

Monica Place

Supporting Lives Two at a Time



Case for Support

Prepared for: Monica Place

Prepared by: Leadership Waterloo Region Class of 2016



YOUR SUPPORT FOR MONICA PLACE WILL HELP SO MANY

Jane's alarm sounds at 5:30 am. Exhausted, the 18 year old gets up and readies herself and her baby, 2-month-old Natalie. At 6:30 am, she and Natalie board the 1st of 2 buses for their long journey to Monica Place. Natalie joins the other babies in the nursery while Jane attends school. Jane joins the other Moms who are completing their secondary education. Jane is excited today because she is submitting her application for university. A dream she never had before...

It's just before 7:00am and 16 year-old Amanda's alarm sounds at 7:00 am. She readies and herself and her baby, 2-month-old Charlie, to go down to the dining room for breakfast. Amanda and Charlie live at Monica Place. Amanda has been there since she was 4 months pregnant and has become part of the Monica Place family. When breakfast is over, Amanda helps to clean up and Charlie joins the other babies in the nursery. Amanda joins the other Moms in class. She is looking forward to seeing April, the teacher, and the other girls, as they have become a great source of support. For the first time, Amanda feels safe and has people to turn to when she is having trouble coping and making good decisions.

Class at Monica Place starts at 9:00 am. Some of the young women are focusing on English while others are taking post-secondary prep courses. At 11:00 am, Ellie, who is one of the nursery volunteers, comes in to let Lisa know her baby needs to be fed. Lisa is happy to be able to do this so easily. She would not have been able to have her baby so close in any other program at another school. She may not have been able to nurse if it wasn't for Ruth, the Public Health support person, who helped her get the assistance she needed when she was having difficulty nursing.

At noon, all of the Moms get together and have lunch; this gives them an opportunity to talk about what most young Moms wouldn't. 15 year old Leanne doesn't think she can keep up with school; it's hard to get herself and her baby on the bus each day to get to class at Monica Place. Her bus ride is over an hour long. She is feeling depressed but the other Moms are her cheerleaders. They can relate and they are able to remind her it's all about her son Jeremy. They remind her she is doing it for him. He matters.

April listens and recalls all of this. She remembers the fear and uncertainty. She also remembers the family she formed when she was at Monica Place 18 years ago. April graduated from Monica Place and attended the University of Waterloo. She now has her Masters in Social Work and Teaching and has returned, 18 years later, to teach at Monica Place. April is living her dream ...

The Class of 2016 will graduate in June. Eight of them are going on to attend College or University. They have plans to build a career, buy a home, and create a meaningful life for themselves and their babies.

Your support can help more young parents achieve their dreams and support these lives two at a time.

ABOUT MONICA PLACE

Our Vision

To provide a safe, supportive community that empowers young women to make informed and healthy choices today and in the future.

Our Mission:

Monica Place is a community that provides supportive housing, counseling and on-site education creating opportunities for growth, learning and skill development.

We empower young women who are pregnant, parenting or choosing adoption to make informed and healthy choices for themselves and their children.

Monica Place holds ourselves accountable to the young women and children we support, funders, volunteers, partners, employees and our community by creating a sustainable environment that is committed to achieving the highest possible standard of service. This includes setting clear objectives for our organization and communicating with transparency. To support the mission, Monica Place operates with a set of guiding values.

Our Values:

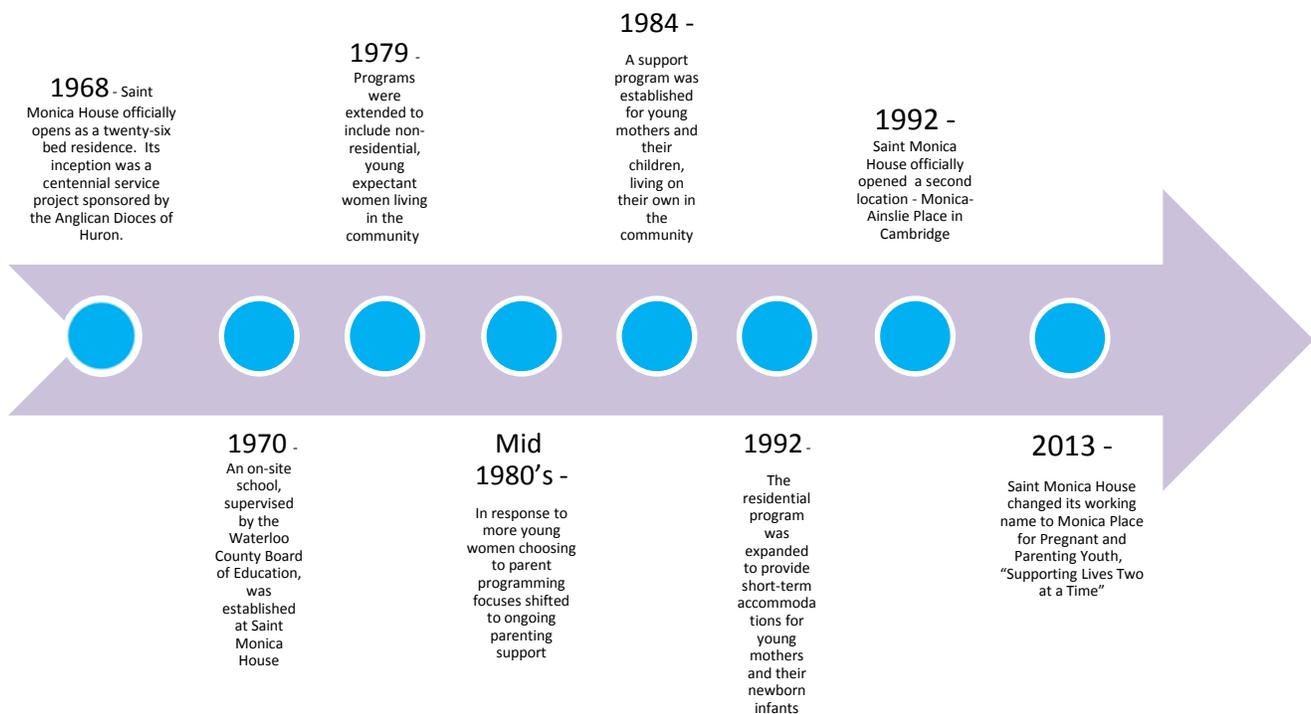
As an organization Monica Place values

- Personal dignity, integrity and respect
- Each individual's unique experiences, strengths and choices
- The diversity of each individual
- Each individual's rights, safety and privacy
- Strong community partnerships

OUR HISTORY

Monica Place for Pregnant and Parenting Youth formerly called Saint Monica House is a Young Parent and Infant Mental Health Centre. Monica Place was officially opened and dedicated on May 26, 1968 as Saint Monica House Incorporated. Its inception was a centennial service project in 1967, sponsored by the Anglican Diocese of Huron.

We have two locations, one in Waterloo and one in Cambridge that provide supportive housing, counselling and on-site education creating opportunities for growth, learning and skill development. Monica Place enjoys a long and rich history of serving young pregnant women in need, and over two decades of service to young mothers and their children. We have provided over 48 years of support to pregnant and parenting young women and their children.



Today, Monica Place is licensed under the Child and Family Services Act and is funded by the Ministry of Child and Youth Services as well as church sponsorships and also relies on the generosity of private donations.

Did you know that in Waterloo Region...

- The teen pregnancy rate is higher than the rate for all of Ontario?
- Kitchener and Cambridge have the highest rates of teen pregnancy?
- About one in nine mothers have not finished high school?
- Just under five per cent of mothers speak a first language other than English?
- Young mothers have the highest rates of small for gestational age infants?
- 70 per cent of the infants born to teen mothers were screened as at-risk?

WHAT MONICA PLACE OFFERS

Monica Place offers a variety of programs to address the complex needs of young women and their children. Young women between the ages of 12-24 receive a variety of support and programs to meet their needs and the needs of their children. Monica Place follows a Trauma Informed Model of Care as many of the young women have experienced trauma including physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse in their formative years, often by a loved one.

Young women can arrive at Monica Place any time during their pregnancy, whether they are choosing to parent, place their child for adoption or remain undecided.

Pre-Natal Residence

The pre-natal residential program is located in Waterloo and is a comprehensive, licensed care and treatment program for young women with multiple and complex needs during their prenatal period. Professionals staff the residence twenty-four hours a day/ seven days a week. Young women may enter residence at any time during pregnancy and actively design the way they wish to receive care. Care plans are individualized for each young woman and are designed to focus on their strengths. Structured program activities are also available. Programming is individualized to suit each young woman's needs.

Front line staff provide support and guidance for young women to navigate their way through psychological, emotional, behavioural, social, educational and everyday living concerns. They also provide residents with links to other community agencies and resources as needed.

Pre-natal programs are offered at Monica Place to help Moms develop a plan of care during pregnancy. Many of these young women have not had a role model to teach them appropriate ways to care for themselves. They will learn the importance of abstaining from smoking, alcohol and drugs. They will learn proper nutrition and are provided pre-natal vitamins, an essential part of pre-natal care.

In partnership with community agencies, these young women receive information that will help them to understand what to expect throughout their pregnancy and childbirth, help prepare admissions forms and will work with hospital staff so they are prepared for Motherhood. This is important because sometimes these Moms may not know how to deal with pressure and stress in a positive manner. Moms also learn proper care for their babies.

Monica Place offers a specialized residential postnatal program for young women who are parenting. The program provides individualized support to the young woman following the birth of her child and provides resources, and a hands-on approach to learning parenting skills and fostering positive attachment between Mom and baby. Moms will learn how to change diapers and how frequently to change their baby, how to breast-feed and the proper nutrition they need themselves. They will learn how bond with their baby, the importance of language and how to hug them and smile with them. Attachment between baby and Mom is so important to help the child learn and grow. Our residential staff ensures that Mom is coping with her new role the attachment process is going well and that baby is thriving.

Twenty-four hour/seven days a week support provides trauma-informed, research based, and evidenced informed services; using collaborative problem solving in the daily work with young women we support. The program encourages a sense of security, safety and the ability to establish a positive bond between mother and child.

Monica Place also offers a specialized residential program for young women who are choosing to place their child for adoption. This program offers support and future planning for the young women.

Education Program

Without the Monica Place Education Program, many of these young women would not graduate high school and would not have the option to proceed with a post-secondary education.

Monica Place Waterloo offers an *On-Site School Program* in partnership with the Waterloo Region District School Board. Through the schooling program, young women are able to earn compulsory and elective secondary school credits from grades 9 to 12. Individualized programs of study allow the students to work independently in different courses and at various levels to meet their needs and future goals. The teachers are knowledgeable about the unique needs of the young parents. Non-residents may also take part in the schooling program.

The program provides the opportunity to receive secondary school credits from grades 9-12 through individual programs of study revised to accommodate varying levels of concentration, self-discipline, learning difficulties and well-being to meet the student's needs and future goals. Students also participate in Parenting Classes, Life Skills programs and counselling support.

While the mothers attend school, free child minding services are provided. Care is provided by trained and dedicated volunteers with staff supervision. Keeping the mother/child together on site supports breastfeeding, attachment and learning together. The program also provides opportunities for young women to build a peer support network.

Subsidized Housing Program (Cambridge)

When the baby reaches 3 months of age at Monica Place Waterloo, the Mom and baby have the option to move into the Subsidized Housing Program in Cambridge. The Monica Place Cambridge complex has fifteen, two bedroom apartment units, which are available for young women and their children who are seeking transitional housing and support.

Individual counselling and group programs are offered as well as parenting and life skills classes. Young Moms may also continue to take part in the On-Site School Program at Monica Place Waterloo.

Mom and baby have the option to stay at Monica Place Cambridge until baby is 3 years old. Young parents do not have to have participate in programming at the Waterloo location to live at Monica Place Cambridge.

Counseling Services

Our counselors provide individual and group counseling support at both the Waterloo and Cambridge locations. One-to-one counseling program helps young women make positive decisions for themselves, their pregnancy and their child. Counselors assist youth with: crisis counselling, pre/post-natal information and education, advocating on behalf of youth to obtain housing, financial support, suggesting and supporting alternatives to abortion, developing safety plans for those in abusive relationships and referrals.

Monica Place also has a life skills program called "SKILLS – Support and Knowledge for Independent Living and Learning Success" This program provides young women with the skills that enable them to effectively manage the demands and challenges of everyday life. The program follows a **Passport to Independence** that will allow each individual to garner the tools to be stable, self-sufficient and live independently.

- **Housing Stability:** Provide support and resources to facilitate attainment of affordable housing in a safe neighborhood.
- **Financial Stability:** Provides support and resources to help youth work toward financial stability by facilitating educational attainment and employment at a livable wage, as well as financial literacy.
- **Physical and Emotional Health:** Provides support and resources to ensure young women and their children are healthy both physically and emotionally.
- **Healthy Relationships:** Provides support and resources to cultivate a sense of self-worth and right to healthy relationships with partners, peers, family, and the community, as well as the skills to resolve conflict, and solve problems.
- **Activities for Daily Living:** Young women learn skills to manage all aspects of maintaining a safe and stable home.

Monica Place Rewards Program

An incentive program, the Rewards Program hosts brand new donations of clothing, toys, hygiene products and household items we receive from the community. As young women display positive school spirit and personal growth, show punctuality, help other students or demonstrate other acts of kindness, they can earn Monica Money (faux dollars) to purchase these new items. This system works well to motivate students each day, as well as to provide them with items they may not be able to afford. During the Christmas season, the program expands to allow our young moms to provide a special Christmas for their children and themselves!

IMPACT ON MOMS, KIDS AND COMMUNITY

An education results in a young Mom who is motivated to continue to grow and develop rather than making poor choices. Her behaviour is mimicked by her child; they will watch her go to school, study and participate in healthy activities.

Impact on Mom:

- Instills confidence and self-worth
- Enables employability, enables Moms to be independent and a contributing member of society
- Reduced chance of repeated relationship choices
- Reduced chance of abuse and abusing
- Reduced chance of subsequent children being born into dysfunction
- Motivation and foundation to maintain a strong, positive lifestyle

Impact on Baby/ Child/ Young Adult:

- Reduced chance of repeat behavior by the child
- Increased chance the child will succeed in school
- Mom and child may end up being students at the same time; the child will learn the love of learning and studying and value education
- Reduced chance of being in an abusive situation; reduced chance of becoming an abuser
- Growing up with confidence and self-worth and becoming an adult with confidence and self-worth
- Reduced dependence on social programs and social assistance
- Reduced chance of being a case for police and social workers

Impact on our community:

- Reduced caseloads for social services
- Formation of new contributors to our community. Studies show that when we give a hand up, the recipients are motivated and want to give back to their community.
- Employable, contributing, prosperous families
- Stopping the cycle of uneducated and aggrieved children having children
- Increased contributions to vibrant communities

Support Services

Ongoing/transitional support is key to ensure what our young Moms learn in our education and housing programs goes with them when they enter the real world. Continuous support is essential to continue the cycle of growth and reduce the chance of returning to old habits.

Monica Place partners with service groups such as Waterloo Regional Public Health and Child and Family Services as well as the Waterloo Region School Board. This collaboration allows the groups to work with Moms and babies in an environment that can synergistically support them. The service groups are able to access Moms and babies in one place rather than having to go to several homes. The Moms are already there; in an environment where they feel safe and are open to receive guidance and support. Moms may ask any question they want without fear of repercussion or judgment.

Family and Services indicate that there is a reduction in child apprehensions because of Monica Place. Moms are open to this guidance and accepting of programs, they learn to be good parents that can raise their children in their homes. Their babies will not be taken and put into protective care.

2014 STATS

- 91 Moms and babies received maternal and infant support
- 21 Moms attended school
- 28 Moms and babies in residence
- 23 prenatal Moms in residence
- 49 Moms and babies live in transitional housing
- 69 Volunteers dedicated 8757 volunteer hours

That means a total of 212 Moms and babies have been supported in 2014....without the programs at Monica Place, these new Moms would not have the support they need. Don't let that happen, **your support for Monica Place allows us to continue Supporting Lives Two at a Time.**

FINANCIAL NEED

Monica Place’s philosophy of supporting two lives at a time results in a significant social return on investment that benefits young parenting women, and our community. Monica Place has offered assistance for decades and measured success on many levels. We continue to build on our reputation as an effective social not for profit agency.

Board Members, staff, and volunteers understand that simply offering accommodation does not work to empower these young women to make informed healthy choices for themselves and their children. The team at Monica Place has developed targeted programming for this population and a comprehensive support network and offers a holistic approach to deliver successful programs.

We need to raise approximately \$100,000 per year to maintain current programming needs for young women and children we support.

Current Fundraising Model

Monica Place is a **not for profit organization that is primarily funded through the Ministry of Child and Youth Services**. Approximately 83% of the required annual revenue is received from the Provincial Government. A small amount of revenue is generated through rental income including fees and recoverables. However, in order to satisfy current operating costs and expenses, ***Monica Place must rely upon the generosity of our community to generate a minimum of \$100,000 annually in donations and sponsorships.*** Funds raised through donations are invested directly into the services and programs that support the parenting young women and their children.

At Monica Place it’s not a donation, it’s an investment. Your sponsorship could help in offsetting the costs associated with helping the hundreds of women and babies every year, as well as assisting in the operation and expansion of our programs and services. Your donation is just that – yours – and you may also chose the area in which you'd like your donation to be given within Monica Place's scope. *Together we can "support lives two at a time".*



Ways You Can Help

- Corporate sponsorship
- Fundraising events
- In kind contributions and services such as contractors and plumbers
- Social media campaigns
- Alumni sponsorships
- Grants
- Individual donations - <http://monicaplace.ca/get-involved/1214-2>
- See our Needs List - <http://monicaplace.ca/get-involved/needs-list>
- Volunteer - <http://monicaplace.ca/get-involved/volunteer>
- Attend our sole fundraising event, The Grape Escape held each October - <http://monicaplace.ca/special-events>

As we continue to experience the increased pressure of reduced government subsidized programs, the need for fundraising, donations, and community partnerships also increases. Monica Place also recognizes that the competition for sponsorship and support amongst not for profit agencies is crowded. In our pursuit to meet the changing, more complex needs of today's pregnant and parenting youth, we continue to look for new ways to strengthen and expand our long term funding sources.

Monica Place would not exist without the support and encouragement of our community. We value, and recognize the vital contributions that our community offers. Your contributions have an exponential impact on our youth and community because you are not just supporting one mother and child you are supporting future generations.

Without the help of our donors, we would not be able to support the many programs we offer or assist these mothers and babies in reaching their full potential and developing the life skills to continue on later outside of Monica Place. A large percentage of the women we support would potentially lose their child to Family and Children Services and/or the foster care system if not given the opportunities Monica Place provides. **Your support is essential to the delivery of the services we offer to empower these young lives, two at a time.**

STRONGER & BETTER

I heard about Monica Place from my half-brother's mother, and chose to attend school at Monica Place because it is an environment where I feel supported and safe. It is also a place where I feel comfortable having my son as he is well cared for at Monica Place. While attending school, the programs that I enjoy the most are Parenting class and Speaker's Corner. Personally, I feel that Parenting was the most helpful because I learned so much about my developing child. You can never know enough about children which is why this program was also the most important to me.

Monica Place has helped me become a strong person and has given me the courage to parent. They provide me with the services I need and make it easier to provide basic supplies I need for my son.

R. Y-H, Age 18

Contact Info:

Address: 231 Herbert Street, Waterloo, ON N2L 0C3

Phone: 519-743-0291

Email: info@monicaplace.com

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/monicaplace>

Web Site: <http://www.monicaplace.ca>

