.

Giving Back >



CAELEB GOFF

Caeleb and Adam: bringing a breath of fresh air and helping hands to Oolagen

It's not at all uncommon given the work we do to find young people in our offices. Normally, you might find them sitting in our reception area before being seen by one of our staff. However, the summer of 2012 saw two delightful young people sitting on the other side of the counter at Oolagen – Caeleb Goff and Adam Silverberg!

Adam, a third year Geography major at Western University, impressed us with his administrative and technical skills. We upgraded and enhanced our data collection software and Adam entered a TON of research stats and information into our database. And he did it all with efficiency, discretion and a great big smile on his face! Thanks Adam!

Caeleb, now a sophomore at Queen's University majoring in Psychology with a minor in English, worked alongside Development Director Caroline Sneath writing various materials, keeping our social media pages current and generally just pitching in whenever and wherever she was needed.

"I felt it was really important to give back to a place that helped me so much," enthused Caeleb. "It's my goal to become a clinical psychologist, but I also just love to write. My summer placement at Oolagen allowed me to combine my passions: writing and mental health. Now that I'm back at school, I am continuing to volunteer as a Student Reporter for Oolagen, writing general interest posts and articles for their social media pages and website."

Things just haven't been quite the same since Adam and Caeleb left Oolagen at the end of the summer to return to their prospective schools. We're grateful for their time, energy, brains and enthusiasm!

ADAM SILVERBERG



Our Mission

their capabilities and

Our Vision

Relationships between



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