



Spring 2015
Newsletter



Michael House

Providing Shelter and Support for Pregnant and Parenting Young Women In Our Community

Spring, the Season of New Beginnings...

This year has brought much to be thankful for. Already in 2015, Michael House has supported 10 women and 6 children, and the amount of community support we've received has been a blessing. As our Transitional Apartments get closer to completion, we have been reflecting more and more on the need we are filling in the Guelph community. We think about two beautiful young girls (2 and 4 years old) who were staying with foster parents, but came to Michael House often for visits with their mother. When their mother gave birth to a handsome little boy, the girls instantly fell in love with their new brother. For such a young mother, we were amazed by her ability to juggle three children under four years of age. Michael House was proud when she moved into her own apartment with her son, with plans to integrate the girls back into their home. This is her new beginning.

While this was absolutely a success story, we wonder how these girls' lives could have been different if our Transitional Apartments had already been completed. As we move forward into our next chapter, we continue to be thankful for God's guidance and for the immeasurable support we've received.

Michael House has won the 2014 Donner Canadian Foundation Awards for Excellence in Delivery of Social Services in the Counselling/Crisis Prevention Category!

This is a nationally recognized award for excellence in management and governance, use of staff and volunteers, innovation, program costs, and outcome monitoring. We are proud to have been recognized as good stewards of your generous donations!

We're Almost There...

Have you driven past our office lately, or checked out our Facebook page? If so, you've seen how the construction of our *Home for Generations* is progressing. Windows are in and the roof is installed! 'Like' us on Facebook if you'd like to see more pictures.

External partners have commented on the unprecedented success of our Capital Campaign. We have reached 82% of our \$2 million goal. We are grateful for all who have taken part in this campaign. From the Steering Committee, to the Cabinet, to each and every donor of money or in-kind gifts, we *thank you* for your support of this project. Though we are pleased with this great progress, we are still in need of funds to complete the new building. If you would like to donate directly to this campaign, please indicate so on the enclosed slip.



What does it mean to be an *Angel*?

A Michael House *Angel* is one who has committed to donating faithfully to our mission. Though any amount of regular giving is helpful and, indeed, essential, the average donation is \$30 each month. We value our Angels highly, as they allow us to plan and budget efficiently. Especially now, as we double in size with the building of our Transitional Housing Program, sustainable funding is vital. We ask you now to become an Angel at this crucial time of growth at Michael House. Thank you for considering becoming an Angel and providing important support for our mission!





Welcome to the Michael House Family

Naomi Law (right) joined the team in October as our Finance and Office Manager. She comes with many years of experience in Financial Management. Previously, Naomi successfully operated her own business for over 4 years providing business training and financial management to local businesses. The opportunity to work for Michael House inspired her to make a career change to dedicate her focus to one organization that she is passionate about. We're grateful to have Naomi in this important role!

Wendy Banks (left) came on board as the new Development Manager in January. She recently graduated from Wilfrid Laurier University with a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration. Wendy was the Funding and Development Officer at Michael House in the Summer of 2011 and had co-op jobs at United Way KW, and Suncor Energy. We are glad to have her back at Michael House full time!

If you see Naomi or Wendy at our Bristol Street office, be sure to say 'hi.'

Under Construction: Baby Brains

Did you know after a baby is born they generate 700 new brain neuron connections per second? And at 3 years old, not only does this process stop, but the neurons actually start pruning, only keeping the brain functions that we use and need! So many adults believe that because a baby doesn't speak or have a memory of their infancy that their environment won't affect the child. In fact the very opposite is true.

The first three years of life sets the bedrock for future life. A baby needs a safe and secure environment to grow their brains and set them up to be healthy children, teens and adults. Our staff knows this and every day they are helping young mothers understand how to provide a safe and nurturing environment for their babies.

Michael House is under construction building our *Home for Generations* for mothers

that need a few extra years of support while they help their children "grow their brains". We are eagerly awaiting our grand opening in the summer.

For more information about this and our other programs check out our website and sign up for our newsletters online at michaelhouse.ca.

Blessings,
Rosemarie Coombs, Executive Director

Mark your Calendars!

BABY BOTTLE CAMPAIGN:

Grab an empty bottle from your church on Mother's Day. Fill it with loose change & return it on Father's Day! *May 10—June 21*

GOLF TOURNAMENT:

Register yourself, or your foursome on our website! *June 9th.*

OPEN HOUSE: Ambassadors, Angels & MH supporters: get a sneak peak of our Home For Generations. *Early Summer.*

GRAND OPENING: Celebrate the completion of our Home For Generations at our ribbon cutting ceremony! *Late Summer.*



Extreme MAKEOVER: Michael House Edition

Do you, or your service group, love to sponsor and decorate? We are looking for those interested in doing hands-on work to furnish and decorate one of our 8 transitional housing apartment units. Please email (wendy@michaelhouse.ca) if you're interested in this fun opportunity to make your own mark on the *Home for Generations!*

NOTE: In an effort to save costs on printing and postage, we are transitioning toward electronic communication. If you would like your Newsletter to be e-mailed to you in the future, call or email us at the office to let us know.

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A Safe Haven For Life

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