
MERRYMOUNT

Family Support and Crisis Centre



Business Case for the
Crisis Residential and Respite Program



**Giving Our Community
Strength for 144 years**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

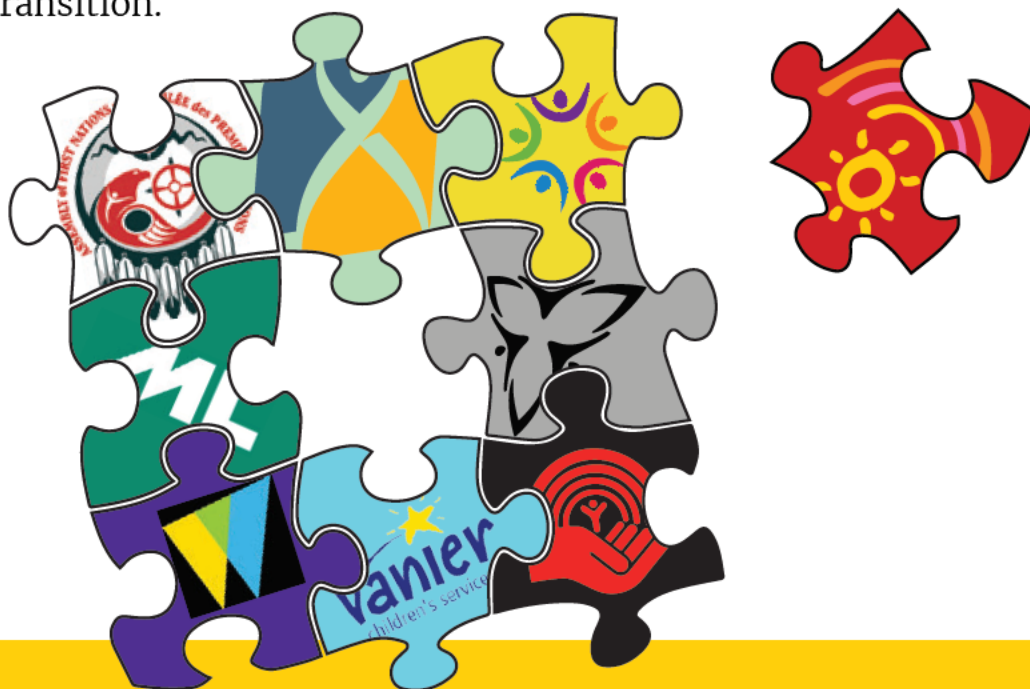
Background	4
Our Community	5
Child Soldiers	6
Respite and Crisis Care	8
Financial Overview	9
Budget Summary	9
Bridge Funding	11
Benefits	12
Testimonials	16
Supporters	20
References	21
Contact Information	22
Letters of Support	23



BACKGROUND

Merrymount is a recognized and respected leader in crisis support and transition services, caring for 8,000 families and 4,000 children facing difficulty each year. The organization is 1 of 5 accredited Children's Mental Health Centres in London, handling children from 0 - 13 years old who fall between a 1 - 3 rating on the mental health spectrum.

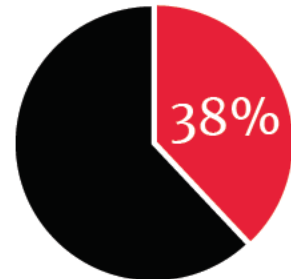
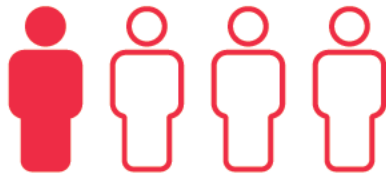
We are also a partner of the Child and Youth Network, working with other social service agencies in the London area. Merrymount provides 30 education and prevention programs for adults and children. We offer 24 hours of continuous, overnight crisis care for children. The programs are non-exclusive, recognizing that any family can experience a breakdown and need community support. The families we serve at Merrymount do not have anyone to turn to. Their extended families and friends are either unwilling or unable to step in and help. When their lives face a crisis, we become their extended family, offering their children a safe place where they are cared for by understanding, compassionate, and skilled professionals equipped to help them in crisis and transition.



OUR COMMUNITY IS IN A CRISIS

There are many Londoners in our community who struggle against overwhelming odds to keep their lives and families together. At Merrymount, we are seeing an increase in families presenting housing and shelter issues, family breakdowns, family violence, social isolation, mental and physical illness concerns, and the challenges of poverty.

71,030 Londoners and one in four children are living in poverty



Indigenous children and youth are living in poverty.

We have the 3rd highest child poverty rate in Canada

London has seen a **50% jump** in calls to the police for children in mental health distress since 2010.



Children are waiting anywhere from **8 months to 2 years** for counselling and psychotherapy support.



The age group most likely to be on social assistance in London are young children (aged 0-4 years), such that roughly **one in eight** preschoolers have parents who are either on ODSP, or (more likely) Ontario Works.

The number of children living in families who are relying on social assistance has **increased by 26.4%** since 2006.

London's broader emergency shelter system is operating at 100% capacity.



These pressures have resulted in growing demand from London residents for critical supports from Merrymount's Crisis Residential/Respite Program which cannot be met due to funding constraints. **Better resourcing would make a significant difference** in the human costs resulting from increased social issues as well as service savings for the City of London.

CHILD SOLDIERS

Displaced Yazidi communities, fleeing the terror of ISIS in Iraq, Syria and surrounding areas, have taken refuge in Canada. Over a quarter of these refugees have settled in London since early 2017. These children, some as young as 5 years of age, were forced into committing crimes against their own families by ISIS, and made into child soldiers. City Council have effectively placed these children in our care, and Merrymount is doing all we can in order to build resiliency in the face of grievous social trauma.

This community has seen some of the worst atrocities and crimes imaginable. Whilst they have made London their home, the echoes of their past still linger and are not easily shaken. These families require specialist education, language and translation services, cognitive behavioural therapy, intense psychological therapy, and transportation.

A number of these families went through bus hijackings and have developed post-traumatic stress disorder. It takes an immense amount of psychological therapy in order to facilitate these families to do something as simple as take the bus to Merrymount's headquarters. Merrymount must, therefore, spend a considerable amount of their budget allocation towards private transportation.

Interpreters for court, immigration, and other legal proceedings for these communities – who can speak a variety of dialects – is provided by Merrymount. The associated costs with staff training needed for this community is high, given compassion fatigue and burnout due to the gravity of the atrocities the families have gone through. As there were no interpreters available to meet the demand in London, Merrymount stepped in and developed a program to train new translators in-house, and helped train these staff through their official certifications. This is a vital step to recovery for the Yazidi community, many of whom are illiterate in their own language.

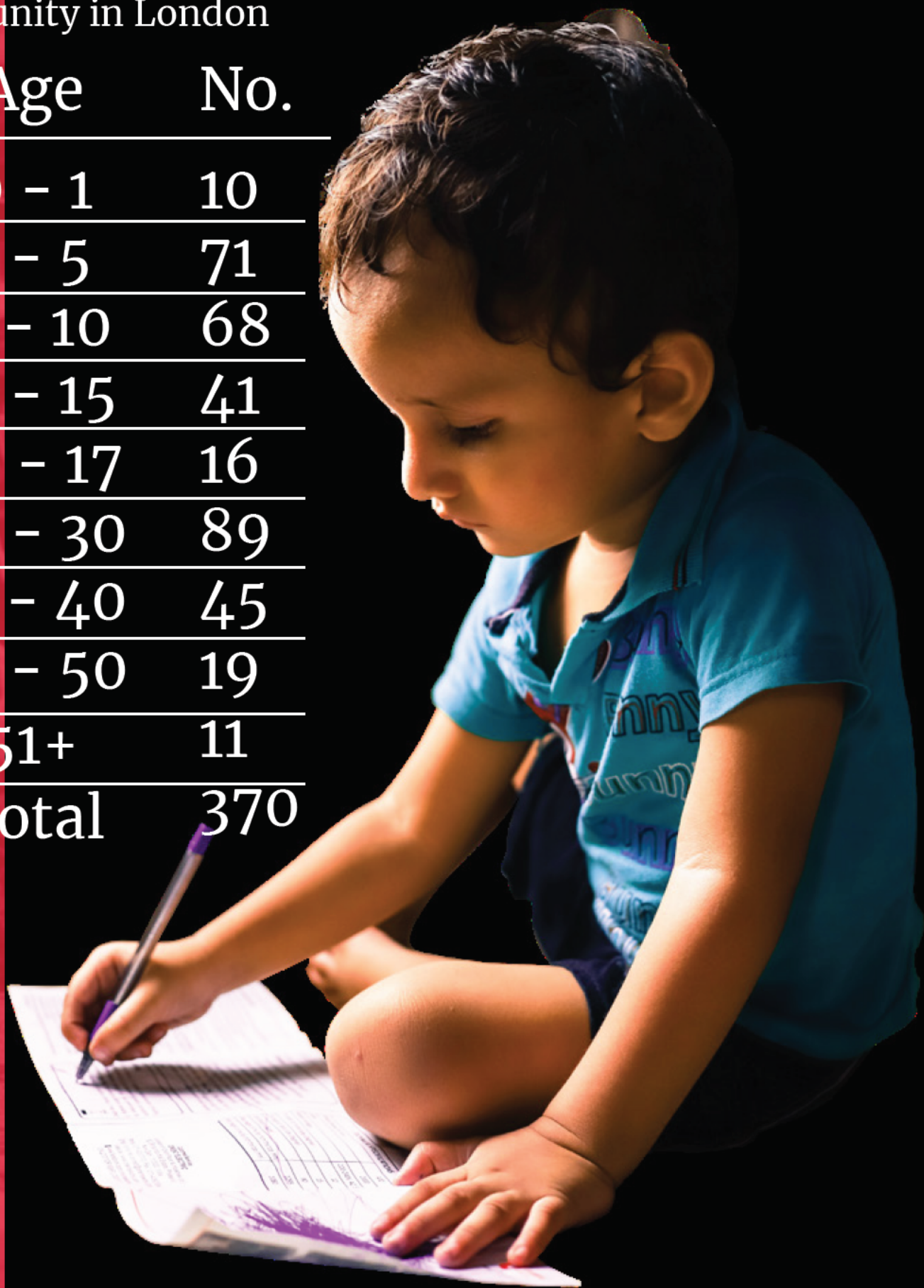
The demands placed upon other similar organizations is also relevant – Merrymount steps in to help those families who are on the waiting list for Vanier, for example, which can take up to six months.

The Yazidi community has been historically one of the most persecuted people throughout history, and have experienced collective trauma, including genocides. The step towards recovery for the families in London will take decades of hard work, with the help of Merrymount's programs and trained staff.

One of the predominant reasons why Merrymount is asking for bridge funding is due to this influx of high-needs refugees dealing with multi-generational trauma, which has placed a significant strain on our programs, facilities, and staff.

Age Range and Number of Yazidi Community in London

Age	No.
0 - 1	10
1 - 5	71
6 - 10	68
11 - 15	41
16 - 17	16
18 - 30	89
31 - 40	45
41 - 50	19
51+	11
Total	370



RESPITE AND CRISIS CARE

Merrymount operates 18 Children's Mental Health Crisis, Residential, and Respite beds.

This program provides care to children (from birth to 13 years old) when their families are experiencing serious disruptions including crisis, stress, and transition requiring respite care. We provide a safe and positive environment with programming that meets their physical, social, and emotional needs.

Four of the beds are funded through the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) to provide intensive Treatment Residential services specifically for children that are diagnosed with a mental health disorder.

The remaining 14 are unfunded. The deficit cost to operate these beds for crisis and respite care requirements of London families, is **\$1,179,031 annually**.

At over 100% capacity, neither Merrymount nor any other crisis care centre will have the capacity to look after nearly 900 children who will desperately need our services.

Of the 18 available beds:



4
target intensive
treatment



14
target crisis
treatment



TOTAL BUDGET SUMMARY – MERRYMOUNT

	Government Funding	Expenses	Deficit
Fully-Funded Programs	\$3,890,097	\$3,890,097	\$0
Crisis Respite Program	\$358,785	\$1,537,816	-\$1,179,031
Family Resource Program	\$719,449	\$1,246,633	-\$527,184
Family Child Support Program	\$1,219,778	\$1,609,767	-\$389,989
	\$6,188,109	\$8,284,313	-\$2,096,204

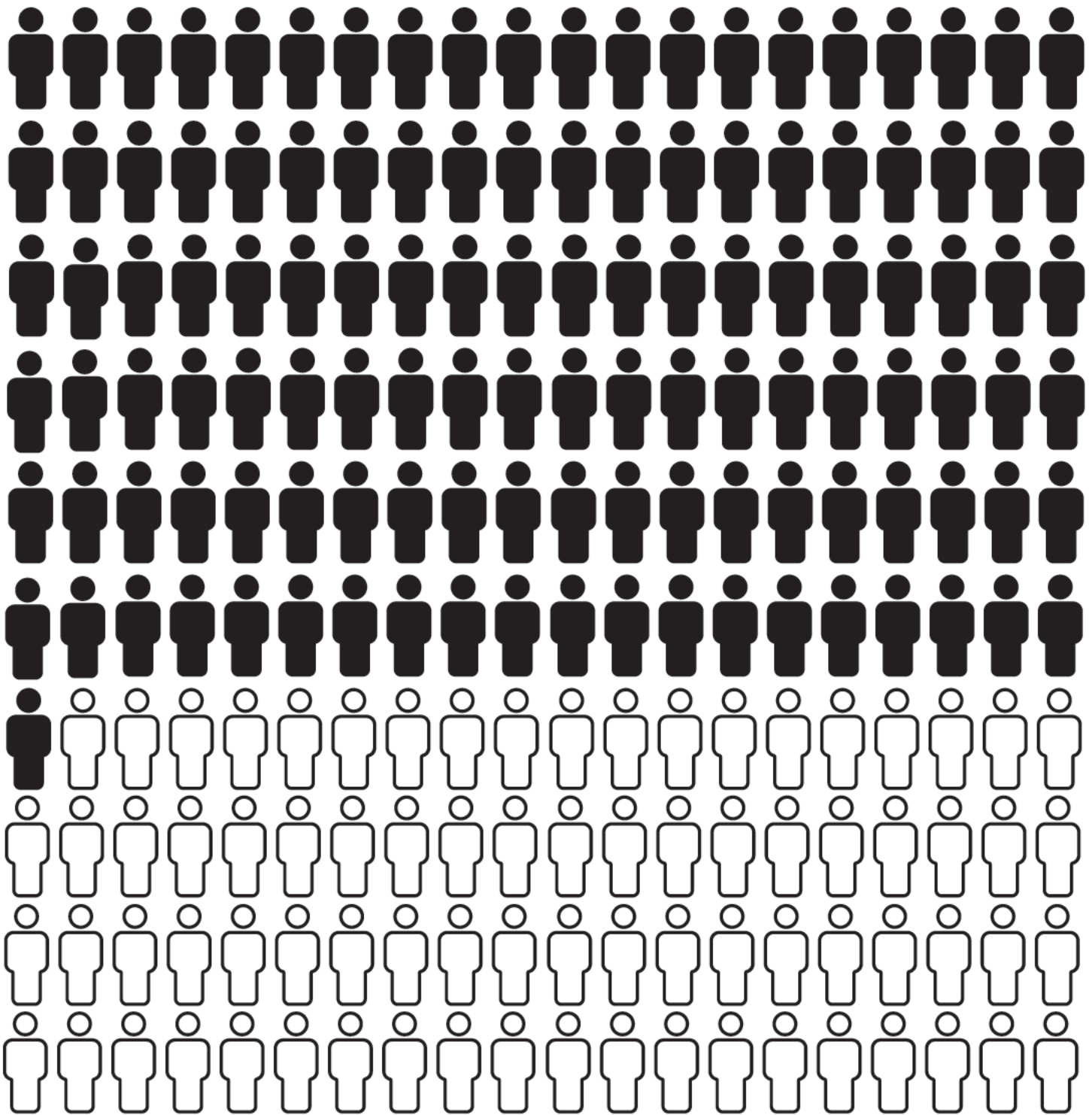
	Off-Setting Revenues	Expenses	Surplus
Contracted Services	\$150,000		\$150,000
Fundraising Activities	\$615,000	\$220,000	\$395,000
Bequests	\$63,000		\$63,000
Bank Interest	\$10,000		\$10,000
	\$838,000	\$220,000	\$618,000

Net Draw From Foundation (2018/2019): -\$1,478,204

LACK OF SUSTAINABILITY

The current track is unsustainable given the public demand for Merrymount's services. Merrymount is requesting bridge funding for our Crisis Residential/Respite Program from the City of London to balance our operational costs and help ensure the ongoing sustainability of Merrymount programming.

60.5%



In 2017, only 60.5% of Londoners who are able to work
are employed or looking for a job.
(source: vital signs London report, 2018)

BRIDGE FUNDING

2019: \$368,704

2020: \$238,704



BENEFITS



There is strong evidence that promotion, prevention, and early intervention targeted at children and families going through a crisis or transition can produce significant tax savings and social benefits.

The direct and indirect cost to our community of not providing appropriate services for those who are vulnerable are much greater than if left unaddressed. This includes the loss of productivity associated with failure to complete school, criminal justice costs, increased support costs, and medical costs of associated physical conditions. (McGorry, Purcell, Hickie, & Jorm, 2007; Mash & Barkley, 2006) Investing in a program that prevents high-risk children from falling through the cracks involves expenditures today but is proven to yield benefits over a 15 to 20-year time span, and over the lifetime of the child.

A study was conducted in the United Kingdom, investigating the prevention of conduct disorders in a single child through an early intervention program. It was found to result in lifetime savings, as stated above, as well as increased higher lifetime salary for the child; an

indirect positive impact for the economy. The study concluded that for every dollar invested in parenting interventions for families resulted in an \$8 dollar return on investment. (Friedli and Parsonage, 2007)

A separate study in the US found that parent education and family support programs result in better outcomes for people living with mental health problems and illnesses such as depression and anxiety, with return on investment ratios ranging from \$1.80 to \$17.07 for every dollar invested. (Karoly, 2010)

The National Forum on Early Childhood Policy and Programs has found that high quality early childhood programs can yield a \$4 (USD) – \$9 (USD) dollar return per \$1 (USD) invested. (University of Pennsylvania, 2015)

A study published in the Journal of Quantitative Criminology estimates (Cohen, 1998) that 1.7–2.3 million dollars can be saved for successful intervention for each high-risk child. These children might have otherwise veered into criminal activities, severely impacting not only their own lives, but that of potential victims.

A meta-study, consisting of four studies of family therapy treating conduct disorder concluded that 8 to 36 hours of behavioral or functional family therapy was effective in improving family communication, reducing conduct problems, and lowering recidivism rates in delinquent adolescents with severe behavioural issues from a range of socio-economic backgrounds. (Brosnan & Carr, 2000)

These independent and international scientific studies all agree and conclude that investment in the type of programs that Merrymount provides will result in a net positive for the economy and a high return on investment over a lifetime. The lifetime savings per child accessing the services Merrymount provides ranges from \$140,000 to \$365,000 annually. (Mental Health Commission of Canada, 2013)

If use of Merrymount services prevented just 10% of incidences (89 children), it would result in potential lifetime system savings ranging between \$12,460,000 and \$32,485,000. The return on investment would be between 2,051% and 5,348% in indirect lifetime costs avoided.



UK Study



Early Prevention
Programming



healthcare
costs



higher lifetime
salary / earnings



criminal justice
costs



for every

(\$1

invested in parenting interventions
for families, you get



(\$8 back in savings

OUTCOMES

Extracurricular activities



More investment in the health and hygiene of a child



Increase children's sense of safety and wellbeing



Decrease the need for more intrusive services



Savings on medical costs



Savings on social assistance costs



Savings on criminal justice costs



Preventing anti-social behaviour and tragic events



Improve the coping strategies, social skills and resilience of children



Increase parents' ability to focus on their own needs



Decrease the level of stress for families



Enhance positive parent-child interactions



TESTIMONIALS

Hello my name is Lindsie, I'm a single, working mother of three beautiful children (Mariah – 15, Leah – 11, and my youngest Noah – 13 months).

Being a Mom has been a substantial part of my identity since I was 18 years old. I take much pride in my role, and strive to be the best parent I can be to my children. Being a single parent is the most challenging yet rewarding responsibility. The pressure to take care of my children without any outside support can be desolate and overwhelming at times. I'm truly grateful for my children, they are who complete me and encourage me to thrive to be the best person. However, I'm only one person, who is juggling life on a daily basis. And let's face it – some days are better than others.

I reached out to Merrymount when Noah was 11 months old because I found myself at a place in my life of hopelessness and desperation. This was a feeling I had never experienced in my time of parenthood. These feeling had taken over my life and I no longer felt pride in myself, leading to depression. In all my life I had never felt so alone. My baby rarely sleeps through the night, he has been sick for a great deal of his short life, and his father has recently abandoned fatherhood. With my world falling apart, and the sleep deprivation getting the best of me, I was turning into a person that I did not want to be. I had hit a point where I needed to reach out, before things got unmanageable.

Finally I called Merrymount. That call brought me hope and support in my life. They told me on the phone that they would take Noah overnight the very next day! My world changed from one phone call – finally someone was willing to listen to my struggle and support me.

Having Merrymount's support brought hope back into my life. No longer do I feel all alone in parenthood. This service changed our lives! I can be a more patient, nurturing and loving mother now that I have the assistance of respite care. I do not know where my family would be without the services of Merrymount. I count on the support and it is essential in our life. There is light at the end of the tunnel for us now.

Thank you so much for all that you do. You are appreciated.

LINDSAY THOMAS


“I have a 6-year-old grandson who has been going for respite care at Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre since he was 3 years old.

I am a full-time grandmother who has had my grandson since he was 2 months old. Being a senior raising a child on my own has been challenging.

I have no other support other than Merrymount. I was referred to Merrymount as my grandson reached a point where I needed to have a bit of a break of 24/7 child care. I have health issues in which the brief respite is beneficial. My grandson has ADHD and ODD. As much as I would like to think of myself as SuperNana, I need any respite care that is available.

I recently had a heart attack and Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre has been great in offering a respite break over/above my scheduled 4 per year. Without having the respite care it would be very stressful, even unhealthy for me. My grandson loves going to Merrymount as he has made friends /attachments over the couple years. The staff have been wonderful and very supportive as well. Merrymount respite gives my grandson a bit of a break from me so that he can grow independently.”

JANET WESTERLING-DROUIN



"I am writing today in support of Merrymount Family Support & Crisis Centre. We are a family of 4, I currently have both of my 2 nieces (7 & 8) in my care. Both girls have experienced trauma in their lifetimes.

I heard about Merrymount through friends. I was enquiring about support services for my nieces. The eldest one was starting to act out and we needed some support. I have only been using Merrymount services for a couple of months. These couple of months Merrymount has helped me greatly and have been a great asset to the girls. It has allowed me to take care of myself and spend quality time with my partner. Also, the girls are making new friends.

Having a place for the girls to spend time at and also to feel comfortable and safe is truly a blessing. Also, there are great staff there too (very friendly and caring).

Merrymount is a one of a kind place and a very important service that I truly believe is necessary for parents. In today's world it is hard to find someone trust worthy you would leave your child with. Not having Merrymount would make it difficult for those parents/guardians that need that little rest/break here and there. It gives them the chance to take care of themselves and recharge to be better guardians.

I would highly recommend Merrymount and it is well worth it for anyone raising a child."

SHELLY LONGBOAT

"I am writing today in support of Merrymount Family Support Centre.

I have one child, she is 35 yrs old.

Being a single parent with no family in London and few friends brought me to Merrymount. I also have issues physically and mentally which at times need a break from parenting.

I have been using *[sic]* services at Merrymount for 3 yrs.

I have used the Crisis Residential program for at least 1.5 ys.

The program has helped me by allowing me to rest, sleep, attend counseling, programs for mental health. When need this program allows me to rejuvenate myself. Having a break from my daughter allows me to care for myself which in return helps me to be a better parent.

I have no family and few friends in London.

If I did not have this respite service I would suffer greatly and my daughter would also.

My mental and physical wellness would suffer.

Merrymount respite program is also great for my daughter. She loves spending time there.

It is a safe, fun place for my daughter to socialize with healthy seperation *[sic]* from me.

I also rest well knowing my daughter is safe and properly cared for.

It would be terrible if these services were not available.

JACKIE ROBINSON

SUPPORTERS



Southwest Ontario
Aboriginal Health
Access Centre



Children's Aid Society
La Société d'aide à l'enfance
LONDON & MIDDLESEX



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Mental health for all



United Way



London Health
Sciences Centre



Central Health Services

rebuilding
with you



London Family
Court Clinic Est. 1974
Professional Services for Families in Court



CPRI CHILD & PARENT
RESOURCE INSTITUTE



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CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information, please contact:

Sister Nancy Wales
President of the Board of Directors

nwales@csjcanada.org

or

Paul Howarth
Executive Director

phowarth@merrymount.on.ca

You can also call or visit us at:

1064 Colborne Street
London, ON
N6A 4B3

519-434-6848



Letters of Support

November 21, 2018

London City Council
City of London
300 Dufferin Ave.
London, ON N6A 4L9

Re: Invest in the Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre

Dear Councillors,

On behalf of Addiction Services of Thames Valley I would like to express my support for the invaluable services Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre offers our shared community. Merrymount provides essential 24/7/365 services that support families and children facing domestic hardship, familial breakdown, and threats to children's mental health—standing as one of five accredited Children's Mental Health Centres in London that meet strict national standards of care.

Addiction Services of Thames Valley has worked closely with Merrymount for many years. In particular, our Heartspace Program has benefited greatly through the collaboration with Merrymount services in order to support clients and their families. The Heartspace Program is a specialized prevention, early identification, education, and treatment program for women who are pregnant, parenting and substance-involved and their children prenatal – 6 years of age. Our Heartspace Addiction/Mental Health Counsellor's have been able to better support the recovery goals of their client's through the partnership with Merrymount to offer various parenting and children programming. In addition, Heartspace continues to utilize Merrymount's Respite Program for clients and it has been found that this service is integral to helping client's focus on stabilizing their mental health and/addiction so that they can feel stronger in caring for themselves and their families.

The Heartspace program also refers clients to Merrymount for additional parenting support and educational programming. Most recently, our Heartspace program is seeking support of Merrymount to co-facilitate a Strengthening Families Program which is valuable in teaching life skills for our high-risk families.

Merrymount provides three essential services that are at risk without your support:

1. The **Crisis Residential/Respite Program** provides care to children up to 13 years old when their families are experiencing crisis, stress, are in transition, or in need of respite by

delivering a high-quality licensed program – designed to the needs of the individual child - to strengthen children and build coping skills.

2. The **Parenting & Children's Programs** initiative offers more than 20 adult programs and 10 programs for children to help educate, inform, and build parenting and life skills.
3. The **Family & Child Support Program** offers care for children whose families are experiencing an emergency and need non-traditional care. This program focuses on helping children establish resiliency skills.

Demand for these critical, life changing services has grown rapidly in London. This has put significant pressure on Merrymount's operating budget, meaning that families and children in need may have to be turned away.

Merrymount needs additional financial support to ensure the sustainability of these services. With this letter I ask that you provide Merrymount with the support it needs to continue protecting our most valuable asset as a community – our children.

Sincerely,

 BA, ADTP

Carrie Duff, BA, PGC (ADTP)
Coordinator of Specialized Programs and Elgin Services
Addiction Services of Thames Valley
260-200 Queens Avenue
London ON N6A 1J3



October 1, 2018

Amir Farahi
amir@blackridgestrategy.com

To Whom It May Concern,

Investing in the Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre

On behalf of Anova, I would like to express my support for the invaluable services Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre offers our shared community. Merrymount provides essential 24/7/365 services that support families and children facing domestic hardship, familial breakdown, and threats to children's mental health - standing as one of five accredited Children's Mental Health Centres in London that meet strict national standards of care.

Merrymount has partnered with Anova in different capacities. Merrymount has provided Anova a safe space for our Community Group Program for Children Exposed to Woman Abuse and has also provided facilitators to help run groups at other locations. Merrymount has gone above and beyond for our families during crises and have been able to support with on-going respite. Merrymount has also provided in-house support at Anova for our families and really stepped up to the needs of our women and our community.

Merrymount provides three essential services that, without your support, are at risk:

1. The **Crisis Residential/Respite Program** provides care to children up to 13 years old when their families are experiencing crisis, stress, in transition, or in need of respite by delivering a high-quality licensed program – designed to the needs of the individual child - to strengthen children and build coping skills.
2. The **Parenting & Children's Programs** initiative offers more than 20 adult programs and 10 programs for children to help educate, inform, and build parenting and life skills.
3. The **Family & Child Support Program** offers care for children whose families are experiencing an emergency and need non-traditional care. The program focuses on helping children establish resiliency skills.

Demand for these critical, life changing services has grown rapidly in London. This has put significant pressure on Merrymount's operating budget, meaning that families and children in need may have to be turned away. Merrymount needs additional financial support to ensure the sustainability of these services. With this letter I ask that you provide Merrymount with the support it needs to continue protecting our most valuable asset as a community – our children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kate Wiggins'.

Kate Wiggins
Executive Director

255 Horton Street • London • ON N6B 1L1 • Ph: 519.642.3003 • 24 Hour Helpline • 519.642.3000

anovafuture.org

formerly Women's Community House & Sexual Assault Centre London

Charitable Registration Number – 12358 2348 RR0001

September 24, 2018

London City Council
314 – 300 Dufferin Ave.
London, N6A 4L9

RE: Financial Investment in Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre

Dear Councillors,

On behalf of the London Cross Cultural Learner Centre (CCLC), I would like to express my support for the invaluable services Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre offers our shared community. Merrymount provides essential 24/7/365 services that support families and children facing domestic hardship, familial breakdown, and threats to children's mental health—standing as one of five accredited Children's Mental Health Centres in London that meet strict national standards of care.

The CCLC has benefited from our partnership with Merrymount in multiple ways:

1. The Mutual Aid Parenting Program offered by Merrymount at CCLC brings together newcomers with a shared concern or experience to get help, give help and learn to help each other and themselves.
2. The Care for Newcomer Children offered at our location is staffed and operated by Merrymount employees. In partnership with Merrymount we were successful in obtaining the CMAS accreditation necessary for child care programs that are offered to newcomers to Canada.
3. Merrymount offers to our refugee children the Playing with Rainbow program as an art therapy intervention for survivors of war trauma and violence.
4. The CCLC needs Merrymount to ensure care for children of newcomer families in crisis, particularly being the only child care facility offering such service after hours.

Merrymount provides three essential services that are at risk without your support:

1. The Crisis Residential/Respite Program provides care to children up to 13 years old when their families are experiencing crisis, stress, are in transition, or in need of respite by delivering a high-quality licensed program – designed to the needs of the individual child - to strengthen children and build coping skills.

2. The Parenting & Children's Programs initiative offers more than 20 adult programs and 10 programs for children to help educate, inform, and build parenting and life skills.
3. The Family & Child Support Program offers care for children whose families are experiencing an emergency and need non-traditional care. This program focuses on helping children establish resiliency skills.

Demand for these critical, life changing services has grown rapidly in London. This has put significant pressure on Merrymount's operating budget, meaning that families and children in need may have to be turned away.

Merrymount needs additional financial support to ensure the sustainability of these services. With this letter I ask that you provide Merrymount with the support it needs to continue protecting our most valuable asset as a community – our children.

Sincerely,



Valerian Marochko, PhD, MBA
Executive Director

November 28, 2018

Invest in the Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre

Dear Members:

On behalf of the London Family Court Clinic, I would like to express my support for the invaluable services Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre offers our shared community. Merrymount provides essential 24/7/365 services that support families and children facing domestic hardship, familial breakdown, and threats to children's mental health—standing as one of five accredited Children's Mental Health Centres in London that meet strict national standards of care. As an organization Merrymount is a wonderful partner and collaborator for meeting the needs of children, youth and families in London and Middlesex. For instance, we operate a number of programs to assist families with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) children with Merrymount and sister organizations and rely upon their space and staff to help make these possible.

Merrymount provides three essential services that are at risk without your support:

1. The **Crisis Residential/Respite Program** provides care to children up to 13 years old when their families are experiencing crisis, stress, are in transition, or in need of respite by delivering a high-quality licensed program – designed to the needs of the individual child - to strengthen children and build coping skills.
2. The **Parenting & Children's Programs** initiative offers more than 20 adult programs and 10 programs for children to help educate, inform, and build parenting and life skills.
3. The **Family & Child Support Program** offers care for children whose families are experiencing an emergency and need non-traditional care. This program focuses on helping children establish resiliency skills.

Demand for these critical, life changing services has grown rapidly in London. This has put significant pressure on Merrymount's operating budget, meaning that families and children in need may have to be turned away. Merrymount needs additional financial support to ensure the sustainability of these services. With this letter I ask that you provide Merrymount with the support it needs to continue protecting our most valuable asset as a community – our children.

Sincerely



Dr. Dan T. Ashbourne, C. Psych.
Executive Director and Psychologist @
London Family Court Clinic (LFCC)
www.lfcc.on.ca or dan.ashbourne@lfcc.on.ca

1-519-679-7250 (ext. 107) Office; 1-519-494-0557 (cell); 1-519-675-7772 (FAX)

November 29, 2018

London City Council
c/o City Hall
300 Dufferin Avenue
London, ON N6A 4L9

Re: Letter of Support for Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre

Members of London City Council:

On behalf of the London InterCommunity Health Centre, I am writing to support Merrymount's efforts to secure funding to sustain their Crisis Residential/Respite Program. The service provides 24/7/365 support to children who are experiencing a temporary period of family instability, and supports families to overcome the crisis and plan for a safe return to their home. Demand for this essential program is growing rapidly, and Merrymount is struggling to serve all London families and children who are in need.

London InterCommunity Health Centre provides health and social services to people who experience barriers to accessing care. As part of this work, our Youth Outreach Worker team provides direct person-to-person contact with youth living in North East and East London, working to reduce risk factors that could negatively affect their health and wellbeing. Our team has a strong and valuable partnership with Merrymount, and can attest to the importance of the Crisis Residential/Respite program, and the many other services provided to support children and families in London.

I appreciate that City Council will need to balance many competing priorities when it sets its next multi-year budget. As part of that budget process, I hope you are able to invest in sustaining Merrymount's Crisis Residential/Respite Program.

Regards,



Scott Courtice
Executive Director,
London InterCommunity Health Centre

November 19, 2018

Dear Council and Councillors:

Re: Invest in the Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre

On behalf of the London District Catholic School Board I would like to express my support for the invaluable services Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre offers our shared community. Merrymount provides essential 24/7/365 services that support families and children facing domestic hardship, familial breakdown, and threats to children's mental health—standing as one of five accredited Children's Mental Health Centres in London that meet strict national standards of care.

Families within our Board have benefited greatly from the services provided by Merrymount. We know that circumstances emerge in the lives of our families where respite care is desperately needed. To have such services and subsequent programming available to our families is what can turn around a situation which at the time seems 'hopeless' to 'hope filled'.

The Board is very pleased to be working in partnership with Western University Centre for School Mental Health and the Mary J. Wright Research and Education Centre and Merrymount staff to implement in our schools, MindUP, a social emotional learning program designed to improve learning, attendance and behaviour. The value of this work has been recognized provincially and is being supported in part by Ontario Local Poverty Reduction funding.

Without continued support, essential services provided by Merrymount, such as those identified below are at risk:

1. The **Crisis Residential/Respite Program** provides care to children up to 13 years old when their families are experiencing crisis, stress, are in transition, or in need of respite by delivering a high-quality licensed program – designed to the needs of the individual child - to strengthen children and build coping skills.
2. The **Parenting & Children's Programs** initiative offers more than 20 adult programs and 10 programs for children to help educate, inform, and build parenting and life skills.
3. The **Family & Child Support Program** offers care for children whose families are experiencing an emergency and need non-traditional care. This program focuses on helping children establish resiliency skills.

Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre
November 19, 2018
Page 2 of 2

We know that demand for these critical, life changing services has grown rapidly in London. This has put significant pressure on Merrymount's operating budget, meaning that families and children in need may have to be turned away.

Merrymount needs additional financial support to ensure the sustainability of these essential services. With this letter I ask that you provide Merrymount with the support it needs to continue protecting our most valuable asset as a community – our children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L Staudt".

Linda Staudt
Director of Education

September 24, 2018

125
Years
1893-2018



Children's Aid Society
La Société d'aide à l'enfance
LONDON & MIDDLESEX

London City Council
City of London
300 Dufferin Ave.
London ON N6A 4L9

Re: **Invest in the Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre**

Dear Councillors:

On behalf of the Children's Aid Society of London & Middlesex, I would like to express my support for the invaluable services Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre offers our shared community. Merrymount provides essential 24/7/365 services that support families and children facing domestic hardship, familial breakdown, and threats to children's mental health—standing as one of five accredited Children's Mental Health Centres in London that meet strict national standards of care.

The Children's Aid Society of London and Middlesex has worked closely with Merrymount over many years. Merrymount provides much need support and crisis intervention services for families in our community. Specifically, the Children's Aid Society has partnered with Merrymount in their crisis residential and respite program; to utilize overnight beds for children whose families are in crisis. Having such a short-term and immediately accessible service for families; often avoids the need for more intrusive services from child welfare.

The Society also refers parents to Merrymount for parenting education and support programming. The programs are of a high quality and are geared towards the needs of the families involved. Most recently, the Children's Aid Society has partnered with Merrymount to support kinship families. This includes grandparents, aunts and uncles and other community caregivers, who are looking after a child, while the child's parent works through their own struggles. This is a much-needed support service in the community. Merrymount's services are always welcoming, flexible and just in time when families need it the most.

Merrymount provides three essential services that are at risk without your support:

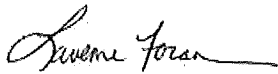
1. The **Crisis Residential/Respite Program** provides care to children up to 13 years old when their families are experiencing crisis, stress, are in transition, or in need of respite by delivering a high-quality licensed program – designed to the needs of the individual child - to strengthen children and build coping skills.
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3. The **Family & Child Support Program** offers care for children whose families are experiencing an emergency and need non-traditional care. This program focuses on helping children establish resiliency skills.

Demand for these critical, life changing services has grown rapidly in London. This has put significant pressure on Merrymount's operating budget, meaning that families and children in need may have to be turned away.

Merrymount needs additional financial support to ensure the sustainability of these services. With this letter I ask that you provide Merrymount with the support it needs to continue protecting our most valuable asset as a community – our children.

Sincerely,



Laverne Foran MSW RSW
Associate Director
Children's Aid Society of London & Middlesex
1680 Oxford St. East
P.O. Box 7010
London ON N5Y 5R8



171 Queens Avenue
Suite 750
London ON
N6A 5J7

Tel. 519-438-4783
Fax 519-673-1509

Toll Free Tel. 1-877-480-2726
Toll Free Fax 1-877-462-1509

September 27, 2018

London City Council
London City Hall
214-300 Dufferin Avenue
London ON N6A 4L9

Dear Members of Council,

RE: Investment in the Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre

On behalf of the Community Services Coordination Network, I would like to express my support for the invaluable services Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre offers our shared community. Merrymount provides essential services, 365 days a year around the clock, that support families and children facing domestic hardship, familial breakdown, and threats to children's mental health. Merrymount is one of five accredited Children's Mental Health Centres in London that meet strict national standards of care.

The Community Services Coordination Network (CSCN) is a publicly funded, not-for-profit organization operating in southwestern Ontario. The core function of CSCN is to coordinate access to various services and supports with complex special needs children and their families, and with adults who have a developmental disability. We have enjoyed a long-standing, positive, professional relationship with Merrymount for over two decades. Our staff and the families we serve respect and value the many services and supports that Merrymount provides to some of the most vulnerable members of our community.

Merrymount provides three essential services that are at risk without your support:

1. The **Crisis Residential/Respite Program** provides care to children up to 13 years old when their families are experiencing crisis, stress, are in transition, or in need of respite by delivering a high-quality licensed program – designed to the needs of the individual child - to strengthen children and build coping skills.
2. The **Parenting & Children's Programs** initiative offers more than 20 adult programs and 10 programs for children to help educate, inform, and build parenting and life skills.

3. The **Family & Child Support Program** offers care for children whose families are experiencing an emergency and need non-traditional care. This program focuses on helping children establish resiliency skills.

Demand for these critical, life changing services has grown rapidly in London. This has put significant pressure on Merrymount's operating budget, meaning that families and children in need may have to be turned away.

Merrymount needs additional financial support to ensure the sustainability of these services. With this letter I ask that you provide Merrymount with the support it needs to continue protecting our most valuable asset as a community – our children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris J. Symons', followed by a period.

Chris J. Symons
Chief Executive Officer



November 13, 2018

City of London Council
City Hall
300 Dufferin Avenue
London, N6A 4L9

Invest in the Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre

Dear London City Council:

On behalf of the **Southwestern Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre** (SOAHAC), I would like to express my support for the invaluable services Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre offers our shared community. Merrymount provides essential 24/7/365 services that support families and children facing domestic hardship, familial breakdown, and threats to children's mental health—standing as one of five accredited Children's Mental Health Centres in London that meet strict national standards of care.

Merrymount provides three essential services that are at risk without your support:

1. The **Crisis Residential/Respite Program** provides care to children up to 13 years old when their families are experiencing crisis, stress, are in transition, or in need of respite by delivering a high-quality licensed program – designed to the needs of the individual child - to strengthen children and build coping skills.
2. The **Parenting & Children's Programs** initiative offers more than 20 adult programs and 10 programs for children to help educate, inform, and build parenting and life skills.
3. The **Family & Child Support Program** offers care for children whose families are experiencing an emergency and need non-traditional care. This program focuses on helping children establish resiliency skills.

Demand for these critical, life changing services has grown rapidly in London. This has put significant pressure on Merrymount's operating budget, meaning that families and children in need may have to be turned away.



**Southwest Ontario
Aboriginal Health
Access Centre**

□ 77 Anishinaabeg Drive
Muncey, Ontario N0L 1Y0
P 519.289.0352 F 519.289.0355

□ 425-427 William Street
London, Ontario N6B 3E1
P 519.672.4079 F 519.672.6945

soahac.on.ca

Merrymount needs additional financial support to ensure the sustainability of these services. With this letter I ask that you provide Merrymount with the support it needs to continue protecting our most valuable asset as a community – our children.

Sincerely,

Brian Dokis

Chief Executive Officer
Southwest Ontario Aboriginal
Health Access Centre
493-495 Dundas Street
London, ON N6B 1W6
519-914-1858 x 2001
www.soahac.on.ca

October 18, 2018

Re: Invest in the Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre

Dear City Council,

On behalf of the Middlesex-London Health Unit, I would like to express my support for the invaluable services Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre offers our shared community. Merrymount provides essential 24/7/365 services that support families and children facing domestic hardship, familial breakdown, and threats to children's mental health—standing as one of five accredited Children's Mental Health Centres in London that meet strict national standards of care.

The Middlesex-London Health Unit and the clients that we serve have benefited greatly from the collaborative relationship we have nurtured over many years with Merrymount. Merrymount is a key agency to which we often refer our clients: whether that be for their wide variety of parenting and children's programs for both targeted and universal populations, help for women and families experiencing Perinatal Mood Disorder through their Mother Reach Program, Crisis Residential/Respite Program and other supports; counseling or alternative education for young mothers. Merrymount is also an active member of the Middlesex-London Community Early Years Partnership and thus involved in planning and executing multi-strategy campaigns and initiatives for both targeted and universal audiences concerning such topics as Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health, Attachment, Resiliency and others related to Child Development. We also very much appreciate Merrymount's generosity as a community partner in hosting a number of MLHU strategies over the years such as Prenatal Classes and Infant Drop-ins, which benefits the clients of both organizations. Finally, Merrymount is continuously seeking out involvement with community partners to enhance their own programming, and Public Health Nurses have provided education for staff, young mom's and families in community play groups on a variety of health promotion topics.

Merrymount provides three essential services that are at risk without your support:

1. The **Crisis Residential/Respite Program** provides care to children up to 13 years old when their families are experiencing crisis, stress, are in transition, or in need of respite by delivering a high-quality licensed program – designed to the needs of the individual child - to strengthen children and build coping skills.
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3. The **Family & Child Support Program** offers care for children whose families are experiencing an emergency and need non-traditional care. This program focuses on helping children establish resiliency skills.

Demand for these critical, life changing services has grown rapidly in London. This has put significant pressure on Merrymount's operating budget, meaning that families and children in need may have to be turned away.

Merrymount needs additional financial support to ensure the sustainability of these services. With this letter I ask that you provide Merrymount with the support it needs to continue protecting our most valuable asset as a community – our children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Mackie'.

Christopher Mackie, MD, MHSc, CCFP, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health and CEO



Laura Elliott, Director of Education and Secretary

November 22, 2018

Amir Farahi
Principal
Blackridge Strategy
210-717 Richmond Street
London, Ontario
N6A 3H1

Dear Amir Farahi,

Re: Invest in the Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre

Dear Amir Farahi,

On behalf of Thames Valley District School Board, I would like to express my support for the invaluable services Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre offers our shared community. Merrymount provides essential 24/7/365 services that support families and children facing domestic hardship, familial breakdown, and threats to children's mental health—standing as one of five accredited Children's Mental Health Centres in London that meet strict national standards of care.

The Thames Valley District School Board, our students and families have benefitted tremendously from the services offered by Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre.

Merrymount provides three essential services that are at risk without your support:

1. The **Crisis Residential/Respite Program** provides care to children up to 13 years old when their families are experiencing crisis, stress, are in transition, or in need of respite by delivering a high-quality licensed program – designed to the needs of the individual child - to strengthen children and build coping skills.
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Demand for these critical, life changing services has grown rapidly in London. This has put significant pressure on Merrymount's operating budget, meaning that families and children in need may have to be turned away.

Merrymount needs additional financial support to ensure the sustainability of these services. With this letter I ask that you provide Merrymount with the support it needs to continue protecting our most valuable asset as a community – our children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Riley Culhane', with a stylized, cursive script.

Riley Culhane
Associate Director
Learning Support Services
Thames Valley District School Board

RC/slp