

# JENNIFER SPRAGUE CHERYL SPRAGUE JENNIFER OGLAN



What She's Wearing:  
Top: Sanctuary  
Skirt: Gracia

What She's Wearing:  
Dress: Joseph Ribkoff

What She's Wearing:  
Top: Guess  
Skirt: 7 For All Mankind

At Delta Chi, it's "family first" in every sense of the phrase.

Opened in 1986 by Cheryl Sprague, the Windsor childcare centres continue their tradition of offering an upscale, home-like atmosphere where children are nurtured and family values are instilled.

"We're very family oriented," says Cheryl, who also serves as the centres' Executive Director. "We believe early childhood should be a rich and rewarding time."

Those beliefs are something Cheryl has instilled in her own family as well. Her daughter Jennifer Oglan and daughter-in-law Jennifer Sprague have followed in her footsteps, joining the Delta Chi management team to help Cheryl maintain the centres' high standards of care.

"We like to hire family, members of our staff's family, and even families that are enrolled in our program," laughs Cheryl. "We deeply value our relationship with our staff and even if they're not family, they become family."

Over the last three decades, Delta Chi has grown to 11 locations, currently operating in stand-alone buildings and in Public and Catholic schools across the city.

"I opened my first centre in a duplex on Ouellette Avenue," reflects Cheryl. "I picked that site because it was a very home-like atmosphere. Our centres have maintained that feel. We've built and developed all our schools around a very nurturing, home-like atmosphere."

The initial concept was designed as an alternative to the many cement block walls and fluorescent lighting of other childcare centres Cheryl had seen at the start of her career as an Early Childhood Educator. Delta Chi centres offer a cozier feel with French doors, art on the walls, and comfy home furnishings.

"I remember my mom saying she wanted children to feel like they were still at home," reflects Jennifer Oglan, Director of Marketing & Communications.

Those same home furnishings will also be found in their latest centre, opening next year inside the new James L. Dunn public school on Giles Boulevard. The twelfth location will provide fully licensed care for infant to school age children.

While the team is excited for the newest location, they're also intently focused on the current task at hand: ensuring the health and well-being of the children in their care during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Director of Operations Jennifer Sprague admits it's been a trying time for parents and staff, but is heartened by the response she's received.

"I have three children myself so I know how important it is to feel comfortable with where you're leaving them," says Jennifer Sprague. "It hasn't been easy, but just to hear all the feedback from parents that has been so positive and so appreciative of everything we're doing has been wonderful."

"I have such gratitude for our staff and our Management Team," says Cheryl. "I cannot speak enough about the work they're doing and the extra effort and hours they're putting in to keep the children safe, happy, and healthy."

Although the team has had their hands full the last few months, they still manage to find time to give back to local charities.

"We're huge supporters of our community," says Cheryl, who is also the president of the Board of the Children's Aid Foundation. "It is absolutely my passion to help children in our community."

Delta Chi sponsors a number of CAS initiatives, including the annual holiday program. The centres also host food drives and sponsor a variety of local children's sports teams.

"If someone asks for help, we don't say no," says Oglan.

"We've even sponsored a parent's hockey team," laughs Sprague.

"We don't like to advertise what we do," says Cheryl. "We don't do it for the attention; we do it for the intention."

With their community involvement and family values, Cheryl and her team have unintentionally become strong role models for both their students and each other.

"Growing up it was always fun watching my mom get dressed up in her suit every day and be the boss," says Oglan. "It's nice to have a space that really empowers women."

"I also love that we have male staff as well," she adds. "It's important to have male role models to provide balance to our program."

"It has been such a pleasure to provide childcare to our community for over 34 years and we look forward to the bright future ahead," says Cheryl.

To discover more about Delta Chi Early Childhood Centres locations or enrollment, visit [www.deltachildcare.com](http://www.deltachildcare.com) or call 519-977-5922.



Story by Jennifer Brignall-Strong. Photo by Pat Scandale