**Executive Director’s Report 2022:**

**Caterina Pace**

**Our amalgamated reports will be posted on our Websites**

[**www.riverparkwaychildrenscentre.ca**](http://www.riverparkwaychildrenscentre.ca)

[**www.riverheightschildrenscentre.ca**](http://www.riverheightschildrenscentre.ca)

Welcome to our Annual General Meeting. As the Executive Director of River Parkway Children’s Centre Corporation. (River Heights Children’s Centre.) I would like to take this opportunity to welcome everyone and share our experiences of the past year. 2022 was a year of overcoming obstacles and thriving back through a pandemic. 2022 was also mainly focused on resilience and building forward momentum. COVID-19 continued to ebb and flow throughout the year.

Both centres were committed to providing high-quality early learning and care program to all our families. Adjustments in all areas of the Child Care program were continuously being made in the day-to-day operations to respond to the changing dynamics of the pandemic. (By January 2022 we had 8 revised versions of a Pandemic plan that outlined our operational guidance for Child Care during the Covid-19 outbreak, 10 regulatory changes to the Child Care & Early Years Act and countless revised policies from Ottawa Public Health and the Ministry of Education.)

Working in partnership with our governments and community partners, we have found creative ways to overcome the many obstacles created by the COVID-19 pandemic. Promoting health and safety to ensure that children and families continue to receive high quality early learning and care was a priority. Both Centres implemented daily online screening tools form the Ministry of Education to be followed by anyone entering our Centres to ensure that we kept the Centres free of illness.

If there is a silver lining to a pandemic, it is that we were able to adapt very quickly to a new and highly impactful situation, develop solutions and provide flexibility in services for families. Our families adjusted with us and together we became even more resilient. Our internal online Storypark Application strengthened family communication and continues to be an important part of daily family engagement.

Our Registered Early Childhood Educators are experts in setting a foundation for lifelong learning for each child. We know that early learning, play-based experiences create well-rounded, healthy people as they grow and make their mark on the world.

Examples of these experiences can be found everyday on our playgrounds or in our program rooms. Learning happens within the context of supportive relationships. With kind, compassionate, and attuned adults, children feel calm and ready to learn. We continue to guide our early learning and care practices always with the four foundations of How Does Learning Happens – (Belonging, Well-being, Engagement and Expression).

Throughout 2022 our volunteer board of directors met remotely to provide input and guidance where needed. Key decisions needed to be made as we navigated throughout the year. Realignment of Cleary Ave., future redevelopment of Cleary Campus, Wellness committee contributions, supporting in employee retirements and instrumental in new hires of employees.

In March 2022, Ontario signed a historic deal with the federal government that lowered licensed childcare fees to an average of $10 a day by September 2025. As a first step, families saw an average 25% reduction in their fees retroactive to April 1, 2022, the fees were further reduced to 52.75% by the end of December 2022.

This is Ontario’s action plan under the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) Agreement. This agreement outlines the key principles and priorities for this funding as well as the actions to be taken in the fiscal years 2022–23 and 2023–24 to work towards the goal of implementing the $10 a day CWELCC.

Some of the priorities that are outlined in Ontario’s CWELCC action plan include. (5)

* **Lowering fees**
  + by 2025–26, average parent fees for children under six will be $10/day inclusive of fee subsidies.
* **Increasing access**
  + by the end of 2026, 86,000 new licensed childcare spaces (above 2019 levels) for children under six are operational.
* **Enhancing quality**
  + by the end of 2025-26, Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) make up 60% of the workforce in licensed childcare.
* **Supporting inclusion**
  + by 2025-26, more Indigenous and Francophone children, as well as children from vulnerable families, can access high-quality, inclusive childcare.
* **Strengthening data/reporting**
  + by 2025-26, Ontario’s data and reporting systems are modernized and upgraded to effectively support implementation and measure success.

In April 2022 pandemic recovery and the new direction of the CWELCC was having a positive impact on both childcare centres. Fees were reduced by 25%.

River Heights remained at full enrollment since September 2020 and River Parkway slowly increased enrollment capacity in the fall of 2022. (Many of our parents that worked for the Federal Government were still working form home and did not require full time childcare).

* We appreciate the leadership of the provincial and municipal government who provided direction and guidance as we collectively made our way through 2022. We are also thankful to the City of Ottawa Children’s Services team who continues to fund and advocate for our sector. Special thank you to Chantal Jacques our Child Care Program Development Specialist form the City of Ottawa who continually supports and advocates on behalf of River Parkway and River Heights Children’s Centre.
* I owe my sincere gratitude to the entire River Parkway and River Heights family. I wish to acknowledge the responsive leadership of the Board of Directors, our team of dedicated and committed Registered Early Childhood Educators, as well as the leadership Team, Cooks and Support Staff. You are a wonderful team that has worked through tremendous challenges over the last few years. You inspire me everyday with the passion dedication and the energy you bring to the Centres and your positions.

Thank you,

**Next, I will highlight the program supervisor reports which will focus on the individual enriching activities celebrated throughout the year.**

**(Insert Program Supervisors reports)**

**River Parkway Children’s Centre**

**Program Supervisor’s Report for 2022**

**Diane Gauthier**

**Last year we worked very hard at River Parkway to maintain all the province-mandated Child Care Health and Safety regulations. We received shipments of N95 masks and Rapid Antigen Test Kits. We did very well and would like to thank all our staff for their extra work and all our families who have been supportive.**

**Covid-19 did not disappear in 2022 but there were certain changes that made life easier for staff, parents, and children at River Parkway. Parents started doing the Covid-19 School and Child Care Screening on-line which was easier than answering all the questions at the door. Parents were also able to come back into the centre as of April 1st. Finally, the children were allowed to bring in their water bottles in the summer.**

**We did have a lot of absent staff and children at our centre last year. Staff and children were absent if they or someone in their family had symptoms, tested positive or had been in contact with sick people.**

**Our enrollment was not at full capacity until October. We started the year 2022 with 19 spaces to fill. Between January and October, 20 children left our centre and after many phone calls, e-mails and tours, we welcomed 39 new children at River Parkway bringing us to full capacity.**

**CWELCC…Lots of work in placing children on the Ottawa list that attended RPCC between April and December to reimburse parents 25% of their fees.**

**For staff, we started the year with Olga as our new Floater. In June, we all**

**renewed our First Aid. (Tazri and Olga became full time permanent)**

**Two staff retired in 2022; Marie in April and Roslyn in December.**

**Finally, we celebrated 2 work Anniversaries in September: Caterina’s 10 years as our Executive Director and Tracy’s 20 years as our cook. Congratulations to our wonderful staff.**

**Last year, we had 1 student from the ECE Program at Algonquin and we had 1 High School student doing her 40 hours of volunteer work. We also had 2 students for the Canada Summer Student Jobs Grants in July and August.**

**How Does Learning Happen is still the approach we to use to focus on what’s important for children. The staff continue to build relationships with the children and get to know them very well to understand their needs.**

**The staff also continue to experiment with Storypark to communicate with parents. They also post photos, videos or stories of our Special days.**

**In 2022, we had a Red Day, a Green Day, a Winter Games Day, a Pyjamas Day, Picnic Days and a visit from Santa.**

**We had special lunches and snacks for Easter, Thanksgiving, Hallowe’en, National Child Day and Christmas.**

**A popular activity was the garden with the seeds planted in the toddler and the pre-school yards. The children were able to water and watch the vegetables grow and they were also able to make salads with their vegetables.**

**Our Program Advisor from the Ministry of Education Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing visited River Parkway for our yearly licensing inspection twice in 2022: in February and in September.**

**She was pleased** **with her observations and there were no non-compliances.**

**Our Health inspection for our kitchen that was done in November also went very well.**

**Let’s not forget that in November, the city of Ottawa created a new entrance to the property**

**Finally, we want to thank our Board members for their volunteer work.**

**A big thank you goes to all the staff for being such hard workers and to**

**Caterina who demonstrated great leadership qualities again in 2022.**

**We would also like to thank the parents for choosing the best staff to take care of their most precious treasures.**

***River Heights Children’s Centre AGM Report 2022***

*As much as we had hoped that 2022 would look different from 2020 and 2021, it looked quite similar…*

*We continued with our “Covid-style” operations!*

*Caterina, Connie, Phuong and the Board of Directors continued with their efforts in securing the financial wellbeing of our corporation.*

*As with 2020 and 2021, Caterina, Diane and I dedicated much time to the ever-changing guideline documents set out by the Ministries of Health and of Education and Ottawa Public Health. Many guidelines from our Pandemic plan remained.*

*River Heights’s preschool and toddler programs operated at its full capacity of 24 and 15 children respectively for the entire year.*

*On both February 1st and 2nd, our preschool program was shut down by our local health unit due to a high percentage of illness. Caterina filed a Serious Occurrence with the Ministry.*

*Danelle and her husband welcomed their first child on February 8th. A beautiful little girl, Mieke.*

*Our audit process took place on February 16th, for our site.*

*On March 9th, we were visited by our licensing agent Jennie Savath.*

*River Heights Children’s Centre complied. Our license was renewed.*

*Caterina, Connie and Phuong began the process for River Heights and River Parkway both to enrolled in the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care System (CWELCC).*

*On April 4th, we welcomed parents back in to our centre for the very first time since Covid 19 guidelines we imposed on provincial childcare agencies, back in summer months of 2020!*

*Our Office Administrator Connie retired at the end of April.*

*Danelle was hired as our new Administrator. Caterina, Fong and I are sharing certain administrative tasks until Danelle returns in the fall of 2023 from her maternity leave.*

*Our Annual General meeting took place on May 5th.*

*On May 24th, our centre was closed for post storm cleanup. Caterina filed a Serious Occurrence.*

*Several staff recertified themselves in First Aid and Level CPR with the River Parkway staff on June 7th and June 9th.*

*Brooke resigned in late June. Just before her scheduled return from maternity of September.*

*Brianna Hawley was our Canada Summer’s Job student.*

*Connie had applied on our behalf back in January. Approval had been granted.*

*Two of our permanent educators returned in the later part of the year.*

*Megan in September and Alyssa in early December. Both, from their maternity leaves.*

*We welcomed Sarah Armstrong in October as a permanent Early Childhood Educator.*

*We received confirmation of being enrolled in CWELCC in the fall.*

*In early December, all full fee-paying families were issued a CWELCC rebate cheque. All families saw a reduction of 25 percent on our monthly base fees retroactive to April 1st, 2022 to December 2022. Rates were scheduled to be reduced again effective January 1st, 2023. Monthly base rates were set at 485.75 for our preschool program and 628.45 for our toddler program for the new year.*

*For a second year in a row, I would have to highlight “staff shortages” as being our biggest challenge for 2022.*

*Again, without our usual support of the Early Child Education programs with Algonquin, la Cite and St. Lawrence colleges, finding qualified and suitable replacements for our educators for their maternity leaves proved to be challenging for a second year consecutive year.*

*Staffing shortages remained an issue for many workplaces, not solely childcare.*

*We relied mainly on KRSS Services. An Ottawa based staffing agency. However, this was a very costly alternative.*

*Our program advisor from CISS worked with a preschool child and the team of educators for most of this year.*

*Storypark continued to be a critical part of how we remained engaged with our families. Our families, the educators and the management continued to embrace this way of communicating.*

*The staff continued to participate in their varying stages of Continuous Professional Learning.*

*In conclusion, I wish to thank the Board of Directors, Caterina, Phuong, Diane, and the entire staff at River Heights for their ongoing efforts, flexibility, and patience this past year. Your commitment and efforts to support the children and our families has not gone unnoticed. I am truly grateful to each one of you…*

*I’d like to express my gratitude to all our River Heights parents, for their continuous support and understanding. Once again, “together” we made our little centre a healthy and safe place for you to bring your children.*

*I am looking forward to what lies ahead for us in 2023… it can’t be as bad as 2020, 2021 and 2022 right??!!*

*Respectfully Submitted,*

*Penny Lalonde*