

2022-2023 Annual Report

Working to End Violence Against Women & Children



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LanarkCountyIntervalHouse



@lcihcommunity

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A WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Lanark County Interval House and Community Support is an amazing agency that continues to demonstrate tenacity at every turn. With COVID ending, not ending, "post-COVID," we have continued to shift with a focus on the needs of women and children across our County.

Our social media presence and our outreach efforts have continued to put us in a leadership role in our community and beyond.

The last fiscal year offered us an accolade award from the OPP for community partnership related to the Victim Advocate program. We look forward to the award ceremony and ongoing work across all local police services as we continue to evolve.



We have 15 housing units that we support and run in response to safe affordable housing, and we continue to advocate and connect the intersection between safe and affordable housing and escalated violence, (4 second stage, 6 beyond second stage, 3 scattered units and 2 units with Carebridge).

June 2022 brought with it the Renfrew County Inquest. We were present, engaged and offered expert witness testimony. 86 Recommendations were made by an amazing jury of community members. Since the release of the recommendations, we have continued to lead with events, partnerships with What Now Lanark County and political engagement at all levels of government. Lanark County was the first county in the province to embrace recommendation #1 and declared IPV an epidemic December 14th, 2022. This has led to lots of uptake across the province and lots of public education and online seminar opportunities.

Our work and the post-COVID realities have been heavy and our team continues to grow and change. We celebrate our newest programs the Perseverance Pantry and Suit Yourself and we look forward to a renovation to our AGAN store in the coming years as we plan for a renewal that speaks to the value of our work, our store, and our services.

As the dialogue remains open to understanding femicide, we lost a LC woman in 2022 and we continue to ensure that women's lived realities are heard and responded to at all tables.

Our community remains our rock of ongoing support. Year after year, the community responds to our calls for support and action as we move See it Name it Change to communities across the County. I continue to be humbled and proud of the work of the agency, our neighbouring Counties, our colleagues and community partners, the strong women and children of our County and our outstanding community. I extend my sincere gratitude.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Erin Lee".

Erin Lee, Executive Director

A WORD FROM THE CO-CHAIRS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Change is constant. We can either embrace change and continue to grow, or we can deny that change exists and remain static.

We, as co-chairs, continue to embrace the many changes which we face every day, but the one constant, is our desire to ensure that all women and children have a safe place to call home should they need one.

Interval House too, continues to embrace change and continues to grow. From a single shelter dedicated to providing women with a safe haven, Interval House now has three buildings dedicated to serving women and their children as they rebuild their lives, secure in the knowledge that they are safe and protected. As well, community members have stepped up to answer the need, providing women with a home to call their own throughout the county. We are never idle. We constantly evolve and embrace the changes and the challenges that this change evokes.

The Board of Directors continues to work hand in hand with the dedicated staff of LCIHCS, providing the fiduciary oversight necessary to ensure that the Agency is well served. We do not sit idly by but take a real interest in the achievements of staff and clients. We are present, and vocal when need be, or we sit quietly cheering everyone on. Whatever is needed, we are there to provide support and a helping hand.



Board Co-Chairs Candace Roberts and Judith Haddad are joined by Executive Director Erin Lee and Former Board Chair Megan Ryder-Burbidge at staff retreat in June 2022



Board Co-Chairs Candace Roberts and Judith Haddad are joined by Executive Director Erin Lee at a cheque presentation by the Rotary Club

A WORD FROM THE CO-CHAIRS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

But we do not do this alone. There is a community behind us, supporting our every move. We could not be an effective voice for women and children without the gracious support of the greater Lanark County population and their many friends. Whether it be through volunteer efforts or through direct financial contribution, each and every gesture is gratefully received and acknowledged.

This generosity has allowed for the continuation of a pilot program entitled "Perseverance Pantry" which allows current clients to come in once a month to replenish their own pantry.

Renovations have begun at the As Good As New store. These renovations will provide a more accessible and pleasant experience for all who come through the door. In addition to this, the upper level will house the "Suit Yourself" program. This program is designed to help women dress for success as well as provide them with the interview skills needed to enter or re-enter the work force. Along with assistance in writing a resume, the program will also provide much needed skills in financial literacy and money management.

This year will also be the year that is remembered by many, as the year in which many communities throughout Ontario declared intimate partner violence, an epidemic. Mississippi Mills was the first township in Ontario to declare IPV and epidemic and was quickly followed by many others. The Provincial Government did not follow suit and in fact denied to even consider 8 of the recommendations, recommendations designed to provide more safety to all women, not just the women of rural Ontario communities.

We have our very dedicated Executive Director and the wonderful staff of LCIHCS to thank for the many successes achieved. We also thank the women who continue to dedicate their time on the board of directors. We would particularly like to thank the following women for the support, past, present, and future; Veronique Roussel, Marina Watson and Julie Whitfield. We wish you every success in your future endeavors.

We would be remiss if we did not mention the Canadian Federation of University Women and in particular, Ontario Council. Under the guidance of Sandra Shaw, who spearheaded the movement, Ontario Council has undertaken the project of urging other CFUW clubs throughout the province to encourage their own municipal councils to declare IPV an epidemic. We thank Sandra and other club presidents for their commitment to this task.

We also extend our thanks to you, our members and supporters. Your presence here tonight indicates your continued support of all that LCIHCS embodies and for this we truly thank you.

In solidarity and friendship, we remain

Judith Haddad & Candace Roberts

Co-chairs 2022-2023

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

LCIHCS continues to be afforded the opportunity to have great women in leadership on its Board of Directors. We strive to maintain a broad range of knowledge, skills and experience on the LCIH Board. The following is the current volunteer members of the Board of Directors for the 2022-2023 fiscal year:

Judith Haddad, Co-Chair
Candace Roberts, Co-Chair
Linsey Sherman-Zekulin, Past Chair
Julie Whitfield, Secretary
Cara Gibbons, Treasurer
Christine Walterhouse, Chair of Governance Committee
Amy Nadeau, Board Member
Marina Watson, Board Member
Veronique Roussel, Board Member

In September 2022, Judith Haddad and Candace Roberts became our Board Co-Chairs with Linsey Sherman-Zekulin acting as Past Chair. Last fiscal year, LCIHCS was actively seeking references or recommendations to fill open positions with a recruitment campaign. We were fortunate enough to find three candidates who were elected to the board in September 2022: Amy Nadeau, Christine Walterhouse and Cara Gibbons.

As of September 2023, Marina Watson, Julie Whitfield, Veronique Roussel and Amy Nadeau will be stepping down from the board. We would like to propose for election Laurie Weir to the Board Slate for the 2023/24 term beginning September 2023 and Kristine von Bloedau as a member in January 2024. We plan to add an additional member during the year as a suitable candidate is identified.



Board Chair Judith Haddad addresses the crowd at the Violet Femmes Event in November



Board Chair Candace Roberts joins LCIHCS staff members at the annual holiday celebration



Board Member Cara Gibbons presents a cheque on behalf of Jara Sweeping and Mattamy Homes at an event held at Icelynd Skating Trails

THE RENFREW COUNTY INQUEST



LCIHCS played an active role in the Renfrew Inquest, and we continue to lead local discussions and implementation strategies of the 86 jury recommendations.

In June of 2022, the inquest into the 2015 femicides of Carol Culleton, Anastasia Kuzyk and Nathalie Warmerdam began in Renfrew County. Thirty expert witnesses, including our Executive Director Erin Lee, gave testimony.

The jurors called upon the Ontario Government to improve with 86 recommendations to prevent Intimate Partner Violence (IPV).

Following the Inquest, LCIHCS focused on educating the community and putting pressure on the province. We partnered with other groups in the community to create the What Now Lanark County Group. On December 9, 2022, the What Now Lanark County Group held a panel discussion with



Left: Members of the What Now Lanark County Group. Right: Panelists Erin Lee, Julie LaLonde, Derek Needham & Pamela Cross

several individuals who had testified at the Inquest. The event was well attended and well received by community members and, as a result, plans for future What Now Lanark County events were soon in the works.



LCIHCS Staff & Community Partners celebrate outside of Lanark County Council Chambers after the historic resolution on Dec. 14, 2022

Recommendation #1 states IPV should be declared an epidemic. Thanks to the tireless advocacy work and strong community relations fostered by our Executive Director, on December 14, 2022 **Lanark County became the first county in Canada to pass a historic resolution** in accordance with the first jury recommendation presented by the Renfrew County Inquest. The resolution was unanimously passed and history was made! **By the end of the fiscal year, five other municipalities** have passed their own resolutions declaring IPV an epidemic including Ottawa City Council on March 8, International Women's Day.

We had the opportunity to meet with Minister Fullerton and Associate Minister Williams with our County Council at ROMA in January 2023. Erin has been meeting with Bob Perrault of Lake 88 to discuss one jury recommendation in detail per week.



Lanark County Council with LCIHCS Executive Director as they shared rural realities of VAW at ROMA, January 2023.

In February 2023, the Provincial government gave its initial response to the recommendations. We, along with other advocates, were disappointed by their response which didn't address 29 of the 75 recommendations aimed at the province. We remain hopeful and committed to holding the government accountable for preventing further femicides and incidents of IPV.

SUIT YOURSELF

DESIGNED TO BE A HAND UP, NOT A HAND OUT

Through the help of an Ontario Trillium Foundation grant, we are thrilled to have been able to unveil a new program this year, Suit Yourself. Everyone feels better and more confident when they look good. The Suit Yourself program provides complimentary work attire and support for our clients as they engage in upcoming job interviews or court appearances.

The program will officially launch in early September 2023, the focus this past fiscal year was to plan, prepare and purchase the items needed to launch Suit Yourself. In August 2022, we created a new contract position for the Suit Yourself and As Good As New Store coordinator. The coordinator has worked to transform our existing space above the As Good As New store into the Suit Yourself location, purchasing and building lots of furniture and clothing storage throughout the year to make the space perfect for our clients. Six of the seven informational videos, which will be available free of charge to our clients, were completed. We have also met with the iSisters Technology Mentoring Team and have a plan in place to help our clients with computer skills support. The Volunteer Coordinator has been engaged in recruiting volunteers for the program including professionals to help with resume writing and interview preparations.

Some challenges have arisen over the past year. The post-COVID supply chain delays continue to challenge us. At times, we have had to pivot to a new plan and other times we have practiced patience and shifted to a new task.



SUIT
YOURSELF



THE PERSEVERANCE PANTRY



The Perseverance Pantry is to support women and children with food and hygiene items. Our hope is to provide some relief from the rising costs of good and services.

This year, we were thrilled to have had the support of more community partners. We received more funding via grants and saw an increase in generous community donations making it significantly easier to provide for our clients. Some significant donors include the F.K. Morrow Foundation, Mazon Canada, Perth and District Community Foundation, Walmart, Foodsmiths, Starbucks, Lanark County Food Bank, Mitchell's Your Independent Grocers, Jeff Julian of Desjardins Insurance Agency and Eric and Christiana Gwin who provide a local egg donation. We utilized a Tower Garden, a self-sustainable vertical garden, to grow produce outdoors during the summer months and indoors the rest of the year.

The pantry has faced some ongoing challenges with the still-rising cost of groceries. We do our best to price match and look for sales to maximize our funds and the support from community donations really helps. There are transportation barriers for our clients. We regularly rely on staff and volunteers to do pantry deliveries throughout the County to clients without transportation.



101

Women used the pantry this year.
Up 159% from last year.

127

Children used the pantry this year.
Up 182% from last year.

468

Pantry orders were completed this year,
an increase of 438% from last year.

"The Pantry is **NOT** just a foodbank for women and families, but a much needed community support. They are there for women to reassure us, to stand together, and to let us know we are not alone!"

- Perseverance Pantry Client

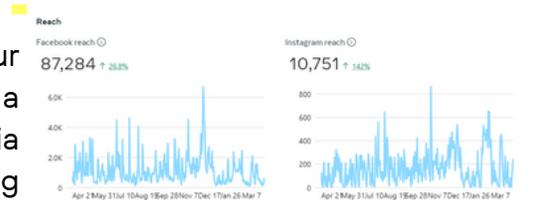
COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Over the past year, LCIHCS has actively nurtured community engagement and collaboration through impactful initiatives. As we reflect on the past year, we extend our heartfelt appreciation to our steadfast community. Your support, whether through volunteer commitment, financial contributions, or in-kind donations, has been indispensable in propelling our mission forward.

We hosted significant events, including Take Back the Night, Violet Femmes, and co-created a mosaic with ReDefine Arts TO in Smiths Falls (postponed unveiling to May 2023). We convened a town hall discussion on femicide, held a poignant December 6th vigil, and engaged with partner agencies like Shelter Mover's Soup Share and What Now Lanark County's panel discussion, where our Executive Director Erin Lee served as an expert witness during the Renfrew County Inquest. Our presence was also evident at community gatherings such as MapleFest, Jammin' at the Junction, Pride, and Women's Fair, fostering meaningful community connections. This year's focus on youth interaction was highlighted by our educational presentation to a local Girl Guides group, resulting in a substantial clothing drive donation. We proudly hosted a two-day Youth Conference, marking a significant milestone since the pre-COVID era.

Our successful partnerships with community members were sustained, notably through a new alliance with Shelter Movers Ottawa and their rural expansion. This nationwide volunteer-driven organization provides moving and storage services for abuse survivors. Additionally, we partnered with We Believe Survivors during the month of May, Sexual Assault Awareness month, to hang a banner across the main street in Perth.

Acknowledging the evolving landscape of communication, our commitment to digital outreach remained steadfast. This year witnessed a significant surge in both followers and reach across our social media platforms. Furthermore, a concerted effort was directed toward sharing regular, informative blog posts. Additionally, we successfully disseminated a newsletter, enhancing our communication and engagement channels, and fulfilled several successful online campaigns, including the 16 Days of Activism which was largely digital this year. Notably, our Communications Coordinator was awarded a Meta certification in Community Management, a distinction that extends to the agency as a whole. This recognition underscores our dedication to effective community engagement in our digital communication strategies.



Graphs indicating a 26.8% increase in Facebook reach and 142% increase in Instagram reach



Graphs indicating a 44.9% increase in Facebook profile visits and a 35% increase on Instagram

Recognition this year was notable, with nominations for the Carleton Place Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence Award for Community Impact and the Layton Legacy Activism Award. We were honored with an OPP Accolade for our outstanding Victim Advocate Program (please refer to the dedicated section).



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

As a registered charity, several of our programs do not receive government funding and are therefore sustained through fundraising initiatives. Resource Development creatively maintains and seeks new opportunities to generate revenue and other resources to ensure short and long term financial success for the agency. This is primarily achieved through fundraising campaigns and events and grant writing, with time spent researching for new grants and recruiting new donors. Resource Development supports all LCIHCS programs and the needs of our shelter and external clients when required.

The last year has been a challenging one for Resource Development. The economy has been an ongoing challenge, the public simply cannot give as much as they were once able to. The reality now is that there has been an increase in grant application submissions making being awarded grants more competitive. We have had to scale down and host smaller fundraisers, change the direct mail campaign and be more direct with donors as to why dollars are needed. Building relationships within the community and securing more in kind support or encouraging donors to give what they can in order to encourage donor retention has been more important than ever.

As a result of these challenges, Resource Development approached things slightly differently this year, spending time researching fundraising trends and using technology to effectively communicate the impact of the economy on the agency. Additionally, Resource Development became more focused on securing monthly donors to support both the agency and Perseverance Pantry with ongoing perishable and non-perishable food donations and hygiene items. Despite economic strain on the community proving challenging to fundraising, LCIHCS was able to host a very successful Violet Femmes event. New "swag" offerings and a virtual store helped with fundraising as well.

Resource Development was able to secure some special supporters this year that made this program, and many other agency programs, a success this year. Thanks especially to St. Paul's Church's for monthly donation, Jeff Julian Desjardins Agent for monthly donations, Mitchell's Independent Grocer in Carleton Place for a weekly donation, Starbucks Carleton Place for a weekly donations and the Starbucks Neighbourhood Grants, Mattamy Homes and JARA Sweeping, Marks Work Wearhouse Carleton Place, REMAX affiliates Carleton Place, Jackson Homes, and many generous members of the public.



AS GOOD AS NEW STORE

Since 1980, As Good As New has been the best place to find quality used clothing in Carleton Place, offering a meaningful opportunity to support women and their children seeking refuge from abusive home environments. Driven by an unwavering commitment to our mission, As Good As New has become an integral and cherished part of the community, serving as a significant source of funding for the shelter and the expansive community support programs administered by LCIHCS. The store plays a vital role as one of the top and most consistent fundraisers for our agency. Beyond its financial contributions, AGAN also serves as a valued resource for our clients, serving a dual purpose as both a revenue source and a community-facing representative of our agency, fostering goodwill and support from the community.



Staff pose with a dress from the Ever After Bridal donation.

Thanks to a generous grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, plans are underway for a revitalization of the store in the upcoming fiscal year. This grant has also facilitated the appointment of a Store Coordinator, a pivotal role that not only enhances the store's daily operations but also supports our dedicated volunteers who oversee its operations.

Despite the challenges with ongoing COVID restrictions and Bridge St. in Carleton Place being closed from November 2021 to December 2022, our volunteers and committee have done an excellent job, leading to an excellent year of recovery for the store. The store saw a 24% increase in sales this year compared to the last fiscal year! In the previous fiscal year, the first-ever automated point of sale system was installed in the store. This has been well utilized in the store and, in fact, we saw a 50% increase in usage over last year. We have continued to utilize social media to reach out to our customers. We held our second virtual Black Friday auction which raised over \$1,000 for the agency.



Our International Women's Day Display was made up of women who inspire our customers!

We were also thrilled to welcome 11 new volunteers to the As Good As New team in the last year, bringing our total to 43 wonderful and passionate individuals. Additionally, we were able to oversee five high school students as they completed their required community service hours.

We had several exciting and profitable donations this year, a local Teddy bear collector shared some of her collection with us which we used as a Valentine's Day fundraiser. Another exciting fundraiser initiative, Ever After Bridal in Perth gifted a selection of beautiful new and used formal and wedding dresses. Being able to sell these unique items created excitement within the store. We are also grateful for the generous donations from local stores and consignment stores including Giant Tiger in Carleton Place and Perth, Coastal Consignment, Bella Women's Consignment Boutique, Trove Fashion, Boomerang Kids, Plato's Closet Ottawa and The Dragonfly Boutique.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

We've achieved remarkable success in reviving our volunteer program despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 landscape. The past year has seen substantial transformations within our volunteer initiative. With only a few exceptions, our program had to be largely put on hold during the pandemic. The reopening of our program, however, has brought about significant positive changes for our agency.

In the 2021-2022 fiscal year, changes in staffing allowed us to assign a dedicated staff member to the role of Volunteer Coordinator. In the Summer of 2022, this staff member worked diligently to revamp the program, streamlining the onboarding process and creating a new, updated volunteer handbook. They've also been instrumental in recruiting and integrating a record number of new volunteers into our ranks.

This year, Volunteer Canada's statistics have revealed that two-thirds of Canadian nonprofit organizations faced a shortage of volunteers during and beyond the COVID-19 era. Fortunately, we have been an exception to this trend, a testament to the unwavering dedication of our volunteers. Excluding our valued board members, we proudly welcomed 30 new volunteers into our community this fiscal year. Additionally, 5 high school students generously fulfilled their volunteer hours with us, enriching our team. This influx has resulted in an impressive 83% growth in our volunteer team, bringing our dedicated volunteers to a total of 77, in addition to our 8 Board Members.

In September 2022, a significant milestone was reached as we introduced a paid role for an As Good As New Store Coordinator. This decision allowed our longtime volunteer, Valerie Martin, to step back and rest from her voluntary role as the coordinator. Although Valerie remains an integral part of our As Good As New Store volunteer team, we want to express our heartfelt appreciation for her unwavering dedication throughout the years.

The impact of our volunteers' contributions resonates across every facet of our agency's operations. Their steadfast support has been pivotal, driving our accomplishments with unparalleled determination. In the past year alone, their collective effort translated to an impressive monthly average of 260 hours of work. This contribution translated into substantial monthly cost savings of nearly \$7,500, amounting to a remarkable annual total of \$90,000 for our agency. This fiscal efficiency further underscores the essential role our volunteers play in advancing our mission. Please see the Shelter and Residential Program section for more information on the positive impacts of our volunteers on the agency.



83%

Increase in the number of agency volunteers over the last year.

260

Hours of volunteer work is contributed to the agency every month on average.

VOLUNTEERS WELCOMED BACK TO THE SHELTER

Throughout COVID, despite on and off lockdown closures and restrictions, the As Good As New Store remained staffed by a steadfast team of dedicated and passionate volunteers. With the exception of occasional volunteers for donation pick ups, gardening and yard maintenance, etc. our volunteer program was closed entirely.

This year, we were thrilled to begin to reintegrate volunteers into our residential program.

Initially we welcomed back shift support volunteers and were thankful to have committed women who have dedicated specific days to support the crisis counselling team. They undertake a variety of tasks, including admin tasks like photocopying; getting bedrooms ready for new residents, organizing donations, teaching residents life skills such as baking, helping residents with specific needs and much, much more.

We then added to our volunteer base by including volunteers who come on a regular basis to enjoy an activity with residents, such as crafts or board games. It allows our residents to take some time for self care and fun. We also had a committed volunteer who came on a weekly basis to do the grocery shopping for us. A task that is time consuming but vital. We thank her profoundly.

We were also happy to accept placement students back to our residential program. They are an excellent support for our crisis staff, and with staff mentoring, are able to experience a wide range of situations and experiences that develop their skills and knowledge of violence against women issues and realities



SHELTER AND RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM

LCIHCS Residential Program provides safety, resources and support to women and children fleeing abuse. The shelter has 15 beds and one emergency bedroom. Counselling staff also answer a 24-hour crisis line. Both services are available every day of the year, on a 24 hour basis.

This year, we developed a wonderful connection with Mississippi Chiropractic Health Centre who generously offered care to our residents. This has had a wonderful impact on our residents. To help us celebrate International Women's Day, we held a tea with a guest speaker, and various community partners kindly donated food, beverages and decorations. It was a lovely occasion including staff, volunteers, and residents. As always, the community came together to generously support us during the Holiday season. We received donations of toys, teen appropriate items, clothing, self care products and many other wonderful things. Our women and children had an amazing holiday season thanks to everyone who cared.

In the past fiscal year, this program was challenged with managing staffing, including hiring and training new staff, and changing requirements for COVID guidelines in congregate settings. COVID challenges continued to be problematic for the shelter. Constantly changing requirements were difficult to enforce especially while respecting choice in a harm reduction environment. As a congregate living setting our requirements were more stringent than those of the general population. Residents were understanding of the regulations and the changes, but it made for some confusing situations. It also meant staff had the additional responsibilities of sanitizing and temperature taking, as well as constantly monitoring for possible symptoms. Nevertheless, staff adapted to all the new circumstances, and our shelter service always remained open, to full capacity. Staffing was in flux, with many new staff facing a large learning curve managing both COVID and post COVID procedures, which were quite distinct and different. Training and peer support were invaluable. Many thanks to the staff who took new staff under their wings and coached them through many challenges.

We noticed an increase in substance use, concurrent disorders, mental health needs, and more evidence of self harming, coupled with continued difficulty obtaining mental health supports while agencies continued to struggle with COVID realities. A self harm kit was created to offer clients an alternate way of dealing with their pain. This is in line with our harm reduction approach.

Any enhancement dollars that we received during COVID have stopped, which has affected many areas of our budget. Residents continue to struggle to obtain housing. Market rents have soared, and many landlords are wary of renting to our clients, especially if they are on social assistance. Consequently resident's length of stay at the shelter have increased significantly with some remaining with us for up to a year. There are long waiting lists for affordable childcare, which in turn affects women's ability to re-enter the workforce. LCIHCS is invested in caring for the health and wellness of our staff. Part of the Residential Program consists of a team of shift counsellors. Various counsellors found their schedule onerous, particularly the volume of night shifts. In an inclusive, cooperative and thorough manner, a committee was formed, including a selection of staff, to investigate and develop an alternative schedule which would enable consistency whilst also managing to lessen the stress of shift work on counsellors.

2022-2023 SHELTER STATISTICS

**165
DAYS**

Shelter was at full capacity, **up 37.5%** from last year

**95
DAYS**

Shelter was over capacity

**138
DAYS**

Average length of stay, **up 62 days** from last year

44

Number of women & children who lived in the shelter

368

Number of Lanark County women turned away/ helped to find alternatives

2,802

Crisis calls received



This year in Ontario, 52 women were killed in 52 weeks.

One woman, mother, sister, daughter, friend taken every week.

Amidst on going challenges and COVID recovery, our community rallied with incredible generosity. Donations poured in from businesses, individuals, and local shops, providing essential items and even giving our residents an opportunity to choose new clothes for themselves free of charge. This meaningful support brought smiles and a sense of normalcy to those we serve.

This year also marked substantial growth in our community network. We're thrilled about developing strong ties with corporate sponsors, amplifying our outreach and impact. As we reflect on the past months, gratitude fills our hearts for the collective spirit that propels us forward. Together, we're making a tangible difference and eagerly anticipate the journey ahead.

We thank you for the ongoing support to the agency!

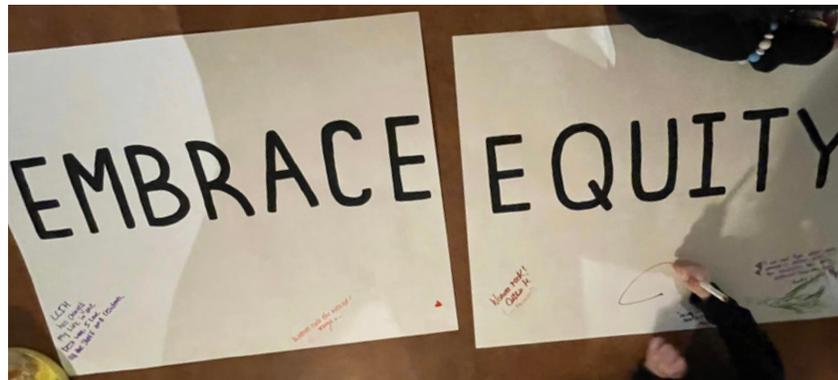
RESIDENTIAL CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

The Residential Children's Program empowers and supports children and mothers who have experienced intimate partner violence through the implementation of programs, counselling, and outings. Additionally providing community resources, childcare and advocacy support through a harm reduction, anti-violence, feminist approach. In the last fiscal year, this program supported 11 mothers/mothers-to-be and 25 children.

With the lifting of some COVID restrictions, we saw a return to the ability to offer more group programming and outings, such as trips to museums, Build-a-Bear and other local activities. This allowed for staff to encourage connection between Moms and their kids while provide respite from the day-to-day residential shelter dynamic in order to encourage further healing and growth.

The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services Grant for Prevention and Early Intervention Services for Children and Youth provided the opportunity for the children's program to invest in child/youth programming, learning activities, recreational activities, and trauma-based programming. Some examples include recreational tickets and passes to places like Saunders Farm and movie passes, as well as new trauma-informed programming books and residential programming organizational supplies. This past year the Children's program saw a return of art therapy, outings to public places (malls, museums, movies etc) and a connection with equine therapy at Ashfield Farms, . The program was also able to offer individualized extra curricular activities, for example one client participated in dance classes.

The ongoing shifting of COVID restrictions continued to challenge our program. Staff actively provided safe options for programming and activities to residents while navigating the most up to date health and safety practices. Staff continues to navigate these changes as the lifting of covid restrictions has also posed its own unique challenges and changes to the program. Staff navigated continued staffing changes over the past year through open communication and drawing on the support of the residential team as a whole.



PUBLIC EDUCATION

Lanark County Interval House and Community Support believes that education and prevention play an integral role in the fight to end violence against women and children in our community. This program continues to be a priority of the agency and for good reason. The Public Education Program offers free training and workshops for schools, service providers and community groups with the intention to break down barriers and create culture change. Education and awareness are key to ending the cycle of violence against women and children and as we witness the closing of a domestic homicide inquest in rural Ontario, we are reminded of the importance of this type of prevention.

Recommendations #23-31 of the Renfrew County Inquest speaks to the importance of offering public education in all its forms & spaces. Specifically, recommendation #23 states: Develop and implement a new approach to public education campaigns to promote awareness about Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), including finding opportunities to reach a wider audience in rural communities. These messages should promote broad recognition of how to seek support, risk factors, and warning signs of IPV, community and bystander engagement, be accessible in multiple languages and in multiple formats, and ensure that rural residents can identify themselves in the messaging and materials.

This past year, our Public Education program was busy responding to requests from all around our community. These requests come from Justice partners, businesses, schools, community members, social service agencies and more. We were thrilled to be able to host two in-person, well attended, successful youth conferences for our rural high schools. There is a clear desire for information and education on how to respond to this epidemic.



Students from high schools in Perth and Smiths Falls attend the first day of a two day youth conference presented by LCIHCS in October 2022

VICTIM ADVOCATE PROGRAM

The Victim Advocate Program serves as a crucial support system for individuals navigating the complex processes from the initial incident to system navigation. Designed to aid victims, the program offers an array of services, including court support for criminal and family cases, safety planning, advocacy, referrals, and accompaniment. Collaborating closely with the OPP and Smiths Falls Police, the Victim Advocate ensures that victims' inquiries are consistently addressed.

In 2022, the program served 86 women, maintaining a consistent level of engagement since its inception in 2019. Recognizing the increasing demand, a second Victim Advocate was introduced this year to ensure optimal support for victims, police, and partners.

To enhance the quality of the service, we actively solicit feedback from those who have utilized the Victim Advocate service. Prioritizing confidentiality, we have facilitated individual survivor forums, creating a safe space for victims to share their experiences openly. These insights have proved invaluable, shaping our approach moving forward as we continue to emphasize the importance of victim perspectives.

An outstanding recognition was achieved on March 3, when we were privileged to attend an award ceremony at the OPP headquarters in Orillia. Our Victim Advocate program received an esteemed OPP Accolade Award. These awards commend exceptional service among OPP uniformed, civilian, and auxiliary members, with recipients nominated by peers or supervisors and selected by a diverse panel of reviewers.

Despite the program existing for over three years, ongoing efforts are necessary to promote awareness within the community, law enforcement, and partner agencies. Ensuring seamless referrals and effective service delivery requires consistent communication. As newer recruits may not be familiar with the program, the Victim Advocate collaborates with liaison officers to provide information and engage new personnel. Over time, as the program gains traction, the goal is for this process to become automatic and integrated into standard protocols.

Many victims express apprehension about disclosing their experiences to law enforcement and becoming part of the Justice System due to associated challenges. This fear often deters reporting. Serving as a vital link between victims and officers, the Victim Advocate Program significantly eases this anxiety. From the outset of an incident and throughout the journey within the system, the Victim Advocate offers unwavering support, creating a consistent presence for victims whenever they require assistance.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Our Community Support Programs include the Women's Program (Carleton Place and Lanark Highlands) and the Sexual Assault Program. It provides support to women over the age of 18 in Lanark County with counselling, advocacy, referrals, housing and legal information and support groups. This includes counseling, legal referrals, advocacy, and more for women and children who are living in the community. These clients may still be living with their abuser or navigating life post-abuse. They face ongoing challenges caused by systemic oppression and lack of resources in our rural area. Between these programs 300 women were supported in the year.

This was a year of transition from pandemic service delivery to a pre-pandemic regular routines. This included having in person groups, offering all forms of individual support (phone, zoom or in person). We also welcomed new team members and a new approach to service delivery. We are now taking a holistic approach to working with women around their trauma and abuse. Women coming for support are being referred in terms of staff available, location and circumstance rather than by identifying their type of abuse. This has allowed for flexibility and an acknowledgment that women do not experience abuse in silos. Another new change was our Highlands program worked closely with an independent charitable organization called Plan B in the town of Lanark with women's groups, advocacy, crop sharing etc. in support of local women. Stay tune for further changes coming in 2023-24!

This year was challenging as we had long term staff on leave and positions not running at full capacity for parts of the year. This is reflected in the decreased numbers. However, by the end of the year, new staff were hired and the process of training and capacity building had begun. Numbers have already begun to increase dramatically. Supporting women to deal with housing and the increased cost of living remain the current biggest challenge. Not far behind are family court, justice system, wait lists, accessibility, transportation, mental health and addictions. We wish our departing staff members the best of luck on their next adventure

389

Total number of women served by CDP

1963

Hours of counselling provided

112

Women received counselling services.
Up 14% from last year.

599

Hours of groups

2303

Client Calls

CHILD & YOUTH OUTREACH PROGRAM

Our Child & Youth Program is designed for young people ages 4-18 years who have been exposed to and/or witnessed domestic violence. The program offers individual counselling as well as child & youth groups which run for a period of ten weeks. We provide a safe environment where they can express thoughts, concerns and feelings; learn conflict resolution skills and how to appropriately express anger; discuss safety planning and family changes; learn about boundaries and healthy relationships and discover new coping skills; and self esteem building.

It was a great feeling to get back a sense of normalcy after the pandemic. Being able to provide support face to face and being present in the schools was certainly a positive within the last year. We will continue to try and implement in school groups for children and youth who are in need of support: if we can bring that support to them it helps with barriers such as transportation and logistics.

We received extra funds this year from the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services that was to be put into our Children's programs. These funds certainly helped provide new up-to-date resources, art therapy, LCIHCS swag, recreational funding that provided children and youth in our community the opportunities to attend summer camps and participate in sports. Being able to provide that opportunity to families was certainly well received and made a lot of children and youth in our community very happy.

We are consistently challenged by families that have really complex situations as they are using the service for ongoing support for longer periods of time. This has created a lengthier wait time for new clients compared to the way things were traditionally done with this program. There has been a shift in what younger children are dealing with and trying to navigate with their peers, which has lead to some negative impacts on them.

The top struggles with our youth are definitely healthy relationships, consent and social media. As an agency we are in the schools having these conversation trying our best to educate our children and youth about the risks and safety around these topics at an age appropriate level. This is a team effort with our Public Education Program.

42

Women served



53

Children &
Youth served

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING SUPPORT PROGRAM & HOUSING ALTERNATIVES

Over the past few years, housing has consistently presented a significant challenge across all our programming efforts. In response, LCIHCS has taken strides to enhance our housing portfolio. This fiscal year, we're proud to have introduced 14 units tailored to clients seeking refuge from abuse. These units, available in various sizes and accessibility levels, cater to our diverse population's needs.

The Transitional Housing Support Program is responsible for providing crisis intervention, counselling, advocacy and referral service to current and former residents of LCIHCS, either in person or by phone.

The program remained consistently busy while staffing to the program experience transition. With the housing crisis ever present and the impacts of COVID, the service demands increased. The Housing Advocate enhancement and the Beyond Second Stage housing program provided enhanced service outcomes.

It is important to clarify that our housing alternatives **are not** definitive solutions, but rather steps we're taking to help women navigate a demanding housing market. These options come with subsidies, allowing women to stay on the RGI waitlist while offering them a temporary solution amid a prolonged wait.

In Fall 2020, with generous support from local, provincial, and federal governments, we acquired a previously underutilized 9-bed rooming house. Throughout 2021, we transformed the space into six housing units, including family and barrier-free units. Rent subsidies, facilitated by the County of Lanark, ensure an affordable and secure housing choice for women ready for more independent living. The unveiling of this housing option, named Beyond Second Stage, was quickly occupied when doors opened in Spring 2022.

This year, our Second Stage building experienced a higher turnover due to pandemic recovery and women transitioning onward. We worked closely with women on solidifying moving-on plans for those who had longer stays in Second Stage Housing. Due to the high turnover rates, updates and repairs were required for three out of four units, incurring both time and financial costs. We extend our gratitude to the remarkable volunteers who pitched in to repaint the units, along with Lindsay Bechamps and family, who refreshed one of our spaces. Additional positive changes include the purchase of a tower garden for the Perseverance Pantry and Second Stage programs, as well as a new play structure for our property. These improvements, large and small, have had significant impact on making the women and children we serve feel at home. Moreover, securing a property manager for Beyond Second Stage property management has lightened the load on our staff.

23%

Increase in demand for THSP this year

17

Women and children housed in Second Stage. **Up 64%** from last year

13

Women and children housed in Beyond Second Stage - doors opened in 2022

11

Women and children housed in scattered units around the County

2

Women housed in partner units with Carebridge

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING SUPPORT PROGRAM & HOUSING ALTERNATIVES

Despite these accomplishments, we continue to grapple with extensive waitlists for RGI Housing both locally and beyond. The private market's rent costs remain unaffordable for our residents, while private landlords often discriminate against those with lower credit scores or those on ODSP or mid-low income jobs, making it even more difficult for our clients to secure external housing. The rising cost of living and housing has created significant challenges for our clients. It is very difficult to connect clients with safe, affordable housing when housing is simply non-existent.

A heartfelt thanks to some of our supporters, including the Town of Carleton Place, the Rotary Club of Carleton Place and Mississippi Mills, and the United Way. We have established and maintain positive working relationships with housing partners and the County of Lanark and we anticipate additional housing supports in the year to come.



The new play structure and tower gardens at our Second Stage Building

On September 21, 2021, 58 people were counted as being unhoused in Lanark County. These individuals were staying in an emergency funded motel, domestic violence shelter, or in public places on the night of the count. This was up from 27 people on the last count in 2018.

Domestic Violence is one of the leading causes of housing instability, including homelessness, for women and children in Canada.

Lack of access to safe, affordable housing continues to be LCIHCS' biggest obstacles to our services.

FAMILY COURT SUPPORT

The Family Court Support program provides information about the family court process, helps women prepare for family court proceedings, accompanies women to legal appointments and helps with the application for legal aid. Women are also assisted with safety planning such as getting to and from court safely. Family Court Support Workers provide information about the family court process, help victims prepare for family court proceedings, refer victims to other specialized services and supports in the community, help with safety planning, and accompany the victim to court proceedings, where appropriate. Family Court Support Workers (FCSW) provide direct support to victims of domestic violence who are involved in the family court process.

A Family Court Support Worker provide information about the family court process; helps prepare for family court proceedings; refers to other specialized services and supports in the community; help with safety planning, such as getting to and from court safely; accompanies to court proceedings, where appropriate; provide assistance with document writing.

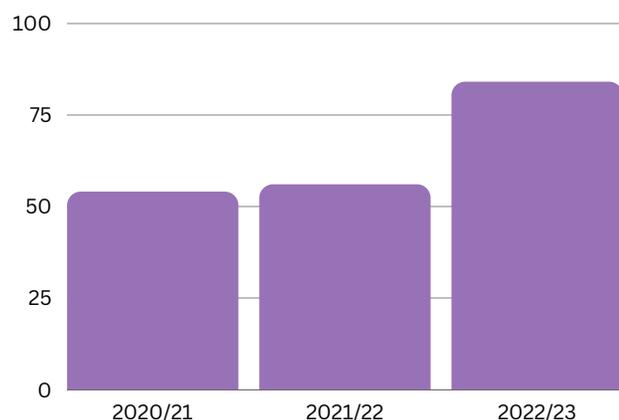
The Family Court Support Worker Program is now receiving funding through the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, which has facilitated an expansion in program hours. In addition, court proceedings have transitioned back to in-person appearances.

The current year has been marked by substantial challenges. There has been a notable upswing in the demand for our services, particularly among women engaged in legal proceedings. Many of these women are ineligible for legal aid and lack the financial means to engage a private lawyer. Consequently, our workload has intensified, encompassing a heightened volume of court-related documentation and document drafting. Persistent issues surrounding the availability of legal aid lawyers continue to necessitate heightened legal support and client preparation. Furthermore, a decrease in available legal professionals, coupled with an industry-wide increase in burnout, has not deterred us from resuming full-time court operations. Despite these efforts, challenges persist in obtaining approvals from the Office of the Children's Lawyer (OCL), and transitioning clients to in-person meetings and court hearings post-COVID-19 has proven intricate.

In response to the evolving landscape, our approach to supporting individuals has undergone adaptation, driven by the heightened demand and the limitations in access to legal aid and family court legal representation. Notably, a greater allocation of time has been directed towards court preparation, deviating from previous years.

53%

increase in demand for the FCSW Program in the last year

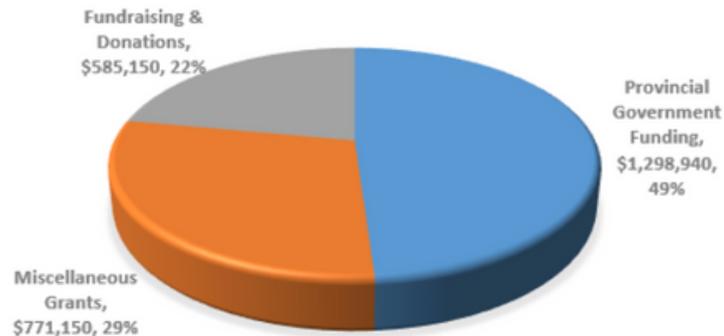


FINANCES

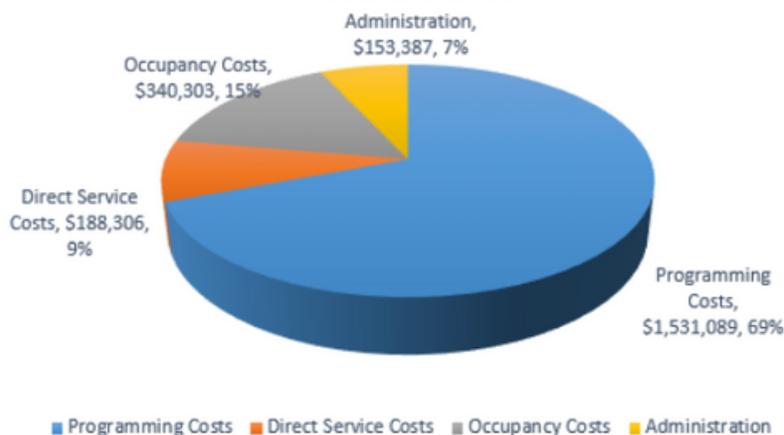
Statement of Operations for the year ended March 31, 2023

Revenue	2023	2022
Provincial Funding	\$1,298,940	\$1,235,345
Miscellaneous Grants	771,150	485,972
Fundraising and Donations	585,150	736,074
Total Revenue	2,655,240	2,457,391
Expenses		
Programming Costs	1,531,089	1,581,573
Direct Service Costs	188,306	198,368
Occupancy Costs	340,303	364,774
Administration	153,387	156,674
Total Expenses	2,213,085	2,301,389
Net Surplus/Deficit	442,155	156,002

FUNDING SOURCES



Use of Funds



THANK YOU TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS!

These organizations make it possible for us to run a number of our programs including Second Stage Housing, The Sexual Assault Support Program, Public Education, Resource Development and The Volunteer Program. We wouldn't be the agency we are without the support of these organizations and their people. Thank you for being the Champions our clients need!

CHAMPIONS IN THE FIGHT TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (\$20,000+)



& THE SHANNAN FAMILY FOUNDATION

PROTECTORS IN THE FIGHT TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (\$10,000+)



SUPPORTERS IN THE FIGHT TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (\$5,000+)



ALLIES IN THE FIGHT TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Almonte Civitan Club
 Almonte Community Presbyterian Church
 Bean Motors
 Beauties of the Beast
 Canadian Tire Gas Bar Carleton Place
 Carleton Place Civitan Club
 Donna MacDonald Ottawa Mortgage
 Market – Mortgage Alliance

Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario
 Grand Hotel Carleton Place
 Kiwanis Club of Perth-on-Tay
 Lanark County Crime Stoppers
 Laura Keller Real Estate Team
 Ottawa Basketeers
 Perth Civitan Club

Perth Lioness Club
 Scotiabank Carleton Place
 Scotiabank Home Financing Solutions
 Scotiabank Perth
 Scotiabank Smiths Falls
 Shelter Movers Ottawa
 St. Andrew's Church Perth
 St. Paul's Church Almonte