Aunt Leah's Independent Lifeskills Society

Annual Report
April 1, 2008 - March 31, 2009

Journey with youth to self-sufficiency
This gift is made:
- [ ] In memory of ________________________________
- [ ] In honour of ________________________________

Please send notification to:  
- [ ] Mr.  
- [ ] Ms.  
- [ ] Mr. & Mrs.  
- [ ] Dr.
First Name: ________________  Last Name: ________________
Address: ___________________________________________
City: ______________________  Province: _______________
Postal Code: __________________  Phone: _______________

My donation for the future:
- [ ] I have included Aunt Leah’s Society in my Will.
- [ ] Please send me more information on making a gift in my Will.

Please make all donations payable to Aunt Leah’s Independent Lifeskills Society and mail to 200-668 Carnarvon Street, New Westminster, B.C.  V3M 5Y6. For more information, please contact 604-525-1204 or visit us at www.auntleahs.org

Charitable registration number:  BN#12304 1683 RR 0001

Privacy Policy:
Aunt Leah's respects an individual's right to privacy and protection of personal information. We are committed to ensuring compliance with applicable privacy legislation. We do not sell, rent or trade our donor lists with other organizations. The information we collect is used to process donations, keep people informed about our activities and ask for support to further our work for youth in foster care and young single mothers. If at any time you wish to be removed from any of these contacts, call us at 604-525-1204 or send us an email at auntleahs@auntleahs.org and we will gladly accommodate your request.
Special Event/Short-term Volunteering continued…

**Lonely Hearts Club Band - Annual Music Benefit:** Some of Vancouver's best local musicians perform their favorite Beatles songs and proceeds support vulnerable young moms and their babies through Aunt Leah's programs. Volunteers are needed on the organizing committee, soliciting silent auction donations, selling tickets, poster ing, and helping on the night.

**Christmas Tree Lots:** We have been in business with our Tree Lots since 1995. We have two locations: in Vancouver at St. Stephen's United Church at 54th Ave & Granville Street, and in Burnaby at All Saints Anglican Church at 7405 Royal Oak. Proceeds support youth in Aunt Leah's Training Programs. Approximately 250 volunteers are needed from late November to Christmas. Volunteers work a minimum 4-hour shift selling trees. Work is outside (hot drinks and propane heaters provided!).

**Christmas Hampers:** Volunteers are needed from late November to mid-December. Donations of food and gifts are assembled into hampers for youth and families in need.

For more information on volunteer opportunities at Aunt Leah's Society:

Phone: 604-264-7238
Volunteering For Aunt Leah's Society

Whether you are interested in a long-term commitment or a one-time opportunity, Aunt Leah's has many volunteer opportunities.

Long-term/Ongoing Volunteering

**Thrift Store:** Aunt Leah's receives donations throughout the year, many of which are given directly to people in our programs. Other items are sold at Aunt Leah's Thrift Store and proceeds support our programs for youth and families. Volunteer work includes sorting, organizing, light cleaning, pricing, customer service, marketing and mailing. Volunteer motto: Work hard and have fun! The Thrift Store is located at 675 S.E. Marine Drive at Fraser Street in South Vancouver.

**Office:** We work hard to increase awareness and encourage support for the vulnerable young people in our programs. We produce a number of communications materials which are printed and assembled “in house” with the help of volunteers. Some examples include educational workbooks, brochures, a quarterly newsletter, mail-outs of donation request letters, and even the annual report you are now reading.

**Fundraising:** There are a variety of volunteer opportunities in this important area of work: assistance with organizing events, acquisition of silent auction items and prizes and various jobs on the day of the events.

Special Event/Short-term Volunteering

**The Kindness for Kids Initiative:** Volunteers are needed for this annual event. Work includes setting up, greeting guests, and assisting with registration.

**Golf Tournament:** Our Annual Golf Tournament is coming up on Sept. 11th at Country Meadows in Richmond. The event includes a day of golf, dinner, games and prizes. Volunteers are needed on the day of the event. Work includes greeting, assisting with registration, helping with the Silent Auction, and supervising on the green. Let us know if you would like to be on our planning committee for next year.

Mandate

Aunt Leah's Independent Lifeskills Society is dedicated to assisting youth and families in learning the necessary life skills for successful independent living.

History

Aunt Leah’s Society was established in July 1988. We have just celebrated 20 years of service to youth and families. Gale Stewart, Executive Director and founder, was a foster parent who knew that there was a need for extra support for youth who were approaching their 19th birthday and leaving government care. They weren’t always ready for independent living. Gale developed a semi-independent living program for foster youth at risk. This housing project became known as the “Support Link” Program. Gale also founded “Aunt Leah's House” in 1988. This program provided a home for pregnant and parenting teens. The incorporation of Aunt Leah's Independent Lifeskills Society led to the subsequent development of many other programs offering life skills and pre-employment training.

Core Values

1. Celebration is essential to a successful life.
2. An individual's artistic/soulful centre must be expressed and appreciated.
3. Success is fragile and must be tended to and supported with care.
4. All behaviour has meaning and is the human tool for communication.
5. Entrepreneurial spirit builds individuals and organizations.
6. Community building ensures that we all have a place to go when we need support.
How You Can Help

Aunt Leah’s Independent Lifeskills Society depends on your support to provide programs and services for vulnerable youth and families. Donors are recognized as members and have voting privileges at our Annual General Meeting.

Donate By Phone Or Mail: We can process your donation immediately over the phone with Visa or MC. You can also use the form on the next page to send your donation in the mail or arrange for pre-authorized debit.

Become A Monthly Donor: By becoming a Monthly Donor, you are contributing to a regular flow of funds which helps us in planning our programs for youth and families.

Gift of Securities: Changes in government legislation makes this an attractive way to give to Aunt Leah’s.

Special Gifts: Honor a significant birthday, birth, anniversary or the memory of a loved one who has passed away by making a special donation.

Planned Giving: Become a benefactor. Please consider leaving a gift for Aunt Leah’s Society in your will.

Donate Goods/Services: These donations help reduce our administrative costs. Furniture & other household goods are used to furnish suites for young people, fill needs for programming areas like classrooms, or are sold for increased revenue.

Host a Third Party Fundraiser: Why not celebrate an event of your choice and pass on the donations to Aunt Leah’s? Third Party Fundraisers are fundraising events done by a group or individual to benefit Aunt Leah’s. If you would like a list of possible Third Party events, please contact us.

Mailing List: Join the Aunt Leah’s Community by signing up on our mailing list. Learn more about the issues young families face today. You’ll receive our quarterly newsletter plus information on special projects and events. Pass it on to a friend or ask them to sign up on our mailing list too!

For more information on How You Can Help, please call us at 604-525-1204

Areas of Service

Aunt Leah’s offers four areas of support services in Metro Vancouver for youth and young moms to help them transition to independent living.

HOUSING:

The housing we provide consists of semi-independent living suites plus communal living for young single moms and their babies.

JOB TRAINING:

Job Training opportunities are available for work in restaurants and retail stores – work experience, help with resumes, interviewing and finding jobs for youth 19 and older.

LIFE SKILLS TRAINING:

Life skills are the basic life management skills necessary for independent living, including banking, budgeting, healthcare, laundry, cleaning, shopping and cooking.

QUALITY OF LIFE OPPORTUNITIES:

In addition to the necessities, we provide Quality of Life Opportunities - participation in activities that add meaning to life – personal celebrations, recreation and group outings.
Aunt Leah’s Programs

Support Link
A residential semi-independent living program which integrates housing with life skills training and pre-employment opportunities.

Thresholds
A supportive housing and life skills program for moms who are working on establishing a positive community for themselves and their young child.

The Link
A community outreach program for former youth in care, and former residents and participants of Aunt Leah’s programs. This is a unique program that ensures a successful transition to adulthood for children aging out of the foster care system.

Volunteers
Each year we owe a large part of our success to our many volunteers. This year we had 389 volunteers who worked a total of 3693 hours. The following charts show the distribution of volunteer time and number of volunteers in each area.

Number of Volunteers

Volunteer Hours

Aunt Leah’s Programs

Support Link
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Board of Directors

Aunt Leah’s Board Members volunteered over 500 hours from April 2008 to March 2009. In addition to their work in governance, they also assisted with several fundraising events throughout the year. Thank you for your hard work and dedication!

**Back:** Marty Frost, Jim McCullum, Matt Chenoweth, Molly Caron, Omar Kassis

**Front:** Megan Halprin, Gale Stewart, Tammy Munro. (Inset: Rachael McKendry)

**Omar Kassis**
Board Chair
Teacher
Urban Native Youth

**Marty Frost**
Board Member
Human Ventures
Cooperative and Non-Profit Development and Training

**Molly Caron**
Board Member
Contractor
Common Sense Consulting

**Megan Halprin**
Board Secretary
Chief Financial Officer
Snowflake Trading Corp. Ltd.

**Tammy Munro**
Board Member
Aboriginal Infant Development Consultant
Vancouver/Coastal AIDP Regional Advisor

**Jim McCullum**
Board Member
Retired Anglican Priest

**Rachael McKendry**
Vice Chair
Project Manager
UBC Centre for Health Services and Policy Research

**Matthew Scott Chenoweth**
Board Member
Teacher
Britannia Secondary School

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**Restaurant Training**
Designed to provide marketable employment and life skills training through classroom and on-site learning at one of several community meal locations.

**Retail Training**
This program operates out of Aunt Leah’s Thrift Store and is designed for youth to receive skills, training and experience in retail businesses.

**I.L.F.F.Y. Workshops**
Independent Living For Families & Youth is a series of workshops designed to teach the basic skills needed for living alone successfully.

**Cooking Club**
A fun atmosphere for youth (ages 15-24) to learn new cooking skills and make food they can take home for the week.
Aunt Leah’s Independent Lifeskills Society

Organizational Chart

Program Director

Support Link Residential Program

I.L.F.F.Y. Independent Living For Families & Youth

Restaurant Training

Thresholds/ Aunt Leah’s House

Cooking Club

Retail Training

The Link Residential Program
Aunt Leah’s has attained CARF (Commission of Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities) accreditation for its Support Link Program and through this has met internationally recognized standards of quality in the provision of outcomes driven programs and services to enhance the lives of young people.
Board Chair
Omar Kassis

These are significant times for Aunt Leah’s as we move into our next twenty years. As a Society, we’ve made it through some difficult days and come out looking better. Aunt Leah’s always survives and even thrives.

Hard work and tight fiscal management have brought us a long way from the financial challenges that were so threatening last year. Although the Society is still experiencing a deficit budget, expenses are down and new contracts promise to bring in more revenue.

The best news in programming is the new Contract with Aboriginal Services (MCFD). What started as a two-bed pilot project has just been extended to a year-long four-bed resource that will enable us to care for four aboriginal moms in the original house where Aunt Leah’s had its first program.

Aunt Leah’s has long served many Aboriginal youth and moms. Although we are not strictly speaking an Aboriginal agency, these individuals and the Aboriginal people on staff give Aunt Leah’s a special focus on working with Canada’s Native people. The statistics relating to Aboriginal people explain why so many of our clients come from this group. Proportionately, far more Aboriginal children are in care than non-Aboriginal ones. Success rates in school and in the workplace are also much lower. This is a multi-generational legacy of the damage done to cultures and people by Residential Schools, and a reflection of the cycle of dependency and marginalization that continues to plague Native Canadians today.

Times are changing. This year’s historic apology and the heightened profile of Native people in Canada are a sign that Canada is beginning to embrace this dark historic legacy and to do something about it. Aunt Leah’s Society has been part of the solution since its first days. The Native way of raising a child is in accordance with what the Society does. Unlike the fragmenting European model of a nuclear family, Native cultures traditionally raise children as a collective community effort, with “Aunties” pitching in along with grandparents and other family and community members.

The Rona Award

On October 30, 2005, Rona Castagnier, long time co-worker and friend of Aunt Leah’s Society, passed away from lung cancer. Those who knew her, knew that she was a very strong, kind, compassionate and proud person. Rona wouldn’t hesitate to give someone her last dollar if they were in need, even if it meant that she would go without. In honour of Rona, Aunt Leah’s gives an annual award and bursary to a student from one of Aunt Leah’s Training Programs who has shown the characteristics that Rona appreciated the most: kindness, compassion, strength and pride. It is Aunt Leah’s hope that by offering this award that we honor Rona and her wonderful soft skills and provide a moment for individuals to reflect on these characteristics and place them of value in their own lives.

2009 Recipient of the Rona Award
Natalie Ming

It was almost three years ago when Aunt Leah’s partnered up with the Career Program at the Provincial School for the Deaf. This is where we first met Natalie Ming. She was 16 years old, hard of hearing, and had no experience in the work force. She joined the Restaurant Training Program where she attended our ILFFY and SuperHost workshops. Natalie successfully completed the program with a certificate of participation.

Once she had a taste of working, Natalie wanted more so she joined Restaurant Training for a second time. We decided to enroll Natalie in a program called Trainer in Training. She learned how to teach and mentor the new students. By the time Natalie completed Restaurant Training she wanted to learn something new so she signed up for our Retail Training Program where she learned many skills like customer service, merchandising, and how to stock inventory. By the end of training Natalie wanted to be a cashier like the rest of her peers. She joined up for one more session of Retail Training. Natalie has come so far since we first met her. We have enjoyed watching her learn and grow. She has become more confident, outgoing and is an all-around happy young woman. Natalie has the drive to learn almost anything and we know she will succeed in anything she puts her mind to.
The Jeremy Wright Award

“Follow Your Bliss”

Aunt Leah’s presents this award in memory of Jeremy Wright, a Support Worker who was very special to us. It is presented to a youth living in the Support Link Program who has strived to achieve their personal best and who most “follows their bliss”. The award is based on character and determination. Any member of the Support Link team can nominate a youth and the decision is made by the Support Link and Leadership Teams. This year the award will be presented at our Training Programs Graduation in June.

2009 Recipient of the Jeremy Wright Award

Johnny Robotham

Aunt Leah’s met Johnny when he was 17 years old and moved into our Support Link Program. He took full advantage of all the program had to offer. He attended workshops regularly and really enjoyed the winter ski trip to Manning Park.

Johnny is a grounded and honorable young man. He is kind and loyal to his peers and would give the shirt off his back if anyone needed it. Johnny was always a pleasure to be around. He has a special talent - he can make you laugh. If he wanted to become a stand-up comic, Johnny would make the stage. He could always put a smile on your face even if you were not in the mood.

Johnny likes a challenge and has most certainly surpassed a few. He maintained employment the entire time he was with Aunt Leah’s. In his work as an assistant to a contractor he learned valuable skills in painting, chimney sweeping and carpentry work. Today he is carrying these skills off to other places.

Congratulations Johnny. We are proud to have been there to see you accomplish your goals and we wish you the best on your journey.

A young person living outside the family home can come to Aunt Leah’s and be supported by a diverse group of caring people. Those who know Aunt Leah’s know that amazing things come from these relationships.

The time is right for people to start noticing what we do. Homelessness is becoming an issue to every level of politician. In the current economic downturn, citizens are paradoxically becoming more aware of the needs of others. If corporate donations go down, we hope that individual and government donations will increase. The wisdom of experience has taught us that funding sources come in waves, and Aunt Leah’s has proven very adept at surfing the changing times.

Aunt Leah’s public profile is growing slowly and helping bring funding and support. The Lonely Hearts Club Band concert was once again a roaring success. The Golf Tournament brought in income and new friends and continues to grow. Our Executive Director continues to be a powerful advocate for foster children and the programs they need.

As we look to the future, we continue to follow a new three year Strategic Plan that was completed last year, to guide us. The Board and Staff of Aunt Leah’s worked well together at two retreats and that collaboration is vital to the long-term health of the Society.

The Board has said goodbye to several long-term members in the last two years and the new crew is well able to handle the challenges and joys ahead. I would like to thank everyone who has made my six years on the Board so rewarding. Many thanks to Rachael McKendry for her service on the Board. Thanks and all the best to the continuing Board members Jim McCullum, Megan Halprin, Marty Frost, Molly Caron and Tammy Munro.

Gratitude goes out to the volunteers, staff, donors, friends of the Society and of course a special nod to Gale Stewart for her leadership, inspiration and wisdom. I am still a friend of the Society and will continue to support Aunt Leah’s in many ways.

Omar Kassis
Board Chair
Executive Director
Gale Stewart

As we begin this new fiscal, I have a great sense of relief and gratitude that we made it through our 20th birthday. Perhaps our struggles reflect some of what it's like for a young person in transition to adulthood. Whether that is true or not, last year (aside from the year of government cuts) will have the distinction of being the most challenging year in our history.

We began the year in preparation for our second accreditation and this hurdle we successfully mastered. All of our programs reached international standards including board governance. Thanks to all who willingly stayed on task and worked beyond their hours so that we could gain this achievement.

The other challenges were spread throughout the year and seemed relentless. Beginning in the spring and continuing through to January of 2009, we saw 25% of our staff go on partial or full medical leaves. Some returned to Aunt Leah's, some were not able to and others returned to find that the organization had closed a program area that affected their employment. As the year unfolded, we were without the human resources to achieve our fundraising goals. As a result two significant programs were closed: the Community Meal/Restaurant Training Program in the fall of 2008 and Thresholds (supported housing for vulnerable moms) in January of this year.

Similar to many difficult situations in life, we have survived, learned important lessons and ended the 2008-09 fiscal year with strength, wisdom and a healthy staff.

The year ahead looks very promising. I believe this is the year when financial sustainability can be achieved, when programming has the underpinning of a strong and financially supported infrastructure. Two new sources of funding have encouraged this belief.

A small grant from the United Way will give us the ability to begin again and open the Community Meal/Restaurant Training program at one or two church sites in the fall of this year.

Financial Sponsors

**Golf Tournament**
- Abbie's Sports Shop
- Aritzia
- Command Alarm Systems
- Fusion Mechanical
- Jack and Donna Zaleski (In Memory of John Hardie Mitchell)
- Jack and Donna Zaleski (In Memory of Katie Zaleski)
- Karin King in Memory of Tim King
- Office Essentials
- Snowflake Trading Corporation
- Tony's Window Cleaning

**Lonely Hearts Club Band**
- Abbie's Sports Shop
- Fusion Mechanical
- Karin King in Memory of Tim King
- Parklane Homes
- Snowflake Trading Corporation

**Tree Lots**
- Action Lock and Security
- Granville and Avery Automotive
- Henneken Auto Sales and Service

Partners
- All Saints Anglican Church
- BC Women's Hospital
- Canada Helps
- IODE Canada
- John Hardie-Mitchell Family Foundation
- Kids Up Front Foundation
- Kinsmen Club of Coquitlam
- Kin Club of Vancouver
- Knox United Church
- MOCC Youth Group
- MCFD Aboriginal Family and Child Services
- Ministry for Children and Family Development
- Shaughnessy Heights United Church
- South Vancouver Neighbourhood House
- St. Stephen's United Church
- Starbucks Volunteers
- The Tri-Parish Community Meal Program (St. Mark's Anglican, Trinity United, St. George's Anglican Church)
- Vancouver Quilters Guild
- Wilson Heights United Church

Special Friends:

We'd also like to thank all of our volunteers, silent auction donors, and those of you who have given items for the youth and moms in our programs or to Aunt Leah's Thrift Store. You are too numerous to name here, yet still an important part of the Aunt Leah's community. Thank you for your generosity over the past year.
Foundations

- Al Roadburg Foundation
- Andrew Mahon Foundation
- Central City Foundation
- John Hardie Mitchell Family Foundation
- KMC Foundation
- Mackenzie Financial Charitable Foundation
- Pratt-Johnson Foundation
- Radcliffe Foundation
- The Toskan Casale Foundation
- Timothy C Kerr Family Foundation
- TZU CHI Foundation of Canada
- United Way
- VanCity Community Foundation
- VanCity Corporate Social Responsibility
- Vancouver Foundation
- Winnipeg Foundation
- Wolridge Foundation
- Yunnan Foundation

Church Donations

- Anglican Church Women
- Parish of St. Stephen The Martyr
- Thrift Store
- South Burnaby United Church
- St. Faith's Anglican Church
- St. Faith's Discretionary Fund
- St. Francis-in-the-Wood Anglican Church
- St. Helen's Anglican Church
- St. John the Divine
- St. Mary's Anglican Church
- St. Mary's Outreach Committee
- St. Philip's Anglican Church
- St. Stephen's United Church Women

Corporate Donations

- 0834335 BC Ltd
- Abbies Sporting Goods
- Boeing Company
- Canada Safeway - Broadway East
- David Nairne and Associates
- Digitally Hip Corporation
- Dona Lucia Esthetics Salon
- Embroidery Guild of St. Mary's Church
- Flexstar Packaging
- Galloway Botteselle & Company
- Karyo Edelman Communications
- Restaurant Marketing Systems Inc.
- Starbucks Coffee Company
- SVP Management Corporation
- Urban Impact Recycling Ltd
- VanCity Branch 14
- Waller Construction

Government “winds” are once again blowing in our favour. As we begin this new fiscal we have been awarded a contract with Aboriginal Services (MCFD) for a four bed residential program for teen moms. This is not only a privilege but also a great opportunity to return to our founding program (Aunt Leah’s House). As many of you will recall, funding was cut for this program in the winter of 2003. This is a very significant event for me personally.

As always, I would like to thank the staff that do the actual work of supporting and advocating for the foster children and families we serve. Their efforts encourage the change that must occur in order for young people to make that important transition to adulthood. I would also like to send my best wishes to those staff that have left us in this past year. May better health and new employment opportunities satisfy and motivate you in 2009.

Omar Kassis and Rachael McKendry (present and past chairs) retire from the board this year. They have helped the organization in so many ways - from meeting deadlines on policy creation to ticket sales and securing silent auction items. Their willingness to support the Aunt Leah's youth and moms has been so clearly evidenced. I will miss you both at the board level but hope to still enjoy your company around Aunt Leah’s events.

And lastly I would like to thank the Management Team: Karin, Brook, Theresa and Sarah. They have provided so much wisdom, humor and support over this past year. When the hard times came and indeed they did come, it has been my privilege to have colleagues who supported some very difficult decisions and who willingly shared their experience in a way that cared for us all.

To those of you who support Aunt Leah’s through your financial gifts or your volunteer efforts, I thank you. Please spread the word about Aunt Leah’s. We still need ambassadors who will tell the Aunt Leah’s story, the story of foster children needing support as they age out of government care and the story of vulnerable moms who are at risk of losing their babies to the foster care system. This is the point where kindness benefits us all. Prevention through kindness will positively impact homelessness, crime and poverty.

In the spirit of Leah

Gale Stewart
Executive Director
Program Director

Brook Calvert

The past year at Aunt Leah’s has been full of both challenges and successes. We celebrated our 20th anniversary as an organization and received our second three-year Accreditation of all of our programs. In addition, we expanded on some of our programs, maximizing the array of services available to our participants.

In Support Link, we increased the number of Support Workers available to work with youth allowing us to offer additional programming such as weekly group recreational outings, employment training opportunities in landscaping and disposal and weekly essential skills workshops. We have expanded the number of topics in the workshop series and are continually increasing our partnerships with community members willing to share their time teaching our youth valuable skills that will increase their chances of a successful transition to independence. We were also able to have a lot of fun this year with youth on our annual trips to Galiano Island to experience camping, hiking and whale watching and to Manning Park for skiing and snowboarding.

Our Retail Training Program is now just over a year old and continues to grow. Sessions are full this term and partnerships are growing to enhance the program and allow students the opportunity to obtain much needed job skills in a supportive environment. We have also increased the number of students able to participate by offering three sessions per year. We hosted two graduation ceremonies this year for youth in our Retail and Restaurant Training programs. In addition, we continued the tradition of giving special awards to one youth from Support Link and one from the Training Programs to honour their personal achievements and commitment to their goals. Our Tree Lot training program was also a success this year. Four youth participated and had the opportunity to attend the volunteer appreciation dinner and receive certificates of achievement.
Individual Donors Continued:


Unfortunately, due to limited resources in both funding and staffing, this past year also saw the suspension of two programs at Aunt Leah’s, the Restaurant Training Program and Community Meal as well as the Thresholds Program for mothers and babies. However, we are hopeful that in both cases, these are merely temporary suspensions in programming. We are planning to begin the Community Meal again on a smaller scale by September of 2009 and are currently in the process of seeking alternate sources of funding for the Thresholds Program.

Although we were not able to secure the necessary funding for Thresholds, we have secured a contract from Aboriginal Services to provide housing for teenage mothers in care of the Ministry and their babies. Aunt Leah’s began in 1988 with a similar program for teenage mothers in care and now it seems we have come full circle. This program will provide services for up to four mothers. And with any luck, we will obtain government funds to re-open Thresholds and be able to provide a supportive, caring environment for all mothers in need, regardless of age.

All in all it was a year full of ups and downs but we are confident that the New Year will be a positive one. The difficulties of the last year have only strengthened our team at Aunt Leah’s and we feel excited about what’s to come. We are also extremely happy to welcome back our Program Director, Sarah Stewart, in June from her maternity leave. She has been missed!

Brook Calvert
Acting Program Director
## Aunt Leah’s Society

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
For the Year Ended March 31, 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>Revenue</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Fees for service</td>
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<td>56.1%</td>
<td>815,743</td>
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<td>Projects and fundraising (Note 9)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donations and grants</td>
<td>428,590</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
<td>424,766</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenue</strong></td>
<td>1,519,634</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>1,497,316</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Expenses**         |         |       |         |       |
| Advertising and promotion | 11,079 | 0.7%  | 14,931  | 1.0%  |
| Amortization          | 17,621  | 1.2%  | 29,199  | 2.0%  |
| Bank charges and interest | 9,984  | 0.7%  | 11,170  | 0.7%  |
| Contract service fees | 22,037  | 1.5%  | 43,791  | 2.9%  |
| Food and clothing     | 88,838  | 5.8%  | 98,111  | 6.6%  |
| Equipment operating expense | 41,770 | 2.7%  | 26,911  | 1.8%  |
| Insurance              | 10,224  | 0.7%  | 8,455   | 0.6%  |
| Office and operating expense | 24,984 | 1.6%  | 21,992  | 1.5%  |
| Professional fees      | 6,063   | 0.4%  | 7,524   | 0.5%  |
| Program and training   | 38,759  | 2.6%  | 32,226  | 2.2%  |
| Recreation             | 12,473  | 0.8%  | 9,570   | 0.6%  |
| Repair and maintenance | 25,935  | 1.7%  | 25,821  | 1.7%  |
| Rent                   | 407,249 | 26.8% | 382,171 | 25.5% |
| Salaries and benefits  | 728,770 | 48.0% | 794,855 | 53.1% |
| Staff development      | 11,676  | 0.8%  | 10,808  | 0.7%  |
| Sundry                 | 4,476   | 0.3%  | 1,479   | 0.1%  |
| Transportation         | 56,271  | 3.7%  | 51,594  | 3.4%  |
| Utilities              | 37,377  | 2.5%  | 38,246  | 2.6%  |
| **Total Expenses**     | 1,555,586| 102.5%| 1,608,854| 107.5%|

| **Excess of Expenses Over Revenue** | $ (35,952) | (2.3%) |

### Individual Donors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor Name</th>
<th>Individual Donors</th>
<th>Monthly Donors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mari Brown</td>
<td>Heather Bowen</td>
<td>Megan Halprin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brook Calvert</td>
<td>Rick Bradburn</td>
<td>John and Sybil Hartley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molly Caron</td>
<td>Shirley Brayne</td>
<td>Laurie Hunsberger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hugh and Ariel Creighton</td>
<td>Derek Breen</td>
<td>John Ingram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex Currie</td>
<td>John and Deborah Breen</td>
<td>Patricia Joyce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jean Dunnett</td>
<td>Anne Broadfoot-Crombie</td>
<td>Anne Kassis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoni Field</td>
<td>Elizabeth Brousseau</td>
<td>Sheila Kelton</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barbara Forsyth</td>
<td>Lorna Brown</td>
<td>Karin King</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lionel Friess</td>
<td>Randolph Bruce</td>
<td>Steven Lam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonnie Fulton</td>
<td>Bev Bullen</td>
<td>Clair Lee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim Gale-Gotowiec</td>
<td>Sarah Burgess</td>
<td>Maggie &amp; Michael Lister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret Gallagher</td>
<td>Chris Cameron</td>
<td>Bryan Twells</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kira Gerwing</td>
<td>Craig Cameron</td>
<td>Carole MacKay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Grattan-Doyle</td>
<td>Eva Cameron</td>
<td>Karina Olliver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Vancouver</td>
<td>Love Cameron</td>
<td>Theresa Olson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pranic Healers</td>
<td>Marie Cameron</td>
<td>Theresa Olson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Todd Walter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Monthly Donors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor Name</th>
<th>Heather Bowen</th>
<th>Megan Halprin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marg &amp; Jack Alexander</td>
<td>Rick Bradburn</td>
<td>John and Sybil Hartley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hugh Alley</td>
<td>Shirley Brayne</td>
<td>Laurie Hunsberger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evelyn Anderson</td>
<td>Derek Breen</td>
<td>John Ingram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joan Andrews</td>
<td>John and Deborah Breen</td>
<td>Patricia Joyce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne Anthony</td>
<td>Anne Broadfoot-Crombie</td>
<td>Anne Kassis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruce Avery</td>
<td>Elizabeth Brousseau</td>
<td>Sheila Kelton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annie Ayre</td>
<td>Lorna Brown</td>
<td>Karin King</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara Bacon</td>
<td>Randolph Bruce</td>
<td>Steven Lam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angela Barr</td>
<td>Bev Bullen</td>
<td>Clair Lee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara Barron</td>
<td>Sarah Burgess</td>
<td>Maggie &amp; Michael Lister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allen Baxter</td>
<td>Chris Cameron</td>
<td>Bryan Twells</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhoda Baxter</td>
<td>Craig Cameron</td>
<td>Carole MacKay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don and Alma Bealle</td>
<td>Eva Cameron</td>
<td>Karina Olliver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gillian Beattie</td>
<td>Love Cameron</td>
<td>Theresa Olson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peggy Beck</td>
<td>Marie Cameron</td>
<td>Todd Walter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eva Beda</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda Bentley</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne Beveridge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julia Bjerring</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dwayne Boquist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olga Boulter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sharon Connaughty</td>
<td>Margaret Cool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joy Costanzo</td>
<td>Pam Costello</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ivy Crawford</td>
<td>Gordon Crewe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rita Crewe</td>
<td>Tom Crowe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eileen Cruikshank</td>
<td>Judi Curtiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Judith Davis</td>
<td>Yaya de Andrade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Annette Dillon</td>
<td>Terence Donovan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lisa Dumbrell</td>
<td>Marjorie Dyson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and Michael Urbani</td>
<td>Maret Erickson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Helmut Fandrich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Noreen Finnerty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Larry Fleming</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Charlie Floris</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Felicia Folk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Heather Forbes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Roger Franke</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Kindness For Kids Initiative

Thank you to everyone who became a member of our Kindness For Kids Initiative. The Kindness For Kids Initiative is a new way of looking at our financial planning for the future. Pledges and monthly donations contribute to a regular flow of funds which helps us in planning our programs for youth and families. This provides us with a source of undesignated funds which can be used where they are needed most and promotes long-term sustainability for the organization. Thank you to the following people for their support of vulnerable youth and families into the future.

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Todd Babick  
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Robert Bryant  
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Barbara Farmer  
Anne Gartshore  
Sandra Hanvey  
Judith Helliwell  
Nancy Hill  
Gwen Ingham  
Kaatza Foundation  
Sylvia Hamilton Kerr  
Joey McGovern  
Rachael McKendry  
Joan McMurtry  
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Shireen Shepard  
John and Joan Spencer  
Paul Stewart  
Don Sturgess  
Nancy Tait  
Ellie Waldman  
Rima Wilkes  
Terry Wilkinson  
Wolrige Foundation  
Erlene Woollard

Revenue

Government Funding 56%  
Social Enterprises 10%  
Foundations 9%  
Donations 8%  
Corporate 7%  
BC Gaming 4%  
Events 3%  
Other 3%

Expenses

Programming 69%  
Administration 17%  
Fundraising 14%
Participants Served Through Aunt Leah’s Programs

April 1, 2008 - March 31, 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residential Programs</th>
<th># Served</th>
<th>Total Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support Link (Plus 1 youth a second time)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thresholds (8 adult moms &amp; 8 babies)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aunt Leah’s House (2 teen moms &amp; 2 babies)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Link Residential (1 long term resident)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lifeskills Programs</th>
<th># Served</th>
<th>Total Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ILFFY Workshops Independent Living for Families &amp; Youth (30 participants, 11 workshops, and the total spots filled at all workshops was 83)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Link Drop In (148 contacts with the 19 participants)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Programs</th>
<th># Served</th>
<th>Total Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retail Training (plus 6 youth a second time)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total participants receiving services (and total attendance for the year) | 122 | 311 |

Funding Sources for Aunt Leah's Programs

While our Support Link and Aunt Leah’s House Programs are almost entirely funded by government sources, all of our other programs which provide housing, life skills and pre-employment training, rely on donations and fundraising efforts.

Other Funding Sources Include:

- Community Groups
- Corporate Donations
- Foundations
- Fundraising Events
- Gaming
- Individual Donations
- Miscellaneous Income
- Monthly Donors
- Tree Lots Sales
- Thrift Store Sales
- Sponsors
- The Kindness for Kids Initiative
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April 1, 2008 - March 31, 2009

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Aunt Leah’s Reduced Reliance on Government

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fundraising</th>
<th>Government</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Funding Sources Include:

- Community Groups
- Corporate Donations
- Foundations
- Fundraising Events
- Gaming
- Individual Donations
- Miscellaneous Income
- Monthly Donors
- Tree Lots Sales
- Thrift Store Sales
- Sponsors
- The Kindness for Kids Initiative
The Kindness For Kids Initiative

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Corporate 7%
BC Gaming 4%
Events 3%
Other 3%

Programming 69%
Administration 17%
Fundraising 14%
## Aunt Leah’s Society

### Statement of Operations

For the Year Ended March 31, 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revenue</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fees for service</td>
<td>$853,225</td>
<td>56.1</td>
<td>$815,743</td>
<td>54.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects and fundraising (Note 9)</td>
<td>175,106</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>190,653</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC Gaming Commission</td>
<td>62,713</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>66,154</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donations and grants</td>
<td>428,590</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>424,766</td>
<td>28.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenue</strong></td>
<td>1,519,634</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>1,497,316</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Expenses**         |           |      |           |      |
| Advertising and promotion | 11,079  | 0.7  | 14,931    | 1.0  |
| Amortization         | 17,621    | 1.2  | 29,199    | 2.0  |
| Bank charges and interest | 9,984   | 0.7  | 11,170    | 0.7  |
| Contract service fees | 22,037   | 1.5  | 43,791    | 2.9  |
| Food and clothing    | 88,838    | 5.8  | 98,111    | 6.6  |
| Equipment operating expense | 41,770    | 2.7  | 26,911    | 1.8  |
| Insurance            | 10,224    | 0.7  | 8,455     | 0.6  |
| Office and operating expense | 24,984    | 1.6  | 21,992    | 1.5  |
| Professional fees    | 6,063     | 0.4  | 7,524     | 0.5  |
| Program and training | 38,759    | 2.6  | 32,226    | 2.2  |
| Recreation           | 12,473    | 0.8  | 9,570     | 0.6  |
| Repair and maintenance | 25,935    | 1.7  | 25,821    | 1.7  |
| **Total Expenses**   | 407,249   | 26.8 | 382,171   | 25.5 |
| Salaries and benefits | 728,770  | 48.0 | 794,855   | 53.1 |
| Staff development    | 11,676    | 0.8  | 10,808    | 0.7  |
| Sundry               | 4,476     | 0.3  | 1,479     | 0.1  |
| Transportation       | 56,271    | 3.7  | 51,594    | 3.4  |
| Utilities            | 37,377    | 2.5  | 38,246    | 2.6  |
| **Total Expenses**   | 1,555,586 | 102.5| 1,608,854 | 107.5|

| **Excess of Expenses Over Revenue** | $(35,952) | 0.9 | $(111,538) | 0.7 |

### Individual Donors

- Marg & Jack Alexander
- Hugh Alley
- Evelyn Anderson
- Joan Andrews
- Anne Anthony
- Bruce Avery
- Annie Ayre
- Barbara Bacon
- Angela Barr
- Barbara Barron
- Allen Baxter
- Rhoda Baxter
- Don and Alma Bealle
- Gillian Beattie
- Peggy Beck
- Eva Beda
- Linda Bentley
- Anne Beveridge
- Julia Bjerré
- Dwayne Boquist
- Olga Boulter
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- Maret Erickson
- Helmut Fandrich
- Noreen Finnerty
- Larry Fleming
- Charlie Floris,
- Felicia Folk
- Heather Forbes
- Roger Franke

### Monthly Donors

- Heather Bowen
- Rick Bradburn
- Shirley Brayne
- Derek Breen
- John and Deborah Breen
- Anne Broadfoot-Crombie
- Elizabeth Brousseau
- Lorna Brown
- Randolph Bruce
- Bev Bullen
- Sarah Burgess
- Chris Cameron
- Craig Cameron
- Robin Elizabeth Cameron
- Jane Carrothers
- Bernadette Castagnier
- Kathy Chan
- Eudora Cheng
- Jack Chow
- Jerry Clarkson
- Mauri Clemens-Braund
Unfortunately, due to limited resources in both funding and staffing, this past year also saw the suspension of two programs at Aunt Leah’s, the Restaurant Training Program and Community Meal as well as the Thresholds Program for mothers and babies. However, we are hopeful that in both cases, these are merely temporary suspensions in programming. We are planning to begin the Community Meal again on a smaller scale by September of 2009 and are currently in the process of seeking alternative sources of funding for the Thresholds Program.

Although we were not able to secure the necessary funding for Thresholds, we have secured a contract from Aboriginal Services to provide housing for teenage mothers in care of the Ministry and their babies. Aunt Leah’s began in 1988 with a similar program for teenage mothers in care and now it seems we have come full circle. This program will provide services for up to four mothers. And with any luck, we will obtain government funds to re-open Thresholds and be able to provide a supportive, caring environment for all mothers in need, regardless of age.

All in all it was a year full of ups and downs but we are confident that the New Year will be a positive one. The difficulties of the last year have only strengthened our team at Aunt Leah’s and we feel excited about what’s to come. We are also extremely happy to welcome back our Program Director, Sarah Stewart, in June from her maternity leave. She has been missed!

Brook Calvert
Acting Program Director
The past year at Aunt Leah’s has been full of both challenges and successes. We celebrated our 20th anniversary as an organization and received our second three-year Accreditation of all of our programs. In addition, we expanded on some of our programs, maximizing the array of services available to our participants.

In Support Link, we increased the number of Support Workers available to work with youth allowing us to offer additional programming such as weekly group recreational outings, employment training opportunities in landscaping and disposal and weekly essential skills workshops. We have expanded the number of topics in the workshop series and are continually increasing our partnerships with community members willing to share their time teaching our youth valuable skills that will increase their chances of a successful transition to independence. We were also able to have a lot of fun this year with youth on our annual trips to Galiano Island to experience camping, hiking and whale watching and to Manning Park for skiing and snowboarding.

Our Retail Training Program is now just over a year old and continues to grow. Sessions are full this term and partnerships are growing to enhance the program and allow students the opportunity to obtain much needed job skills in a supportive environment. We have also increased the number of students able to participate by offering three sessions per year. We hosted two graduation ceremonies this year for youth in our Retail and Restaurant Training programs. In addition, we continued the tradition of giving special awards to one youth from Support Link and one from the Training Programs to honour their personal achievements and commitment to their goals. Our Tree Lot training program was also a success this year. Four youth participated and had the opportunity to attend the volunteer appreciation dinner and receive certificates of achievement.
Foundations

- Al Roadburg Foundation
- Andrew Mahon Foundation
- Central City Foundation
- John Hardie Mitchell Family Foundation
- KMC Foundation
- Mackenzie Financial Charitable Foundation
- Pratt-Johnson Foundation
- Radcliffe Foundation
- The Toskan Casale Foundation
- Timothy C Kerr Family Foundation
- TZU CHI Foundation of Canada
- United Way
- VanCity Community Foundation
- VanCity Corporate Social Responsibility
- Vancouver Foundation
- Winnipeg Foundation
- Wolrige Foundation
- Yunnan Foundation

Church Donations

- Anglican Church Women
- Parish of St. Stephen The Martyr
- Thrift Store
- South Burnaby United Church
- St. Faith's Anglican Church
- St. Faith's Discretionary Fund
- St. Francis-in-the-Wood Anglican Church
- St. Helen's Anglican Church
- St. John the Divine
- St. Mary's Anglican Church
- St. Mary's Outreach Committee
- St. Philip's Anglican Church
- St. Stephen's United Church Women

Corporate Donations

- 0834335 BC Ltd
- Abbies Sporting Goods
- Boeing Company
- Canada Safeway - Broadway East
- David Nairne and Associates
- Digitally Hip Corporation
- Dona Lucia Esthetics Salon
- Embroidery Guild of St. Mary's Church
- Flexstar Packaging
- Galloway Botteselle & Company
- Karyo Edelman Communications
- Restaurant Marketing Systems Inc.
- Starbucks Coffee Company
- SVP Management Corporation
- Urban Impact Recycling Ltd
- VanCity Branch 14
- Waller Construction

Government “winds” are once again blowing in our favour. As we begin this new fiscal we have been awarded a contract with Aboriginal Services (MCFD) for a four bed residential program for teen moms. This is not only a privilege but also a great opportunity to return to our founding program (Aunt Leah’s House). As many of you will recall, funding was cut for this program in the winter of 2003. This is a very significant event for me personally.

As always, I would like to thank the staff that do the actual work of supporting and advocating for the foster children and families we serve. Their efforts encourage the change that must occur in order for young people to make that important transition to adulthood. I would also like to send my best wishes to those staff that have left us in this past year. May better health and new employment opportunities satisfy and motivate you in 2009.

Omar Kassis and Rachael McKendry (present and past chairs) retire from the board this year. They have helped the organization in so many ways - from meeting deadlines on policy creation to ticket sales and securing silent auction items. Their willingness to support the Aunt Leah's youth and moms has been so clearly evidenced. I will miss you both at the board level but hope to still enjoy your company around Aunt Leah's events.

And lastly I would like to thank the Management Team: Karin, Brook, Theresa and Sarah. They have provided so much wisdom, humor and support over this past year. When the hard times came and indeed they did come, it has been my privilege to have colleagues who supported some very difficult decisions and who willingly shared their experience in a way that cared for us all.

To those of you who support Aunt Leah’s through your financial gifts or your volunteer efforts, I thank you. Please spread the word about Aunt Leah's. We still need ambassadors who will tell the Aunt Leah’s story, the story of foster children needing support as they age out of government care and the story of vulnerable moms who are at risk of losing their babies to the foster care system. This is the point where kindness benefits us all. Prevention through kindness will positively impact homelessness, crime and poverty.

In the spirit of Leah

Gale Stewart
Executive Director
Executive Director
Gale Stewart

As we begin this new fiscal, I have a great sense of relief and gratitude that we made it through our 20th birthday. Perhaps our struggles reflect some of what it’s like for a young person in transition to adulthood. Whether that is true or not, last year (aside from the year of government cuts) will have the distinction of being the most challenging year in our history.

We began the year in preparation for our second accreditation and this hurdle we successfully mastered. All of our programs reached international standards including board governance. Thanks to all who willingly stayed on task and worked beyond their hours so that we could gain this achievement.

The other challenges were spread throughout the year and seemed relentless. Beginning in the spring and continuing through to January of 2009, we saw 25% of our staff go on partial or full medical leaves. Some returned to Aunt Leah’s, some were not able to and others returned to find that the organization had closed a program area that affected their employment. As the year unfolded, we were without the human resources to achieve our fundraising goals. As a result two significant programs were closed: the Community Meal/Restaurant Training Program in the fall of 2008 and Thresholds (supported housing for vulnerable moms) in January of this year.

Similar to many difficult situations in life, we have survived, learned important lessons and ended the 2008-09 fiscal year with strength, wisdom and a healthy staff.

The year ahead looks very promising. I believe this is the year when financial sustainability can be achieved, when programming has the under-pining of a strong and financially supported infrastructure. Two new sources of funding have encouraged this belief.

A small grant from the United Way will give us the ability to begin again and open the Community Meal/Restaurant Training program at one or two church sites in the fall of this year.

Financial Sponsors

**Golf Tournament**
- Abbie’s Sports Shop
- Aritzia
- Command Alarm Systems
- Fusion Mechanical
- Jack and Donna Zaleski (In Memory of John Hardie Mitchell)
- Jack and Donna Zaleski (In Memory of Katie Zaleski)
- Karin King in Memory of Tim King
- Office Essentials
- Snowflake Trading Corporation
- Tony’s Window Cleaning

**Lonely Hearts Club Band**
- Abbie’s Sports Shop
- Fusion Mechanical
- Karin King in Memory of Tim King
- Parklane Homes
- Snowflake Trading Corporation

**Tree Lots**
- Action Lock and Security
- Granville and Avery Automotive
- Henneken Auto Sales and Service

Special Friends:

We’d also like to thank all of our volunteers, silent auction donors, and those of you who have given items for the youth and moms in our programs or to Aunt Leah’s Thrift Store. You are too numerous to name here, yet still an important part of the Aunt Leah’s community. Thank you for your generosity over the past year.

Partners

- All Saints Anglican Church
- BC Women’s Hospital
- Canada Helps
- IODE Canada
- John Hardie-Mitchell Family Foundation
- Kids Up Front Foundation
- Kinsmen Club of Coquitlam
- Kin Club of Vancouver
- Knox United Church
- MOCC Youth Group
- MCFD Aboriginal Family and Child Services
- Ministry for Children and Family Development
- Shaughnessy Heights United Church
- South Vancouver Neighbourhood House
- St. Stephen’s United Church
- Starbucks Volunteers
- The Tri-Parish Community Meal Program (St. Mark’s Anglican, Trinity United, St. George’s Anglican Church)
- Vancouver Quilters Guild
- Wilson Heights United Church
The Jeremy Wright Award

“Follow Your Bliss”

Aunt Leah’s presents this award in memory of Jeremy Wright, a Support Worker who was very special to us. It is presented to a youth living in the Support Link Program who has strived to achieve their personal best and who most “follows their bliss”. The award is based on character and determination. Any member of the Support Link team can nominate a youth and the decision is made by the Support Link and Leadership Teams. This year the award will be presented at our Training Programs Graduation in June.

2009 Recipient of the Jeremy Wright Award

Johnny Robotham

Aunt Leah’s met Johnny when he was 17 years old and moved into our Support Link Program. He took full advantage of all the program had to offer. He attended workshops regularly and really enjoyed the winter ski trip to Manning Park.

Johnny is a grounded and honorable young man. He is kind and loyal to his peers and would give the shirt off his back if anyone needed it. Johnny was always a pleasure to be around. He has a special talent - he can make you laugh. If he wanted to become a stand-up comic, Johnny would make the stage. He could always put a smile on your face even if you were not in the mood.

Johnny likes a challenge and has most certainly surpassed a few. He maintained employment the entire time he was with Aunt Leah’s. In his work as an assistant to a contractor he learned valuable skills in painting, chimney sweeping and carpentry work. Today he is carrying these skills off to other places.

Congratulations Johnny. We are proud to have been there to see you accomplish your goals and we wish you the best on your journey.

A young person living outside the family home can come to Aunt Leah’s and be supported by a diverse group of caring people. Those who know Aunt Leah’s know that amazing things come from these relationships.

The time is right for people to start noticing what we do. Homelessness is becoming an issue to every level of politician. In the current economic downturn, citizens are paradoxically becoming more aware of the needs of others. If corporate donations go down, we hope that individual and government donations will increase. The wisdom of experience has taught us that funding sources come in waves, and Aunt Leah’s has proven very adept at surfing the changing times.

Aunt Leah’s public profile is growing slowly and helping bring funding and support. The Lonely Hearts Club Band concert was once again a roaring success. The Golf Tournament brought in income and new friends and continues to grow. Our Executive Director continues to be a powerful advocate for foster children and the programs they need.

As we look to the future, we continue to follow a new three year Strategic Plan that was completed last year, to guide us. The Board and Staff of Aunt Leah’s worked well together at two retreats and that collaboration is vital to the long-term health of the Society.

The Board has said goodbye to several long-term members in the last two years and the new crew is well able to handle the challenges and joys ahead. I would like to thank everyone who has made my six years on the Board so rewarding. Many thanks to Rachael McKendry for her service on the Board. Thanks and all the best to the continuing Board members Jim McCullum, Megan Halprin, Marty Frost, Molly Caron and Tammy Munro. Gratitude goes out to the volunteers, staff, donors, friends of the Society and of course a special nod to Gale Stewart for her leadership, inspiration and wisdom. I am still a friend of the Society and will continue to support Aunt Leah’s in many ways.

Omar Kassis
Board Chair
Board Chair
Omar Kassis

These are significant times for Aunt Leah’s as we move into our next twenty years. As a Society, we’ve made it through some difficult days and come out looking better. Aunt Leah’s always survives and even thrives.

Hard work and tight fiscal management have brought us a long way from the financial challenges that were so threatening last year. Although the Society is still experiencing a deficit budget, expenses are down and new contracts promise to bring in more revenue.

The best news in programming is the new Contract with Aboriginal Services (MCFD). What started as a two-bed pilot project has just been extended to a year-long four-bed resource that will enable us to care for four aboriginal moms in the original house where Aunt Leah’s had its first program.

Aunt Leah’s has long served many Aboriginal youth and moms. Although we are not strictly speaking an Aboriginal agency, these individuals and the Aboriginal people on staff give Aunt Leah’s a special focus on working with Canada’s Native people. The statistics relating to Aboriginal people explain why so many of our clients come from this group. Proportionately, far more Aboriginal children are in care than non-Aboriginal ones. Success rates in school and in the workplace are also much lower. This is a multi-generational legacy of the damage done to cultures and people by Residential Schools, and a reflection of the cycle of dependency and marginalization that continues to plague Native Canadians today.

Times are changing. This year’s historic apology and the heightened profile of Native people in Canada are a sign that Canada is beginning to embrace this dark historic legacy and to do something about it. Aunt Leah’s Society has been part of the solution since its first days. The Native way of raising a child is in accordance with what the Society does. Unlike the fragmenting European model of a nuclear family, Native cultures traditionally raise children as a collective community effort, with “Aunties” pitching in along with grandparents and other family and community members.

The Rona Award

On October 30, 2005, Rona Castagnier, long time co-worker and friend of Aunt Leah’s Society, passed away from lung cancer. Those who knew her, knew that she was a very strong, kind, compassionate and proud person. Rona wouldn’t hesitate to give someone her last dollar if they were in need, even if it meant that she would go without. In honour of Rona, Aunt Leah’s gives an annual award and bursary to a student from one of Aunt Leah’s Training Programs who has shown the characteristics that Rona appreciated the most: kindness, compassion, strength and pride. It is Aunt Leah’s hope that by offering this award that we honor Rona and her wonderful soft skills and provide a moment for individuals to reflect on these characteristics and place them of value in their own lives.

2009 Recipient of the Rona Award

Natalie Ming

It was almost three years ago when Aunt Leah’s partnered up with the Career Program at the Provincial School for the Deaf. This is where we first met Natalie Ming. She was 16 years old, hard of hearing, and had no experience in the workforce. She joined the Restaurant Training Program where she attended our ILFFY and SuperHost workshops. Natalie successfully completed the program with a certificate of participation.

Once she had a taste of working, Natalie wanted more so she joined Restaurant Training for a second time. We decided to enroll Natalie in a program called Trainer in Training. She learned how to teach and mentor the new students. By the time Natalie completed Restaurant Training she wanted to learn something new so she signed up for our Retail Training Program where she learned many skills like customer service, merchandising, and how to stock inventory. By the end of training Natalie wanted to be a cashier like the rest of her peers. She joined up for one more session of Retail Training. Natalie has come so far since we first met her. We have enjoyed watching her learn and grow. She has become more confident, outgoing and is an all-around happy young woman. Natalie has the drive to learn almost anything and we know she will succeed in anything she puts her mind to.
Staff Members

Management Team
- Brook Calvert: Director of Operations
- Theresa Olson: Director of Communications and Donor Relations
- Gale Stewart: Executive Director
- Sarah Stewart: Program Director

Administration & Development
- Michael Alleyne: Thrift Store Donation Pick-ups
- Sterling Aurel: Development/Thrift Store Manager
- Jean Paul Bouchard: Thrift Store Assistant
- Kim Gale-Gotowiec: Admin and Fundraising Assistant
- Katrin King: Human Resources & Fundraising
- Jan Lovick: Volunteer Coordinator
- Brandon McLean: Thrift Store Donation Pick-ups
- Christine Piasta: Thrift Store Assistant
- Fran Rajanayagam: Thrift Store and Office Assistant

Support Link Program
- Connie Babiak: Support Worker
- Barbara Forsyth: Support Link Program Coordinator
- Shannon Johnston: Support Worker
- Joanne Orbeck: Support Worker
- Bridget Orford: Purchasing Manager
- Paul Stewart: Maintenance Manager
- Sarah Thomas: Support Worker
- Ryan Turk: Support Worker

Thresholds & Aunt Leah’s House
- Debbie Abraham: Family Support Worker
- Pam Costello: Thresholds Program Coordinator
- Dawn Fletcher: Family Support Worker
- Chasity Kuzmicz: Family Support Worker
- Karla Lauten: Family Support Worker
- Autumn Moreno: Family Support Worker
- Allison Redmond: Family Support Worker
- Erin Skobel: Family Support Worker

Training Programs
- Antonio Dominelli: Restaurant Training Chef
- Liz Glowacki: Food Service Trainer
- Angelina Oates: Food Service & Retail Trainer
- Tai Tang: Food Preparation Worker
- Pamela Urquhart: Training Programs Coordinator

Aunt Leah’s has attained CARF (Commission of Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities) accreditation for its Support Link Program and through this has met internationally recognized standards of quality in the provision of outcomes driven programs and services to enhance the lives of young people.
Aunt Leah’s Independent Lifeskills Society

Organizational Chart

Program Director

- Support Link Residential Program
- I.L.F.F.Y. Independent Living For Families & Youth
- Restaurant Training
- Thresholds/Aunt Leah’s House
- Cooking Club
- Retail Training
- The Link Residential Program

Back: Paul Stewart, Brook Calvert, Karin King, Gale Stewart, Masha Pouraghibhi, Tanya Boon, Connie Babiak, Theresa Olson.
Front: Sarah Stewart, Barbara Forsyth, Pam Costello, Antonio Dominelli and Fran Rajanayagam.

Fran Rajanayagam, Patricia Joyce, Gale Stewart and Bridget Orford

Back: Omar Kassis, Paul Stewart, Barbara Forsyth, Brandon McLean, Lionel Fries, Front: Angelina Oates, Pam Costello, Pamela Urquhart, Gale Stewart

Ryan Turk and Connie Babiak

Sarah Thomas and Joanne Orbeck

Liz Glowacki, Jean Paul Bouehard and Jan Lovick
Board of Directors

Aunt Leah’s Board Members volunteered over 500 hours from April 2008 to March 2009. In addition to their work in governance, they also assisted with several fundraising events throughout the year. Thank you for your hard work and dedication!

Omar Kassis
Board Chair
Teacher
Urban Native Youth

Megan Halprin
Board Secretary
Chief Financial Officer
Snowflake Trading Corp. Ltd.

Rachael McKendry
Vice Chair
Project Manager
UBC Centre for Health Services and Policy Research

Marty Frost
Board Member
Human Ventures
Cooperative and Non-Profit Development and Training

Molly Caron
Board Member
Contractor
Common Sense Consulting

Tammy Munro
Board Member
Aboriginal Infant Development Consultant
Vancouver/Coastal AIDP Regional Advisor

Jim McCullum
Board Member
Retired Anglican Priest

Matthew Scott Chenoweth
Board Member
Teacher
Britannia Secondary School

Restaurant Training
Designed to provide marketable employment and life skills training through classroom and on-site learning at one of several community meal locations.

Retail Training
This program operates out of Aunt Leah’s Thrift Store and is designed for youth to receive skills, training and experience in retail businesses.

I.L.F.F.Y. Workshops
Independent Living For Families & Youth is a series of workshops designed to teach the basic skills needed for living alone successfully.

Cooking Club
A fun atmosphere for youth (ages 15-24) to learn new cooking skills and make food they can take home for the week.

Back: Marty Frost, Jim McCullum, Matt Chenoweth, Molly Caron, Omar Kassis
Front: Megan Halprin, Gale Stewart, Tammy Munro. (Inset: Rachael McKendry)
Aunt Leah’s Programs

Support Link
A residential semi-independent living program which integrates housing with life skills training and pre-employment opportunities.

Thresholds
A supportive housing and life skills program for moms who are working on establishing a positive community for themselves and their young child.

The Link
A community outreach program for former youth in care, and former residents and participants of Aunt Leah’s programs. This is a unique program that ensures a successful transition to adulthood for children aging out of the foster care system.

Volunteers
Each year we owe a large part of our success to our many volunteers. This year we had 389 volunteers who worked a total of 3693 hours. The following charts show the distribution of volunteer time and number of volunteers in each area.
How You Can Help

Aunt Leah’s Independent Lifeskills Society depends on your support to provide programs and services for vulnerable youth and families. Donors are recognized as members and have voting privileges at our Annual General Meeting.

Donate By Phone Or Mail: We can process your donation immediately over the phone with Visa or MC. You can also use the form on the next page to send your donation in the mail or arrange for pre-authorized debit.

Become A Monthly Donor: By becoming a Monthly Donor, you are contributing to a regular flow of funds which helps us in planning our programs for youth and families.

Gift of Securities: Changes in government legislation makes this an attractive way to give to Aunt Leah’s.

Special Gifts: Honor a significant birthday, birth, anniversary or the memory of a loved one who has passed away by making a special donation.

Planned Giving: Become a benefactor. Please consider leaving a gift for Aunt Leah’s Society in your will.

Donate Goods/Services: These donations help reduce our administrative costs. Furniture & other household goods are used to furnish suites for young people, fill needs for programming areas like classrooms, or are sold for increased revenue.

Host a Third Party Fundraiser: Why not celebrate an event of your choice and pass on the donations to Aunt Leah’s? Third Party Fundraisers are fundraising events done by a group or individual to benefit Aunt Leah’s. If you would like a list of possible Third Party events, please contact us.

Mailing List: Join the Aunt Leah’s Community by signing up on our mailing list. Learn more about the issues young families face today. You’ll receive our quarterly newsletter plus information on special projects and events. Pass it on to a friend or ask them to sign up on our mailing list too!

For more information on How You Can Help, please call us at 604-525-1204

Areas of Service

Aunt Leah’s offers four areas of support services in Metro Vancouver for youth and young moms to help them transition to independent living.

HOUSING:

The housing we provide consists of semi-independent living suites plus communal living for young single moms and their babies.

JOB TRAINING:

Job Training opportunities are available for work in restaurants and retail stores – work experience, help with resumes, interviewing and finding jobs for youth 19 and older.

LIFE SKILLS TRAINING:

Life skills are the basic life management skills necessary for independent living, including banking, budgeting, healthcare, laundry, cleaning, shopping and cooking.

QUALITY OF LIFE OPPORTUNITIES:

In addition to the necessities, we provide Quality of Life Opportunities - participation in activities that add meaning to life – personal celebrations, recreation and group outings.
Mandate

Aunt Leah’s Independent Lifeskills Society is dedicated to assisting youth and families in learning the necessary life skills for successful independent living.

History

Aunt Leah’s Society was established in July 1988. We have just celebrated 20 years of service to youth and families. Gale Stewart, Executive Director and founder, was a foster parent who knew that there was a need for extra support for youth who were approaching their 19th birthday and leaving government care. They weren’t always ready for independent living. Gale developed a semi-independent living program for foster youth at risk. This housing project became known as the “Support Link” Program. Gale also founded “Aunt Leah’s House” in 1988. This program provided a home for pregnant and parenting teens. The incorporation of Aunt Leah’s Independent Lifeskills Society led to the subsequent development of many other programs offering life skills and pre-employment training.

Core Values

1. Celebration is essential to a successful life.
2. An individual’s artistic/soulful centre must be expressed and appreciated.
3. Success is fragile and must be tended to and supported with care.
4. All behaviour has meaning and is the human tool for communication.
5. Entrepreneurial spirit builds individuals and organizations.
6. Community building ensures that we all have a place to go when we need support.

Volunteering For Aunt Leah's Society

Whether you are interested in a long-term commitment or a one-time opportunity, Aunt Leah’s has many volunteer opportunities.

Long-term/Ongoing Volunteering

**Thrift Store:** Aunt Leah’s receives donations throughout the year, many of which are given directly to people in our programs. Other items are sold at Aunt Leah’s Thrift Store and proceeds support our programs for youth and families. Volunteer work includes sorting, organizing, light cleaning, pricing, customer service, marketing and mailing. Volunteer motto: Work hard and have fun! The Thrift Store is located at 675 S.E. Marine Drive at Fraser Street in South Vancouver.

**Office:** We work hard to increase awareness and encourage support for the vulnerable young people in our programs. We produce a number of communications materials which are printed and assembled “in house” with the help of volunteers. Some examples include educational workbooks, brochures, a quarterly newsletter, mail-outs of donation request letters, and even the annual report you are now reading.

**Fundraising:** There are a variety of volunteer opportunities in this important area of work: assistance with organizing events, acquisition of silent auction items and prizes and various jobs on the day of the events.

Special Event/Short-term Volunteering

**The Kindness for Kids Initiative:** Volunteers are needed for this annual event. Work includes setting up, greeting guests, and assisting with registration.

**Golf Tournament:** Our Annual Golf Tournament is coming up on Sept. 11th at Country Meadows in Richmond. The event includes a day of golf, dinner, games and prizes. Volunteers are needed on the day of the event. Work includes greeting, assisting with registration, helping with the Silent Auction, and supervising on the green. Let us know if you would like to be on our planning committee for next year.
Special Event/Short-term Volunteering continued…

**Lonely Hearts Club Band - Annual Music Benefit:** Some of Vancouver’s best local musicians perform their favorite Beatles songs and proceeds support vulnerable young moms and their babies through Aunt Leah’s programs. Volunteers are needed on the organizing committee, soliciting silent auction donations, selling tickets, posterizing, and helping on the night.

**Christmas Tree Lots:** We have been in business with our Tree Lots since 1995. We have two locations: in Vancouver at St. Stephen’s United Church at 54th Ave & Granville Street, and in Burnaby at All Saints Anglican Church at 7405 Royal Oak. Proceeds support youth in Aunt Leah’s Training Programs. Approximately 250 volunteers are needed from late November to Christmas. Volunteers work a minimum 4-hour shift selling trees. Work is outside (hot drinks and propane heaters provided!).

**Christmas Hampers:** Volunteers are needed from late November to mid-December. Donations of food and gifts are assembled into hampers for youth and families in need.

*For more information on volunteer opportunities at Aunt Leah’s Society:*

Phone: 604-264-7238

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Yes!

I would like to donate!

Enclosed is my □ One time gift of $_______________

or □ Monthly gift of $ _______________

Enclosed is my □ Cheque

Charge my □ VISA □ MasterCard

_ _ _ _ / _ _ _ _ / _ _ _ _ / _ _ _ _ / _ _ _ _

Card Number Expiry Date

Monthly donors: I hereby authorize Aunt Leah’s Independent Lifeskills Society to make automatic MONTHLY withdrawals from my bank account or credit card as indicated. I understand that I may cancel this authorization at any time by notifying Aunt Leah’s. I will receive a tax receipt for the total amount of my monthly gifts on an annual basis. I have enclosed a cheque marked “void” or provided my credit card information.

_______________________________

Signature

Tax receipt issued to: □ Mr. □ Ms. □ Mr. & Mrs. □ Dr.

First Name: ________________ Last Name: ________________

Address: _____________________________________________

City: ________________________ Province: _______________

Postal Code: ________________ Phone: __________________

Cell Phone: ________________ Office: _________________

Email: ______________________

□ I would like my donation to be anonymous

Tax receipts are automatically issued for donations over $20. For donations under $20, a receipt will be issued on request.