

Teresa Group In Touch

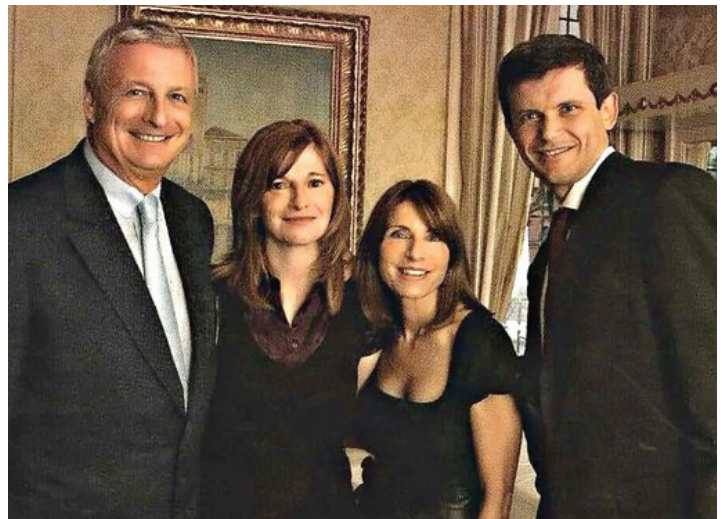
Bottom Right: Christian Courtin-Clarins, Simone Shindler, Clarins Canada VP Christine Dallaire and Clarins Canada President Jocelyn Cuirot.

Clarins is a company with a long history of philanthropic giving. On September 26, 2007, Simone Shindler, Program Director at The Teresa Group, received "The Clarins Most Dynamic Woman Award". This is only the second time that this award has been given in Canada. It is given to an outstanding woman who strives through an association, to help children in need recover their dignity and hope in the future.

The \$50,000 Clarins award will help The Teresa Group start to develop a preschool for children affected by HIV and AIDS. "A preschool is the missing link in our services and we feel that early intervention is the key to a good start in life," says Simone. The preschool centre will initially cater to about 24 children and eventually progress to a larger number. It will allow children to have a safe place to come everyday and be nurtured by staff that understand the social emotional context of living in a family affected by HIV and AIDS.

"It's amazing to be nominated and recognized for my work. Through this award we are able to highlight the work of the organization. Many people do not know about the ways in which children are affected by this devastating disease. This award publicly allows us to highlight the >>>

Teresa Group Social Worker Captures Coveted Clarins Award



WHAT'S INSIDE

- PAGE 1 SOCIAL WORKER CAPTURES COVETED CLARINS AWARD
- PAGE 3 JEN'S BRUSH WITH FAME
- PAGE 3 REPTILES, MOVIES, AND A LITTLE MAGIC
- PAGE 4 THERE'S A PRESCHOOL ON THE HORIZON
- PAGE 5 DEEDS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE
- PAGE 6 ONE CUT, ONE DONATION = ONE HUGE DIFFERENCE
- PAGE 7 THIS PROGRAM REALLY WORKS!
- PAGE 8 THE GREAT OUTDOORS
- PAGE 8 ROOM WITH A VIEW
- PAGE 8 THE 2007 HOLIDAY PARTY





agency and the needs of the kids,” says Simone. The glittering award ceremony took place at the historic Windsor Arms Hotel, where distinguished guests, including Christian Courtin-Clarins, company chairman, were treated to a delectable cocktail reception.

Simone has been directing the Leading the Way Program at The Teresa Group for nine years. Under her guidance and mentorship the Prenatal Group, New Moms and Babies Group, Moms and Toddlers Groups, the Back to School Program, Summer Camp for Kids and Tutoring Program have evolved and grown. In 2002, Simone worked with a group of girls to create *Bye-bye secrets*, a book that brings to light what it is like when HIV or AIDS takes over a child’s world and in 2005, she organized a book of art and writings by children living with HIV and AIDS called *Hopes, Wishes and Dreams*.

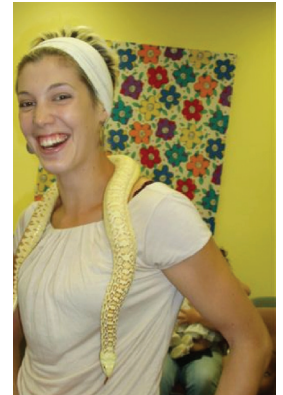
Congratulations Simone for this well deserved honour!



“At Clarins, we owe everything to women, they are the ones who make the world a better place.”

— Christian Courtin-Clarins

“Serving children and their families living with or affected by HIV and AIDS”



“Jen’s brush with fame...”

The Teresa Group’s Family Support Coordinator, Jennifer Kindy-McPherson was extremely fortunate recently in having a once in a life time opportunity to meet and chat with former US President Bill Clinton. He was the keynote speaker for the grand opening of the Ontario Economic Summit and Jen’s husband Trevor was the key organizer of the event.

Jen was nervous about meeting President Clinton but she knew what she wanted to say. She wanted him to know about The Teresa Group and she had taken copies of our children’s books as a gift for him. She waited patiently backstage for the meeting. Then finally he arrived. “It all happened so quickly”, she said, “ but once we shook hands and I gave him a brief introduction about our organization, he offered to sign the books *“Bye-bye secrets”* and *“Hopes, Wishes and Dreams”*. I graciously thanked him for his offer, but instead presented him with the books. He was thrilled.” He said “These are absolutely beautiful. Look at the colours and the art work.” Jen went on to tell him that the books were written by the children who attend our programs. President Clinton took a special interest in *“Bye Bye Secrets”* and shared a brief story. “I thanked him for supporting HIV and AIDS and all of his other initiatives. In return he thanked us for our efforts here at The Teresa Group. It was quite an amazing meeting.”

Reptiles, Movies, and a Little Magic

Squeals of joy and excitement could be heard coming from The Teresa Group’s new program room this August as snakes, lizards, and magic filled the space as a part of the summer programming series for families. Reptiles and amphibians were uncovered and presented by Reptilia, a traveling zoo that teaches children and adults alike about these species. This educational and exhilarating event packed the room with individuals of every age including babies to grandparents. Everyone present had the chance to “wear” a snake around their necks, and many took the opportunity to face their fears and do just that! What a sight!

Rain couldn’t stop The Teresa Group family picnic even though it was moved indoors to the new program room. Sparkles the Magician entertained the families with magic tricks and jokes while pizza, chicken fingers, and snacks filled their appetites. Sparkles’ performance filled the room with laughter and amazement. On another day, families were asked to join The Teresa Group staff for a family movie day at a local movie theater to see the children’s movie *Ratatouille*. For some of the children it was their first time seeing a movie in a theater, and with the help of goodie bags and one funny rat, it’s something they will remember for a lifetime! Thank you to the many volunteers who helped to make these events fun and memorable!





There's a Preschool on

The Teresa Group has been grappling with the impact of HIV and AIDS on young children for a number of years through its New Moms and Babies and its Moms and Tots Groups. Clinical observations by staff in these groups along with conversations with clients indicate that many of the mothers feel overwhelmed in coping with their health and the needs of their young children. Living in poverty, poor housing, feeling ill, tired and stressed all can impact on the ability to parent and therefore on the development of the child.

Jody Heymann, M.D., Ph.D notes in a 2003 UNESCO report, that HIV is changing the nature of early childhood care demanded. Children who are HIV infected and affected face both increased health and developmental challenges. "The overall need", states Heymann "for quality early childhood care services is increasing as a result of HIV. Not only is there a need for greater supply, but it is also necessary for these services to adapt to meet the new demands of HIV infected and affected children".

As noted by Mary Eming Young of the Human

Development Network of the World Bank, "the positive effect of early childhood programs can change the developmental trajectory of children born into poverty". More and more evidence shows that poor and disadvantaged children and families particularly benefit from early childhood interventions. Van der Gaag and Tan, 1998 note that well-targeted ECD programs cost less and produce more dramatic and lasting results than education investments at any other level. Myers, Van der Gaag and Tan put forth these points in support of ECD programs targeted specifically for young children affected by HIV and AIDS.

The unique challenges faced by young children affected by HIV and AIDS have not been addressed at the preschool level in the Greater Toronto Area. In September, the Board of The Teresa Group decided to move ahead with plans to establish a preschool for this group of children. This is a huge undertaking for the organization but one which can have a tremendous impact on the lives of many of the young children we serve. It will be modeled on a highly successful program at The Children's Place Association Early Learning

"Serving children and their families living with or affected by HIV and AIDS"

PRIZE WINNERS

Main Event Raffle Held On October 21, 2007

First Prize: Victor DiRisio, Toronto

Second Prize: Mark DiRisio, Niagara Falls

Third Prize: Krista Kerr, Toronto

the Horizon

Program in Chicago. Their program has been designed to meet the complex medical, emotional and educational needs of children affected by HIV and AIDS.

As part of the planning and development of The Teresa Group's new centre, staff member Simone Shindler visited The Children's Place Association Early Learning Program in Chicago that has been running a preschool for children affected by HIV and AIDS for the past ten years. Simone noted that each day children are cared for by highly trained staff members that are thoroughly educated about HIV and its medical and social effects. The preschool is a bright and lively place full of curious young children eager to come each day to this caring and fun centre.

Without a doubt this well evaluated centre is one that The Teresa Group can learn a great deal from in terms of running a preschool for this population of children. Like the Chicago Early Learning Program, The Teresa Group hopes to create a unique environment that cares for children affected by HIV and AIDS and surrounds them and their family with advanced interventions at no cost to the families.

Deeds That Make a Difference November 2007

“Do what you can, with what
you have, where you are”.

Theodore Roosevelt

An expression of gratitude to the many Teresa Group supporters who continue their acts of kindness to make a difference in the lives of the children and families at The Teresa Group:

The congregation of Manor Road United Church for the boxes of non perishable food items at Thanksgiving for our families.

To Nancy Cameron, Bea Almas, Helen Cameron, Mary Murray who continue to hand knit/crochet hats, mitts, scarves, comforters and blankets for the children.

To Cindy Baanders-Lukas for the donation of treats and to June Wallace for the handmade blankets.

To Studio Fontana for the cash donation that is collected in a jar at the salon counter.

To Emerson Marketing for their generous donations of new diaper bags and items for newborns.

To Neil Wycik Coop for their ongoing donation of children's vitamins.



L to R
Lift Salon, Judy , Steve Roy and
Canadian Idol Judge Jake Gold,
The Solo Bace Gang



One Cut, One Donation = One Huge Difference



It is hard to imagine that it has been 10 years since the amazing Steve Roy started The Mane Event, a haircutting extravaganza that benefits The Teresa Group. On Sunday, October 21 over thirty stylists gave up their day off and offered their time and talents to the 10th Anniversary Mane Event. Their dedication and compassion for this cause is quite remarkable! Some have been participating for years while others are new to the event. All were united by a desire to help the hundreds of children affected by HIV and AIDS that The Teresa Group serves.

The weather cooperated this year and clients turned out in droves filling the salons to capacity. Fabulous cuts, colouring and highlights were the order of the day. A number of clients just dropped in to support the event with a financial contribution. We were delighted when Canadian Idol judge Jake Gold dropped in to Solo Bace to get his hair cut and support the event again this year. As always, Teresa Group volunteers were on hand at Solo Bace, Lift Salon and April Maloney Salon to greet everyone, offer an array of tasty sandwiches, cookies and beverages and of course to hand out goody bags to clients as a thank you for participating.

Our special thanks to the merchants and individuals who contributed over sixty wonderful items to the Silent Auction that was hosted by Lift Salon. We particularly want to pay tribute to Melanie Snare from Quality

Jewellers who has kindly donated beautiful jewellery items for the Mane Event raffle for a number of years. How lucky we were to have Schwarzkopf Professional as the lead sponsor of the event again this year. They have been supporting this event since its inception ten years ago. Not only does Schwarzkopf generously provide all of the items for the client, volunteer and stylist goody bags at the event but they also make a cash contribution to The Teresa Group plus provide hundred of gift items for the Holiday Party bags. Wow!

This year's Mane Event had a bit of a new twist. Not only did the event benefit children at The Teresa Group, but it also helped out another charity. Angel Hair for Kids provides hair wigs for children from disadvantaged families who have lost their hair as a result of Alopecia, burns and cancer treatments. Eight Mane Event clients agreed to have ten inches of their hair cut off and donate it to Angel Hair. For those clients their participation in the Mane Event had double the impact.

Drum roll please! This year's Mane Event was the most successful in history bringing in over \$30,000 over the course of six hours. This brings the ten year total for this event to over \$200,000. To Steve Roy our ambassador extraordinaire, all of the stylists, salon owners, clients, merchants and volunteers involved in the 2007 Mane Event our heartfelt thanks. We look forward to seeing you again next year.

“Serving children and their families living with or affected by HIV and AIDS”

This Program Really Works!

Leading the Way (LTW) is one of the core programs delivered by The Teresa Group. In February 2007, Spire Consulting was contracted to examine nine years of data that had been collected from the children and youth who attended the program. The evaluation was funded by the Provincial Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario.

Both quantitative and qualitative data were used to evaluate the program. Analysis of the quantitative data revealed a number of interesting findings about the children and youth who participate in LTW. It was estimated that 15% of the children were depressed and 11% were anxious. Children in the undisclosed group were significantly more likely to be over the 50th percentile for depression than children in the disclosed group. The majority of children demonstrated lower scores on both the anxiety and depression scales after participation in LTW, although caution must be used with these results due to the lack of a control group. Many children attend LTW for multiple sessions and almost 70% of the children returned for at least a second session. They also rated the groups and the facilitators very highly.

Qualitative analysis of the documents showed how the facilitators used many activities to help the children explore themes relevant to HIV and AIDS. Children in turn used these activities to explore the impact that HIV and AIDS has on their lives. Over time, the facilitators noted the participants' increased ability to cope with their emotions and to manage their behaviours, as well as an increase in knowledge about HIV and AIDS.

A number of themes emerged in the qualitative analysis. The first theme centred on children's fears about the future, including the loss of parents and caregivers and concern about what would happen to themselves and their siblings. For children who had been disclosed to, facts about HIV and AIDS helped allay some of these fears.

The second theme dealt with the children's fears of rejection

related to HIV and AIDS, which kept the children from talking openly about it in their communities. This led the participants to feel strongly about having LTW as a safe place to express their emotions, especially those triggered by illness and death in their families.

A third theme examined the effects of HIV and AIDS on families. Families experience stress as parents struggle to cope with living with HIV or AIDS. Families' structures and roles are changed due to the illness, separation and death of family members.

The research also found that factors affecting the children's ability to cope with HIV and AIDS do not occur in isolation from other life events, especially poverty, racism, community violence and family conflict. Coping with HIV or AIDS is particularly difficult for children, since their concerns, understanding of HIV and AIDS, and coping mechanisms are influenced by their stage of development.

There are a number of important implications based on the findings of this evaluation. Data gathered provided important insight into the challenges facing children affected by or infected with HIV or AIDS. Since these children experience isolation due to the stigma around HIV and AIDS they need long-term support from a consistent source to cope with the issues that they face. The evaluation also indicated that the success of LTW stemmed largely from its adaptability and flexibility, and that the activity-centered approach successfully allowed children to nonverbally express complex and difficult emotions. Data gathered from the evaluation will be used to further strengthen the Leading the Way program as it continues to provide a safe environment for children and youth affected by HIV and AIDS.

On July 3, 2007 The Teresa Group's Executive Director, Karen Vance-Wallace had the honour of presenting the findings of the Leading the Way research project at the international AIDS Impact Conference in Marseilles, France.



The Great Outdoors

Ferry boat rides, swimming, hiking, sports, arts and crafts, and new friends filled the summers of more than thirty children once again, as The Teresa Group and the YMCA of Toronto joined together to provide free day camp. Every family with children between the ages of six and fifteen years old, was eligible to enroll their children in three free weeks of these fabulous programs, and the response was remarkable. Not only are these camps fun for the children, but they also provide an opportunity to get out into the fresh air and experience nature, which is not something they can often do living in urban Toronto. One program of note was the Youth Leadership Program for youth 13-15, where they not only participated in recreational games but were also able to engage in leadership activities, environmental awareness, global education, and community service projects. One of The Teresa Group campers commented that, "camp was the most fun I had this summer, it was much better than sitting at home. I can't wait until next year!" The Teresa Group is thrilled to be able to provide this service as these children would otherwise be unable to attend summer camp due to the soaring costs of these programs.

A Room with a View

The seams were bursting on the program room at The Teresa Group, so to accommodate the attendance and activities of the support groups and special events, a larger room was sought in the building. The end product is beautiful. From the wall of sun drenched windows, comfortable carpeting, inviting colors, to a space to park a stroller, the welcoming and soothing environment fits perfectly with the feelings The Teresa Group strives to convey to each person who enters the door. The results of this new room have been outstanding; clients are attending groups in record numbers, presentations are running smoothly as there is now room for child minding, and there is room for the little ones to explore. One client spontaneously commented, "I love that the prenatal group is in the new room. There is so much space and it just feels nice."

The 2007 Holiday Party

The Teresa Group's new program room was buzzing with activity the first three weeks in November when the elves were once again busy organizing holiday gifts for The Teresa Group family party scheduled for November 25th.

Under the guidance of Marjorie Monahan, long time volunteers Cecilia Edwards, Jean Hafner and Virginia Simone wrapped and labeled gifts to ensure every family member received a gift. Marianne Van Esch, the 2007 Holiday Party Chair, Adriana, Ashley, Lianne, Liz and Mitch to name but a few also volunteered to ensure the gift bags were ready for the big day.



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