



CHILDREN'S REHABILITATION CENTRE - ALGOMA 1952-2002

*Anniversary logo designed by
Heather Bot, Sault College
Graphic Design Student*

FIFTY YEARS of:

**providing therapy services and programs for children and young people with physical disabilities and multiple special needs
dedication to working with families
maximizing potential together**



**The proclamation is announced at the
January 28, 2002 City Council Meeting.**

left to right: Aiden Mowat & Tammy West (Youth Advisory Committee), Heather Bot (logo designer), Susan Vanagas-Cote (Executive Director), Olga Fischer (President, Board of Directors)

PROCLAMATION

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

WHEREAS Children's Rehabilitation Centre - Algoma is a long-standing organization within the community of Sault Ste. Marie; and

WHEREAS Children's Rehabilitation Centre - Algoma provides a range of services to children and youth with physical disabilities and multiple special needs; and

WHEREAS the Centre holds as its core philosophy and mission, the importance of working with families in enabling children and youth with special needs to develop their potential and to contribute as valued members of the community; and

WHEREAS this year marks 50 years of service to children and youth with special needs and their families:

NOW THEREFORE, I, John Roswell, by virtue of the power vested in me as Mayor of Sault Ste. Marie, do hereby proclaim and pronounce this year as the 50th Anniversary of Children's Rehabilitation Centre - Algoma service to children and youth with special needs.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

We note, in Dr. Sinclair's chronicle of the Centre's origins, a theme that has prevailed over the past 50 years and will continue well into the future. That is the recognition of the children and young people we serve as children, first and foremost, who deserve and have a basic right to learn independence, self-advocacy and "the opportunity to make the most of their *abilities*."

The past 50 years have seen tremendous advances in medicine, technology and rehabilitation practices. Many more children and young people are surviving and looking toward their futures with hopeful dreams. Dr. Sinclair's words remind us that Children's Rehabilitation Centre - Algoma exists for one purpose only...to bring children and young people closer to actualizing their dreams, helping them make the most of their abilities and enabling them to contribute to their communities.

As technology, research and best practices have evolved over these past 50 years so has the responsiveness of Children's Rehabilitation Centre - Algoma. We believe that today's programs and services not only meet the physical and functional needs of the children we serve but also support both children's and families' emotional and psycho-social well-being.

Medical research, particularly in the area of genetics, and technological advancements continue. We can only speculate what will be achieved over the next 50 years. Whatever the future holds, be assured that Children's Rehabilitation Centre - Algoma is committed to that future and looks forward to continuing to do all that we can to maximize potential together.

Olga Fischer, President
Board of Directors

Susan Vanagas-Cote,
Executive Director

Children's Rehabilitation Centre - Algoma is dedicated to working with families in enabling children and youth with special needs to develop their potential and to contribute as valued members of the community.



FIFTY YEARS OF PROGRESS A LOOK BACK

...Excerpts from the Chronicle of Dr. Alex Sinclair. Dr. Sinclair is one of the founders of the orthopaedic program for children with physical disabilities...the precursor to Children's Rehabilitation Centre - Algoma.



1950

The celebration of a Golden Anniversary is a propitious time to reflect upon all that has transpired in those fifty years and to review how it all began. When our story begins in the early 1950's, the country was coming to grips with problems which had necessarily been deferred for the duration of WW II. A staggering statistic that surfaced was that there were some 10,500 educable children in Ontario who were physically handicapped. More than 200 lived in this community.

The advent of antibiotics starting in the late 1930's and rapidly developing during the war resulted in a gratifying decline in infant mortality. This did make the challenge all the more urgent to serve the needs of the proportionate steadily growing number of handicapped children who lived to attain school age.

To keep things in context, at that time there was no universal hospital insurance, no state-sponsored health insurance, no polio vaccine and no blanket drug benefit plan. But there were substantial other resources: RotaryBa dedicated service club, a keen local branch of the Ontario Medical Association, a visionary Board of Education, a helpful resource in the Ontario Society for Crippled Children, parental enthusiasm, community support.

Nominees of the local OMA branch trained at model children's rehabilitation centres in the U.S. and 9 Western European countries. As a result, it was decided that a children's rehabilitation centre was required for this community. But what kind?

It was determined that there was a need for a special facility to provide physiotherapy, speech therapy, and schooling where the children could be taught a core curriculum with consideration of their special needs. It was to embrace all religious persuasions and socio-economic levels including children of non-indigent families.

The prime reason for rehabilitation, helping children to help themselves, was to give handicapped children the opportunity to make the most of their abilities. This is the basic right of all children.

1952



The Rotary Club, the Cerebral Palsy Council and the Public Board of Education opened the Orthopaedic Unit in King George Public School and provided a physiotherapist. Local physicians donated services.



1955



Pre-schoolers entered the program early to prepare them for enrollment in their regular classes in neighbourhood schools.



1958

The Unit continued to grow and more space was required. It moved to William Merrifield Public School. As a result of the Rotary Club's efforts and the cooperation of Sault Ste. Marie Public Board of Education, additional classrooms and facilities were provided.
The Unit supported 46 clients and 6 full time staff.





The unit was renamed
THE ROTARY CHILDREN'S REHABILITATION UNIT
in recognition of Rotary Club's significant financial support and sponsorship.

1964



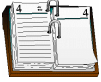
The Rotary Unit was incorporated and became part of the network of children's treatment centres in Ontario. The unit had another name change and was now called the "ROTARY CHILDREN'S CENTRE." The Centre had its own Board of Directors and an Executive Director was hired. There was continued support from Rotary Club and annualized funding from the Ministry of Health. Services expanded to the District of Algoma.



1983



1990



The Sault Ste. Marie Children's Centre Foundation was established to support the enhancement and development of programs and services at the Rotary Children's Centre.



1992



Continued growth in services for children and families resulted in a move to the vacated James Lyons Public School.



1996

James Lyons School was purchased at fair market value with the financial support of the Rotary Club, Foundation and Ministry of Health.



1997



The Centre changed its name to Children's Rehabilitation Centre - Algoma to reflect its broad community involvement.

Parents were invited to join a new committee - the Family Advisory Committee to represent the voice of the consumers.

Children's Rehabilitation Centre at 50

years...

2002



Children's Rehabilitation Centre - Algoma now supports 500 clients and 44 full and part time staff.

Services have continually expanded and now include:

- occupational therapy
- physiotherapy
- speech-language pathology
- social work
- respite care
- seating and orthotics clinics
- medical clinics
- videoconferences
- teen support groups
- preschool programs
- family support



The Centre's philosophy of "family centred practice" led to the development of the Family Advisory Committee

and more recently, the Youth Advisory Committee. Their existence ensures that the needs of our consumers are heard. The involvement of both Family and Youth Advisory Committees support the Centre's ongoing philosophy of involving consumers in our strategic planning process.



MESSAGES

CHILDREN'S REHABILITATION CENTRE - ALGOMA

FOUNDATION

"Maximizing Potential Together" is the Foundation's driving force. We have the opportunity to work with enthusiastic board members (the movers and shakers from our community) to provide the financial means to accomplish what traditional funding does not. The Foundation's goal is to financially support the creation of practical solutions to help children and young people be the best that they can be.

Currently, the Foundation is dedicated to fundraising for two essential projects:

▪ Transitions

Providing funds to set up enhanced supports for pre-schoolers in our nursery school program and the establishment of a Youth Transition Program geared toward the needs of our young people, 14 - 18 years of age.

These programs will help us work better to enable our clients to live more independently, hold down jobs or move on to post-secondary education.

▪ Endowment Funds

Money raised is channelled permanently into investments in which only the earned interest is used to fund future Centre projects that traditional funding cannot cover. An Endowment Fund offers long-term financial stability for the Centre and supports our commitment to continually meet the changing needs of the children and young people we support.

The need for non-traditional funding sources is ongoing and as the Centre evolves so will the Foundation. We encourage any individual who would like to support the good work of the Centre, to join our exciting team. Call the Centre and ask about how you can get involved.

Children's Rehabilitation Centre - Algoma has come a long way in 50 years. The Children's Rehabilitation Centre - Algoma Foundation congratulates the Centre on its many years of dedicated service. With our ongoing commitment of financial

support, we hope to ensure that the Centre's growth continues over the next 50 years.

Larry McDonald, President
Children's Rehabilitation Centre -
Algoma Foundation

YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Children's Rehabilitation Centre - Algoma has undergone an amazing evolution over the past 50 years. The Centre has always been committed to a philosophy of involving consumers in the development of programs and services. One of the most recent extensions of this philosophy is the establishment of a Youth Advisory Committee in October, 2001. Empowering youth who have disabilities to become active, productive adults is the main goal of this committee.

The Youth Advisory Committee is comprised of 4 teen representatives. We meet on a monthly basis to discuss issues as they relate to services for teens of the Centre. We have an opportunity to hear about or bring forward issues to the larger teen population through the Centre's "Teens On The Move" group. This group provides an opportunity for teens to get together socially to have some fun, discuss ideas and concerns about life in high school, and visit various community businesses and services in preparation for becoming more self-sufficient. The Youth Advisory Committee also attends the Board of Directors' meetings at least once a year to share our ideas and update the Board on our activities.

A highlight for our committee was meeting Mr. Tony Clement, the Minister of Health and Long Term Care when he visited the Centre last summer. Mr. Clement was very interested in the committee's role in the Centre. He commended us for our involvement, encouraged us to continue and wished us the very best in our future endeavours.

We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Children's Rehabilitation Centre - Algoma on its 50th anniversary. We hope that as the Centre grows and

introduces new programs and services to young people, we will continue to have an active role in helping to ensure that these programs truly meet our needs.

Aiden Mowat,
Pamela D'Addetta,
Steven Leggett,
Tammy West,
Evana Kinkaid., Staff Facilitator

FAMILY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

In 1997, the Children's Rehabilitation Centre - Algoma invited parents to join a new committee called the Family Advisory Committee (FAC). The committee was formed to ensure that information on established services and new directions was communicated between families, management and the Board of Directors. After five years, I can happily say that we have been quite successful in doing just that! We have been actively involved in the dissemination and review of consumer satisfaction surveys, ensuring that there is an opportunity for input on all aspects of service. Since we ourselves are consumers, we provide a unique perspective to plans, directions and initiatives that are undertaken by the Centre.

As issues and concerns arise, families may call committee members (our contact information is printed in every Centre newsletter) to request that items be added to the meeting agendas.

On this, the year of its 50th anniversary, I would like to congratulate Children's Rehabilitation Centre - Algoma whose objectives encourage us as members of the Family Advisory Committee to meet the needs of our families with open ears, eyes, minds and hearts.

Barbara French, Chair
Family Advisory Committee