

Stepping Into Need

by Adam Richards



Does the need in our community overwhelm you? Do you feel helpless in the face of so much brokenness? Sadness? Addiction? Homelessness? Need?

I often find that the conversation about the isolated, homeless, addicted or broken completely changes when it is someone we know personally who is in this kind of peril. Think about your own circle, have you known someone with an addiction, someone who has found themselves without the ability to afford a home, someone who has been through the trauma of domestic abuse? Is there someone close to you who has lost a loved one? In each of those circumstances, our sensitivity and initiative completely rises due to the direct connection we share. At The Cridge Centre for the Family, we care more intently because the

stories we hear and share are not from those distant to us, or on the news, or in another family and community. They are right here in our circle, in our programs, a part of our Cridge family.

Our hope this year is to broadly communicate in a manner that truly resonates that we are all connected to the need around us. That the issues we face are not their issues, but **our** load to bear. We refuse to turn our back on the overwhelming need around us, but rather we choose to step into that need. We work together with resilience and humility to care for those who are facing challenges.

If you are overwhelmed by the need around you, join us in being the hands and feet of God's love to those who are so desperately needing this love and hope.

Paula West-Patrick's 37 Years of Love and Care

by Christine Wosilius and Tanya Kuhn



The interview and screening process had been intense, first meeting with the manager of Childcare, followed by two interviews with the CEO and staff teams. Then there was a two-week trial where she worked in a volunteer capacity to ensure that she was a fit for the work. Not being deterred by this, on February 1st, 1987, Paula West-Patrick walked through the doors of The Bishop Cridge Centre for the Family (as it was then known) as its newest Early Childhood Educator.

As Paula recounts this time in her life, she notes that God has always played an important part in her journey each step of the way, from taking her first steps of faith as a teenager to walking out that faith in her work at The Cridge Centre for the last 37 years. God has guided her in her studies and experiences, honouring her commitment to her own family while giving her passion for vulnerable families. Paula turned down a full scholarship to Wilfred Laurier University and instead, headed off to Grand Prairie, knowing only that she wanted to share her faith with children and provide support to a community in need. She signed up to complete her Early Childhood Education at Grand Prairie Regional College. It was there that she met Gavin, a Vancouver Island Boy, who would later become her husband.

Paula has always believed that “every child deserves an opportunity to learn and grow.”

From the moment she walked through the doors of The Cridge Centre, she experienced a warm feeling, “like you were home.” This new position allowed her to prioritize family, grow her career, and live out her passion for inclusion and supporting families in need. Paula jumped in with both feet. After a few months in her role, she helped open an additional twenty spaces for children under the age of three. She then took a brief (four-month) maternity leave and then returned to work with her son in tow and ready to take on the next set of tasks and challenges.

Following in The Cridge Centre's legacy, Paula's bigger vision for our Children's Services began to grow. When asked about her contribution, she simply states “I'm one of the people who took up the banner.” As she listened to the parents in her program, she began hearing stories of children who had been asked to leave other childcare centres for behavioural or developmental needs. It was not yet standard practice to explore causes for a child's behaviour. This led to many children being excluded from programs and entire families being denied access to supports. Paula has spent her career advocating inclusion; exploring all the factors relating to a child's development and insisting that educators find strategies to support all children.

This led to stronger partnerships between our Children's Services and Queen Alexandra

Centre for Children's Health (QA). Our Children's Services continue to support multiple children with additional needs in all of our programs today. This is an amazing testimony to the work Paula does in going that extra mile to support children and families, providing advocacy, financial assistance, a listening ear, and never giving up.

Paula has built a program that is known for excellence in support and education. Incoming Manager Christine Wosilius says that one of the biggest things she admires about Paula's work is her desire to create a community. It is not just a Day Care, but also a place where families can develop their own peer support systems and where it is safe to ask for help. It is a place where children receive trauma-informed care and where families can build relationship with each other simply by having fun.

As this chapter of her life is coming to a close after 37 years of service, Paula is excited to pass the torch to Christine and a growing team of new leaders. Of her many memories of her time here, she is most grateful for the opportunity to train with Magda Gerber, internationally renowned founder of Resources for Infant Educators, and having had the chance to represent The Cridge Centre at the World Forum on Early Care and Education in Macau, China. Through government partnerships, it is a time of increased access to trained staff and affordable care for families who need it most. She is looking forward to quality time with Gavin, spending time in her garden, travelling and most important, having fewer decisions to make on a day-to-day basis.

Thank you, Paula. Words cannot express our gratitude for all you have given of yourself, your talents and your time. We pray that in your retirement you will receive blessings in equal measure to those you have poured out into the lives around you. We honour you and your legacy to The Cridge Centre and hope that you experience true rest.

I've learned that
people will forget what you've said,
people will forget what you did,
but they will never forget the
way you made them *feel*.
- Maya Angelou



Paula in Macau at the World Forum on Early Care and Education

Dear Paula

I was struggling to find the right words to express my gratitude towards you. Until I figured it out – it was a 'feeling'. It was the way you made me feel in your company and the way you spoke about families and children. With curiosity, care, respect, experience, creativity (I called 'the dance') and energy.

~ Kristi Ferreira, Supported Child Development Consultant



The Gift of Rest

by Candace Stretch

Abundant life: this is the core vision of The Cridge Centre for the Family. The Cridge Respite Service, a program that supports parents and guardians raising a child with complex needs, captures this vision in a unique and dynamic way, helping them to pursue a life of joy and renewal.

For almost 25 years Respite has been stepping in to offer our families a chance to experience a break by providing complimentary hotel stays, restaurant gift certificates, and other self-care activities, all generously donated by local businesses. For parents and guardians, Respite is a reminder that they are not alone, that their well-being matters, and that their role as a caregiver is both seen and valued.

Over the past several years we have seen significant increases in the need for Respite. In 2023, we counted over 700 parents on our listing. Our amazing staff work hard to ensure that as many families as possible receive the rejuvenation of a Respite experience. Yet, every month, our program sees dozens of new referrals for parents and guardians eager to receive an opportunity to take an often desperately needed break.

In order to meet the increased need for Respite in our community, we need your support. Unlike many other services in our community, Respite does not receive government funding; and, while we are fortunate to have many generous partners that provide in-kind donations, Respite relies on donor funds to operate and expand our services. We are always looking for businesses who would donate a service or experience – maybe you know one?

Every year we hear from families who are so grateful for the donors who support Respite. In the words of one parent: "Respite gave us the opportunity to put ourselves first for a night and financially would have never been something we could have done as a low-income family. We've been thankful for the opportunity over the years and the reminder that parents matter too."

Thank you for helping us offer opportunities to help these parents pursue the "abundant life" that we seek for all those served by The Cridge Centre for the Family!

Christmas Hamper Joy

by Rachel Simmonds

Picture this: a drizzly Wednesday morning in December by the housing-office-condo-mix that is our Supported Housing Program. A car pulls into the small parking lot, the driver quickly gets out and opens the trunk and grabs stacks of preciously wrapped boxes and bags, and staggers under the weight of their parcels into Unit #5. This donor doesn't know the family that they've bought gifts for, and likely will never meet them, but they do know that they're helping provide a beautiful Christmas.

Now picture Christmas morning for one of these families. Beautifully wrapped gifts lovingly placed under the tree. The kids unwrapping them with glee, and the parent(s) or caregiver sitting back with a tear in their eye. Grateful, joyful, maybe for the first time in months, and taken care of.

The Christmas Hamper program, run jointly between the Supportive Transitional Housing and Respite and Respite Programs, reaches over one hundred families and individuals. The program has been running for over 20 years and has grown as the list of donors continues to increase and match the growing need in our community. Donors are given wish lists that the children and parents have made up: toys, books, clothing, cleaning supplies, grocery store gift cards and so much more. Simple, but tremendously impactful.

Lara and her children received a hamper this year. Their names have been changed, but the sentiments are all very real. Faced with health and financial struggles that were proving to be too much to handle, Lara was at the end of her rope. Here's an email that Lara sent as a thank-you to the donors who created their hamper.

I'm blown away!! Speechless and so filled with gratitude! Picking up the hamper was like Christmas morning for me, and Santa spoiled us!!! I ever so joyfully placed the packages under our tree, thankful that my kidlets will feel the magic Christmas brings. My heart is full! I can't wait for those sounds of excitement and intrigue when my boys arrive home from school and see these



pretty packages under our tree!!!

A second email soon followed:

As I pack up Christmas, I just had to reach out with a post-Christmas thank you. A thank you to The Cridge for providing an opportunity for my family to reach out for help, and connecting us to the heartfelt generosity of donors. And a thank you to the generosity of the donors. Their kindness filled our home with joy and a sense of being cared for after a very challenging year.

The gifts brought light to all of our faces but also lifted a heavy burden of helplessness that I've been carrying. It was more than just the tangible presents; it was the magic of the holidays that we didn't miss out on. The guilt I felt not being able to provide that extra bit needed at Christmas melted away with your warmth for people you have never met. It's not easy to accept that I need help and even harder to reach out and ask for it. Hence my need to express further my profound sense of fortune and gratitude. I'm feeling a positive start to 2024, and I hope to be able to pay it forward someday knowing how much generosity can really impact a family.

To those who have supported us in this project for years or have just recently joined—thank you! To The Maxine Davis Project, Terra Remote Sensing Inc., Arbutus Global Middle School, Westhills Land Corporation, Sons of Norway, Eidsvold Lodge #53, our friends from various government ministries, Dusanj Wirk Accounting, The Ginger Group Hair Salon, and our newest friends and neighbours of Carolyn Place, we're grateful for your support and generosity toward our families.



While my time here at The Cridge Centre is quite short compared to many, it did not take me long to discover the amazing treasures we have in the people who serve and lead. One of those who has made a significant impression on me is Paula West-Patrick, our amazing Manager of Children's Services. You cannot help but be impressed by the amazing service she has built over the 37 years she has been with us. Yes, 37 years!! Years of passion and commitment in the care of children in our community, which means years of loving families. As Paula steps into retirement, she leaves a legacy far beyond the amazing childcare building and programs that are in place. It is a legacy of care and commitment to bringing love and excellence to children. She has established a team of committed and passionate staff who daily receive children into their care.

There are no words to express the gratitude we have for you, Paula, you have been a blessing to our organization, to our children and families and to the service of our God. May you know the impact you have had and may you step into a season of rest and gardening. We love you!

~ Adam Richards, CEO, The Cridge Centre

Join the Movement

What do you think of when you hear the word "Will?" For a lot of people, it brings to mind legal jargon, dividing up assets, and all the what-ifs the future could hold. But these days Wills are going far beyond that.

"Ethical Wills" have surged in the past few years. Here's why:

- You can make a major contribution to a charity of your choice
- You don't use any money you need now.
- You can still support loved ones in the future.

Over 3 million Canadians have embraced the power of "Ethical Wills," leaving a lasting impact on the world. It's your neighbours, the

man who runs the shop around the corner, the schoolteacher who teaches your kids, and millions of other ordinary Canadians who are choosing to include charities in their wills, while still providing for their family members. When you leave a gift for The Cridge Centre, you're impacting more than just your own legacy. You're providing safe and affordable housing for the woman rebuilding her life after getting a brain injury from her abusive husband. You're helping a child with diverse needs access the care they need in the classroom.

By leaving a gift in your will, you're taking care of your family and also your larger community. Learn more about how you can support The Cridge Centre for the Family by leaving a gift in your will at willpower.ca

Hummus and Greek Salad



PHOTO BY CLEO STRACUZZA ON UNSPLASH

Yield: 250 ml approximately

- 540 ml canned chickpeas rinsed or
- 250 ml dry soaked overnight & cooked
- 25 ml tahini
- 10 ml minced garlic
- 5 ml salt
- 1.5 ml black pepper
- ¼ bunch fresh parsley or cilantro tops
- ¼ bunch chopped green onions
- 5 ml toasted cumin ground
- 1.5 ml coriander ground
- 30 ml lemon juice fresh squeezed
- 40 ml extra virgin olive oil
- 50 ml water preferably the cooking liquid from the chickpeas

Method: Combine all ingredients in a food processor with the blade attachment and process to a coarse or smooth consistency as desired.

Greek Salad

Tomato wedges, diced cucumbers and sweet assorted color bell peppers, with red or sweet white onion. Use red onion if you like the stronger flavor. Use a ratio of equal amount of each vegetable except for the onions use ¼ the amount. Kalamata olives and Goat feta makes for a tasty salad, however using cow feta is also very good. Combine all the vegetables and toss, then add a slab of feta on top and decorate with the olives. Sprinkle with a little dry oregano and drizzle with the dressing. Enjoy!

Greek Dressing

- Yield: 250 ml
- 175 ml Extra virgin olive oil
- 10 ml Oregano rubbed preferably Greek
- 2 ml Fresh black pepper
- 3 ml Salt
- 10 ml Minced garlic
- 30 ml White wine vinegar
- 30 ml Lemon juice fresh squeezed

Method:
Combine all ingredients in a bowl using a whisk.

Donation Form

2024 – 03

Single gift amount: \$ _____

Cheque enclosed or Please charge my credit card

Monthly gift amount: \$ _____

Void cheque enclosed or Please charge my credit card

Gift End Date: _____ or until further notice

Please use my gift as follows:

[] Where needed most

[] With the following designation

[] Mr [] Mrs [] Ms Other _____

First Name _____ Middle Initial _____

Last Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

With credit card and identity fraud on the rise, we have measures in place to keep your information safe. Please choose from one of the following options:

- **Donate online at cridge.org/donate/**
- **Call 250-995-6427 to speak with our Donor Specialist**

Sign also to authorise bank withdrawals.

All monthly payments will be scheduled the first day of each month. Receipts for your charitable giving tax credit will be issued annually. Charitable Registration # 108079419RR0001

The Cridge Centre for the Family collects personal information on this form for reasonable and obvious purposes that meet with regulatory requirements. This information will never be shared, and will never be used for purposes outside of the obvious without your permission.

Please detach and mail this form to:

The Cridge Centre for the Family
1307 Hillside Ave. Victoria, BC V8T 0A2
Contact: Joanne Linka, Manager of Communication
& Fund Development 250.995.6419 Email: jlinka@cridge.org







Spending of funds is confined to Board approved programs and purchases. Each gift designated toward an approved program will be used as designated with the understanding that when a given need has been met, designated gifts will be used where needed most. Gifts will be acknowledged with an official receipt for income tax purposes.

The Cridge Centre for the Family is certified by the Canadian Council of Christian Charities and is accredited by the Imagine Canada Standards program.



Let's Connect

-  TheCridgeCentre
-  TheCridgeCentre
-  thecridgecentre
-  CridgeCentre
-  The Cridge Centre for the Family Official
-  cridge.org/category/story-library

How do you want to receive The Messenger?

We would like to start sending The Messenger to you by email.

If you don't have email, don't worry, we will continue to send it in the mail.

If you would like to receive it by email, please let Sharon know at scrozier@cridge.org

NOTE: Please double check the accuracy of your name and address and notify Sharon Crozier of any changes via email to scrozier@cridge.org or by phone at 250-995-6427.

The Messenger is published by The Cridge Centre for the Family in March, July and November.
Editors: Rachel Simmonds, Joanne Linka, Shelley Morris | Production: IdeaZone | Printing: ARC Document Solutions

PM40024094

The Cridge Centre for the Family
1307 Hillside Avenue
Victoria, BC V8T 0A2
Phone: 250-384-8058
Fax: 250-384-5267

scrozier@cridge.org
www.cridge.org