



# MY FIRST DAY

2012 SUMMER NEWSLETTER

## PART 1 OF 2



**hannahhouse**  
MATERNITY HOME

As Hannah House celebrates its 10 year anniversary, I can still recall vividly my first day there. It was a cold evening in March, nine years ago, when I was on my way to Hannah House. I had many thoughts running through my head; thoughts about my life, how I had ended up in this situation, and what my future held. I was an honour student, enrolled in a Business course. I had plans to get my masters degree and build a great career. All this came to a halt the day I found out I was pregnant. I was from India, born in a Christian family; however, our culture was rigid and had no forgiveness for an unwed mother. I just didn't have the courage to tell my family about my pregnancy. They would not understand, would not be supportive, and would disown me. I was alone in a new country and I had to figure out a way. Being a student, I began researching online for help. I came across Niagara Life Centre and decided to make an appointment. After many meetings with the counselor, I decided to come to Hannah House. My plan was to go to Hannah House, stay until the baby was born, find a good adoptive home, and go back to my life – pretending that none of this had ever happened. It was, after all, better this way.

It was close to supper time when I arrived at the house. Everyone was busy preparing and assisting with dinner. Some girls were setting the table, others were making the meal. I was taken aback by the fact the girls genuinely seemed to like this place. I thought the atmosphere would be gloomy, where the staff was probably not friendly and could care less of the residents. The staff however came across as genuine, affectionate and above all empathetic. Throughout the meal there was laughter, girls talked about their day, we read a devotion together, and in a strange way it felt like one big family. After dinner I went to my room. It was beautiful, coloured in blue with big bright windows. On my bedside table was a Bible specifically for young women in crisis. As I read through some of the first few pages I burst into tears. I was in a hopeless situation, in a house full of strangers, and I never thought I would end up here. But as I read through the verses I felt this immense peace wash over me, for the first time in a long time. I knew this could only come from God. It was a special moment in my life and I still own that Bible as it reminds me everyday of God's faithfulness. Over the next few days, I got to know the Hannah House staff, a group of people who worked hard for the residents, ensuring they received the best care possible. They were truly the hands and feet of Jesus. As my due date came closer I began to scan through the list of adoptive parents, looking for the ideal parents for my child. This was the toughest decision of my life, one that would change me and leave me incomplete forever. But I dared not to think of the alternative, to keep the baby and raise the baby on my own. Somehow though, as I watched staff help the girls become good moms; providing life skills, assisting them in the transition once they moved out of the house; I wondered and dared to hope that maybe I could do the same.

Three weeks into my stay my pain began. I was rushed to the hospital and gave birth to a beautiful baby boy. I didn't have a name picked out, I didn't have the adoptive parents picked out, I didn't have any clothes for the baby, and I was all alone aside from the Hannah House staff whom was my labour coach. But as I looked down at my baby, I knew one thing for certain, I could not stay a single day away from him and not in a million years could I give him up. This brought to me the realization that I would have to tell my family about my pregnancy, my decision, and figure out a way to complete my education while supporting my baby all at the same time. I had no doubt in my mind that I would be disowned.

### HANNAH HOUSE CELEBRATES 10 YEARS

For the past 10 years, you have generously given your gifts and monetary donations to Hannah House Maternity Home. Our doors remain open because of the love and compassion you have shown to the young women and babies who have for a season found security and shelter at Hannah House.

I will lie down and sleep in peace,  
for you alone, O Lord, make me  
dwell in safety.  
Psalm 4:8

Ten years, 120 young pregnant women, 71 newborn babies.

On behalf of each one, a heart felt thank you!  
Cheryl Plett, Executive Director

### OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT HANNAH HOUSE

- Hannah House is in need of babysitters and gardeners. Those interested in volunteering can download a volunteer application from our website.
- Teal/Wakunick Charity Golf Tournament, sponsored by Niagara Peninsula Steelworkers Area Council, at Willodell Golf Club on Sunday, September 8, 2012. For more information and to register visit [www.hannahhouse.ca](http://www.hannahhouse.ca).
- Ride for Refuge 2012 - Saturday, September 29, 2012 - A family friendly cycling fundraiser. For more information and to register visit [www.rideforrefuge.org](http://www.rideforrefuge.org), choosing Hannah House Maternity Home as your charity of choice.
- Niagara Falls International Marathon - Sunday, October 21, 2012. For more information and to register online to run on behalf of Hannah House visit [www.niagarafallsmarathon.com](http://www.niagarafallsmarathon.com)

### NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Hannah House welcomes Anne Heikoop and Diane Conlon to the Board of Directors. Check out our website at [www.hannahhouse.ca](http://www.hannahhouse.ca) to read their full bios.

### YOUR GIFT + LOVE = CHANGING A LIFE

- \$50 provides gas for the Hannah House van for one week
- \$100 provides formula for a baby for one month
- \$250 provides a warm welcome and the security of home to new arrivals
- \$500 provides a young mother with a complete life skills program for one month
- \$1000 keeps the lights burning, the phones and internet connected, and little toes cool each month

As we contemplate the next ten years, would you consider giving a monthly gift of \$20.00? Our goal is to build a firm foundation for the future, with 250 new monthly partners by the end of 2012. Simply fill out Gift Option 1 or 2 on the donation slip below. Your gift makes a difference one life at a time.

## Donation Slip

Charitable Registration Number: 83172-7268 RR0001

Thank you for making an investment into the lives of young girls and their babies.

Please fill out this form clearly and kindly make cheques payable to Hannah House. A receipt for your investment will be mailed to you once a year for your income tax purposes.

### PERSONAL INFORMATION

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ PROVINCE: \_\_\_\_\_ POSTAL CODE: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

#### GIFT OPTION 1 BECOME A MONTHLY PARTNER

**AUTOMATIC CHEQUE GIFTS**  
I hereby authorize Hannah House to withdraw the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_ from my account on the 20th day of each month beginning in the month of \_\_\_\_\_ this year \_\_\_\_\_.

Become A Monthly Partner  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide a cheque from your account with "VOID" written

#### GIFT OPTION 2 BECOME A MONTHLY PARTNER

**AUTHORIZED CREDIT CARD GIFTS**  
I hereby authorize Hannah House to bill my credit card for the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_ on the 20th day of each month beginning in the month of \_\_\_\_\_ this year \_\_\_\_\_.

CARD TYPE: Visa  Mastercard   
CARD # \_\_\_\_\_ EXPIRY DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
NAME AS APPEARS ON CARD: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

#### GIFT OPTION 3

**ONE TIME GIFTS**  
I would like to make a one time investment to Hannah House for \$\_\_\_\_\_.

#### GIFT OPTION 4

**SCAN OR TEXT "SUNFLOWER" to 76000 to give your gift.**



CELEBRATING 10 YEARS!

# Yarnahouse

