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From: Amy Katz
Network Facilitator, Bathurst-Finch Network
New Heights Community Health Centres, Bathurst-Finch
On behalf of: signatories below
Please reply to: Amy Katz at: akatz@newheightshealth.org
647.436.0385

Att: Nancy Marshall
Administrative Coordinator City Librarian's Office
Toronto Public Library
Fax: 416-393-7083

June 9th, 2010

To the Chair and Members of the Toronto Public Library Board,

Re: Increased hours and service capacity for Centennial Library

First, as community agencies operating in Bathurst-Finch and city-wide, we'd like to congratulate you on the key role Centennial Library plays in our area.

Bathurst-Finch (also called Westminster-Branson) has one of the highest concentrations of newcomers in the city. Anyone will tell you: Centennial Library is one of the first places people visit in the neighbourhood.

And people keep coming back. The committed workers at Centennial have made the library an incredibly valuable source of community space, information, vibrant programming, warmth and, of course, a fantastic place for reading and learning.

In survey after survey, when we ask what people appreciate about the neighbourhood, we hear: the library. We also hear that community members would like the library to be open more often.

Today, we are writing to tell you our library is over capacity. While it serves a population of 43,945 people and had 102,675 visitors in 2008, it is open only 40 hours per week. The closure on Mondays and limited hours on weekdays leave a serious hole in the neighbourhood's community space. This affects everyone, but is a particular hardship for youth, seniors, small children and families.

Bathurst-Finch (also called Westminster-Branson) is one of the City of Toronto's designated 13 priority neighbourhoods. We were given this designation, in part, due to a critical lack of accessible community space. We would ask you today to allocate resources to Centennial Library both for additional hours and to increase their programming capacity, which we are aware is currently stretched to the limit.

Please advise us at your earliest convenience about next steps, and in terms of how quickly this could happen. We would be pleased to meet with you to discuss this in more detail and provide you with input from community members as to the hours that would work for them.

All the best and thank you for your attention:

Diane Broad, Manager, Community Family Support Services/Y-CONNECT,
Griffin Centre

Julie Callaghan, Program Director, New Heights Community Health Centres

Kim Hinton, Manager of Community and Neighborhood Development Unit, Family Services Toronto

Bathurst-Finch Neighbourhood Action Group (residents council)

Please reply to: Amy Katz, Network Facilitator, Bathurst-Finch Network,
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