

Fact Sheet

Falstaff Family Centre – Fact Sheet

JD4-July 22-04

Located in Stratford, Ontario, the Falstaff Family Centre is a registered charitable organization focusing on the needs of families and children in Stratford and Perth County. Founded in 2002, the Centre is a multi-faceted and evolving facility that sees over 700 people come through its doors each week.

HISTORY

- Fall 2000 – The Avon Maitland District School Board declares five Huron county schools redundant, and announces its intention to close them and auction the buildings.
- Concerned for the future of the historic Falstaff School, a 1929 neo-Gothic building, members of the Stratford community organize to try and save it.
- Falstaff's plight comes to the attention of singer/composer and Stratford resident Loreena McKennitt, who purchases the building in November 2000 to preserve its historic relevance while providing the community time to decide on its future use.
- McKennitt holds a public meeting to identify possible uses for the building, over 275 people attend – the need for a facility to support children and families emerges as the primary theme.
- June 24, 2002, the Falstaff Family Centre officially opens its doors to the public.

PERMANENT PROGRAMS

The Falstaff Family Centre is home to six permanent programs:

The Perth-Middlesex Early Years Centre (operated by Perth Care for Kids)

Focuses on families and child development, offering a diverse range of programs for children from birth to age 6.

The Foundations Program (offered by Family Services Perth-Huron)

Assists young adults with developmental disabilities in a wide range of community activities and work.

The Literacy Network (offered by Family Services Perth-Huron)

Provides one-on-one and small group literacy and numerary classes, providing support and encouragement to adults in the community who struggle with reading, writing and basic math skills.

The Snoezelen Room (offered by Family Services Perth-Huron)

Is a sensory room that offers unique relaxing and therapeutic treatments for people with developmental disabilities, autism, Parkinson's or Alzheimer's diseases.

Kindermusik (offered by Aggie Elliot)

Children and parents learn through music and movement with activities designed to enhance young peoples' development by strengthening physical, emotional, social and cognitive skills.

Stratford & Perth County Community Foundation

Is a locally run public foundation that supports charitable activities in areas ranging from health, education and social services to arts, culture, recreation and the environment.

VISITING PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

Falstaff Family Centre has hosted a broad range of visiting programs and activities, including the following:

- Carols & Cookies Christmas event
- Summer Frolic fun day
- Dandelion Festival
- Stratford Book Festival
- Kids cooking classes
- Art classes
- ESL classes
- Pilates, Chi Kung, Yoga, Shiatsu classes
- Amelia's Studio for Dramatic Arts
- Katimavik
- Scoutsabout program
- Songwriters Association
- Stratford Children's Service
- Perth Community Futures Development Corporation
- Lutherwood Community Opportunities Development Association (CODA)
- National Judicial Institute convention
- University of Waterloo Engineering Science Quest Camp
- Choices for Change: Alcohol, Drug and Gambling Counseling Centre
- Young Hearts Bible Club
- Bereavement Counseling for Children
- Suzuki Musical Academy
- Wellspring Art Therapy

BUILDING FEATURES

The Falstaff Family Centre is:

- Fully accessible – with ramps, an elevator and a chairlift
- Equipped with a brand new state-of-the art catering kitchen
- Totally smoke-free, peanut-free, and pesticide-free
- A neo-Gothic building with Ontario heritage designation
- A model for converting redundant public buildings for community use

For more information, please contact:

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