Midaynta

Association of Somali Service Agencies

2004/05 Annual Report

Building a Better & Prosperous Community

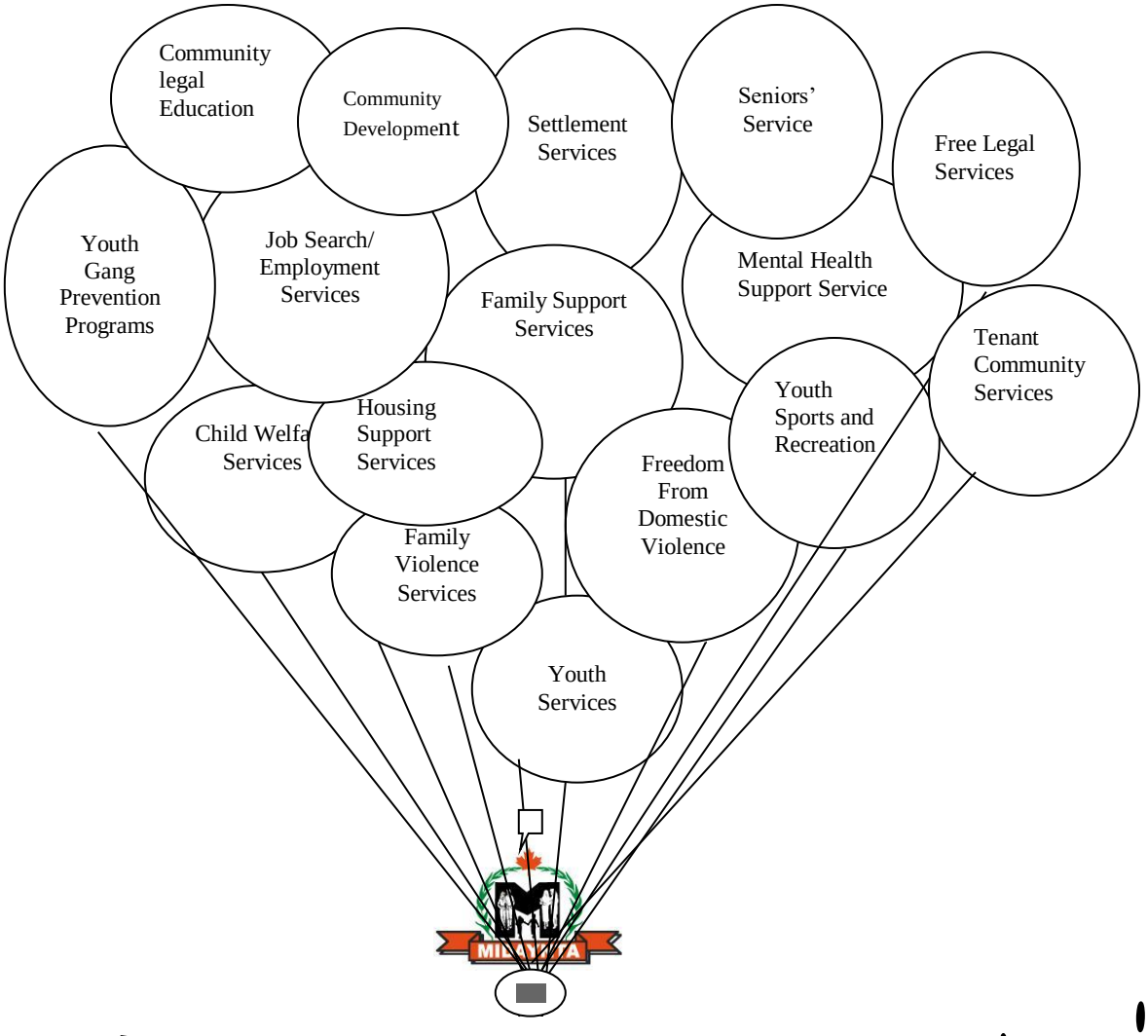
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We are celebrating over a decade of successful community servic



A Message from the President and the Executive Director

This has been one of the most dynamic years in the history of Midaynta. The organization has successfully served over 5,000 clients, undertaken a comprehensive restructuring process and enhanced its capacity through a combination of Board development, strategic planning and increased programs and services to the community. This past year with the participation of our board members, staff, supporters and other stakeholders, we were engaged in a process of developing new strategic directions to guide and support our new mission, vision and key priorities.

Midaynta has now been serving the needs of the Somali community in the Greater Toronto Area for the past twelve (12) years. Although it's initial mandate covered family reunification of those affected by the civil war, it has broadened to become a broad service provider and a coalition of sixteen (16) service providers. Although the agency-based model has contributed to the development of the organization in the past, it is now felt that a different model would enable the Board and staff to achieve commonly articulated goals, have an agreed upon direction for the organization, and move beyond crisis management in order to tackle comprehensive and long-term issues that will be critical to the organization's success.

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The retreat on agency capacity building and strategic planning held during last year and supported by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, identified a range of recommendations attributable to the structure and governance model currently in use. It was concluded that Midaynta's current and future needs could be better met by an independent, inclusive board of directors representing the community at large rather than agencies. This discussion and relevant necessary decisions were approved, as you know, at the Annual General Meeting on November 6, 2004.

It was identified that the key strategies to this transition would include:

(1) The attraction and training of a board whose members are knowledgeable about governance, familiar with the needs of the community, and able to work harmoniously with staff in the achievement of the agency's mandate;

(2) The provision of strong and stable leadership;

(3) The creation of community infrastructure; and

(4) The recruitment and coordination of well trained staff and volunteers.

We are pleased to report that most of the short-term goals were achieved and the first phase of Capacity Building program was completed and reviewed by the Board. The consultants that we hired for the process have created a comprehensive document that will assist us to fully implement and act upon the recommendations. Some of the changes were already implemented. The amended by-laws, the last piece of the process, will be effective immediately after your ratification tonight.

Overseeing this transition has required a great deal of time and commitment. Thanks to the contribution of the Board members who have been so supportive in lifting up Midaynta through this period of transition. You have truly made this an enjoyable experience and proved unprecedented leadership qualities.

We are excited about the strong relationship that we have developed and maintained with our stakeholders. With new funding and innovative partnerships, we have been able to launch new programs and projects, thus increasing the number of our clients. We expanded our services to include community development services in partnership with Culturelink and the Centre for Spanish Speaking Peoples. Similarly, in response to the needs of the most vulnerable youth in the Jamestown area, we are engaged in delivering youth leadership development and services in partnership with Horn of Africa Community Development, Thistletown Community Services and City of Toronto, where we assist local youth to remain in school and stay away from violence.

Our deepest thanks go to the staff whose tireless efforts to enhance the lives of our newcomer community have ensured the success of Midaynta.

We are thankful to our program participants, our volunteers, member agencies, board members, funders, partners and our community members who entrusted us with their cases and believed in our capabilities and credibility.

Finally we would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to our funders from Citizenship and Immigration Canada, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, City of Toronto, the United Way of Greater Toronto, Toronto Community Housing Corporation, and others who contributed financially in order to support our work and strengthen our ability to deliver on our mission. We certainly value your feedback and we will continue to enhance our services to the community.



Abdulkadir Abow
President



Ibrahim Absiye
Executive Director

Our Policy

Midaynta services and programs are open and available to all and everyone residing and/or working in the City of Toronto regardless of race, religion, colour, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, gender, social status, or ethnic origin.

Who we are

Midaynta is committed to building vibrant communities in which social and economic development is central to all aspects of individual and family life.

- We believe in and value the provision of high quality community social services that promote and build a better and prosperous society;
- We are accessible, equitable and accountable to the community;
- We provide free and friendly settlement and community development services, and continue to advocate for a largely underserved and marginalized communities
- We believe in working in partnership and collaboratively with other service providers to make a difference in developing our community and the society;
- We serve clients regardless of race, national origin, ethnicity, culture, gender, sex, sexual orientation, age, ability or religion; and
- We endeavor to unite the communities by creating a socially cohesive environment under the roof of a "Community Centre".

Client Code of Service Rights:

The right to non-discrimination: You have the right to receive services in a trusting, respectful and supportive environment free of any discrimination and harassment.

The Right of Privacy and Confidentiality: You have the right of privacy and confidentiality and to disclose only what you believe is necessary at any given time.

Limits of Confidentiality: Staff limits of confidentiality include; the requirement to report incidents of child abuse, to comply with a court ordered subpoena and prevent harm.

The Right to Review Your File: The file is the property of Midaynta and you have the right to review it and make comments if you disagree with the contents of the file.

The Right of Autonomy: You make decisions about your needs and goals.

The Right to refuse Services: You have the right to refuse services at any time or to request service from an alternate person.

The Right to Information: You have the right to receive accurate, complete and timely information.

The Right to Complain Mechanism: You have the right to a safe, fair and transparent complaint process when you feel that your rights have been violated.

Programs & Services – 2004/2005 Highlights

Midaynta management, staff and volunteers are pleased to celebrate their successes and accomplishments in providing quality settlement and community development services to our community. We have intensified our outreach efforts, expanded our programs and services, established new collaborations, networking and partnerships with both mainstream and ethno-cultural organizations in the city and increased our funding base substantially. Our accomplishments during the year would not have been possible without the commitment, hard work, and dedication of our staff and volunteers as well as the support, direction and good governance of our Board of Directors.

Immigrant Settlement & Adaptation Program (ISAP)

Multilingual settlement counsellors assist newly arrived refugees and immigrants in their settlement and integration. During the year, the staff provided over 12,900 settlement and integrations related services to our community across the GTA. These services included but not limited to the following:

- Providing information and orientation about life in Canada including cultural norms, translations, housing, health, banking, legal rights and responsibilities, civic participation, etc. Periodically Midaynta conducts group information sessions on a variety of settlement related issues, to educate clients about changes in policies, procedures and requirements.
- Raising awareness around cultural diversity and racism.
- Assisting with various government applications.
- Offering linguistic an cultural interpretation and advocacy that facilitate access to services in the community;
- Free legal advice and document certifications;
- Free statutory declarations to establish personal identity by a licensed legal practitioners;
- Youth and senior services;
- Employment and job search sessions;
- Mental health awareness;
- Referrals to other appropriate agencies;
- Translation of personal documents, certified by a commissioner for oath.

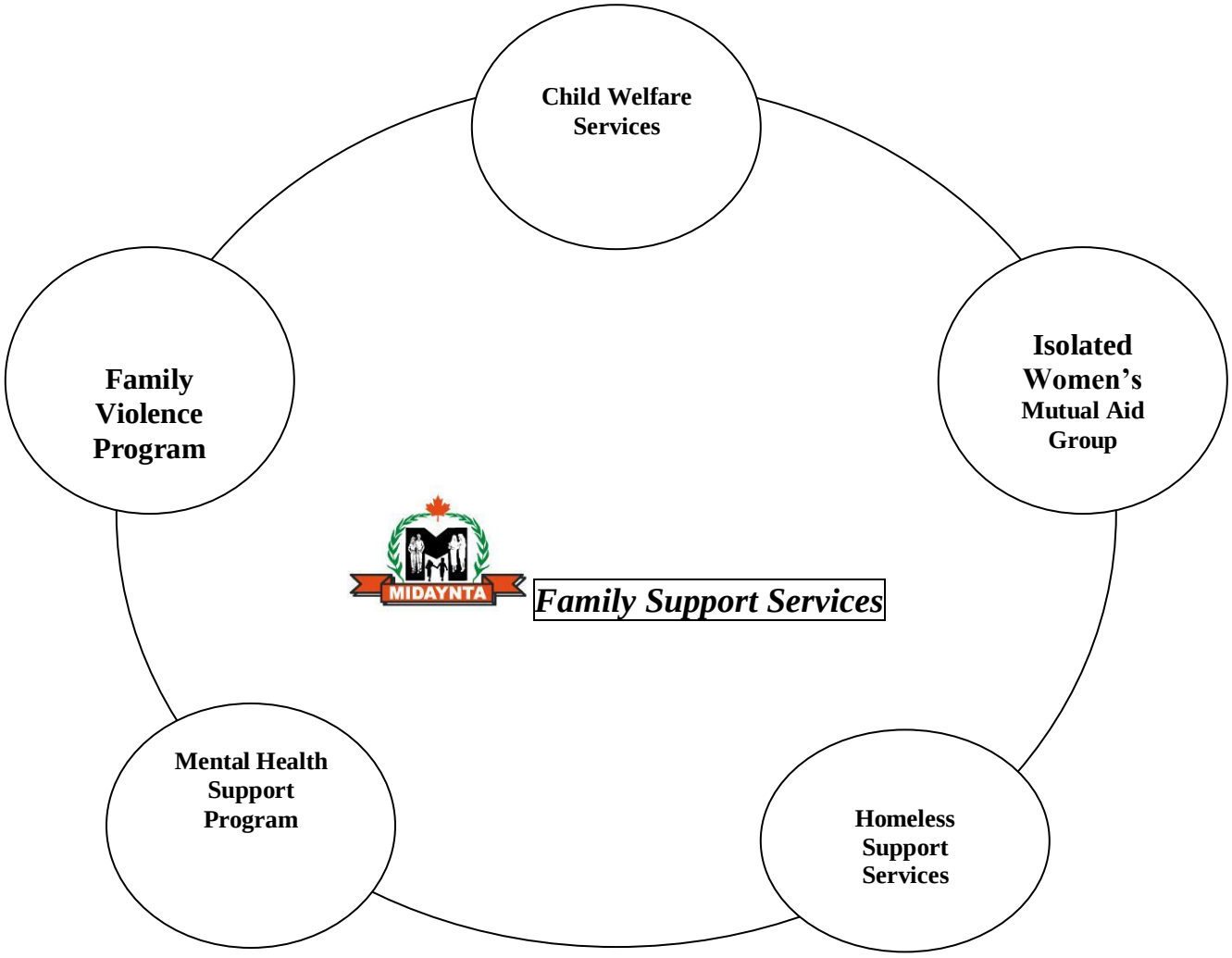
Client comment:
…. "thank you very much to Midaynta for giving us the support to make it our goal".

…. "being a newcomer, it was really a tough experience for me and the rest of my family. Your support and succeeding meeting with you made it a much easier experience for me …….

We extend our thanks and appreciation to the Settlement Directorate of the CIC for their continued support to Midaynta. This support is a graphic testimony of the Department's belief in our commitment to provide professional settlement and integration services to the newcomer community.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada

Family Support Programs & Services



We are extremely grateful to our funders

CIC

TORONTO

Housing & Homeless Support
Family Violence & Prevention
Community Legal Education
Drug Abuse Prevention
Breaking the Cycle of Violence

Somali Women's Mutual Aid Support

THE ONTARIO TRILLIUM FOUNDATION
LA FONDATION TRILLIUM DE L'ONTARIO

Somali Family Mental Health Support Program
Somali Youth Support Program
Agency Capacity Building

Children's Aid FOUNDATION

Bridging Child Welfare Project

TCHC logo

Family Support & Crisis Intervention Program

This is a continuous program that has its primary goal as the promotion of preventive measures to combat family violence and breakdown. The program provides practical and emotional support to victims of family violence through crisis prevention and safety planning. The program serves the East African communities in Toronto who are victims of domestic violence such as wife abuse, child abuse and elder abuse. Substantial results were achieved during the year in the areas of community outreach and education, workshops and information sessions, direct services, and parenting education. This is generously supported by the Community Service Grants Program (CSGP) of the City of Toronto. The family violence prevention program provided over 4,340 services to the clients in the community during 2004/05.

Participants' feedback provided encouragement and motivation for the project staff. Some of the comments from the clients included:

> *……..I thought I was alone with no support in sight, through this program, I realized I have a community organization that provides the necessary support, unlimited…….*

Somali Women Mutual Aid Group (Freedom from Violence)

The purpose of the mutual aid group is to outreach and connect socially isolated women to each other and to services/programs in their communities and/or neighbourhoods. The program is a self-help group where participants learn from each other. The goal is to reduce isolation faced by Somali women and increase peer support and access to community information and resources. The services include family conflict resolution, cultural counselling, support for new mothers, parenting and support for women in crisis. More than 60 socially isolated women were reached during the year. Some of the women's comments were as follows:

> *"……I met other mothers other mothers who have similar issues like me……."*

> *"… through the program, I developed support networks. I do not feel alone any more…"*

Bridging Child Welfare

The goal of the program is to raise the awareness of the Somali community about child welfare legislation in Canada and to educate the staff of the Children's Aid Society of Toronto about the culture of the Somali community in the context of child welfare. The program also provides education to the community to prevent child abuse and neglect.

Bridging Child Welfare project is a joint partnership with Somaliland Women's Organization, Somali Immigrant Aid Organization and the Children's Aid Society of Toronto as the Trustee. Although the program ended on June 30, 2003, yet Midaynta continues to provide this service to the community along with members of some of the partner agencies.

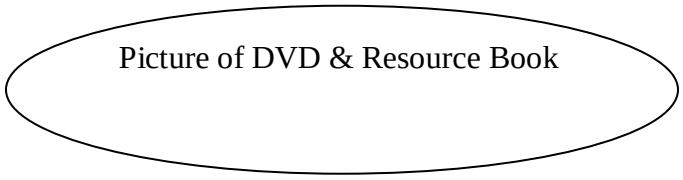
Family Mental Health Support

A sound mental health condition has huge benefits in every aspect of a person's life. In view of the importance of this service, Midaynta, in partnership with Somaliland Canadian Society and Family Outreach and Response Program (FOR), provides culturally sensitive services to the Somali families with mentally ill members.

The goal of the Somali Family Mental Health Support program is to increase awareness in the Somali community about mental health issues and to increase the community's access to mainstream mental health services. The program also increases Somali family's capacity to understand and cope with mentally ill family members. The services of this project include, but not limited to:

- Increase awareness of the prevalence of mental health problems among members of the Somali community in Toronto with focus on depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, posttraumatic stress disorders and suicidal symptoms;
- Provide information and referral to the appropriate services in the city;
- Advocate for families in a variety of issues such as welfare, housing, employment, education and legal services; and
- Empower the Somali community to deal with mental health issues.

This 3-year program, which was supported by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, came to an end in March 2004. However, Midaynta, along with FOR, continues to support those families with mentally ill members. A resource booklet (Best Practices) and a DVD were completed and are available for use by service-providers.



Housing and Homeless Prevention

Housing and Homeless Prevention program is a support service for homeless clients and those at risk of homelessness Support services under this program include housing help and eviction prevention. The program also provides culturally sensitive assistance to prevent homelessness in the Somali community. Services also include assistance to find and maintain affordable housing, information, referral, eviction prevention, housing stablization, and counselling, mentoring programs and peer support initiatives. Midaynta's Housing Counsellor works with low-income families who have barriers and challenges in finding and maintaining appropriate and affording housing.

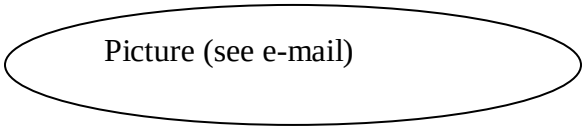
During the year of 2004/2005, 858 new clients and 1,102 repeat clients were served in the areas of housed, stablilized, prevented eviction, and housed in shelters.

Job Search & Employment Services

In partnership with Culturelink, Midaynta has successfully delivered Job Search and Employment workshops for the job-ready newcomers. Together we conducted over 12 workshops during the year with a job placement success rate of over 70%. This program has exceeded target expectations and outcomes in all of its component measurements.

Midaynta Job Search & Employment program provides employment assessment, referral, pre-employment training, employability skill enhancement, resume writing and appropriate job search sessions for unemployed/underemployed newcomers with limited English language skills, lack of Canadian experience, discrimination in the workplace, lack of knowledge about the Canadian work culture and labour market information.

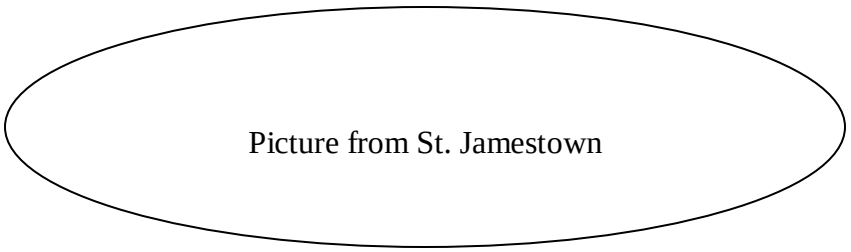
Clients of the Job Search and Employment Services unit have access to our computer lab which provides free usage of computers with high speed internet access for job search and resume development.



Tenant & Community Services

With new funding and innovative partnerships, we have been able to launch new programs and projects. We expanded our services to include community development services in partnership with Culturelink and the Centre for Spanish Speaking Peoples. Midaynta is working for Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) in two locations in downtown Toronto in partnership with CultureLink, providing tenant and community development services. Similarly, we are working in Etobicoke Centre with the Centre for Spanish Speaking Peoples.

Services provided during the year under these contracts include community engagement & mobilization, tenant support services, tenant education, creating linkages and networks with location service-providers, advocacy for tenants, youth recreation, senior's socialization and support, after-school assistance, and working with local tenant council representatives in developing safe, healthy, and secure environments.



Problem Gambling Project

Midaynta is working with the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) in order to outreach and provide limited clinical counselling to problem gamblers.

The Problem Gambling research with the Toronto Somali community was completed in February 2003 and its findings during this year. Based on the findings, we have developed an Action Plan which articulates specific intervention, preventive and educational programs for problem gamblers in the community. Midaynta is working closely with COSTI Immigrant Services in expanding culturally sensitive services to individuals and families affected by problem gambling and related addictions.

Somali Youth Coalition

Our youth support services have increased dramatically during this year. Midaynta in partnership with the Children's Aid Society of Toronto and Somali Youth Association of Toronto (SOYAT), under the umbrella of the Somali Youth Coalition, continued to provide services to the Somali youth in Toronto.

The Somali Youth Support program works with the Somali community as well as the mainstream institutions to reduce the risk factors causing a number of Somali youth to drop out of schools, join gangs and get into trouble with the law. It is the goal of the project to adopt an early prevention approach by promoting staying in school, getting involved in community recreation and sporting events and developing youth leaders who can act as role models for other Somali youth.

Midaynta has also established a community kitchen and a Home Work Club program at Central Neighbourhood House (CNH) for the Somali youth in the Regent Park area. This program is financially supported by the Drug Abuse Prevention Program at the City of Toronto. Interest in this program is so high that enrollment is very tight, with some times a long waiting list.

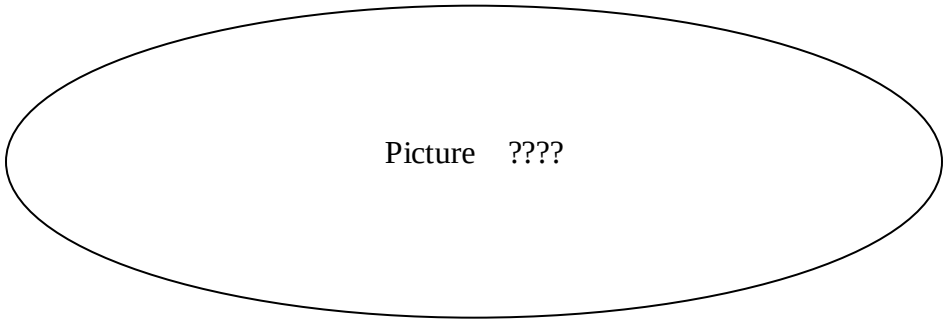
A highly respected group of consultants, Facilitators Without Borders (FWB) conducted a three-day community workshop involving a youth group, an adult group, and a combined community wide group. Participants were from the Regent Park area. The project was named Somali Youth Horizons (SYH) and the final report, with recommendations on how to address the issues and concerns of the community, is on the works.

See Nugal for pictures -

Seniors' Services

Midaynta continued to be part of the Breaking Down the Barriers to Seniors Services project for seniors under the Mullti Agency Partnership Project (MAPP) with the lead of the St. Clair West Seniors. This service is run at four locations within the former City of York and has become quite popular among the Somali senior population. Its services include seniors' recreational and educational programs, congregate dining, various health-related services, meals on wheels, transportation and escort, home help/homemaking, respite care, adult day programs and seniors' case management (information and referral, crisis intervention and assistance).

This popular program is currently under review by the partners in order to enhance service sensitivity, accountability, staff training & development, evaluation of Phase I, and commencement of Phase II.



Legal Clinic

With an average of 73 clients a month, the Free Legal Clinic remained to be extremely busy during the year. One of the most important services to the community during the year was the provision of free legal services. Legal Aid Ontario has generously assigned a lawyer to Midaynta in order to help the community in resolving some of their legal concerns. A lawyer is always available to prepare statutory declarations and to offer advice on other legal topics such as small court cases, schools, employment, housing, domestic violence, immigration, etc.

Community Legal Education – Islamaphopia

Community Legal Education is an anti-racism, human rights, and equity awareness building and public education program. During the year, Midaynta, in collaboration with its member agencies, developed and delivered workshops on Islamaphopia, hate activities, racism, community profiling, human rights and the systemic barriers faced by the Somali community in Toronto. The program activities were designed to assist us to increase the community's awareness and help maintain the community infrastructure to address and respond to racism and racial inequalities in the social and economic development of the population we serve.

Community/Agency Capacity Building

The retreat on agency capacity building and strategic planning held during last year and supported by the Ontario Trillium Foundation identified a range of recommendations attributable to the structure and governance model currently in use. Most of the recommendations were carried out within the past year and half and some of the major achievements of the capacity building process included the following:

- Revised and approved Mission, Vision & Value Statements
- Revised strategic Goals & Operating Objectives
- Changed structure from Association Model to Organizational (Service) Model
- Approved Board to represent, and be accountable to, the community instead of agencies
- Changed from "Midaynta Association of Somali Service Agencies" to "Midaynta Community Services"
- Revised Policies and prepared Policy Manual
- Revised Bylaws, to be approved at the 2005 AGM
- Drafted and approved Membership Criteria
- Completed Board & Management development/training
- Submitted Application of name change to the Ministry of Consumer & Commercial Relations
- Submitted Application of Charitable status

Board of Directors

Executive Committee:

1	Abdulkadir Abow	-	President
2	Hareda Mohamud	-	V. President
3	Kinsi Ismail	-	Past President
4	Mahad Yusuf	-	Treasurer
5	Mohamed Ali	-	Secretary

Members:

6	Osman Ali		Member
7	Bashi Hosh	-	Member
8	Elmi Ibrahim	-	Member
9	Mohamed Bood	-	Member
10	Rashid Osman	-	Member
11	Barlin Ali	-	Member
12	Jibril M. Jibril	-	Member
13	Mukhtar Houssein	-	Member
14	Abdirahman Abdulle	-	Member
15	Halima Saad	-	Member

Management:

1. Ibrahim Absiye	-	Executive Director
2. Mohamed Tabit	-	Program Manager
3. Mohamed Ismail	-	Accountant

Staff:

4. Said Ahmed	-	Settlement Counsellor
5. Abdulkadir Ali	-	Settlement Counsellor
6. Fowzia Ali/Amina Noor	-	Settlement Counsellor
7. Camille Lee	-	Advice Lawyer (Legal Aid Ontario)
8. Nima Omar	-	Intake Worker
9. Farhia M. Abdi	-	Intake Worker
10. Faisal Hassan	-	Housing Support Counsellor
11. Amina Warfa	-	Family Support Counsellor
12. Shakira Quraishi/Ruth Antwiwaa	-	JSW/Employment Counsellor
13. Maryan Dalal	-	Mental Health Support Counsellor
14. Abdullahi Elmi/Ubah Nur	-	Mental Health Support Counsellor
15. Idris Madar	-	Seniors Support Counsellor
16. Muna Mohamud	-	Family Support Counsellor
17. Mohamed Ali "Nugal"	-	Youth Support Worker
18. Ali-Bahsi Farah	-	Youth Support Worker (at SOYAT)
19. Amina Yasin-Omar	-	Youth Support Worker (at SOYAT)
20. Farhia A. Abdi	-	Community Development Counsellor
21. Cindy Louie	-	Community Development Counsellor
22. Asha Tifow	-	Community Development Counsellor

Volunteers:

Students and volunteers continue to be vital to the work of Midaynta. During the year, over 85 volunteers and 7 students donated their skills, time and talent to the programs of Midaynta. In return, Midaynta remains committed to providing opportunities for the volunteers in gaining new skills as well as Canadian experience.

Without the participation and dedication of our students and volunteers, it would be impossible to deliver and accomplish high quality services to the community. There are always ways to help and we are thankful for those who came forward and made a difference.

Summary of the Finances

REVENUE		2004/05	2003/04
Federal:	Citizenship and Immigration Canada	$ 309,637	300,387
	COSTI/OCASI/Culturelink (JSW)	10,248	11,615
	National Crime Prevention		50,000
Provincial:	Ontario Problem Gambling Centre/CAMH	17,693	6,000
Municipality:	City of Toronto	95,966	90,936
	Toronto Community Housing Corp (TCHC)	42,098	
Foundations:	CAW: Somali Family Mental Health Support		15,000
	United Way of Greater Toronto	27,150	19,420
	Ontario Trillium Foundation	89,700	136,400
Other:	COSTI – Family Violence Prevention	4,300	1,800
	General Revenue/Fundraising	32,837	30,290
	Fee for Service	50,801	45,591
	Total Revenue	**$ 680,430**	**707,439**
	Total Expenses	**714,633**	**616,270**
	Excess of Revenue over Expenses	**(34,203)**	**91,169**
	Fund Balance – Opening	**305,007**	**213,838**
	Fund Balance – Closing	**$ 270,804**	**305,007**