



Serving Niagara for
Seventy-One Years.



JohnHoward
SOCIETY OF NIAGARA

Through responsive and individualized service, the John Howard Society of Niagara is committed to facilitating positive personal growth through Justice, Prevention, Education and Employment programs that enrich the communities of the Niagara Region.

jhs-niagara.com

ST. CATHARINES

210 King Street
St. Catharines, ON L2R 3J9
Phone: 905.682.2657
Fax: 905.984.6918

WELLAND

225 East Main Street
Welland, ON L3B 3W7
Phone: 905.732.7655
Fax: 905.732.2912

FORT ERIE

469 Central Avenue
Fort Erie, ON L2A 3T8
Phone: 905.871.3932
Fax: 905.871.9265

JohnHoward
SOCIETY OF NIAGARA



2020 ANNUAL REPORT

President

Gregor McDonald

Past President

Tracy Sacco

Vice-President /JHS of Ontario REP

Ron Cuthbert

Executive Director & Secretary to Board

Jay Gemmell

Treasurer

Gordon Sheehan

Board Members

Aneeta Allaart

Sarah Diamond

Tom Hanrahan

Maureen Jesseau

Marco Magazzeni

Venessa Magny

James McCaffery

Steve Scriven

Matt Swindley

Nicole Thwaites

Jen White

2019-20 Funders

District School Board of Niagara

Employment and Social Development Canada

John Howard Society of Canada

Ministry of the Solicitor General

Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services

Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development

Operation Springboard

Ontario Tourism Education Corporation

Niagara Region

Niagara Prosperity Initiative

MISSION STATEMENT

Through responsive and individualized service, the John Howard Society of Niagara is committed to facilitating positive personal growth through Justice, Prevention, Employment and Education programs that enrich the communities of the Niagara Region.

President’s Message
Gregor McDonald



On behalf of the John Howard Society of Niagara Board of Directors I would like to express our gratitude to our staff and partners who navigated through changes in our funding platform as well as a global pandemic.

2019 saw the Ontario government adopt a new model for the employment service system for job seekers, social assistance clients and employers. The new service system managers will lead the implementation of local service improvements and will be paid based on their results. We look forward to working with Fedcap Group Inc., the lead of a consortium of local GTHA-based non-profits, as the new Service System Managers for Hamilton-Niagara. I would like to congratulate Jay for keeping the board apprised of these changes and ensuring that the John Howard Society of Niagara is positioned for success within the new framework.

As soon as we were settling into this new framework the world was hit with a pandemic that has not been witnessed since 1918. Covid-19 has caused government and business to make drastic changes to contain this virus and save lives. Our management team adapted quickly to limit direct person to person contact to keep our clients and staff safe during these uncertain times. Our staff have proven that they can offer a high level of service and stay engaged in the community using a variety of mediums.

In a Public Position Paper that the management team put together and the Board approved we state “It is with pride that we say we have not stopped working tirelessly for the people of the Niagara Region and will do so for the foreseeable future.”

Thank you for your continued support and service.

Gregor McDonald
President

Executive Director's Remarks

Jay Gemmell



Who could have imagined how the 2019-20 fiscal year would end?

As we entered the fiscal year we knew that changes were coming to the Employment Ontario network. As the year progressed the Ministry of Labour and Skills Development conducted a comprehensive search for three new Service System Managers as a start to the Employment Ontario Transition. Niagara was chosen to be one of the Prototype regions. Fedcap was chosen as the Service System Manager. Just as we were gearing up and getting to know our new funder, the Covid-19 pandemic took hold. The staff at the Job Gym, were working at such a high level, that our year end numbers were still excellent.

This is a true testament to the staff in our employment services, and the great relationship that they share with many employers around the Niagara Region. We are looking forward to building a strong and effective relationship with Fedcap. The strength on this relationship will be to the advantage of the Niagara Regional Labour market.

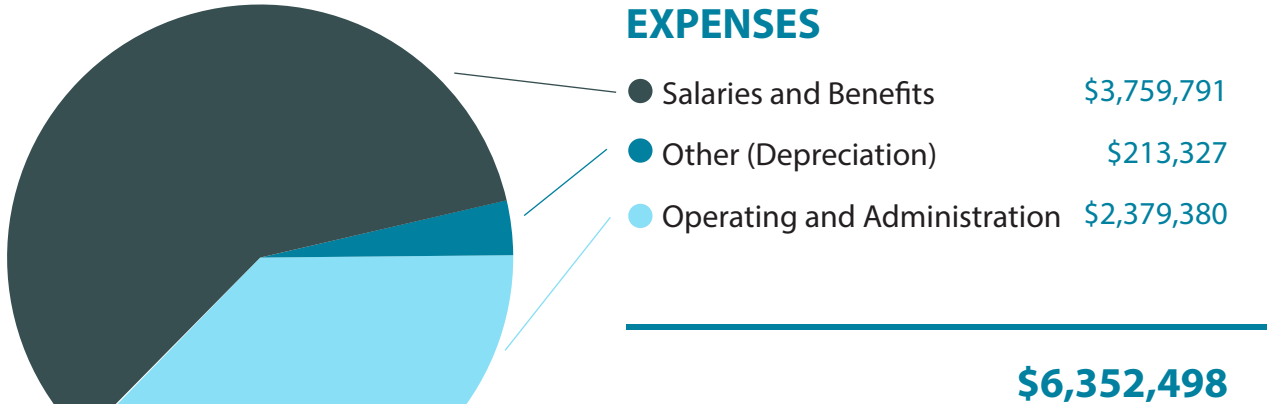
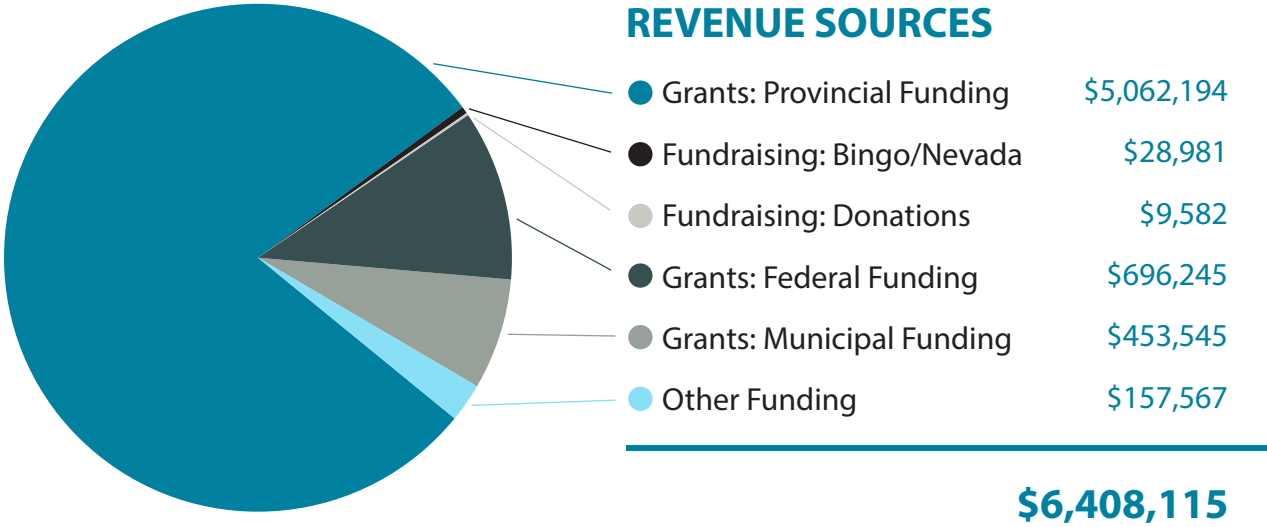
The John Howard Society of Niagara was part of a proposal "write" that represented all of the social services that support youth in Niagara. Niagara was chosen to be one of the new Youth Wellness Hubs for the province. We were very happy to have been given the opportunity to be one of the physical sites for the operation of the Hub in Niagara. We and our partner sites, The Centre' de Sante', and the Fort Erie Friendship Centre, have welcomed many of the youth serving agencies into our buildings to make accessing service much easier for youth and their families. On top of that, the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health invested in the Hub site in Welland to create a site where youth could gather and get not only support services, but also, food, and recreational activities as well. As the Covid-19 crisis comes to an end, we have great anticipation, that when we can gather, the camaraderie of sharing a space and activities will make the site a more accessible space, and open up support services to those who previously might not have had access.

While we finished the year quickly developing virtual approaches to reaching our clients. We were pleasantly surprised at the enthusiastic responses of those that we were trying to reach. Their enthusiasm, across the full spectrum of our service delivery model, was encouraging. Our staff were remarkably creative, and responsive. Our client supports never wavered during the rapid transition. It is a tribute to both our staff's ingenuity, and the commitment of our clients that this transition went so well.

I would like to thank each of our many community partners for their support during this very difficult time. Our partners have been wonderfully engaging, and supportive. The many folks at the Courthouse and the NRPS Headquarters who made the transition to "virtual court", seamless. The banding together of the Employment Ontario Managers has helped significantly with a turbulent end to the year, and I am sure that this group will also be helpful during the transition to a new system, intended to support more vulnerable clients. The Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre, Niagara Chapter of Native Women, Centre' de Sante', Contact Niagara, CASON, Pathstone, and The Raft attached to the Youth Wellness Hub have also been so supportive during a transition time. The Community Services Network of Niagara has really bound together during this time. The John Howard Society of Niagara has benefitted profoundly from these partnerships.

I would also like to recognize our Board of Directors at the John Howard Society of Niagara. They are so generous with their time. The support that they offer me, and our organization is invaluable. We have a significant change with our Executive Committee this year. I am so grateful for the huge amount of time that the outgoing officers have provided to this organization, while anxiously awaiting the new perspective that change offers!

Jay Gemmell
Executive Director



Bail Verification and Supervision Program

This program allows for marginalized individuals to have fair and equal access to a bail release.
2019-20: 300 clients accepted into the program.

Indigenous Persons' Bail Court

Helps indigenous persons to learn about and reconnect with their culture. Offering culturally specific plans of care after facing systemic racism in the criminal justice system.

WASH (Weekend and Statutory Holiday) Court

Ensures individuals arrested on weekends and holidays have access to program supports.

Adult Community Service Order

Community service hours are completed by clients, providing essential assistance to not for profit and charitable organizations across the Niagara Region.
2019-20: 205 client referrals, 5,530 hours completed in the community

Direct Accountability Program

The program allows for individuals accused of low level and first time offenses to be diverted out of the regular court system.
2019-20: 222 eligible individuals were referred to DAP, held accountable through community-based sanctions.

Intermittent Community Work

The program allows for individuals who would otherwise be serving a weekend sentence in an institution, to give back to their communities on weekends through community service. 2019-20: 383 hours in the community

Record Suspension

This customized fee-for-service support helps to navigate the record suspension process for interested, eligible individuals.

Non-Residential Attendance Centre

Community program aimed to rehabilitate and reintegrate youth by providing cognitive based programming to fit the participants' individual needs.

Bail Verification and Supervision Program

Adult Community Service Order Program

Direct Accountability Program

Intermittent Community Work Program

Record Suspension

Non-Residential Attendance Centre

Community Case Management and Supervision Program

NEW Community Case Management and Supervision Program

The John Howard Society of Niagara (JHSoN) partners with the John Howard Society of Canada (JHSC) and Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) to provide community case management and supervision to selected individuals who are released from detention. This partnership directly supports the CBSA's effort to provide increased options for the effective release of individuals into the community while achieving a balanced enforcement outcome. It also aligns with recommendations from the United Nations' High Commission for Refugees for a more robust Alternatives To Detention (ATD) program within Canada.

An ATD is any set of tools or programs that can offset a risk that an individual could pose if released into the community. In June 2018, the CBSA launched its ATD program which, in addition to other types of release options, includes the Community Case Management and Supervision (CCMS) program. The intent of CCMS is to promote detention avoidance, or release from detention for selected persons who are compliant with the CBSA. These individuals may either lack a suitable bondsperson, or require social service supports in addition to their bondsperson in order to mitigate risk upon release into the community. The JHSoN is established and experienced in the delivery of CCMS to individuals who pose some level of risk to the public, or pose a risk to the integrity of the CBSA's immigration enforcement program.

To achieve the objectives of CCMS, the JHSoN employs a holistic approach by providing a structured and supportive environment that seeks to address the needs of the individual while abiding by the individual's release conditions. The services provided may include:

- Establishing reporting requirements;
- Referrals to health & mental health support;
- Referrals to addiction support;
- Referrals to employment & housing support;
- Referrals to support for families & children; and
- Mandatory residency (for high risk individuals), as required

The CCMS program has been a welcomed addition to the community services that our organization has been offering to the Niagara Region for over 70 years!

A Story of Resiliency and Success

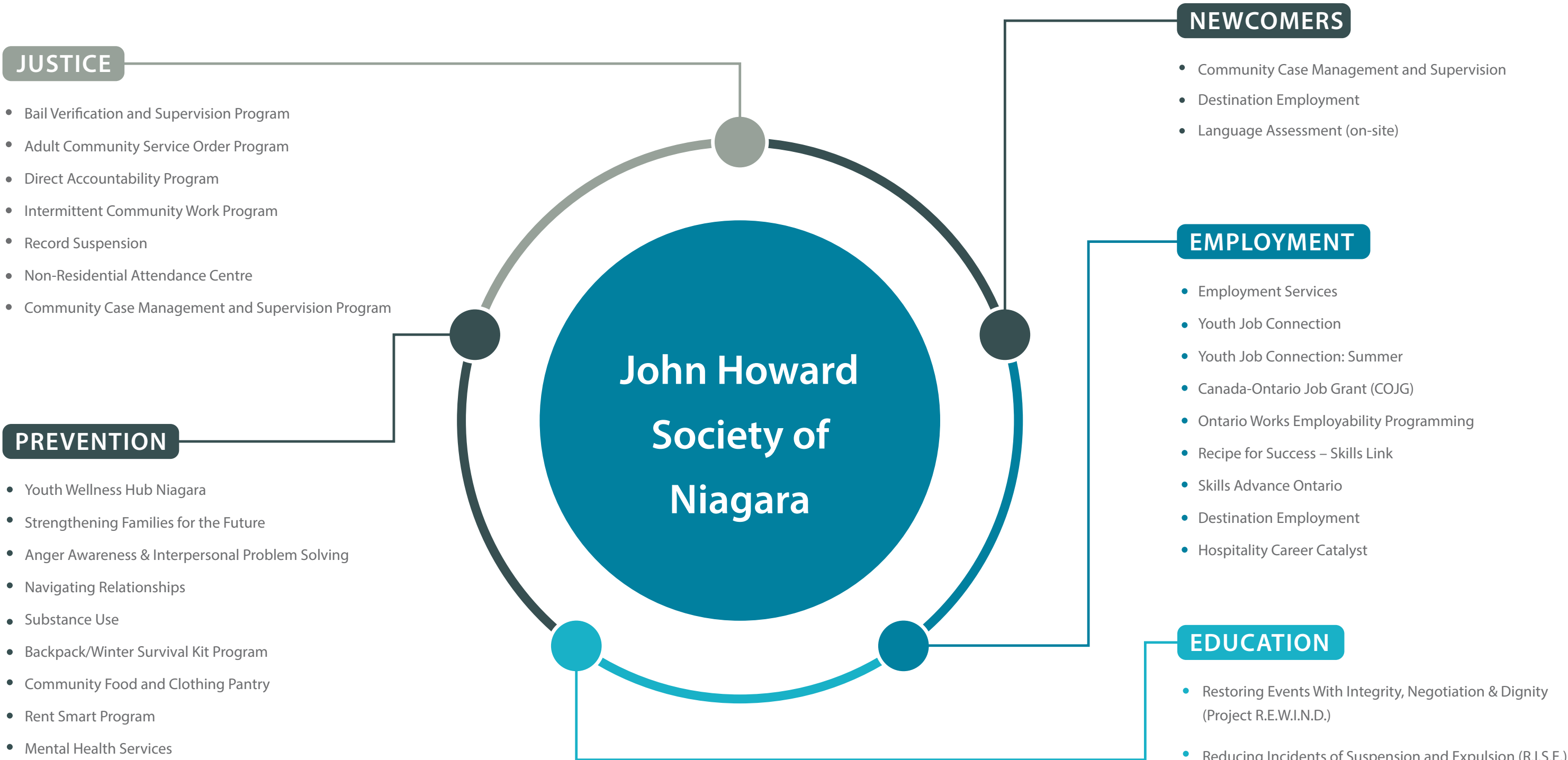
As Bail Counsellors, it's tough to explain how involved we can become in someone's life. In some situations, we become what feels like the only lifeline a person has left. This was particularly true for a client I'll call "Dave". When I first met Dave, he walked into my office as a ball of nerves - making frequent jokes to ease his anxiety of meeting his new Bail Counsellor. Dave had come into contact with the law with intertwining criminal and family court proceedings. Most devastating for Dave was the fact that he was not able to see his children as a part of his bail release. From this first meeting, it was clear that Dave was struggling to hang on - struggling with the new norm of living without his children, losing his business, on the verge of losing his house and car, and all while struggling with significant mental health issues, and battling a past of addiction. To Dave, it felt as though his whole world was crumbling apart.

And it was. My role was to keep Dave motivated. To keep him fighting. However, this was often easier said than done as it seemed as though each time Dave took a step forward, there were multiple new obstacles waiting for him. His Legal Aid application, for example, took several months to complete and was over a hundred pages. From there, he struggled to: find lawyers who would take his case, get on financial assistance, refinance his house and his car, and address both physical and mental health concerns. And through all of this, he would show up to bail appointments, without fail, but often defeated by the set-backs he had faced.

During our appointments, we would prioritize what needed to be done first, and I would attempt to figure out what I could do to assist and make his load lighter, give him a pep-talk and send him out the door with a list of things he could focus on until I saw him again. Sometimes that to-do list just said, "Wake up and get out of the house each day." Finally, after over a year of being in the Bail Program, there was an end in sight when Dave's lawyer mentioned a timeline of when his case would go to trial, which gave Dave an idea of when he could hope to see his children again. But...then COVID-19 hit, and Dave's court cases were essentially put on hold.

When I called Dave each week thereafter, it would be obvious in his voice that he was running out of hope. I would say, "Hang in there Dave! As permanent as this bail process feels right now, it is temporary. You will get through it". He would then remark that he keeps trying to tell himself this, but each set-back makes the bad situations feel everlasting. One day, he called back 5 minutes after our weekly pep-talk. He explained that his lawyer called with a potential offer to settle outside of trial. He was elated. The next time I called, he had obtained a new psychiatrist, one he will get to see ongoing rather than bouncing from one to the next, and the psychiatrist had agreed to write a letter in support of his ODSP appeal. He thanked me for the ongoing support, and I remind him that he did all the hard work. Despite the challenges and often feeling so overwhelmed he could hardly leave his house, he stayed clean, he attended counselling, he managed to find the right combination of mental health medications, and he developed a strong network of supports. He never missed appointments, he learned to advocate for himself, and he learned to reflect on his accomplishments. His resiliency and determination to overcome challenges are what makes him an undoubtable success in the Bail Program.

-Heather, Bail Counsellor



Prevention

Youth Wellness Hub Niagara

This fully integrated one-stop shop for youth age 12-25, in partnership with MHLTC, CAMH, MCSS, addresses gaps in the youth services system.

Strengthening Families for the Future

A prevention program for families with children of all ages who may be at risk for substance misuse, depression, violence, delinquency, or school failure.

Anger Awareness & Interpersonal Problem Solving

This fee-for-service program is offered in a dynamic group environment, teaching participants to respond to anger responsibly by using positive coping mechanisms.

Navigating Relationships

These fee-for-service sessions held in confidential group environments provide insight, tools and support to make positive changes promoting healthy relations.

Substance Use

This fee-for-service psycho-educational program is based on harm reduction principles and includes discussion on recovery planning and relapse prevention.

Backpack/Winter Survival Kit Program

Through community donations and John Howard Society of Niagara funds, backpacks containing essential hygiene products are provided to individuals in the community who are experiencing homelessness.

Youth Wellness Hub Niagara

Strengthening Families for the Future

Anger Awareness & Interpersonal Problem Solving

Navigating Relationships

Substance Use

Backpack/Winter Survival Kit Program

Community Food and Clothing Pantry

Rent Smart Program

Mental Health Services

Community Food and Clothing Pantry

Through generous donations, this program offers much needed emergency necessities including food, toiletries, and clothing.

Rent Smart Program

Provides education and support to tenants, landlords, and community educators with one goal: successful tenancies.

Mental Health Services

Mental health counselling services available on-site at all locations helping participants to manage short and long term mental health concerns. Direct referrals to the Niagara Health System for additional mental health supports provided on an as needed basis.

Education

Project R.E.W.I.N.D

(Restoring Events With Integrity, Negotiation & Dignity)

The John Howard Society of Niagara is proudly working together with all of the school boards in the Niagara Region and the Niagara Regional Police in an effort to respond pro-actively to harming behaviour. The School Based Restorative Justice Program is one innovative way in which we are meeting the needs of youth in our community.

Any form of harming behaviour not only disrupts the educational process for those directly involved, but also affects the atmosphere within the schools and surrounding communities.

As a committed partnership, we are working hard to maintain a safe, caring school community, where every young person can feel the safety and security that is necessary to learn and grow.

R.I.S.E Program

(Reducing Incidents of Suspension & Expulsion)

In conjunction with The District School Board of Niagara, The John Howard Society of Niagara administers the R.I.S.E program to students on short and long term suspensions or expelled from their home school. The program provides students with the opportunity to address a student’s individual cognitive social-emotional-physical barriers to success. The R.I.S.E Program is comprised of three major components - academic, life skills and physical activity.

The purpose of the R.I.S.E program is to provide students with a safe learning environment to continue their studies and to develop effective strategies so the students can successfully return to school. The John Howard Society workers with a partnership with the DSBN Social Worker are responsible for facilitation of the life skills/social skills portion of the program. Focus areas include social and emotional components of decision making, goal setting and emotional regulation.

Restoring Events With Integrity, Negotiation & Dignity (Project R.E.W.I.N.D.)

Reducing Incidents of Suspension and Expulsion (R.I.S.E.)

DSBN’s Link to College Program

Care and/or Treatment, Custody and Correctional (CTCC) Facilities

DSBN’s Link to College Program

The Niagara Link program is designed for students who are not currently attending secondary school or who are at risk of leaving school before graduation. This program allows students to work towards earning secondary school courses while at the same time earning one Niagara College Dual Credit. (A Dual Credit counts both as a secondary school credit AND a College general elective credit). The College provides all of the students with a glimpse of “life after high school” and provides different elements than a typical secondary school environment. This program is a perfect transition program from high school to post-secondary.

Care and/or Treatment, Custody and Correctional (CTCC) Facilities

A CTCC program provides a safe place for students who are unable to attend regular or special education classes within a community school. The CTCC classrooms run in specialized sites across Ontario. The Pathways to Success program is a program created and funded to support children and youth in the Niagara Region. The Pathways to Success program is a venture between the DSBN and the John Howard Society of Niagara. The program is designed to address students’ individual academic, social, and emotional needs, provide stabilization and treatment, and assist the home school in developing education plans supporting other programs in the Niagara Region upon discharge. Each student is placed on an individualized and flexible program with respect to academics, social skills, and transition/re-integration plan.

Employment

Job Gym is the Employment Services Division of the John Howard Society of Niagara, providing professional services to the Niagara community since 1976. We have over 10,000 visitors to our centres annually and serve a diverse population.

Job Gym is a leader in connecting employees to local employers and are experts in the labour market and training fields. Professional, qualified Employment Counsellors provide one-on-one services free of charge in a respectful, inclusive environment.

Our commitment to clients is demonstrated through our just-in-time service model where we value fiscal integrity, flexible, adaptable and responsive services. We reach the most remote locations in our region through itinerant and digital services. Our highly trained staff are skilled in recognizing the diversity of our clients and their vast range of needs and can adapt interventions that are appropriate, cost effective, and suitable.

Job Gym Website and Job Board

The Job Gym website is a great resource for anyone seeking information about employment in Niagara. Job Gym continually promotes the latest jobs through our website, job board, and social media. Niagara’s most popular Job Board features hundreds of local jobs every day. Job Seekers can apply online and Employers can post jobs at no cost. With hundreds of thousands of visitors a year, it’s Niagara’s favourite job resource.

Recipe for Success

This 16-week program includes 3 weeks of pre-employment workshops at the St. Catharines Job Gym and 13 weeks at Wendy’s job placement with weekly workshops. Participants receive an hourly wage for all workshops and job placement. Pre-employment and life skill training are provided to prepare for and maintain job placements.

- Employment Services
- Youth Job Connection
- Youth Job Connection: Summer
- Canada-Ontario Job Grant (COJG)
- Ontario Works Employability Programming
- Recipe for Success – Skills Link
- Skills Advance
- Destination Employment
- Hospitality Career Catalyst

Youth Job Connection and Youth Job Connection: Summer

This program provides intensive employment supports for youth ages 15 to 29 who are not employed or in education, and experience multiple barriers to employment.

The summer component of Youth Job Connection provides summer part-time, and after-school job opportunities to high school students aged 15 to 18, who are facing challenging life circumstances and may need support transitioning between school and work.

Supports include:

- Paid pre-employment training to promote job readiness
- Job matching and paid job placements
- Hiring incentives for employers
- Mentorship services
- Education and work transitions supports



Client Testimonials

Job Gym - Employment Services Division of the John Howard Society of Niagara has been providing Aerosafe Technologies with Co-operative Education candidates since March of 2019 that has benefitted and enabled these talented individuals to transition into full-time positions with our highly skilled team. Our companies have a mutually respectful and productive working relationship. Job Gym Employment Services provides us with excellent customer service and keeps us informed of available funding opportunities. If you are considering using Job Gym as your labour provider, they have my highest recommendation.

Barry Romanyk
Plant Manager
Designated Official (CGP)
Aerosafe Technologies / Aerosafe Processing
1767 Pettit Road, Fort Erie, ON. L2A 5N1



I have engaged in the expertise and services of the Job Gym and worked closely with them for the last 3.5 years. The team at the Job Gym are always top notch at keeping us informed and providing us with resources, changes to legislation and new opportunities for business grants. They understand our business needs and find us candidates that are the right fit for our organization. I often find myself referring my experience with the Job Gym to colleagues and other business connections.

Colleen Hykoski
Human Resources Manager
Fleet Canada Inc.
1011 Gilmore Road, Fort Erie, L2A 5M4



John Howard Society of Niagara
Staff Service Awards - 2020

Congratulations to these staff members for reaching a milestone year of employment at the John Howard Society of Niagara!

5 years

- Gillian Lomax

10 years

- Heather Barton
- Joe Saxon

15 years

- Hope Elliott
- Ashley Flett
- Jay Gemmell
- Samantha Messier

20 years

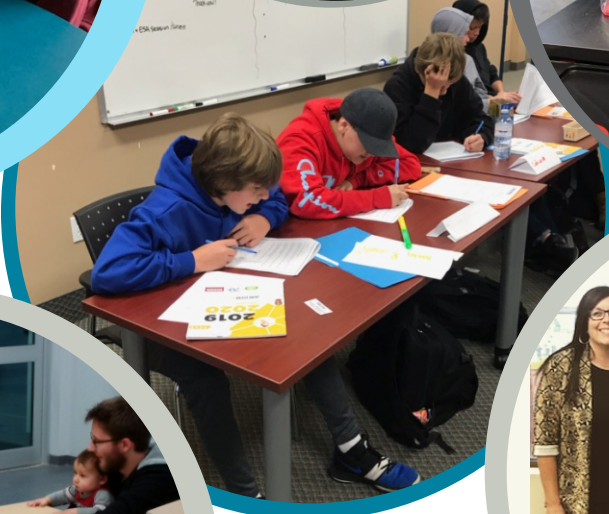
- Amanda Channon



education



justice



prevention



employment

