

# Health in Your Hands



The newsletter of the Lawrence Heights Community Health Centre

## Community Spreading the Words



By Sarah Levitt

The Words 2 Live By program is a youth engagement program that ran from September 2006 until August 2007. This unique health promotion program used Hip Hop as its foundation and young people as its teachers. Four youths from the neighborhood — Helen, Najla, Sukri and D’J — trained as facilitators for four months. In this training they learned leadership and group development skills. They also cultivated their excellent performance skills in the arts of Hip Hop and Spoken Word.

This group developed a three-month program for youth. The program explored individual health issues. It also explored community health issues, like violence, gender-based discrimination and the upcoming redevelopment of Lawrence Heights.

Last winter, this team spoke with youth groups across the city about the health issues that they had been exploring. In the early spring, the team recruited eight more

youths from the community, to teach them skills that they had learned about communication and participating in groups. They also talked about health issues important to youth. As the group said in its opening meeting, “We wanted to speak to you, not as doctors, teachers or politicians, but as youth, as people who, like you, are going through it every day.”

These youths worked together over the next four months. Each participant had the chance to create one Hip Hop or Spoken Word piece that reflected a health issue he or she thought was important. Through a partnership with the City of Toronto De-



**In this issue:**

- Message from the Board Chair and the Executive Director .....2
- Help Us to Help Others: An International Book Drive .....2
- Have You Met Connie Dildy? .....2
- News From Bathurst-Finch .....3
- Annual General Meeting and Open House....3
- Youth Zone.....3
- The Senior’s Section .....3
- Recipe: Simmering Soup .....4
- Day Tripping .....4
- Health Tip: Hands-on .....4
- Plus: dates to note and more

partment of Parks, Forestry and Recreation’s Lawrence Heights Recreation Centre and its recording studio led by Don Barnes, all the youths recorded their pieces.

### Block party

One really special event that grew out of our program was the **block party**, in June 2007. The theme of the party was “Unity through diversity.” The goal of the event was to celebrate the summer and our superb local talent. We also wanted to kick off summer for our community that is united and strong. The block party featured a dance competition, African drumming, R & B performers and Hip Hop acts. We had over 500 people come to the party to celebrate. 🙌



## Here to Stay

With all the changes going on in the neighbourhood, the Lawrence Heights Community Health Centre has some great news: we’re not going anywhere! In fact, we’re only getting stronger. For example, we are expanding our services to a satellite clinic site in the Bathurst-Finch neighborhood (see an article about this on page 3).

But don’t worry, even as we continue to grow, and even as the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) makes plans to revitalize the community, our Centre will continue to deliver high-quality health services with the personalized touch that you’ve grown to love and count on over the years.



# Message from the Board Chair and the Executive Director

We are pleased to present the third issue of our newsletter, *Health in Your Hands*. We hope that you will enjoy some of the new content and the diversity of contributors. Our aim is to reach out to our clients, members of the community, partner organizations and others to communicate what is happening at the Centre and in the community. We hope you like it!

Our staff and board have been working hard over the past few months to improve current services, develop new programs to meet emerging needs, and strengthen our internal operations. We rely on your valuable input in order to help us with this. Thank you to everyone who participates in our client surveys and events. If you would like to get more involved with the Centre, please e-mail [agarcia@lhchc.com](mailto:agarcia@lhchc.com) for membership information.

In health,



*Mr. Rethazi*

Michael Rethazi  
Board Chair

*Andrea Cohen*

Andrea Cohen  
Executive Director



# Help Us to Help Others

## An International Book Drive

By Eva Tavares

Guess what's happening... We are having a book drive, with all donations going to libraries in Jamaica. We've also been asked to help out with a children's activity room, with educational toys and supplies for small children.

If you have any books to donate, we would be happy to give them on your behalf. We are collecting used or new books for all ages, fiction or non-fiction.

Please drop them off at the Centre, in the barrel on the second floor.

For more information, please contact: Eva Tavares by e-mail at [ward15\\_eva\\_tavares@hotmail.com](mailto:ward15_eva_tavares@hotmail.com) or Denise Earle by phone at 416-787-1661, ext. 275.

Help us help others! A special thank you to the Barbara Frum Library staff for starting a great collection so far. 🙌



# Have You Met Connie Dildy?

Interview by Dr. Karl Kabasale

Connie Dildy is our secretary and receptionist. Hers is the first friendly face that you see when you walk into the Centre. She's been a full-time employee here for 12 years. But how well do we really know her? Connie answered six questions to help us get better acquainted with her:

### What duties do you perform as part of your job?

I serve our clients and the general public, and I perform administrative duties.

### What is it like dealing with the public, day in and day out?

I like meeting people from all walks of life, because I learn something each time I communicate with them. One of my daily goals is to ensure client satisfaction, which is different for each client. Some people value friendly and courteous staff members who respond to their needs, while others value knowledge, accuracy and speedy service. Some want all of these things. Most importantly for me, I try to treat every person with respect.

### What is the most challenging aspect of your work?

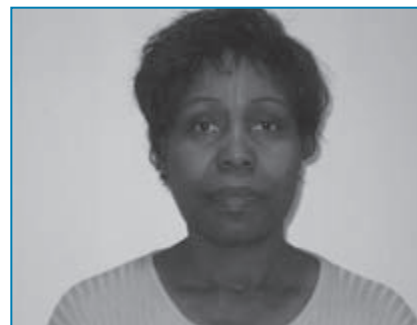
It's a challenge managing all of my responsibilities while working at the front desk; multi-tasking is important. I have to help our clients who come into the Health Centre, and also provide information to the public over the phone. Because we're on the front lines at the front desk, people frequently turn to us first for assistance.

### What is the most rewarding part of your work?

It is most rewarding and enjoyable for me to help people. I get a lot of gratification when clients are satisfied.

### You are a key part of the health centre's team; what is your personal definition of health?

My personal definition of health includes a healthy mind, body and spirit. The mind needs to be free of stress and focused on positive things. The delicate mechanisms of the body must be kept in good working order in order to take care of your obligations to yourself, your fellow beings and your Creator.



### What do you think of Toronto Community Housing Corporation's plan for the revitalization of the Lawrence Heights community?

Although I'm not abreast of all of the proposed changes and plans for the Lawrence Heights community, in an ideal world there should be a balance between community members developing their own unique neighbourhood culture, and agencies supporting the growth of the community. The Lawrence Heights community is not dead, but revitalization could help to maintain a high quality of life for all residents. 🙌

## The New Heights Scholarship

Are you living in the Lawrence Heights area and graduating from secondary school this year? Do you contribute to your school and/or community? Are you thinking about higher education?

The New Heights Scholarship offers \$2,500 each to two students entering the first year of post-secondary education.

Applications are available on our website, [www.lhchc.com](http://www.lhchc.com). **This year's application deadline is March 31, 2008.**

Want more information? Contact Judith Otto at [jotto@lhchc.com](mailto:jotto@lhchc.com) or 416-787-1676 ext 256.



# News from Bathurst-Finch

News

By Julie Callaghan

The Centre recently launched the Action for Neighbourhood Change (ANC) project in the Bathurst-Finch community. (This area was formerly called the Westminster-Branson neighbourhood.) This is also the area where we are developing our satellite community health centre (CHC) and community hub.

Action for Neighbourhood Change is funded through the United Way of Greater Toronto. It is a two-year project that will bring together people who live and work in the Bathurst-Finch neighbourhood. They will explore issues that matter to the community, and develop resident-led solutions and programs. The project aims to develop leadership skills among residents that will hopefully lead to a sustainable neighbourhood association. The Centre has hired three new staff to assist with this project.

Meanwhile, our work continues on the **satellite CHC and community hub**. We have chosen Hilditch Architects to help us with the design of the satellite and hub. With the architect, we are currently preparing a functional plan.

We know of more than 10 community and social service agencies that are interested in providing programs and services within the hub. These agencies will bring expertise in working with the area's youth, seniors and newcomers with settlement, employment, and recreation. We're seeking more agencies that would be interested in partnering with us.

With all of the work going on in Bathurst-Finch, we opened a small office in the area. Please feel free to drop by, see our new space and meet the staff! 🐾

**Our new office in the Bathurst-Finch area: 5987 Bathurst St., Suite 104 (Upper Level), Toronto, ON M2R 1Z3, 647-436-0385.**

# AGM and Open House

Events

On September 24, 2007, we hosted our open house and annual general meeting of members. Both events were well attended by members, clients and friends. Our guest speaker, Debbie Gordon, spoke about media literacy and the effects on children. Our open house featured our current work and programs focused on our target populations. The annual meeting had a spectacular finish with everyone getting involved in drumming. And of course, there was plenty of good food to go around. At the meeting our membership elected our Board of Directors for the year. We're pleased to see many directors re-elected along with some new faces.



## Board of Directors 2007/2008

Michael Rethazi, *Chair*

Karl Kabasele, *Vice Chair*

Gail Archer, *Treasurer*

Almaz Tesfaigzi Mehreteab, *Secretary*

Alexander Dow

Joan McKnight

Harry Rosenberg

Shaon Saeed

Maureen Simpson

Eva Tavares

# Youth Zone

Programs

The Youth Zone officially started October 17, 2007. Not all programs were up and running right away, but we are adding more all the time.

On Wednesdays, the Centre is open from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., then closed until 4 p.m. **The Centre will then see youth only from 4 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.** These youth programs will run until June 2008:

- After School Program
- Case co-ordination services for youth only
- Pathways to Education Tutoring Program
- R.E.A.D.Y. (Real Experience Access Designed for Youth), a joint initiative with Jewish Vocational Services for a pre-employment training program for youth

We will be running a pilot project of the cooking program **So You Think You Can't**

**Cook** until the end of this year. The **Early Years Parents Group** will run all year.

Paulos Gebreyesus, our Program Director, is meeting with Planned Parenthood Toronto to discuss other programs that Planned Parenthood can provide, such as men's health and a peer training program.

Our new Child and Youth Worker will develop programming for youth that are not involved with any of the above programs, but who are at the Centre and congregating on the second floor on Wednesday nights. 🐾

**Look for our new Youth Clinic to start in the spring of 2008!**



A Pathways to Education tutoring session

# The Seniors' Section

Programs

By Daniel Rose

A friendly reminder/invitation to attend our **Forever Young** seniors' group. The group meets every Thursday from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Centre.

Our meetings involve many seniors in lively group discussions, usually focused on good mental and physical health. We also have guest speakers from other agencies, who lead interesting and informational talks. The group especially enjoys the excellent luncheon, consisting of good, nutritionally balanced foods and prepared by a *bona fide* cook by the name of Singh. We also engage in plenty of other fun and enjoyable activities well-suited to seniors. If you are in your golden years and want further details regarding this program, please contact Olu Akinkunmi at 416-787-1661 ext 234.

We know from past events that our community has some bright and entertaining youths, as well as some talented and exceptional seniors. So, we are planning an inter-generational event! We hope to hold our event sometime in mid- to late 2008. Your ideas are welcome! Please contact Denise Earle at 416-787-1676 ext 275 to get involved or let her know your suggestions. 🐾

# Simmering Soup

*Kale, lentil and chicken soup*

This home-style soup is packed with flavor and nutrients, which supply many health advantages.

**Preparation time:** 25 minutes

**Cooking time:** 25 minutes

**Number of servings:** 6



1 Tbsp.	olive oil or canola oil
1 cup	chopped onion
1 cup	coarsely chopped carrots
2 cloves	garlic, minced
6 cups	reduced-sodium chicken broth
1 Tbsp.	chopped fresh basil (or 1 tsp. dried basil, crushed)
4 cups	coarsely chopped kale (about 8 ounces)
½ tsp.	salt
⅛ tsp.	black pepper
1½ cups	cubed cooked chicken or turkey
1 medium	tomato, seeded and chopped
½ cup	red lentils, rinsed and drained

1. Chop onions, carrots (coarsely), kale, tomato and basil. Mince garlic.
2. In a large saucepan heat oil over medium-low heat. Add onion, carrots, and garlic. Cook, covered, for about five minutes or until the vegetables are nearly tender, stirring occasionally.
3. Add chicken broth and, if using, dried basil to the vegetable mixture.
4. Bring to boiling; reduce heat. Simmer, covered, for 10 minutes. Stir in kale, salt, and pepper. Return to boiling; reduce heat. Simmer, covered, for 10 minutes.
5. Stir in chicken, tomato, lentils, and, if using, fresh basil. Simmer, covered, for five to 10 minutes more or until kale and lentils are tender.

**Nutritional information:** 199 calories; 20g total carbohydrate; 5g total fat; 1g saturated fat; 31mg cholesterol; 871mg sodium; 20g protein; 7g fibre.

Recipe courtesy of the Diabetes Education Centre. Source: [www.dlife.com](http://www.dlife.com) 🙌

## Health Tip

# Hands-on

Hand washing, when done correctly, is the most effective way to prevent the spread of communicable diseases. Follow these simple steps to keeping hands clean:

1. Wet your hands with warm running water.
2. Add soap, and then rub your hands together, making a soapy lather. Do this away from the running water for at least 15 seconds. Be careful not to wash the lather away. Wash the front and back of your hands, as well as between your fingers and under your nails.
3. Rinse your hands well under warm running water.
4. Pat hands dry with a paper towel.
5. Turn off the water using the same paper towel. Remember to dispose of it in a proper receptacle. 🙌

# Day Tripping

By Trudy-Ann Powell

On Wednesday, August 22, 2007, the Lawrence Heights Community Health Centre hosted a community trip to St. Catharines and Niagara Falls. The trip was a successful event.

In total, 34 youths joined us on the trip. Each and every one of them expressed enthusiasm for the opportunity to get outside of the community.

We reached our destination on time, and took part in several guided tours. Our first stop was the Welland Canal. We spent an hour and a half there, and took a tour of the museum. The tour focused on St. Catharines as part of the Underground Railroad, and the different black folks that played significant roles in Canadian Black History. Most of the youths seemed eager to learn about the history and concept of the Underground Railroad. (The tour clarified that the Underground Railroad was not literally a railway passage!)

The group also got some insight into the process of how ships pass through the canal.

Next, we visited Fort George at Niagara-on-the-Lake. We saw a re-en-

actment of the War of 1812. We also got a musket demonstration, which our youth found fascinating.

We finished the trip with a visit to Niagara Falls. We saw different scenery and visited the Ripley's Believe It Or Not museum.

The trip was tremendous, as it placed a lot of emphasis on youth. Many of the youths expressed feeling a sense of worth that someone went to great lengths to plan a trip geared to them. One of the highlights for them was receiving \$10 for lunch.

We had five staff from the Centre along to help keep things running smoothly.

We're grateful for sufficient funding to offset the cost of the trip. The funding went a long way in making for a smooth trip. We were able to book a comfortable bus for the journey. The bus was cozy and the group enjoyed some relaxing music and a film while on the move to our destination.

In closing, the trip was a superb. It was my pleasure to co-ordinate a fantastic outing that brought great enjoyment to a group of young people. 🙌

## Our Hours

The operating hours for Lawrence Heights Community Health Centre are:

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday: 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Wednesday: 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.; 4 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. (youth programs only)

Friday: 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Please note that not all members of the clinical team are at the Centre when it is open.

## Upcoming Holidays

Lawrence Heights Community Health Centre will be closed for these holidays:

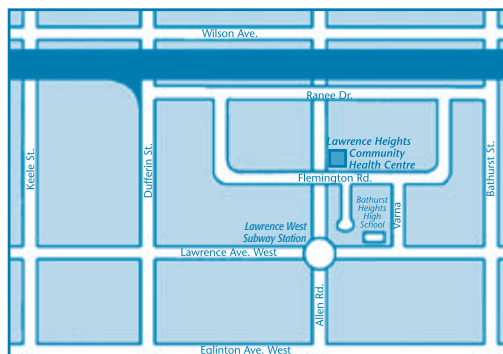
Family Day Monday, February 18, 2008

Good Friday Friday, March 21, 2008

Victoria Day Monday, May 21, 2008

Canada Day Tuesday, July 1, 2008

## Where to Find Us



Lawrence Heights Community Health Centre is a five-minute walk from Lawrence West Subway Station. You can also get here from the subway station by taking the 109B bus.

Lawrence Heights Community Health Centre

12 Flemington Road, Toronto, ON, M6A 2N4

Phone: 416-787-1661

Website: [www.lhchc.com](http://www.lhchc.com)

