

# Thank you!



### Thanks to ...

**Auto West Group** has become Touchstone's first Diamond Sponsor through their generous donation of the RTR Mini Cooper S that has been used by the RCMP to promote their "Resist the Race" campaign. Touchstone will be offering tickets to raffle the car as soon as licensing requirements are completed. Check our website at [www.touchstonefamily.ca](http://www.touchstonefamily.ca) for details as they become available.

### Thanks to ...

Hanif Muljani, CEO of **theportables** for providing two display banners for us to use at our various events and workshops. They will truly help to build awareness of Touchstone's name and we are very grateful.

### Thanks to ...

**Budget Printing** for generously printing our newsletter for us.

### Thanks to ...

**The Information Refinery** for the many hours of extra time they put into creating this wonderful newsletter and brilliant new website. Check us out – [www.touchstonefamily.ca](http://www.touchstonefamily.ca).

### Thanks to ...

The children from Mrs. Albrecher's grade 6 class of **St. Bernadette Elementary** in Surrey, who donated the money they raised from their class sale of household items to provide an hour of counseling for a Richmond family.

### Thanks to ...

**DCD Design Manufacturing Company** for setting us on the path of creating a program to help families in a very practical way. Through their generous donation, the Family Champion Program has been born.

DCD offered to donate a computer to a family who needed support for their children's homework projects. The family who received this gift were very grateful to hear they would be the recipients and completely overjoyed when it arrived with unexpected gifts of toys, books and food items contributed by DCD employees.

There are other families who have specific needs and other companies or individuals who might like to join DCD in the Family Champion program. As a Family Champion, you will be advised 3 times a year of specific needs amongst our family community. It might be that a budding hockey player needs skates or an upcoming, young artist needs art supplies. Family needs will be explained and you will have the opportunity to select the support you provide to enable these children to succeed in their goals. Send a note by e-mail to [gpatko@touchfam.ca](mailto:gpatko@touchfam.ca) or call 604-207-5046 for more information.

### Thanks to ...

**Women Making A Difference.** Christine Campbell, Janet Clouston, Linda MacMillan and Donna Price are the four ladies who comprise this amazing group. They held their Third Annual Tea Cup Golf Tournament to benefit Touchstone's 'fee for service' program which enabled families to receive over 140 hours of counselling services.



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## Message from Michael McCoy, Executive Director

Greetings all!

As we begin our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, we are adding another page to the story of Touchstone. Literally that is! We feel it is time to share the good stories, news and latest developments here at the Association. Welcome to the first of two annual newsletters that you will be receiving from us, it is our sincere hope that you find it interesting and useful.

To try and reflect on those 25 years of growth with a few inches of typed space is very difficult. The common thread in our history of success is the people who have made the organization what it is. They include:

#### The Board of Directors:

Who, for twenty years has personified the faces and nurtured the spirit of **volunteerism** within our organization. Without these community volunteers who so willingly give up personal time to contribute personal expertise and skill, the Association could not carry out its mission. We are grateful for and respectful of their commitment.

#### The Management Team:

Who, being the extraordinary individuals that they are have kept the Association (and me) heading in the right direction. Their **dedication** accompanied by their humour and compassion is a most valuable asset.

#### Francis House Residential Program:

Who are faced daily with the intensity and complexities of adolescent behavior. Their commitment to youth and their families' gives us all cause to know that **courage** is needed to create change and hope.

#### Family Preservation and Reunification Group:

Who meet with and deal with the complications and confusion of modern day family living. Through their work they make a difference in the quality of family life. Their **thoughtfulness** is a great benefit to those they serve.

#### Day Program Staff:

Who bring an **enthusiastic attitude** when supporting youth in overcoming obstacles while gaining academic and personal success. With these adult cheerleaders available, many youth achieve what previously seemed impossible.

#### Restorative Justice Program Staff and Volunteers

Who bring **commitment** to this very innovative approach to justice ensuring that victims, family and offenders are each treated with respect, fairness and equality throughout the process.

#### Community Action Plan for Children (CAP-C)

Who are reaching out to multi-cultural and isolated families in the community with a **sensitivity** that invites participation and inclusion in a meaningful way.

In writing the 'who' I leave room for a future edition in which to talk about the 'what, where, when and why' and the continuing story of Touchstone.

This first newsletter is the result of the encouragement given by Past Chair, Ian Hardern, with many thanks.

## Contacts

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## Great news for all Richmond families

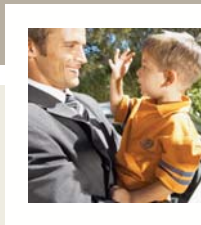
The Touchstone Family Association's Board and Management have taken a major visionary step in establishing a permanent endowment fund that will be invested and managed with care by the Richmond Community Foundation. This permanent endowment fund will provide interest funds to support ongoing Touchstone programs forever. As stated by Michael McCoy our Executive Director, "Family is the first community we belong to. Strong families mean strong communities". Richmond Community Foundation uses broad local knowledge to connect donors to the cause and organization that matter most to them, helping them make a lasting difference in their community. The Richmond Community Foundation welcomes the opportunity of working closely with Touchstone Family Association and helping them build their endowment. If you would like more information on how you can help Touchstone Family Association grow their endowment, please contact Georaina Patko at 604-207-5047 or e-mail [gpatko@touchfam.ca](mailto:gpatko@touchfam.ca).

## Events

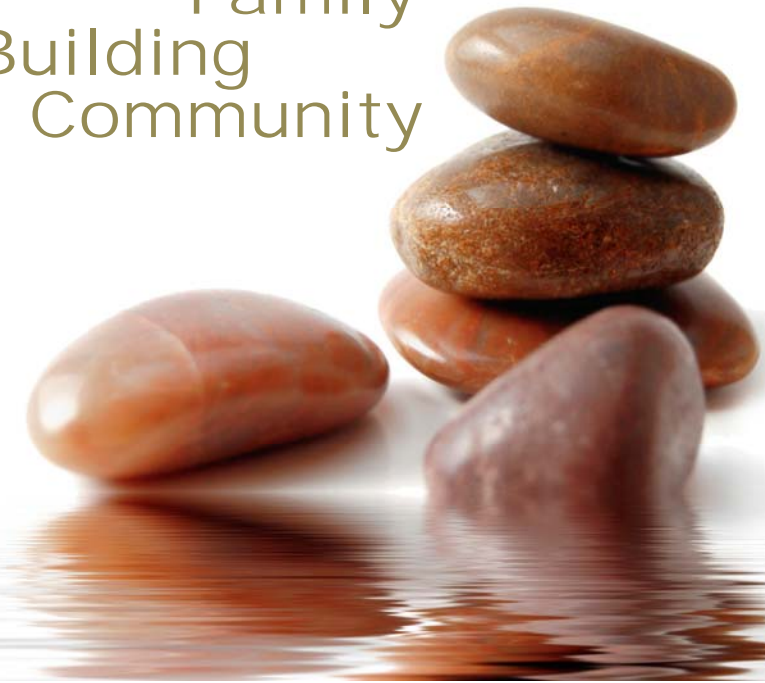
### Mark your calendar so you don't miss Touchstone's upcoming events.....

May 2	Family Conference
May 27	Touchstone Open House
September 17	Tea Cup Golf Tournament
September 24	Touchstone AGM Featuring Ross Green, well known author of the Explosive Child

More information will be available on our website: [www.touchstonefamily.ca](http://www.touchstonefamily.ca)



## Strengthening Family Building Community



# Newsletter

# Disneyland in a Day



This year five lucky children from Touchstone were selected to go on a trip of a lifetime. They were going to join 120 other lucky children from all over the province between the ages of 6-10 years old heading to Disneyland for a day. They were all going to be part of the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual "Dreams Take Flight" Extravaganza! About 50 volunteers from the Vancouver area and another 70 volunteers from the Los Angeles area would join them on October 21, 2008. Everyone was to meet in the Air Canada hangar at 4:30am where the children and volunteers would check in and the festivities would begin!! As the 6:30am departure time drew near, you could feel the excitement of the children building. When the plane finally landed at the cargo section of LAX International Airport after the relatively short 2.5 hr flight, the excitement of the children could hardly be contained. They could not believe that two fire engines with their ladders extended and fire hoses at full blast and the 100 or so spectators were there to greet them! The 45 minute bus ride from LAX to Disneyland was almost anti-climatic as some children slept from pure exhaustion. However, they quickly regained their energy when they saw the turrets of the Disneyland castle come into view.

From then on, it became a race to see which group of 10 (5 children and 5 volunteers) could ride the most rides in the time allotted. The 12 groups of 10 left in 12 different directions all searching for the best rides with the shortest lines. After a quick break for lunch where all the Disney characters had gathered for autographs and photos, it was back to the rides. As the afternoon wore on and the heat of the day began to take its toll, everyone was glad to take an ice-cream break and to sit and rest their feet. Then it was a mad dash to get the last few rides in before everyone had to meet on Main Street to find the perfect souvenir as a reminder of the wonderful day. Once all the purchases had been made, it was back on the buses by 7pm to get back to the airport for a 9:30pm flight home. On our bus, it was determined that the ride record was 17 for the day! After pizza dinner, the rest of the flight home was pretty quiet with most children sleeping or watching the movie. When we arrived back at the Air Canada hangar at 11:30pm, the families waited anxiously to hear all about their child's experiences of the day. The children, however, were much more interested in flopping into their beds to recover from their exhausting day. There would be time tomorrow to reminisce about the day in Disneyland ... This trip was made possible through one person's dream to make some less fortunate children's dreams come true. Lori Ferguson was that person. She was an employee of Air Canada. Through sheer determination and a LOT of support, Lori was successful in organizing this all expenses paid trip for 125 children each year for the last 16 years. Unfortunately, this was to be Lori's last year as she succumbed to brain cancer shortly after the 2008 trip to Disneyland, however, her legacy will continue.

## Have you ever wondered what the CARF accreditation symbol is about?



CARF is an independent, nonprofit accrediting body whose mission is to promote the quality, value, and optimal outcomes of services through a consultative accreditation process that centers on enhancing the lives of the persons served. Founded in 1966 as the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, and now known as CARF, the accrediting body establishes consumer-focused standards to help organizations measure and improve the quality of their programs and services.

Touchstone is very proud to announce that they have been accredited for a period of three years for the third consecutive time for the following programs:

- Counselling (Children and Adolescents)
- Family Preservation and Support (Children and Adolescents)
- Group Home Care (Children and Adolescents)
- Prevention/Diversion (Children and Adolescents)
- Support and Facilitation (Children and Adolescents)

CARF surveyors made no recommendations, which signifies that they did not identify ANY areas of non-conformance to the standards. This is an extraordinary accomplishment and places Touchstone in the top 3% of agencies surveyed by CARF.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL AT TOUCHSTONE!**

## Family Violence

As part of Touchstone's continuing series of workshops, in January 2009, we were proud to present Allan Wade, PhD. Allan is an expert in 'Response-Based Counselling'. The workshop was presented to Touchstone staff and other community professionals and was very well received.

Many experts agree with the following definition of family violence, developed by the National Clearinghouse on Family Violence (1994). Broadly, family violence is abuse of power within relationships of family, trust, or dependency. It can include many forms of abusive behaviour: emotional and psychological abuse, neglect, financial exploitation, destruction of property, injury to pets, physical assault, sexual assault, and homicide.

The 'response-based' approach described by Allan, gives counsellors a tool which can improve a victim's psychological recovery. It focuses on the acknowledgment of the many physical and social actions taken by a victim to resist violence, rather than solely on feelings such as betrayal, hurt and helplessness. The focus on even the smallest acts of resistance is a positive experience and contributes to the victim's belief that they were not helpless. Highlighting resistant acts also reinforces the fact, that it is the perpetrator not the victim, who is truly responsible for the violence.

Touchstone counsellors will be incorporating this approach into their work with victims of violence. If you or someone you know is experiencing Family Violence, please call Touchstone Family Association at 604-279-5599.



## Ms. Huang's Story

我與丈夫及女兒於 1999 年，由台灣移民到溫哥華。不久，我因身體不適，受情緒病的困擾，對自己及家人時常都感到不滿，心內似有『無窮無盡』的怒氣，且常疑惑自我價值。

我於 2006 年 6 月 1 日，在一個很偶然的機會，我應朋友邀請，參加由點石家庭協會主辦的家長課程。在課程中，我發覺自己的人際關係技巧出了困難，令我一下子無法接納自己。(因我一直認為自己是一個有愛心、熱誠、肯幫助人，且把握人際關係技巧有一定的水準。)

待課程結束後，我懇求 Selina Ma, 註冊心理輔導員幫助。在接受專業的輔導期間，我重新處理自己及家人的關係問題。經過 Selina 的悉心協助，我重新調整、接納及重整人際關係技巧，亦改善夫妻、與女兒、朋友等等的問題。

在此我無法用筆墨或言語表達接受心理輔導的優點，祇能再三的感謝我能得到這個機會，令我及家人重建關係。我借這次的機會，希望傳遞一個正面的訊息與來自中國、台灣及/或香港及/或其他亞洲人，讓他們多瞭解接受專業心理輔導的優點，亦希望有關服務社區中心，能多舉辦有關的教育講座和宣傳。我衷心希望有更多的人，主動尋求幫助，虛心接受專業心理輔導，讓更多有需要的人能接受點石家庭協會所提供的專業服務，並盼望人人能善用此項服務，從而建立一個健康的社區。

The above letter has been translated below by Selina Ma, Clinical Counselor.

I emigrated from Taiwan with my husband and daughter in 1999. Soon after we settled down in Vancouver, I was quite ill and my life became filled with blaming, frustration, and hostility towards my family. I had no strategies to deal with stress.

Around January 2006, I got a chance to accompany one of my friends to join in one of the Mandarin Speaking Parenting Groups, which was organized by Touchstone Family Association. In the group, I was assisted to explore, share, and learn how to become aware of my personal issues, family dynamics, difficulties in relationships and communication. Through this group sharing, I was helped to have more open and direct attitudes.

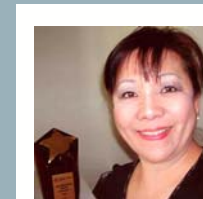
After the completion of this group, I shared my concerns with Selina Ma, Clinical Counsellor. Through in-depth therapeutic counselling approaches, I was able to be honest and share my feelings in an open-minded manner. I was deeply moved by these intensive self-exploration sessions, I could soften my negative emotions and I could evaluate various alternatives in coping with conflicts and problems with my family. I would like to show my thanks for Selina Ma's kindness and sincere assistance that I could regain happiness and enjoyment with my family and friends in life.

Last but not least, it was a precious experience that I feel could be used by many people from Asian countries if they were more aware of the different varieties of counselling services available at Touchstone Family Association. I understand there is much needed to be done, and little resources available. May there be enough funds for Touchstone Family Association to help as many families as need them. I wish all the best and thank Touchstone Family Association for contributing to the families in Richmond and surrounding area.

### Grace Leung

Touchstone Family Association's volunteer, Grace Leung was the recipient of the Constellation Award at the 2008 Volunteers Are Stars Gala. Grace was recognized for her service as the lone translator for members of the Cantonese and Mandarin speaking community that participated in the Restorative Justice program. Touchstone Family Association wishes to congratulate Grace and thank her very sincerely for her invaluable support.

If you would like to volunteer to facilitate Restorative Justice Community Justice Forums or would simply like to know more about the process, please contact Haroon Bajwa at 604-207-5039 or haroon@touchfam.ca



## What is Restorative Justice?

Community Justice Forums provide a community-based, alternative approach to the traditional justice system. Aimed at holding people who have come into conflict with the law accountable for their actions, community justice forums bring together everyone affected by the incident, including; the victim, offender, their family and/or supporters. Trained volunteers facilitate a discussion among the participants and assist the parties in building a resolution agreement that aims to repair the harm.

The following article is written by a 'rookie' volunteer facilitator for the program. He reflects on the cultural diversity in our City.

Restorative Justice should work wherever the participants share similar values about right and wrong and allow each other enough space to accommodate cultural diversity. Nowhere are those important assumptions more necessary than in the city of Richmond, BC. This city is like a kaleidoscope of cultures – a world in one city – as it has been described.

So how do we manage Restorative Justice and the Forum it entails when a group of diverse youth abuse property belonging to two different cultures? An African youth harmed the property of two Asian owners. This was witnessed by an adult of European heritage who reported to the RCMP who in turn apprehended the youth group. The African youth admitted guilt, apologized and was referred with his family to the Restorative Justice program at Touchstone.

Interviewing everyone was like a trip to the UN, and with the help of excellent translation services and culturally sensitive briefings from Touchstone, everyone had their say. A restorative plan was successfully agreed by all. Victims, family and offender were each treated with respect, fairness and equality throughout the process. They were all satisfied so that soon after the matter was resolved, the offender was able to greet the victims who were very happy with the outcome. They expressed the desire that they wanted to see the young man succeed. Restorative Justice conducted with care, can be applied to great effect amidst great cultural diversity.

