



WOMEN'S HABITAT



**ANNUAL
REPORT**
2019/2020

It's been called the pandemic within the pandemic. Within weeks of shutdown, Covid-19 was illuminating what we've known for years: women and children across Canada are in danger in their own homes. The pandemic has pushed families' already experiencing violence and poverty to the brink.

With flexibility, creativity and sheer person-power, Women's Habitat re-designed the way we invested our time, energy and resources. We received a groundswell of community support, an overwhelming symbol of the good in our world, in response to a revolving set of unknowns. What we do know, what we have always known, is that in the face of adversity, women still rise. We are honored to continue to witness their resilience.

We are proud of our determination, and humbled by your unwavering support, We are an intersectional feminist agency committed to anti-racism, and continue working towards confronting and eliminating discrimination at the individual, organizational, and societal levels.

We believe Black Lives Matter.

We believe in Indigenous rights and truths.

We believe women.

We work for justice.

We are accountable. We can evolve. We will grow.

For over forty years we have faced an uphill battle in our mission to eradicate gender-based violence. We are not stopping now. We are just getting started.

In partnership,
Silvia and Pat



Silvia Samsa,
Executive Director



Patricia Else,
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ANTI-BLACK RACISM

We recognize that anti-Black racism (ABR) exists in our organization, society and across the globe and as such we are committed to ongoing reflection, discussion and action to address anti-Black racism at Women's Habitat of Etobicoke. We will create a system of accountability and transparency that challenges ABR including creating a safer environment for disclosure of ABR and a resolution process.

We commit to on-going conversations and raising awareness of ABR including training and education for all our stakeholders and commit to actively engage in external advocacy efforts and actions to eradicate ABR and all forms of oppression.





The ultimate measure of a person is not where one stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where one stands in times of challenge and controversy.

-Martin Luther King, Jr.

HOME BOUND

In May 2020, the Ending Violence Association of Canada began conducting a study on the pandemic's impact on survivors of violence. They surveyed 376 staff and volunteers at various shelters and sexual assault centres from coast to coast and confirmed our greatest fear. The frequency and severity of the abuse women and children were enduring was increasing. Abusers were taking advantage of the conditions created by the pandemic, controlling access to technology and using the isolation to further terrorise.

At Women's Habitat, we initially noticed a sharp decrease in the number of crisis calls we were receiving. Women were unable to access a safe space and moment to make the call to us. They were being watched by their abuser 24/7.

"My client is exhausted. She's a mother of four with twins on the way. She is trapped at home with her abuser and is afraid to go to a shelter due to Covid-19. She misses the in-person support."

-Outreach Support Worker



"Our role as staff is to support and encourage women as they move forward. Unfortunately, due to pandemic safety restrictions, we are single shifted. This means that we are unable to offer as much support as we normally would and group activities are limited."

-Shelter Counsellor





NO SAFE PLACE

Women have been faced with two horrendous options; live with the abuse or risk their health in the communal living setting of a shelter. Shelter protocols have changed and new residents now need to self-isolate for 14 days to confirm they are COVID-19 symptom free. When explaining the current reality of shelter life, many women reconsidered and choose not to leave their homes and come to the shelter.

Average number of calls to our crisis line in the first months of the pandemic: **60**

Average number of calls recieved per month prior to the pandemic: **120**

SHELTER ISOLATION

COVID-19 has significantly changed how we are operating. Today, shelter life looks very different. It means using the kitchen, dining room, and laundry facilities at designated times only. It means wearing a mask and keeping distance from other residents and staff. It means having your temperature taken every time you return to the shelter. And the greatest challenge of it all; managing the stress and anxiety caused by the pandemic while working through the trauma of abuse and trying to establish a new life.

Today, living in shelter means all of this while trying to navigate this new world for your children.

It is a reality no woman should ever have to face.



Through it all I have been reminded of my privilege. At the end of my shift I get to go home where I can take off my mask, use the kitchen when I please and I don't have to share my room with my children all day every day. The reality for our residents looks very different.

-Shelter Counsellor



11 women were in our shelter during Covid-19

19 children were sheltered during Covid-19

Largest family: **1 mum & 5 children**

* Note: number of residents reflect period from April - August 2020



OUTREACH & UPRISE

Food insecurity refers to the state of being without reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food. According to [Toronto Public Health](#) it affects almost 1 in 5 Toronto households. Barriers to food access in Toronto increase for racialized communities with a [Canadian national study](#) by PROOF and FoodShare revealing Black households are 3.56 times more likely to be food-insecure than White households.

Historically our organization has not had the capacity to run a food bank. Many of our program participants access our group programming for the emotional support and the nutritious meals we provide. The pandemic meant we would no longer be able to provide group sessions, leaving our clients without a guaranteed hot meal each day. We worked with our donors and volunteers to turn our outreach centre in a distribution centre, packaging groceries and preparing meals for our community and delivering them to those in isolation. As the pandemic continues, we will continue to work with our dedicated supporters to provide essentials our clients need.

As a senior I wanted to thank the people who are preparing the meals. I wanted them to know how much I appreciate them. I was shocked when I opened them. The meals are incredible quality, beautifully presented. I felt the love which they were made. Thank you to the volunteers that made them. They taste homemade, so good, just amazing, they truly made me feel better.

- Food Disbursement Program Participant



WOMEN'S RIGHTS ON THE LINE

Across the globe women's rights and economic freedoms are being threatened at all levels. Women hold a majority of jobs in sectors which has been ravaged by the pandemic. As women lose paid employment, many face a huge increase in care work due to school closures and overwhelmed health care systems. These women require resources and supports to navigate through this hardship. In the months to come, measures to stimulate the economy must support and focus on the needs of women and children.

Since March 2020 we have experienced a swell of referrals. Our outreach services have registered 74 new clients. Their needs ranged from emotional and psychological crisis support to housing support related to safety and income loss. We expect these numbers to grow as the pandemic drags on and we will continue to prepare and pivot to meet the need while we push for women's rights and interests to be front and centre of COVID recovery plans.





A NEW WORLD

Together we are moving forward. We are collaborating with our funders, donors and community partners to further transition our programs and services to a virtual platform. We are working with women and children to help them develop the know-how and resources to access these virtual programs which will become an enhancement to existing in-person services in the years to come.

We are looking forward to creatively implementing this high quality programming to include individual and group counseling support, parenting support, programming designed to create paths to financial independence and youth leadership programs. We believe that capacity and agency building is the way forward to support our clients. We will continue to assist them in building resilience, skills and competencies while creating the conditions for readiness and sustainability.

As we pivot our programs we maintain our focus on our strategic plan objectives. We are meeting with partners who share our vision of developing affordable housing for survivors of gender based violence. Together, we have developed our scope of work for this project and are eager to move forward with next steps. We will continue to engage our supporters in this initiative as it progresses.



YOU



Make it happen

As the world changes we continue to respond to the needs of the families we serve. We continue to blend the work of on the ground support with our commitment to advocating for lasting social change. We do this only with your support. Simply put, if it wasn't for faithful supporters like you, we wouldn't exist. So thank you for supplying the funds, time and dedication we need to make a difference in the lives of survivors of violence.

As individuals we can do great things.
As a collective we can move mountains.
We can fight inequity and remind women that no matter what happens, Women's Habitat is here for them.



SUPPORTERS

I have found that among
its other benefits,
giving liberates the soul
of the giver.

-Maya Angelou

Major Funders

Ministry of Children, Com-
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United Way Greater Toronto

\$30,000 +

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Foundation
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Willowbrook Social
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\$20,000 - \$29,999

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How wonderful is it that nobody
need wait a single moment before
starting to improve the world.

-Anne Frank

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Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed its the only thing that ever has.

-Margaret Mead

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Calum Mcguigam
Grace Meade
Emily Mercy
Ghazaleh Milani
Chrisoula Mirkopoulas
Julia Mitroi
Katherine Moshonas
Melissa Mowbray
Heather Murphy
Margaret Murphy
Vita Nachstheim
Denzel Neto
Marconi Neto
Andre Ng
Dani Ng See Quan
Erin Niepage
Sheila O'Mahony
Andrea Oddy
Katie Oestreich
Adenike Olaniyan
Paige Ozvald
Tanya Palladina
Pancha Panzo

Colleen Paterson
Jennifer Paul
Ana Pereira
Alex Perez
Lisianne Persaud
Melody Petriw
Renee Pilgrim
Jonathan Pilotte
Kate Pinchin
Nancy Prout
Amy Psaila
Stephanie Pukowsky
Marlene Ramnath
Indria Rao
Esther Reid
Kayla Reid
Roxanne Richardson
Riley Robinson
Anne Roe
Graham Rowlands
Sara Romano
Risa Rosenberg
Nicholas Rossing
Deborah Santana
Sheila Santos
Sandy Savo
Anna Schermel
Manju Sharma
Sandra Sikora
Ivana Simic

Courtenay Skeat
Kay Skeat
Sarah Skeat
Karen Skobel
Claudie Smith
David Smith
Murray Smith
Katrina Sochacka
Carolyn Solby
Annabel Strickland
Barb Symons
Soni Thakar
Niroja Thiru
Onyka Thomas
Deborah A. Tiller
Aditi Vijay
Katharin von Gavel
Franz Wagner Dal Bello
Tony Way
Emily Wexler
Susan Whalen
Alicia White
Laura Wolfe
Bev Wooding
Bhupendra Yadav
Mary Yang
Scott Yearwood
Deanna Yimin Qi
Will Zaraska
Werner Zimmermann



FINANCIALS

Statement of Financial Position

AS AT MARCH 31, 2020

Assets	2020	2019
Cash and other current assets	\$ 1,163,800	\$ 1,246,201
Tangible capital assets	2,737,318	2,821,853
Total Assets	3,901,118	4,068,054
Liabilities		
Accounts payable & accrued liabilities	\$ 206,676	\$ 238,738
Deferred contributions	73,072	17,979
Mortgages payable	238,197	258,923
Total Liabilities	\$ 517,945	\$ 515,640
Fund Balances		
Invested in tangible capital assets	\$ 2,499,121	\$ 2,562,930
Internally restricted net assets	557,330	926,339
Unrestricted net assets	326,722	63,145
Total Fund Balances	3,838,173	3,552,414
	3,901,118	4,068,054

Copies of the audited financial statements may be obtained on request from Women's Habitat of Etobicoke.

Statement of Operations

AS AT MARCH 31, 2020

Revenue	2020	2019
Government grants	\$ 1,464,864	\$ 1,613,607
United Way of Greater Toronto	354,835	360,896
Fundraising, foundations & other revenue	354,443	375,869
Total Revenue	2,174,142	2,350,372
Expenses		
Staffing costs	\$ 1,855,882	\$ 1,812,406
Purchased services	35,612	47,737
Program costs	107,108	91,629
Building & occupancy costs	116,673	189,669
Office & administration	103,156	172,931
Amortization	111,339	113,947
Fundraising expenses	13,613	34,619
Total Expenses	\$ 2,343,383	\$ 2,462,938
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	(\$169,241)	(\$112,566)



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Crisis Line: 416.252.5829
Shelter: 416.252.1785
TTY: 416.252.0361

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