

## The Shelldale Centre

At Shelldale, thirteen agencies and community organizations collaborate to provide integrated services to high-risk children, families and individuals. At the centre of this collaboration is the community based primary prevention program called Onward Willow Better Beginnings Better Futures (BBBF). BBBF provides early years programs, family support and outreach, children and youth programs, and community development services.

Shelldale is situated within the Onward Willow neighbourhood, being the area in Guelph that has the highest rates of poverty and family problems. It is also an area where many new immigrant and refugee families settle initially upon arriving in Canada. Twenty-Six different languages have been identified in the one kilometre area surrounding Shelldale.

The Shelldale Centre's mission is to provide a seamless network of formal agencies, community organizations and neighbourhood groups that are mutually committed to serving the children, youth, families and individuals in the Onward Willow neighbourhood and the larger Guelph area. The Centre is based on a belief in the strength of citizen participation and leadership in identifying community assets and needs, and participating in decisions that affect their lives. Partners are committed to innovative programs and structures that will best serve the community, and support the partner organizations in fulfilling a shared vision.

Ongoing guidance and direction to the Shelldale Centre is provided by the Shelldale Centre Coordinator and working groups and committees of the partner organizations, and community members. Through the Shelldale Partners group, agency partners and neighbourhood leaders come together to make decisions in the overall best interests of the Centre and its members.

The former school was purchased by Family and Children's Services (F&CS), with assistance from the City of Guelph. Initial funds were provided by the F&CS Capital Fund, the Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services, partner organizations and local service clubs. The Shelldale Centre is now owned and operated by Shelldale Community Centres Incorporated, an independent corporation affiliated with F&CS.

The Shelldale Centre provides offices and space for programs, meetings and activities for partner and community organizations in the following areas:

- *Onward Willow Better Beginnings Better Futures* primary prevention programs
- Child, youth and family recreation
- Early childhood programs
- Employment training
- Community policing and victim services
- Violence against women support programs
- Family health programs
- Child welfare services
- Aids education, support and prevention programming
- ESL instruction
- Support programs for recovering alcoholics, and families and friends of alcoholics