

# Community Information Hamilton

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## 39th ANNUAL REPORT

April 1, 2009  
to  
March 31, 2010

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Administration Line: 905-528-8127  
Website: [www.cishw.on.ca](http://www.cishw.on.ca)

Online database of community services: [www.inform.hamilton.ca](http://www.inform.hamilton.ca)

# Community Information Hamilton

*linking you to your community*

*a proud Inform Hamilton member*

## Annual Report 2009/2010

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### Board of Directors

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In September, 2005 the following foundational statements were adopted:

#### Mission Statement:

We respond to the needs of our clients by linking them to community and government programs and services.

#### Vision:

As the primary provider of information in Hamilton about programs and services, we enable people to participate more fully in the life of their community.

#### We value:

accuracy  
diversity  
leadership

accessibility  
expertise  
partnership

accountability  
integrity  
the people we serve

#### Guiding Principles:

- We collect, manage and provide accurate, complete and up-to-date information.
- We respond quickly, efficiently and effectively to our clients.
- We respect, and are sensitive to, our clients' needs
- We provide leadership and advocacy for community needs.
- We build responsible relationships with others in the community in order to increase our capacity to respond effectively
- We ensure ongoing development of our capacity and expertise in information technology for the benefit of our clients, partners and staff.

Under the leadership of our Board of Directors, and with the support of our funding partners, we strive to accomplish our mission through our inquiry service; electronic database and other resources; community consultation, collaboration and education; publications; social reporting and co-operation with other community and information agencies. CIH also provides specialized child care information and referral services through Child Care Information Hamilton.

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## We appreciate the ongoing support of our funding partners in 2009/2010

City of Hamilton supporting both CIH and Child Care Information Hamilton  
United Way of Burlington & Greater Hamilton  
Ontario Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation (pay equity)  
Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services/Children and Youth Services (pay equity)  
Service Canada – Canada Summer Jobs

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## Report from the President and the Executive Director

Statistics and financial information in the report reference the period April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010. The narrative also covers the period up to the Annual Meeting in June, 2010.

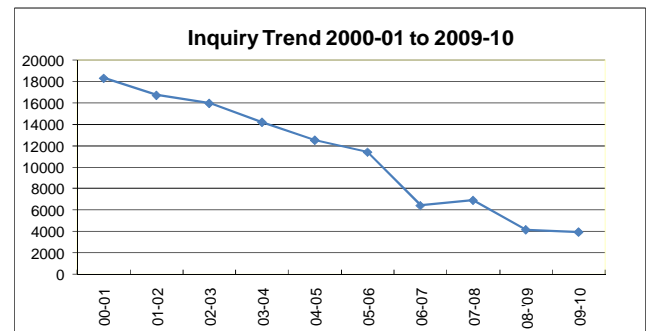
We continue to be inspired by the focus and direction identified through our revitalized strategic planning activities initiated in 2005 and reviewed annually since then. We are pleased to report success in providing service to the community in a complex and volatile service delivery climate. This accomplishment is a credit to our resourceful staff, our funding partners and our dedicated Board of Directors.

### Information and Referral

An important aspect of our work is our Inquiry Service. Whether a request for assistance is by telephone, letter, in person, by fax or e-mail, our staff served clients individually more than 3,900 times with accurate and comprehensive information that addressed their needs.

Although the demand for one-to-one direct service continues to decline, it is more than offset by increases in the use of our online database. When Individuals and organizations are able to “self-serve” the information they need, the limited staff resources of CIH can be focused on those who are at a disadvantage to access information or who are dealing with complex circumstances. We are also able to

concentrate attention on improving and enhancing the information and tools that are available online and through special purpose data collections.

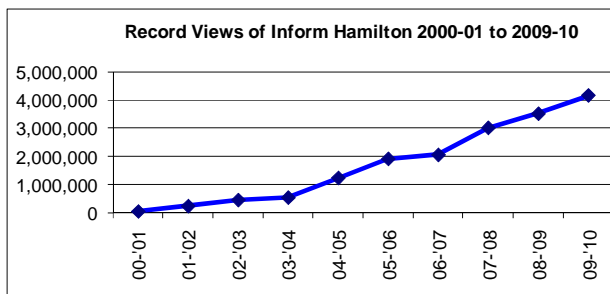


Our **Inform Hamilton** electronic database continues to grow in importance as a critical source of information for the community. In 2009-10, there were **4,161,781** views of records in the database, approximately an **18%** increase over the prior year.

In addition to page view statistics, we can also identify how many **unique** visitors access Inform Hamilton each month. In 2009-10 an average of more than **58,500** unique visitors used our online information collection. Each of these visitors viewed an average of **six** database records.

Feedback from **Inform Hamilton** users is consistently positive. In our November, 2009 online survey, **75%** of respondents were repeat users. **87%** indicated they were either “very successful” or “fairly successful” in finding all or most of the resources they were

seeking. **94%** reported that it was “very easy” or “fairly easy” to navigate and search the online database. The full report is available on request.



Inform Hamilton data is accessed by repeat users, by those who use internet searching tools as well as by people who use one of the custom public data collections that we have created:

- myhamilton.ca community portal
- Ontario Early Years
- Contact Hamilton
- Older Adult Programs & Services
- Diverse Hamilton
- Hamilton Immigration Strategy (under development – and will include a translation tool in each record)

In addition to those specialized collections we are also working with community partners to create and maintain special collections for their internal use including:

- City of Hamilton (Ontario Works)
- Community Care Access Centre
- Hamilton Family Health Team
- Hamilton Cultural Resources (as a data contributor)
- Contact Hamilton

We are committed to continue to respond to the community’s needs by creating new data collections according to specifications.

## Database and Publications

We no longer produce a printed version of the *Red Book*, the directory of community services. The decision to discontinue was in

response to several years of decreased demand for this printed resource. This factor, along with the availability of new software tools prompted us to explore innovative strategies for print products including a “self-serve” option which would allow organizations or individuals to print their own customized resources as they were needed. This has now been implemented for specialized collections.

Leasing and selling data in other electronic and paper formats occurs in response to the expressed needs of the community.

Electronic products are an increasingly significant service delivery mode and revenue source. We provide customized online datasets sourced from the larger **Inform Hamilton** database. Not only does this improve revenue but it is a significant support to meeting our mandate of connecting people with services and working effectively with community partners.

Along with our **Inform Hamilton** partners in Ancaster, Dundas and Flamborough, we develop and enhance our database **Inform Hamilton**. Our goals for the online database are:

- to provide the community with enhanced access to our information
- to improve the efficiency of data collection and maintenance
- to enable staff who respond to information and referral requests to focus their efforts on serving persons who are at a disadvantage to access information
- to generate revenue from a broad portfolio of information products

Underpinning the success of **Inform Hamilton** is **CIOC** software ([www.cioc.ca](http://www.cioc.ca)). We contribute to the management and development of the software through participation in the Community Information Online Consortium. CIOC continues to expand and to support its members with ongoing enhancements. The most recent

enhancements are tools to support search results mapping which are now available to the public through **Inform Hamilton**.

The software enables all CIOC members (ourselves included) to contribute local information to provincial data collections. Our participation in these projects also enhances our revenue stream.

A proposal to initiate a major redevelopment of CIOC software with support from the **Ontario Trillium Foundation** has received final approval. The redevelopment plan will support the work of data management and sharing, information & referral, client tracking, service inventory maps and volunteer opportunities management and matching.

## Child Care Activities

**Child Care Information Hamilton** provides information about child care and related services to residents of the City of Hamilton through the community partnership of **Co-ordinated Access for Child Care**. As the first point of contact and data/website manager, we respond to individual inquiries and community agency requests for information and support. With more than **3,500** referrals as well as **3,325** community contacts in support of maintaining our information and promoting the service, this has been a busy year.

In mid 2009 we completed the integration of all of our child care information into **Inform Hamilton**. As part of this integration, we have introduced a specialized child care search as well as a number of mapping tools and the capacity for online updating.

Child care staff also use the CIOC client-tracker tool to document their work and enable us to produce statistical and narrative reports.

We produce thousands of public education materials and distribute these by electronic

and conventional mail and in person, to parents, caregivers and professionals. In addition, child care staff delivers public and small group presentations in the community.

The Registry of Home-based Child Care provides parents with another child care option. The Registry is a listing service that helps parents to connect with caregivers. Caregivers receive support and training through the services of Affiliated Services for Children and Youth (ASCY), our community partner.

## Disability Information Service Helpline (DISH)

We continue to support DISH with our database. Due to funding limitations, DISH is providing services only part-time. CIH supplies back up information and referral services for people with disabilities to the extent our resources and expertise permits.

## Community Announcements Service

This service provides the community with an economical way to communicate their events and announcements to individuals, community agencies and other organizations. It is also a significant source of revenue to support CIH activities.

Approximately 850 registered subscribers (organizations and individuals) receive notification of new announcements by email. Other users subscribe to the news feed (RSS) available on the site. Service demand is consistent and feedback about the service is exceptionally positive.

## Funding & Support

We are grateful to both the **United Way of Burlington & Greater Hamilton** and the **City of Hamilton** who continue to provide

essential funding support. This support is greatly valued.

The **Inform Hamilton** partners and **CIH** are fortunate to have the critically important support of the **Hamilton Public Library** (HPL). The **CIH** office on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of the Central Branch is provided at very reasonable cost. In addition, HPL and the City have enabled us to integrate with their phone system and HPL provides vital technology and support for our activities.

A grant from **Service Canada** to support the hiring of summer students as well as funding for Pay Equity from the **Province of Ontario** and the **City of Hamilton** also supported our activities in 2009-10.

In March of 2010, our agency was chosen as one of the recipients of **Allegra Hamilton's** FootPRINT Fund®.

The FootPRINT Fund® awards print services, through Allegra Hamilton, to selected nonprofit organizations to enhance their image, expand their services and extend their printing budgets.

## Other Activity Highlights and Partnerships

We are strongly committed to work with and support other community organizations within the limits of our resources. Among our 2009/2010 highlights and participation were:

*Volunteer Hamilton* – we continue to collaborate with Volunteer Hamilton to support their use of CIOC software to display and match volunteer opportunities with people seeking to volunteer.

*French Data Collection* – A selection of **Inform Hamilton** records were initially translated into French in the summer of 2007. Each summer since then we have continued to add to, refine and update this collection. The translated records are publicly available

through the french interface of CIOC via a link from the main search page of **Inform Hamilton**.

*Regional Data Initiatives* – We have provided leadership and co-ordination in the creation of specialized data collections for Older Adult Programs and Services and for our Community Care Access Centre. In addition to data from Hamilton, these collections include information from our colleagues in Niagara, Haldimand-Norfolk, Brant and Burlington.

*Provincial Data Collections - Inform Hamilton* provided data to support provincial data projects including:

- 211Ontario.ca
- Settlement.org
- Ontario Association of Community Care Access Centres
- Ontario Aboriginal Calendar and Services Directory
- Access to Professions and Trades in Ontario
- Directory of Youth Justice Services in Ontario
- Directory of Justice Services and Resources in Ontario
- Inventory of Programs and Services Leading to Employment
- Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities Employment and Training Services

*Other Activities* –

Association of Community Information Centres in Ontario (ACICO/OnLine Ontario)

- Manage online discussion forum

School Age Solutions Advisory (child care)

Child Care Systems Working Group (City of Hamilton)

Community Information OnLine Consortium

- Board of Directors
- HelpDesk/Enhancements Group
- Technical Committee
- Training Committee

Co-ordinated Access for Child Care

- Home Child Care Registry

Best Start Network

myhamilton.ca community portal

Inform Hamilton Partners group

## The Year Ahead . . .

We predict and are planning for an challenging year ahead. Overarching all of our activities will be the implementation of a 211 service in the City of Hamilton which is planned for the fall of 2010. 211 is a simple number to call to obtain community information. Funding to implement call centres throughout Ontario by 2011 was announced in 2008.

We look forward to working with our colleagues in Niagara, Haldimand, Norfolk and Brant to support the delivery of this service to our residents through the provision of excellent community services data. **Inform Hamilton** data will support the centralized call centre based in Niagara Region that will serve all our communities.

We anticipate that activities related to the launch of 211 and the new role for CIH as the regional data co-ordinator for the Central South service area will be a prominent feature of our activities in the coming year.

Among the other activities we anticipate in 2010/2011 are:

- Continued service for the residents of the City of Hamilton through Community Information Hamilton, Inform Hamilton and Child Care Information Hamilton
- Further exploration and development of the revenue generating potential

- of the database through specialized data collections
- Ongoing promotion, and training for the effective use of the **Inform Hamilton** database for community agencies and the public
- Strategic Plan - review and update
- Exploration of options for producing paper resources through a self-serve, fee-for-service tool
- Strengthening our community partnerships in order to better serve our clients and the community
- Enhancement of our collaboration with Volunteer Hamilton
- Review of staff and volunteer job descriptions and performance appraisal processes
- Meeting emerging standards for data management in our role as a critical data provider for 211 and regional data co-ordinator
- Succession planning and transition for our Executive Director position and other staff reorganization to respond to changing demands

We hope to accomplish these and other goals in a climate of stable funding, through committed and capable staff and with our dedicated and resourceful Board members.

We wish all staff, volunteers and supporters of Community Information Hamilton a healthy and productive year.

Respectfully submitted

Sadhna Jayatunge, President  
Lesley Russell, Executive Director

June 23, 2010

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Community Information Hamilton  
and  
Child Care Information Hamilton

Executive Director		Lesley Russell	
Resource Co-ordinator	Lilian Erskine	Child Care Counsellor	Beth Lee
Information Services Co-ordinator	Mark Winfield	Child Care Counsellor	Eleanor Rosewell
Administrative Assistant		Anita Thomson	

*Summer Students (2009)*

Matthew Kuyntjes, Marisa Burton

Website for the Inform Hamilton Database:

<http://www.inform.hamilton.ca>



Website of Co-ordinated Access for Child Care in Hamilton

<http://www.cafcc.on.ca>

