

Annual General Meeting Report

2015-2016

ADVICE FROM YOUNG CARERS TO THEIR CAREGIVING PEERS...

We asked our Powerhouse Project members this:

If you could give a young carer advice based on your own experiences, what would it be?

The results blew us away...

"Believe in yourself."

"Stay strong."

"It's hard, exhausting, stressful, fun, happy and good."

"Make sure you spend some time on yourself. Don't let yourself fade away."

"Have good humour and be positive."

"Run when you can. Walk when needed. Crawl if you must. Just never give up."

"Keep your head high, even in the darkest times. You gotta smile and show your pride of helping your family members. Never feel sad, for you are making someone else's life happier by showing them you honestly love and care for them. Turn your worries into joy for you are showing someone else that they literally mean the world to you, which will make a smile grow on their face. You are a strong person by showing your love and loyalty to them. Keep that smile shining, even through the dark, for you will always make it out."

Founded August, 2008

"Our Vision . . . A community where Young Carers and their families are supported and can reach their full potential."

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND BOARD CHAIR

If our work through the 2015-2016 year has shown anything, it's that caregiving is truly a family event. This year opened our eyes to the caregiver experience in new and unanticipated ways. Through participation in *The Caring Experience* project, we learned on a much deeper level how no one family caregiver journey is the same, all with varying intensities and levels of impact. The focus groups facilitated by *The Change Foundation* in Hagersville and St. Catharines gave us the opportunity to really hear our families and young carers as they shared their stories. Just when we thought we understood the young carer experience and the importance of being connected with our Powerhouse families, we were unexpectedly shaken and moved beyond words. Through listening and learning combined with the research from Dr. Chalmers and her students at Brock University, we have enhanced our knowledge and understanding of our organizational purpose and have a clear vision of what work needs to be done.

With a commitment to quality, the 2016 -2017 year will be powered by a sincere appreciation for our families and the amazing kids we have the privilege to serve, a genuine desire to make a difference in their lives, and a stronger drive to advocate for their recognition in the healthcare world.

We would like to thank everyone who has been a part of this incredible year. We are so very grateful to be a part of it all.

Michelle Lewis

Michelle Lewis, Executive Director

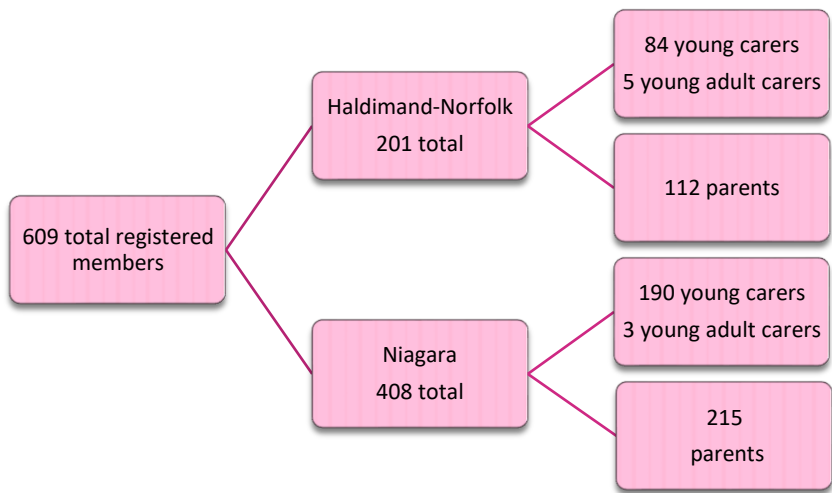
Christina Smith

Christina Smith, Board Chair

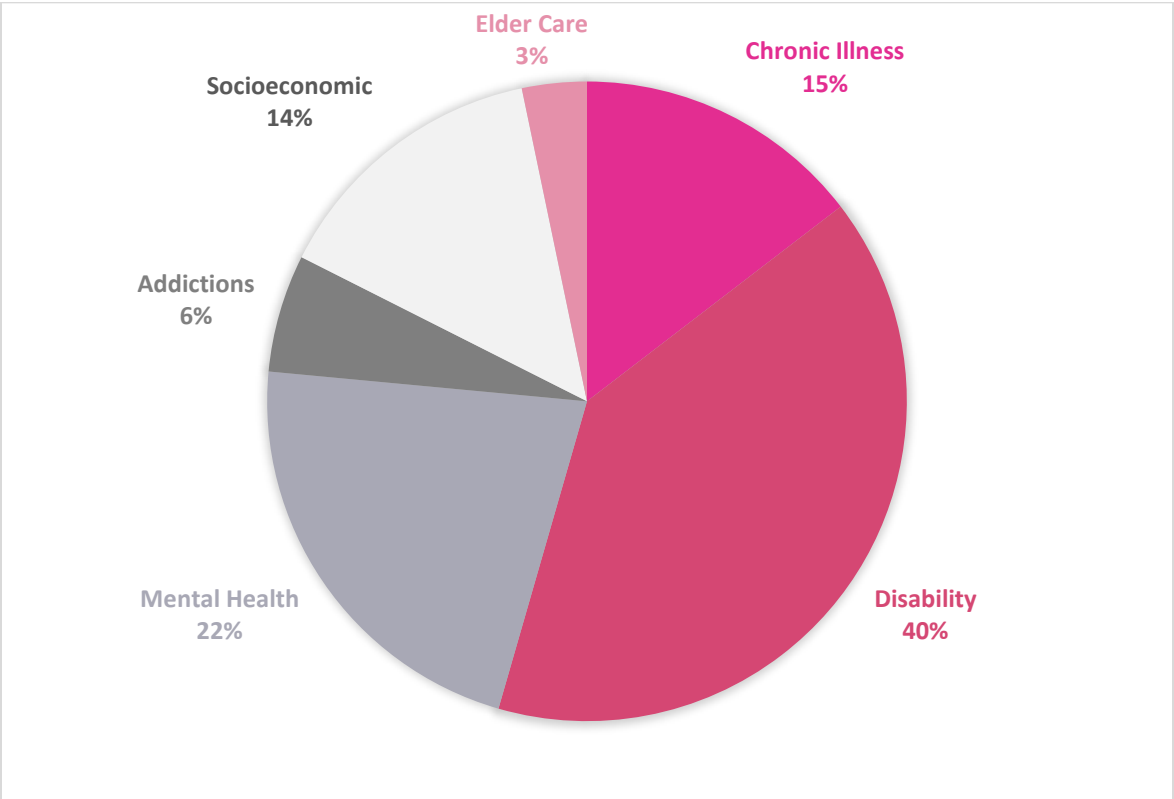


Summary of Members

As of March 31st, 2016

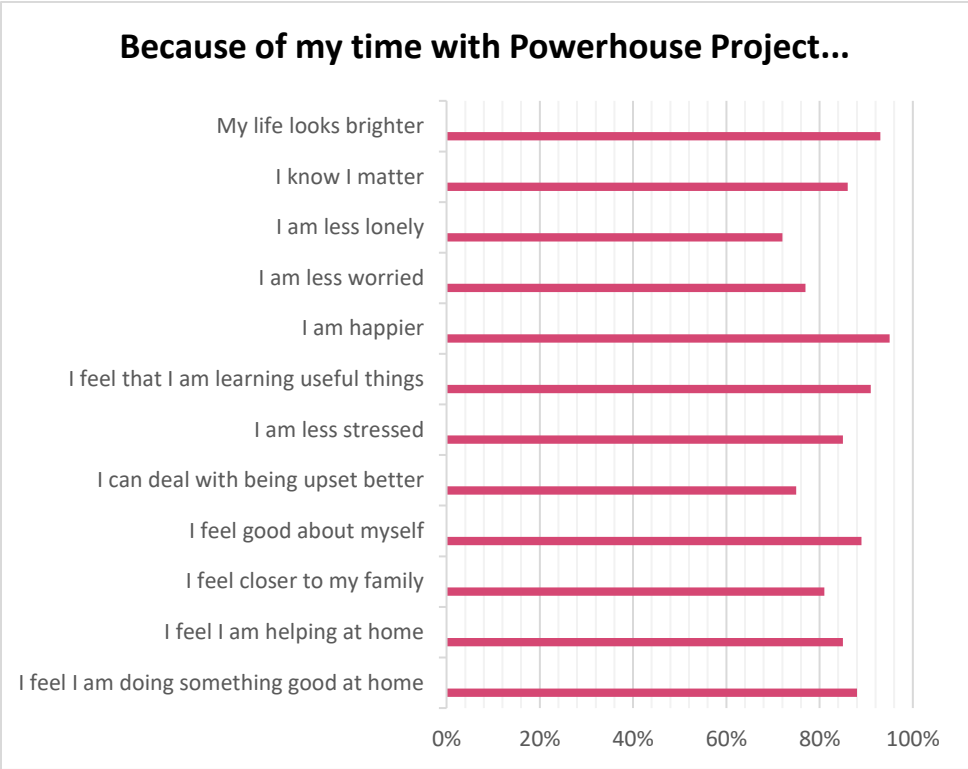


Reasons for Caregiving



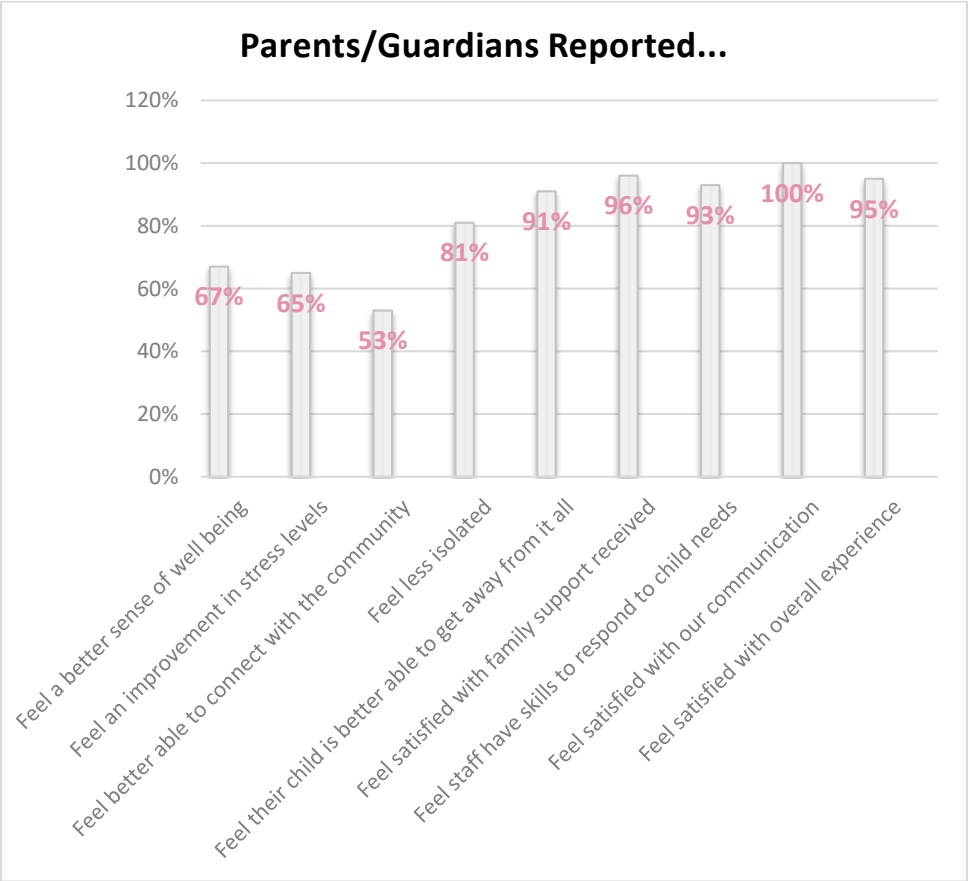
30% of our young carers are caregiving for multiple family members and for multiple reasons.

Young Carers Said...



"My perfect life would be to have Powerhouse every day!"

- Young Carer



"For her it gives a sense of belonging, of not being alone. To have fun with other kids that understand and get it. It's nice knowing she can speak freely and open up in a way that she might not with us. We are forever grateful for finding out about Powerhouse."

-Parent

"I wish I could be a better Dad to my son, I am so limited in what I can do. I am so thankful for Powerhouse Project so that my son can get out and have fun."

-Parent

2015 – 2016 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Christina
Smith
CHAIR

Kim Latour
PAST CHAIR

Rick Nero
TREASURER

Laura Dumas
SECRETARY

Robyn Garner
DIRECTOR

Vanessa Coens
DIRECTOR

Pam Isaak
DIRECTOR

Tracey
Marshall
DIRECTOR

John Woods
DIRECTOR

THANK YOU

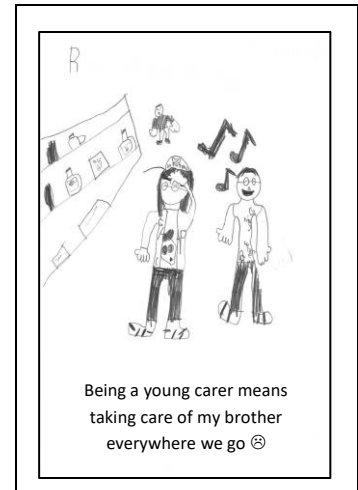
On behalf of the caregiving families we support, we'd like to give a huge thank you to our very dedicated and special staff, board, and community partners, specifically the Alzheimer Society of Brant Haldimand Norfolk Hamilton Halton. It truly does take a village!

"Honestly, I can't say enough how much I appreciate what you have done for my son. He has confidence and wants to do things now. You care and always reach out. Not many organizations do that".

- Parent

Accomplishments

- Launched in-school programs in 2 Welland elementary schools
- Selected by the LHIN 4 as part of their Voices in the Community video series
- Featured on the Taking Niagara By Storm television show where staff, a young carer and a parent were interviewed
- Enhanced our services through the sibling support we provided as part of an Autism Ontario, HN REACH and McMaster Children's Hospital partnership
- Received funding from PenFinancial Credit Union to purchase booster seats when providing transportation for young carers
- Implemented a new social media strategy to enhance our communication and outreach
- Invited to participate in the Caitlin's Wish project – a collection of stories, poems, illustrations, and other works by young carers worldwide
- All staff were certified in Mental Health First Aid for Adults who Interact with Youth and in SafeTALK
- Selected to participate in focus groups for The Change Foundation's Caring Experience Project



Strategic Plan 2016 – 2019

#1. Strengthen Our Foundation: *Optimize board and organizational effectiveness and enhance sustainability.*

- 1.1 Align governance model and policies with strategic direction and the mission, vision and values
- 1.2 Ensure the integrity of programs and implement outcome measurement
- 1.3 Foster a culture of high quality improvement and achievement of success
- 1.4 Diversify revenue sources to stabilize, enhance and grow the organization
- 1.5 Endorse evidence informed practice
- 1.6 Invest in board and staff development
- 1.7 Program policy development
- 1.8 Align staff model with goals

#2. Grow Our Leadership: *Enhance our status as a trusted advisor on young carer issues in Ontario.*

- 2.1 Grow our leadership in the provision of young carer support services and programming
- 2.2 Seek opportunities to participate in research
- 2.3 Advocate for the needs of young carers
- 2.4 Initiate opportunities for collaboration
- 2.5 Ensure staff, volunteers and board members have the necessary tools to be strong advocates for our organization
- 2.6 Bring our expertise to schools, hospitals and medical professionals to develop supports for young carers
- 2.7 Strengthen our brand

#3 Increase Our Impact: *Enrich the lives of young carers and their caregiving families.*

- 3.1 Engage clients in planning through scheduled advisory committee opportunities
- 3.2 Enhance community referrals and support connections for clients
- 3.3 Work to improve transportation barriers to service
- 3.4 Increase number of clients served
- 3.5 Enhance our community profile, specifically in Haldimand-Norfolk

A Year to Remember...

