

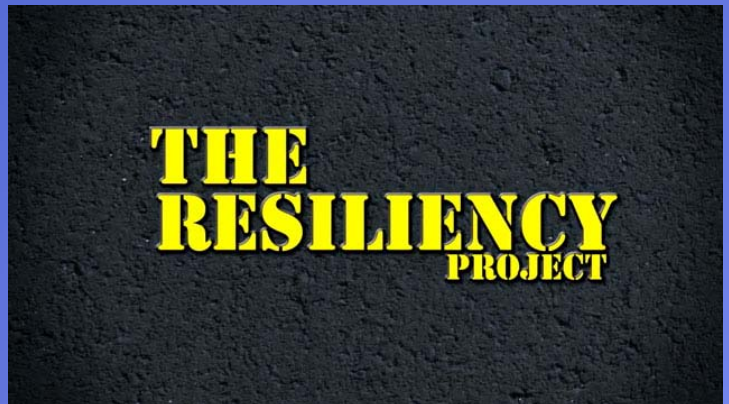


The Buzz is a quarterly newsletter devoted to informing the broader community about the activities of the Regent Park Focus Youth Media Arts Centre. This issue covers the period of December 1, 2009 to February 29, 2010. Previous issues of The Buzz are available for downloading at [www.regentparkfocus.com](http://www.regentparkfocus.com)

## Regent Park TV Produces a Video on the Factors that Keep Youth Healthy

Established in 1993, the Regent Park TV (RPTV) program empowers young people to create videos on topics that are meaningful to them. Members meet weekly to plan their productions, with filming and editing often taking place in the evenings and weekends. Once produced, the videos are posted on-line and available for viewing at [www.regentpark.tv](http://www.regentpark.tv).

RPTV began the 2010 winter season by partnering with the Toronto Drug Strategy Committee of Toronto Public Health to produce a video on youth resiliency. To shoot the video, RPTV's production crew, consisting of Abdul Wahid Al-Basith, Saeema Saifuddin, Athural Khan, Rahul Miah and Emmanuel Kedini, visited young people in four different areas of the city: Kingston Galloway; Queen Street West; Victoria Park & Parma Court; and Regent Park. The resulting 10-minute video, which is entitled the **Resiliency Project**, features interviews with 25 different young people speaking about the factors that contribute to making youth strong and healthy. The video was debuted on January 25th, 2010 at a Youth Resiliency Forum sponsored by Toronto Public Health and held at Metro Hall. The video was also featured at a **CAMH** sponsored community forum on Fostering Resiliency in Youth and Families, held at the Coptic Centre in Mississauga on March 11, 2010. The **Resiliency Project** video is available on **Regent Park TV**.



## Regent Park Focus Profiled for its Best Practices In Community Arts

On January 27th, 2010 Regent Park Focus joined many other community arts groups at the Harbourfront Centre to celebrate the launch of the **Neighbourhood Arts Network**. Sponsored by the Toronto Arts Foundation, the Network was created to support individuals and community groups engaged

in community arts practices. As part of the evening's program, Regent Park Focus Youth Media Arts Centre was highlighted in the Best **Buzz Video Series**, an audio/photo/video compilation profiling innovative and successful neighbourhood arts hubs in Toronto.

### Emerging Photographer William Kuan Wins Award

**Regent Park Focus Photography Program's** very own William Kuan was one of ten finalist in the Our City, Our Stories photography contest. Our Cities, Our Stories was a 10-week City of Toronto sponsored photography program that took place at 19 sites in Toronto's priority communities. The aim of the project was to motivate young people to learn the art of photography and then use these skills to create a photo essay of their neighbourhoods and city. At the completion of the project, participants submitted their work to the **Our City, Our Stories** website, where the essays were exhibited online, as well as entered in a photography competition.

The 10-week program at Regent Park Focus took place after-school every Wednesday. William used his friend **Tresvonne Rose-Wilson**, also a Regent Park Focus member, as his photography subject. "I took photos of Tresvonne doing the things that he likes to do. It's really amazing how he gives off such a bold statement without even using words. To be honest, I didn't realize I had a photo story. My instructor showed me I did," said William.

On February 18, 2010, a selection of the **Our City, Our Stories** photo essays were exhibited in the rotunda at City Hall. In a formal ceremony held in the evening, Mayor David Miller and other dignitaries were on hand to say



a few words and congratulate William and the other competition finalists. Congratulations William! The exhibit subsequently travelled to the Etobicoke Civic Centre from March 11 to 25th, 2010 and then the Scarborough Civic Centre from April 12 to 21st, 2010.



## Last Fridays': A Community That Plays Together Stays Together

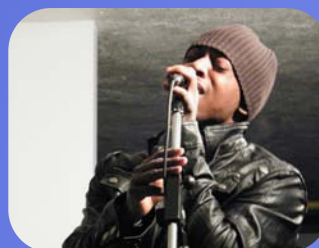
Established in 2008, **Last Fridays** is a performance event hosted by Regent Park Focus on the last Friday of each month. The event serves as a social inclusion forum for residents of various incomes and backgrounds to meet and socially interact with each other, while enjoying musical performances. **The Regent Park Focus House Band** performs regularly at the event.

On January 29th, 2010 Regent Park Focus hosted their monthly **Last Fridays'** event on site in the Focus Gallery. Approximately 35 people braved the bitter cold to attend. The talented **Regent Park Focus House Band**, an initiative of our **Instrumental Music program**, opened their set with the Bangles' hit song, Manic Monday. Following their musical performance, community member Dominique Lorde led us into intermission with an amazing rendition of Amazing Grace. During the intermission, in which food was served, long time local housing advocate and public health nurse, **Cathy Crowe**, was interviewed by Catch da Flava Radio member **William Kuan** about issues of homelessness in the community. When the interview was complete, audience members were invited to ask Cathy their own questions. After this, Mark Harris soon had the crowd laughing with a set of humorous songs, while Steve Jlin elicited goose bumps with his R&B crooning. Overall January's Last Fridays' event was a great success.

On February 26th, 2010 Regent Park Focus hosted a **Last Fridays'** event at the Daniel's Presentation Centre in honor of Black History Month. The centre was packed with a standing room only crowd of over 120 people, who were treated to a spectacular program. The evening started with the Regent Park Focus House Band who introduced a number of new songs from their growing repertory of music. They were followed by Kim Miller's Da Newz poetry and traditional African drumming by three members of Matadi, a Toronto based drumming collective. Toronto artist's Ekko Effect livened up the crowd with some energy filled rapping. He was followed by hip hop artist Kris P. The first half of the evening was brought to a close by the soulful R&B songs of Toronto artist Steve Jlin. The intermission gave everyone a chance to snack and chat. Raswell and Ekow of the band Subnodes, then reignited the crowd with their unique brand of progressive hip hop, featuring guitar and keyboard playing behind their raps. For their final songs they invited members of the **Focus House Band** to jam with them to great effect, including one point at which

Focus House Band drummer Oshane Duncan, took up the challenge to perform a free-styling rap. The final two artists of the evening were Dennis Passley and the great Glen Ricketts, a two time Juno Award nominee. Glen entertained us with his stories about hanging out in Regent Park and the music business, along with performing some of his hit reggae songs. And Dennis Passley brought the evening to a close with his soulful saxophone playing. Dennis invited the **Regent Park Focus House Band** to provide back up and they did so quite successfully. It's clear the band is learning a lot about jazz improvisation by jamming with professional artists at Last Fridays' event. All and all the **February's Last Friday** was another great evening of music, food and fun.

We are looking forward to more successful Last Fridays' programs in 2010 thanks to the generous support of Daniels Corporation and Rogers Communications Inc.



## O'Connor Media Lab

Established in 2008 the **O'Connor Media Lab** is a satellite video production program run by the Regent Park Focus Youth Media Arts Centre. The program is based in the O'Connor Community Centre which is located in the Victoria Park and Parma Court community.

Over the course of the winter 2010 season, Regent Park Focus worked with 12 out-of-school and out-of-work youth to introduce them to the film industry. Additionally, interested participants were invited to try their hand at producing their own videos. Two of the youth in the program took us up on the offer, producing a short video entitled **Spy vs. Spy**. Created by Alex and

Myles, the video is based on Mad Magazine's long running cartoon strip about the antics of two spies trying to kill each other. The video is available for viewing on **Regent Park TV**.

The O'Connor Media Lab is supported by the Youth Challenge Fund.

## Samba Kids

In January 2010 the **Regent Park Focus Youth Media Arts Centre** partnered with **Drum Artz** to host a 15-week drumming program for children. The program took place after school every Thursday in the back room of Regent Park Focus. Each week 20 to 30 children, between the ages of 10-12, arrived at Focus to be taught the fundamentals of Brazilian and African percussion. Participants involved in the Samba Kids were invited to perform at the Regent Park Focus **Last Fridays'** event in March.





## Divas Girls Group

Established in 1996, the **Divas Girls** Program provides girls, ages 10-14 and living in Regent Park with a place to socialize and explore their identities as racialized young women entering the challenging world of teenagehood. The program takes place every Friday at the Regent Park Focus Youth Media Arts Centre. In addition, in October 2009 the program was expanded to two local schools.

The long running **Divas Girls** Group continues to be a popular program running both at Regent Park Focus, and off site at Lord Dufferin school and Regent Park Duke of York school. The 2010 program was coordinated by Emmie Cans, a Toronto artist, with the assistance of Pat Whittaker. In addition, during the winter session, she was assisted at the school sites by three York University teacher candidates, Kavita Persaud, Marie Lee and Sarah Cluer.

There have been many wonderful, meaningful and creative exchanges between the young women in the program and the facilitators. Some of the issues they have explored together are: self-esteem, body image, communication, and positive role models. One activity, led by Kavita, involved asking the girls to share their personal role-models through the use of dialogue, drawing and poetry. In another session, the girls wrote their hopes and aspirations on a butterfly shape, which they then painted with acrylic paint. On other days, the **Divas Girls Group** took it easy, playing get-to-know-each other games and relaxing. The Divas also loved watching DVDs like Degrassi Junior High, which led to informative group discussions on various issues. Keep up the good work girls!

The 2010 Divas Girls Group was generously supported by the Ministry of Health Promotion and Sports After-School Initiative in partnership with Kiwanis Boys and Girls Club.



## Catch da Flava Radio & Magazine Collective

Established in 1998, Regent Park's **Catch da Flava Radio Collective** continues to broadcast on CKLN 88.1 FM every Tuesday night at 7:30 pm. The show is hosted by youth living in Regent Park and provides a forum for them to promote health, discuss issues of importance to them and cover current events. In addition to the radio show, the collective also produces **Catch da Flava magazine**, a print newsmagazine that has been serving Toronto youth since 1995.

Every Tuesday evening, the 12 youth members of the Catch da Flava Radio & Magazine Collective gather at Regent Park Focus to eat, hang out, and plan their upcoming radio shows and/or magazine articles. And at precisely 6:45 pm, 3 or 4 assigned members of the collective depart the meeting with a staff member, and proceed to the Ryerson Community-Campus radio station, known as CKLN.88.1 FM, to broadcast their radio show. Some of the topics featured on the show during the

winter season are: **Parent Relationships; Pan American Games; Domestic Violence; Healthy Eating; the Haiti Crisis; Global Warming; Proroguing of Parliament; Speculations about the End of the World; Exploring Muslim Identity; Prank Calls** and the Provincial By-Elections. The Catch da Flava Radio Collective is facilitated by 17 year old Onik Khan. The 2010 Catch da Flava Radio and Magazine program is generously supported by Toronto Community Housing and Dion Durrell & Associates.

### Did you Know?

Did you know that 904 people took part in program activities offered by Regent Park Focus Youth Media Arts Centre during the Winter quarter?

Or that Regent Park Focus received 3,491 website over this same period?

We've been busy!

## About Regent Park Focus

Established in 1991, Regent Park Focus Youth Media Arts Centre (Regent Park Focus) is a not-for-profit organization located in Regent Park, Toronto. Regent Park Focus is motivated by the belief that community arts and participatory media practices play a vital role in building and sustaining healthy communities. Regent Park Focus seeks to increase civic engagement and inspire positive change by giving youth the tools and support to create artistic works and media productions.

Youth are encouraged to work collectively to develop resources that explore issues of relevance to them and their communities. These resources, along with the process of creating them, increase personal well-being, contribute to community health and address systemic barriers to equitable social participation.

Regent Park Focus receives organizational funding through The Toronto Arts Council-Community Arts and the Ontario Arts Council-Arts Education, as well as in-kind partnership support from the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH).

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