Hello! We want to tell you about Carizon and the people they help!

CARIZON
family + community services

Annual Report
2015/16
Vision:
Hope~Wellness~Community

Mission:
Carizons is a multi-service community organization committed to improving the future of individuals and families through supportive, therapeutic and preventative programs.

Strategic Directions:
1. Fostering Client Success
2. Pursuing Sustainable Growth
3. Building Our Capacity to Serve

Values:
We believe:
➢ That every person has potential.
➢ In valuing each person and their importance to our community now and in the future.
➢ That every person is treated with dignity and respect as an individual based on their unique strengths and needs no matter their background, culture or life experiences.
➢ In the importance of communities being welcoming and inclusive of all their members.

Pillars of Service:
1. Children’s Mental Health
2. Counselling
3. Education and School-based Services
4. Community Services

Board of Directors:
Vivian Zochowski, President, Susan Dusick, Yaacov Iland, Holly Harkins-Manning, Lisa Lishman, Craig McNiven, Richard Steinmann, Barney Strassburger Jr., Lisa Strayer, John Vieth
I joined the team at Carizon Family and Community Services on January 4, 2016 and have been in the role of CEO for half a year. In that time, what I’ve learned isn’t too different from Robert Fulghum’s “All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten.” Top five lessons: 1) Play Fair, 2) Share Everything, 3) When you go out into the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands and stick together, 4) Warm cookies and milk are good for you, and 5) Don’t take things that aren’t yours.

“Play Fair” – Carizon has an enormous responsibility because our community has entrusted us to deliver programs and services that truly make a difference. We serve 20,000 people in this community. We help the most vulnerable through our counselling, community services, children’s mental health and education and school-based programs. It is the trust that our clients place in us that reminds us of the importance of playing fair, of living our values of treating people with dignity and respect, of recognizing potential, of welcoming communities and valuing each person.

“Share Everything” – Carizon is not an island; we are an archipelago. In order to enhance our services and respond to the needs of the community, we recognize and leverage collaborative opportunities. We are proud of achievements realized through our partnerships with the School Boards, Lutherwood, Langs, Reception House, the City of Kitchener, the Region of Waterloo and multiple agencies, organizations, funders and government initiatives. We are delighted to be an integral partner in flagship, innovative collaborations like the Family Violence Project of Waterloo Region and Connectivity Kitchener. We certainly express our thanks to all of our partners for observing that we can achieve so much more when we work together.

“When You Go Out in the World, Watch out for Traffic, Hold Hands and Stick Together” – Our vision of “Hope-Wellness-Community” speaks to the importance of looking out for one another. We are all in this together and we all have a role to play. It is critical to listen and to continue to seek out information from all of our stakeholders: the people we serve, our dedicated, skilled and caring front-line staff, students and volunteers, our funders and donors. We are indebted to all who have supported us and seen those we serve safely to the other side of the street.

“Warm Cookies and Milk Are Good For You” – It’s essential to reward hard work and celebrate our successes. Carizon has had many reasons to rejoice and brag about significant achievements. Last year, Carizon embarked on an ambitious accreditation process with the Canadian Centre for Accreditation (CCA). Having just amalgamated in 2013, this was no simple undertaking. The troops dug deep, pulled together and were awarded a 4-year accreditation – this is a gold standard in the accreditation world. The site reviewers applauded the commitment and dedication of our staff, Board, volunteers and students to serving our clients, to striving for quality improvement, to living the Mission, Vision and Values of the organization and to treating our clients with respect and understanding the vulnerability of the population we serve.

Many other milestones were achieved this year including the 10th anniversary celebrated by the Family Violence Project collaboration and the awarding of the prestigious International Motorola Solutions Webber Seavey Award for Excellence to Connectivity Waterloo Region jointly with Waterloo Regional Police Service and Langs for innovation in responding to community needs.

The icing on the cookie, however, is when I received the report from Carizon’s Program Development and Evaluation Committee that tells me that in culminating our Carizon-wide satisfaction results, 95% of people are satisfied or very satisfied with their Carizon experience. Bravo team!

Lastly, “Don’t Take Things That Aren’t Yours.” - What we can’t take is all of the credit. We express our profound thanks to all who have worked so hard to achieve so much: our staff, students and volunteers, our Board, our funders and stakeholders, our partners, and most of all our clients and the people we serve who continue to strive to overcome very real and often heart-breaking challenges. Thank you for placing your faith in Carizon along your journey.

Tracy Elop
CEO
Children’s Mental Health

Front Door and Intensive Home-based Services (Programs Offered in Partnership with Lutherwood):

Front Door (Intake, Assessment, Walk-In Counselling, and Mobile Crisis) implemented a new model of service delivery, offering four days a week (including Saturdays) of Walk-In & Access. Families can directly access a single session that can help with: behaviour, emotional state, self-harm, unsafe activities, conflicts at home, troubles at school, struggles with peers, and mental health diagnoses, or can help children, youth, and families access more intensive services. This approach to service reduced the wait for initial services from 6 -12 weeks to less than 1 week. We have also seen tremendous growth in demand, delivering approximately 1200 walk-in sessions this year, a 58% growth from the previous year.

Increased access to Walk-In Counselling has meant some families do not require more intensive interventions as their needs are met earlier in their journey. The Partners and Zero2Six programs (in-home intensive support) have also streamlined processes, reducing wait times from between 10 and 12 months to approximately 3 months.

Working with Grand River Hospital, we have created a protocol to conduct Wellness Calls to clients that are discharged from the hospital’s Child and Adolescents Inpatient Unit. These calls are provided by our Mobile Crisis team to demonstrate ongoing support by the community, and to ensure clients are able to follow their safety and discharge plans and access immediate support.

Carizon is also collaborating with Grand River Hospital to bring their Psychiatric Consultation Clinic to Front Door. Through this approach, families we are working with will be able to quickly access psychiatric support for emerging mental health concerns.
Children’s Mental Health

Trauma Treatment Services:
106 children and youth received trauma treatment services this year. Our trauma treatment team provides a variety of therapeutic interventions designed to help children and youth (ages 5 – 18) and their parents overcome the negative effects of traumatic life events, such as childhood physical or sexual abuse, traumatic loss of a loved one, domestic, school or community violence, or exposure to serious accidents or disasters. The interventions also address issues commonly associated with trauma, such as low self-esteem, difficulty trusting others, mood instability, difficulties coping in school, anxiety and self-injurious behaviour.

Trauma treatment includes group programs such as “It’s a Girl Thing” offered in partnership with Family and Children’s Services of the Waterloo Region for teenage girls who have experienced trauma, and a parenting workshop to provide parents and caregivers with information on how to understand and parent their child impacted by trauma.

Expansion to our services for youth living with FASD - Temenos:
Our FASD program launched a new secondary FASD classroom providing service to students aged 12-18. Located at Waterloo Collegiate Institute (WCI,) and offered in partnership with the Waterloo Region District School Board, this program provided service to 4 young people with FASD. Child and Youth Workers, Social Workers, and an Occupational Therapist deliver therapeutic programming and skill-building interventions, complementing the Special Education Teacher and related WRDSB supports. This collaborative support allows youth in the program to successfully attend school in a place where their needs are understood and they can develop new skills.

Encompass Programs:
The children in the Encompass Living, Learning and Afterschool programs continued to benefit from Emotional Freedom Technique sessions, Reflexology, and Music Therapy. We also welcomed our first Art Therapy Intern this year. The Circle of Security parenting program was offered to all parents in the Encompass programs with the intent of implementing this program more broadly across children’s mental health programs.

Through a partnership with Grand River Hospital, we welcomed Dr. John Heintzman who provides psychiatric services to our children. He has become a highly valued member of our treatment team and his knowledge and experience have enhanced our treatment planning and service delivery.

We also welcomed Officer Paul from the Waterloo Regional Police who engages in positive interactions on a monthly basis with the students in our Encompass Learning Program, and provides safety consultation for the team.

Other Programs our Encompass children have enjoyed include: swimming, YMCA programs, library visits, 3 Day camping trip, inclusion programing in community camps, DESSA Optimistic Thinking groups, community events and workshops.
Encompass Afterschool - The Encompass Afterschool program updated its model of service this year to better meet the needs of children and their parents, to more successfully engage parents in treatment and to strengthen family relationships. The length of the program was expanded to a full year, and the after school programming was provided to children in smaller groups, allowing for more focused skill-building. Children spent fewer days of the week in the after school (on-site) program this year, and more time in the family home during the evenings, which allowed staff to spend more time creating opportunities for parents and children to apply and practice their new skills at home. Into the spring, the programming shifted predominantly to the home environment with a focus on full integration of new skills learned and a gradual reintegration of children into their community schools.

Music and Art Therapy - Carizon accepted our first art therapy student this year from the Toronto Art Therapy Institute. Art therapy combines visual art and psychotherapy that allows the children to express themselves, explore their emotions, problem solve, work through trauma, build relationships and improve their self-esteem in a nonverbal and non-threatening way. After just one session, children demonstrated a comfort level and trust that is difficult for traditional talk-therapists to achieve. Music therapy in our Children’s Mental Health programs also helps children develop relationships and manage issues they may not be able to address using words alone. Music therapy sessions include the use of active music making, music listening, and discussion. For children who have traumatic stories to tell, music is a safe and familiar way to express feelings, develop safety and trust while having fun and being creative. Music Therapy is known to release mood enhancing chemicals in the brain that help children suffering from depression, stress, anxiety or other difficult emotions.

JACK’S STORY

Jack is a young lad, twelve years of age. As a younger boy, Jack was traumatized from witnessing domestic violence. He struggled to develop relationships and was regularly suspended from school. He was defiant and disruptive in the classroom.

Throughout the past school year, Jack participated in our Encompass Afterschool Program, engaging in a variety of therapeutic activities including individual therapy, music therapy, social skills and recreational programs. During Jack's first music therapy session, he entered the room and made a bee-line for the drum set. He began to play, Sara, the music therapist matched him step by step on the piano. “Jack didn’t speak, but we connected and entered a nonverbal and creative improvisation.” Sara shared that Jack had difficulty expressing his feelings through the use of words, but felt free to explore his feelings through music. He began adding singing to his therapy – themes of death, loss, destruction, accompanied by hope, joy and rebuilding. After weeks of therapy, Jack eventually made the connection of his musical themes to his own life. It was not a forced healing progression, but a natural and creative one.

Jack’s behaviour not only improved in school, but his music therapy experience made him want to come to school as it was something he would look forward to each week. “I want to come every day,” declared Jack. “If I could, I would do that!”
Counselling

Carizon’s Clinical Team offers individual, couple, family and group counselling to community members of all ages and from all walks of life. Counselling is provided through an assortment of funded programs including Domestic Violence counselling funded by the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS), Sexual Abuse counselling funded by the Ministry of Health (MOH), counselling for recipients of Ontario Works (OW) and the Ontario Disability Support Pension (ODSP) funded by the Region of Waterloo (ROW) and counselling for children who have been exposed to domestic violence, referred by Family and Children’s Services and funded by MCSS. In addition, Carizon provides fee-for-service counselling on a sliding scale to ensure that money is never a barrier to receiving counselling services.

The Clinical Counselling Program offers ten different supportive, psycho-educational and therapy groups year round, including groups for seniors, women, teens, children and men ranging in topics such as depression, anxiety, anger management, self-esteem and abuse.

The Clinical Counselling Program operates an Employee Assistance Plan (EAP) program that offers counselling for the employees of 48 companies, ranging from small businesses to large local companies with multiple locations in Canada and the United States. In addition, we offer EAP companies mediation for workplace conflict, workshops, career coaching and Critical Incident Response when violence, death or accidents impact the workplace. Our Critical Incident Response is also requested by other community members.

Carizon’s Clinical Counselling team continues to champion the availability of effective trauma treatment for our community’s financially disadvantaged population and to increase our internal capacity through training and supervision. Several counsellors in the clinical team have been trained in Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing (EMDR) which is one of the most effective treatments for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).
Counselling

Credit Counselling
Carizon recognizes that by supporting families managing financial issues, we alleviate a critical worry that contributes to family stress and function. In addition, financial literacy education helps families to build their knowledge and skills. The credit counselling team delivered 43 speaking engagements and community education to 643 individuals this year.

KATHY’S STORY

Kathy, a 60 year old woman, was struggling with anxiety. She felt sad, heavy and exhausted no matter how much sleep she got. Kathy wrestled with making any decisions and experienced overwhelming feelings of hopelessness. She connected her signs of depression with the passing of her mother earlier that year. Further, Kathy’s father was diagnosed with dementia. Her stress level grew as she grappled with the decision to have her father moved to a secure, long-term care facility. An only child, Kathy felt guilty about making this choice and a weighty sense that she had lost both parents. A retired school teacher, Kathy believed she was well equipped to manage life circumstances, and never thought she would be the “type of person” that would need counselling. But Kathy felt isolated and even disconnected from her husband and children who tried to be supportive.

Kathy turned to Carizon for counselling. Her individual sessions focused on helping her deal with her losses and her anxiety and depression. Following her individual counselling, Kathy also attended the “Managing Stress for Managing Moods” group and learned more healthy coping skills. By the end of counselling, Kathy’s depression and anxiety lifted. She felt energized and the heaviness and sadness alleviated. She was able to cope with supporting her father better, enjoy time with her family and feel optimistic about the future. Kathy told her counsellor that anyone can benefit from counselling and that she was grateful for the help getting through such a dark time in her life.
Education & School-Based Services

Pathway to Education Kitchener

Pathways helps youth in low-income communities graduate from high school and successfully transition to post-secondary education, training and/or meaningful employment. Pathways addresses systemic barriers to education by providing leadership, expertise and a community-based program proven to lower dropout rates. Its success is built on the dedication of its volunteer tutors and mentors, like Bharat Patel. In his address to Pathways graduates, Bharat shared why he does what he does:

*I think the most frequent question students ask me...is “Why do you volunteer?”...Why do I volunteer? To walk alongside incredible students as they march toward their future. Why do I volunteer? To see them blossom into stand-up contributors to society. Why do I volunteer? To slowly chip away at students’ outer guards, and get to know more about them as people. Why do I volunteer? Because what I get back from it is priceless. You may think all this great help with your homework is an incredibly valuable gift. In truth the irreplaceable gift is watching you achieve what you truly thought was impossible, and even more.*

Steps to Education

The Steps to Re-engagement Program, in partnership with the Waterloo Region District School Board, supports students who are 18+, have disengaged from school and are at risk of not graduating.

Early Identification Early Intervention Program

EIEI creates a sense of belonging and connectedness fostering better outcomes for children. EIEI Consultants are placed in schools to help create common language and understanding of the importance of resiliency for all. More than 2200 children received early intervention service in fiscal 2015/2016.

School Mental Health

School Mental Health coordinators engage families and children that are struggling to connect with services and feel unsuccessful in school. The role of the School Mental Health Coordinator is to walk with the families and assist them in navigating and connecting with supports in the community. 277 families were seen for mental health service coordination and consultation and 513 teachers and parents participated in workshops.
When asked “Why you do what you do?” Leanne Brown, School Mental Health Coordinator, shares this letter:

Dear: Leanne Brown
Hi this is Alicia. I Just wanted to say thank-you for helping my mommy to get the things I need for camp and a really BIG thank-you for helping me get in camp so I can have a awesome summer, to do new things and meet new friends. I know I haven’t meet you yet but I hope you have a awesome summer, like im going to have because of you!
Thank you so much!
Love: Alicia

With housing relatively stable, Sarah talked about accessing counselling for her own mental health and the wellbeing of her child. She started to participate in counselling at Carizon, however, had no reliable daycare provider and no one to watch the baby during her appointments. With an office just down the hall, the Steps worker would watch the baby so Sarah could have this opportunity to care for herself.

Just as things where starting to settle – housing was stable, counselling was going well, and she had started the process of enrolling in St. Louis - Sarah faced another major obstacle. Her roommate departed, leaving Sarah with an unmanageable financial living situation. After months of searching, Sarah and her Steps worker found an affordable arrangement where Sarah would undertake a number of duties within the building. Enrolled at St. Louis, Sarah completed her final 5 credits to earn her high school diploma.

Sarah and her Steps worker still keep in touch. Despite the many struggles and challenges, today Sarah is thriving as a single mom. She has a stable job with a local real estate agent who is helping her complete her realtor license. Sarah is just one of the almost 300 students that have been assisted through the Steps To Reengagement program.
Community Development
Carizon family outreach workers link families to community supports, help them meet their basic needs, and strengthen communities. Working in five sites (Erb West, North Waterloo, Paulander, Wellesley and Woolwich) they supported 1342 families this year.

Erb West Community Development has a renewed focus on youth leadership engagement providing opportunities for youth to give back and provide mentoring. Another Youth Creation (AYC) is an afterschool program in the Erb West neighbourhood. 49 children in grades 1-6 participate in activities led by high school or university youth. It’s a great opportunity for fun on a Friday night and a chance for older youth to build their leadership skills. A highlight this year was rock climbing at Grand River Rocks.

In the Paulander Community Centre, our program hosted our first community Iftar. During Ramadan (a period of prayer and fasting for practicing Muslims) fast is broken every day at sunset – this is Iftar. Many people brought a favourite dish and a friend and the community learned from one another. Thanks to the Women’s Giving Circle, we’ve been able to initiate a Paulander Girls Group where 10 girls, ages 12 and up, meet to talk about life, participate in activities and receive supportive advice and mentoring. Focusing on neighbourhood engagement and leadership, Paulander has seen a significant increase in involvement, attracting 30 community volunteers.

Youth Navigators
A collaboration with the City of Kitchener and Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council, this program focuses on youth engagement in the Chandler Mowat community. Youth Navigators build relationships with disengaged youth, facilitate resource connections, provide a listening ear and help youth address challenges.

Children and Parents Connecting
Children and Parents Connecting works with volunteers, community groups and agencies to provide programs and services for children ages 0-6. In 2015/16, with 26 volunteers and 41 community partners, this program delivered programs to 248 parents and 298 children. The team was excited to see a significant increase in father engagement in the Home Visiting Program - 45% of dads participated.

Growing Healthy Two-Gether
The Growing Healthy Two-Gether Program assisted 257 women at four locations across the Region. With the large influx of Syrian Refugees, the staff arranged transportation from Reception House for women who were waiting for housing to provide them with prenatal care, education and connections.

Promise of Partnership
The primary purpose of this program is to promote the mental well being of refugees through counselling, mentoring and navigation of mental health services. With the arrival of New Canadians from Syria, the program has surpassed its intended goals of service delivery, participating in region-wide forums to address emerging issues and working with community partners to embrace diversity in relation to hiring New Canadians.
Community Services

Families and School Together
F&ST provides fun-filled, structured activities to support parents, and strengthen bonds between families, schools and the community. F&ST promotes child success by supporting parents in their role as partners in the educational process while also reducing the stress that parents and children experience from daily life. F&STWORKS is a social support network for F&ST graduate parents enabling families to meet monthly for two years to continue the affirming relationships they established with other families in their community. F&STWORKS is currently in three schools in Kitchener and Cambridge.

F&ST participants share their thoughts:

• “It makes me really happy to meet new parents who are so supportive of one another, where we can sit and exchange ideas that are so valuable to all of us. We can discuss the challenges we face with our children and how parents address the situation in different ways.”

• “My children look forward to coming to F&ST each week. My son is able to express and talk about his emotions more now through Feeling Charades.”

• “We have added some of the activities from F&ST into our routine at home and it is great quality time we get to spend together”.

Connectivity Kitchener serving Kitchener, Waterloo, Wilmot, Woolwich and Wellesley
This innovative multi sector approach involving 32 organizations, collaboratively and proactively addressed 88 situations of elevated risk in fiscal 2015/2016. In addition, Connectivity Waterloo Region (Cambridge and Kitchener) was proud to be the recipient of the International Association of Chief of Police (IACP) Motorola Solutions Webber Seavey Award for Excellence in Law Enforcement. This prestigious award recognizes public servants who have identified a need in the community and took action to address it.

Connectivity Process Road Map
The Family Violence Project of Waterloo Region
In January 2006, a group of partners committed to working together to respond to family violence, to help families find emotional and physical safety and to work with the community to end the cycle of violence. These partners formed a collaborative called The Family Violence Project. Housed at Carizon’s head office at 400 Queen, the fundamental principle of this model is to provide consistent supports and seamless delivery of services to victims and children. FVP partners include: The Waterloo Regional Police Service Domestic Violence Investigative Branch, Victim Services, the Elder Abuse Response Team, Women’s Crisis Services, Carizon Family and Community Services, Family & Children’s Services of the Waterloo Region, Legal Aid Ontario, Crown Attorney’s Office, and Waterloo Region Sexual Assault Domestic Violence Treatment Centre. In 2016, the FVP celebrated its 10th anniversary and the success of providing a one stop access point for victims and their families.

Emotional Freedom Technique - EFT, a two-year pilot project supported by Lyle S. Hallman Foundation is based on the principles of Chinese acupuncture, uses a pattern of meridian points releasing uncomfortable feelings and concerns, resulting in reduced impact of trauma, building self-confidence and addressing related challenges. “EFT is another tool in the family’s tool box of strategies for calming down, talking about feelings and problems as well as, dealing with them in a positive, effective way,” says EFT Specialist Linda Stearns. Community Services has also been exploring ways of integrating EFT into our Encompass programs.

CHRISTINA’S STORY
Christina, a 7 year old, has many gifts - an amazing sense of humour, self-confidence, creativity, and a caring nature. Christina was also born prematurely at 30 weeks after a complicated pregnancy. At birth she was not breathing and required resuscitation. Christina was in the hospital until she was 10 months old when she was released to go home on “palliative care.” Christina experienced a number of potentially traumatic events related to her premature birth and subsequent frequent medical interventions. She received a gastric feeding tube at 6 months of age and is particularly sensitive to oral stimulation. Christina has a diagnosis of Pervasive Development Disorder.

The frequent medical interventions created anxiety for Christina around hospitals, needles and medical procedures. Christina struggled trying new food for fear of choking, was nervous about sleeping by herself and feared the dark and being alone.

Christina was referred to the Emotional Freedom Technique program due to her high level of anxiety. Linda Stearns met with Christina and her mother for one hour, weekly for 8 weeks. Their treatment goal was to provide and teach Christina and her family EFT, a method, equated to acupuncture, of tapping on meridian points of the body to increase an individual’s energy system. Christina became very efficient in remembering the tapping points as well as stating her problems and feelings after several sessions.

Her mom shared concrete examples of the improvement she saw on a weekly basis. By the end of the 8 weeks, Christina was going to bed independently 90% of the time and stayed in her bed all night 5 to 6 nights each week. During therapy, Christina also bit through an arrowroot biscuit - “a big step” - and she was tapping independently between sessions.

Prior to the Emotional Freedom Technique program starting, Linda asked Christina’s mother to rate her ability to manage her anxiety (1-10 scale) and she rated it as “0.” At the end of the program Christina’s mother was asked to rate her ability to manage her anxiety and she rated it as a “9.”

During one session, Christina’s mom encouraged her to share an incident. Christina said, “Oh yeah, my sister pulled out my feeding tube and we had to go to Hamilton!” Linda responded: “How did you feel?” Christina replied, “I was scared and nervous and I tapped all the way to Hamilton!”
Statement of Operations For the Year Ending March 31, 2016

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During the year Carizon’s Board of Directors approved a restructuring plan and the severance costs associated with this restructuring plan have been included in the operating fund results for the year ending March 31, 2016.
Carizon expresses profound thanks to our funders

United Way of Kitchener-Waterloo and Area

Federal Funders
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
Public Health Agency of Canada

Provincial Funders
Ministry of Community and Social Services
Ministry of Child and Youth Services
Ministry of Health and Long Term Care
Waterloo-Wellington Local Health Integration Network

Regional and Municipal Funders
City of Kitchener
City of Waterloo
Region of Waterloo Community Services Grants
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