



Welcome Back!

Reaching for Rainbows is thrilled to be able to re-open this fall and welcome the girls back to the playroom! COVID-19 has been a challenge for everyone in our community; especially those that are most vulnerable. When the girls spend time with us after school, they're offered a safe space where they can engage, learn, create and join friends and program leaders around a table, sharing snacks and stories.

Reaching for Rainbows is needed now more than ever, to support the young girls in our community and their families and to help them recover from the great challenges that the last year and a half held. As the programs reopens, we will be following and adhering to all public health guidelines to ensure a safe space for our girls and program leaders.

Strengthening relationships in their Rainbow community supports skill development and will help the girls build up their confidence and thrive. We can't wait to see them!

What have we been up to?

Reaching for Rainbows follows the school board's calendar and does not open if the schools aren't open. We had to make the difficult decision to temporarily close our doors until the timing is right to re-open this Fall. Instead of a setback, we saw this as an opportunity to focus on building a sustainable future for the program. Our goals and fundamental principles in working with the girls remains the same - honouring their uniqueness and supporting their individual needs. We have been hard at work creating a larger Board of Directors and bringing on an Executive Director and Program Coordinator to strengthen and support the future of Rainbows, and all the people in our community who benefit from the program.

2021/2022 Board of Directors:

Lynne Donovan, Jane Wollenberg, James Wright, Wendy Chapman, Kelly Sinclair, Kiran Menzies & Amanda Flude.

Staff:

Emily Pennington (Executive Director) & Karen Hotston (Program Coordinator)

All of us at Reaching for Rainbows would like to make a special thank you to Judie McLaughlin who has been committed to Rainbows for almost 10 years. We appreciate her tireless dedication of time and support to keep Rainbows going for the girls and our community. All the best Judie in your future endeavours!

Rainbows in our Community

Reaching for Rainbows is so fortunate to have the support of the community of Prince Edward County throughout the pandemic. Due to COVID-19, many of our legacy funders have been limited in their ability to help, and with the need having increased more than ever in our community, this is a challenging time to achieve

funding goals. Recognizing this, we have had some remarkable community partnerships reach out to us to help support where they can.

Grant Van Gameron of the local food truck **Harry's Charbroiled** connected with *Reaching for Rainbows* in April, and we have been fortunate to have their fundraising support throughout their season this year! They are located at Cressy Mustard Co., and are accepting cash and debit donations through a Rainbows cash box on site. Check them out the next time you are in the mood for an amazing burger!

Oak Clothing & Surf Shop located in Wellington generously donated a portion of their surfboard lottery funds to Rainbows. **Edwin Farms** is accepting donations on our behalf at the Picton Town Hall Market. **The Good Place** in Wellington & **The Bloomfield Market** are also accepting donations on our behalf. In addition, we are so thankful to the **Kinsmen Club, Picton Rotary, Parrot Foundation, The Community Foundation** and more for their continued support to keep our program up and running.

Why are we here?

Over ten years ago, our current Board Chair Lynne Donovan saw the statistics disproportionately affecting the youth of Prince Edward County and the inequities within our community, lower than average literacy & high-school graduation rates, higher than average food insecurity and issues around housing affordability.

She invited experts in youth programming, early childhood education, and child and youth work around the table to identify how she could create something to improve the trajectories of the 37% of PEC children who are identified as vulnerable.

What was recognized through all of this work was that the ability for children to foster and build healthy relationships is deeply rooted in a play-based program; supporting these children through behavioural, academic and interpersonal issues. From this core strategy, *Reaching for Rainbows* was born and has been a positive game changer ever since for the 200+ girls who have been part of the program, along with their families and the community.

How You Can Help

Your support makes a difference. Two sisters who joined us had speech impediments and were very quiet. With our patience, relationship-building and the resources we coordinated for them, they not only found their voices they also found their confidence.

We understand that everyone has experienced setbacks during these difficult times. Our hope is that you donate what you can to our reopening. Every contribution goes a long way in the program and is appreciated. All donations over \$25 receive a tax receipt.

If you are interested in supporting *Reaching for Rainbows* in other ways, please connect with us info@reachingforrainbows.com. We'd love to hear from you!

