

2004/2005 Annual Campaign

Family Respite

The goal of the 2004/2005 campaign was to raise \$47,000 to provide family relief. A total of \$67,000 was raised!

To raise funds to provide Respite/Parent Relief for parents who have children with special needs.

Whether it's getting out to a movie or the upcoming company Christmas party, some parents just can't get out the front door. The Simcoe Community Services Foundation is giving the community an opportunity to help. It's launching its first-ever annual campaign, November 10 at 11:45 am at the city hall rotunda. For a family like Weldon's, getting a break from the demands their special needs child places on them is tough. First, they have to find someone willing to take on the challenge – and then they have to be prepared to pay more than most parents would pay a babysitter, usually a teenager in the neighbourhood.

“Some children have very complex needs, whether those needs are developmental, medical or behavioural. What this means is these children require intense, one-on-one supervision for a variety of tasks, whether eating or toileting or something as simple as learning to play. Finding someone to take this on to give parents a break is difficult,” explained Karl Cadera, a Family Support Worker with Simcoe Community Services. “Simcoe Community Services offers respite for parents, but because of a lack of funding, we have a waiting list of more than 50 people, a list that grows longer each week.

“When the Foundation first began working on its campaign we set a goal of \$47,000 to help the 47 families on that waiting list. That's now up over 50.” “Anyone who's a parent understands the need to recharge their batteries,” he added. “Imagine how much more tired you can become, if your child doesn't sleep, requires help with feeding, or doesn't sit to watch a video or play a game. These parents desperately need a bit of time, so they can continue to provide the intense, quality care our most vulnerable children need.”