

February 9, 2016,

Mr. Brian Kreps, Program Manager, Emergency Hostels, Hamilton Social Service Department

Stephanie Paparella.for Friday Feb. 12th Budget Meeting

We are writing to ask you to fund the needs of the Good Shepherd program, Community Resource Centre, which is offered by Notre Dame House. This established valuable program which supports street youth is in dire financial need. This city can and should provide continuing help for our most vulnerable youth. The 2016 city budget should be able to accommodate this small program. This city is wealthy enough and compassionate enough.

The Canadian Federation of University Women, at national, provincial and local levels, has established as priorities the support of children and the reduction of poverty. One of the most important goals is the establishment of safe and adequate care for our child population. The teenagers and young adults served by the Community Resource Centre have a right to have a future. They need help now.

As you are sadly aware, Hamilton has a particularly high rate of children living in poverty. The rate was estimated at one in four children in both 2009 and 2013. Along with the poverty but not solely because of poverty many youth are forced out of their homes, because of family conflict and abuse. With supportive intervention they can get on with their lives safely. In 2009 our Social Planning and Research Council identified projects for street youth which had successfully helped many youth and specifically had diverted eighty one teens from becoming homeless. These programs are successful and we are proud to be part of a caring city which provides them..

Part of the City of Hamiltons official vision statement is "to be the best place in Canada to raise a child". The city has three strategic priorities: to build a prosperous and healthy community, to deliver valued and sustainable services, and to work together to ensure good leadership and governance. We are asking that your decision reflect these guidelines. Please continue to fund this valuable program that truly helps those most in need .

Sincerely,

Deborah Welland,

President of the Hamilton branch of the Canadian Federation of University Women