



A letter from Dave Smith
December 2011

My Dear Friend,

It's been another busy year for all of us but the holidays make us slow down a little, think about the people we love and if we're lucky, share time together. It's also a time to look back over the past year and for me it's been such an amazing year that I wanted to write to you personally to let you know how things are coming along at the Dave Smith Youth Treatment Centre.

The Dave Smith Youth Treatment Centre has now completed a full year of offering residential drug and alcohol abuse treatment services for young people between the ages of 13-21.

You know, when I first planted the seed in this community for residential treatment for our youth over 20 years ago, people didn't understand the need. Kid's lives, families and communities were being destroyed by the crime, health issues and broken hearts that substance abuse brings with it. In the day treatment program, the youth themselves were telling us that they needed more. They told us that to leave at 4:00 each afternoon and walk back into the situations that brought them to us wasn't working for them. They needed so much more than day treatment if they ever had a hope of claiming back their lives.

I was determined not to give up until folks all across our community understood. Substance abuse and mental health had to be talked about and not swept under the carpet anymore.

Thankfully folks like you, our board members and clinical staff believed in my dream. We never gave up. Then Ottawa police Chief, Vern White and other prominent members of our community started speaking out. The Champlain Local Health Integration Network listened and the Dave Smith Youth Treatment Centre was chosen to integrate with Alwood Treatment Centre in Carleton Place and open the only residential treatment program for youth (13-21) this side of Thunder Bay or Toronto.

Once we heard that news we did not want to wait one day longer than we had to before opening our doors. There sure was no time to wait to raise the almost \$8 million needed to build a suitable new 30 bed facility. So, we agreed to open two temporary facilities (Carleton Place for male clients and Carp for female) so that we could get treatment programs up and going right away. I was so proud the day I cut the ribbon on the Carp Campus for girls. I thought my heart would pound out of my chest knowing we were one step closer to making my decades-long dream happen.

We still have to raise the money for the new facility, *but I'll write to you about that another time.*

Last year, 162 young people were admitted for much-needed treatment; including addiction treatment, life skills, nutrition and fitness, high school or continuing education. Once they graduate from residential treatment, a continuing care counsellor helps them readjust and connects them to community services, home and school. Families also receive guidance through the family program.

There is more. Barriers have been removed and now anybody refer a youth. We've strengthened ties with Royal Ottawa Hospital and the mental health team at CHEO. Dr. Rob Milin from the Royal Ottawa Hospital has joined our staff and now does regular rounds at the residential Campuses. We have also become a teaching facility and currently have a psychiatric resident on premises.

I'm telling you, it's so amazing to watch these young people take back their lives! They work so hard and it's just such an honour to see them at their graduation, healthy and full of new hope. I wish I had time to tell you all the wonderful stories but I appreciate your time and want to talk to you about something important before I go.

This time of year we all run around to find things to wrap and give people we care about. I'm going to ask you to think for just a minute or two to consider giving a little something to the Dave Smith Youth Treatment Centre and help us turn a young life around.

You know, making a donation in someone's name is a gift that always fits. I'll even help you finish shopping. If you send me a list of names and addresses with a donation of \$10 per name, I will personally send a gift card out on your behalf letting your loved one know that their gift from you helped change the life of a deserving young person.

Thank you for helping support the important work we do and in the youth in crisis we care for. Together, we'll make sure any youth who asks for help gets it.

I wish you a holiday filled with good food and laughter.



Dave Smith
Founder, Dave Smith Youth Treatment Centre

P.S. Please take a few minutes to return the enclosed envelope today. If you have any questions, call Carolyn at 594-8333 ext 1201. She'll help you.

YES! I want to help with a gift of \$ _____ Give online at davesmithcentre.org

First and Last Name: *(please print)* _____

Mailing Address: _____

- My cheque (payable to Dave Smith Youth Treatment Centre) is enclosed.
 I would like to make my donation with: VISA MASTERCARD American Express

Credit Card # _____ Expiry Date: ____ / ____

Signature: _____

Dave Smith Youth Treatment Centre, 786 Bronson Ave., Ottawa ON K1S
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