

ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024



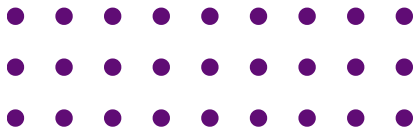
THE
WOMEN'S CENTRE
GREY BRUCE





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VISION

& Mission



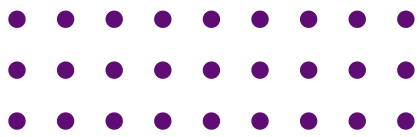
VISION

The Women's Centre Grey Bruce is a safer place for women, children and youth.



MISSION

Women, children and youth will live in safety regardless of their circumstances, and our community will recognize and work to eliminate abuse and violence.



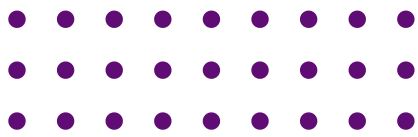
MESSAGE FROM THE *Executive Director*

As I reflect on the past year at The Women's Centre Grey Bruce, I am filled with pride for the progress we have made together. Our staff, board members, volunteers, donors, community partners and other stakeholders have helped in so many ways to ensure our mission is realized. We all have worked extremely hard to continue in the endeavour to provide services and safe havens at our Violence Against Women Emergency Shelter Program, Second Stage Transitional Housing Program and Anti-Human Trafficking Youth Program to ensure that women, children, and youth fleeing from violence have professional and caring people surrounding them, and a safer place to call home as they heal from their experiences.

We completed the 2nd year of a 3-year Strategic Plan, which emphasized four priority areas to work on:

- 1 Optimizing Organizational Resources**
- 2 Building Holistic Supports through Enhanced Community**
- 3 Engagement Continuing to Build Community Response to Human Trafficking**
- 4 Assessing the Organizational Brand**

- The first priority is optimizing our organizational resources, reviewing the agency's staffing structure and addressing staffing shortages caused by Covid-19, the effects of which has lasted a long time. A significant achievement was having all staff positions filled with employees who are passionate and committed to providing excellent support to our program participants. This includes having a list of reliable Relief Staff workers who can be called to come in with short notice to cover off employees who are absent.
- Our next priority is building holistic supports through enhanced community engagement and identify opportunities to collaborate with community partners to expand onsite services. This was a year focused on giving tours of our facilities to community partners to ensure our colleagues understand The Women's Centre's programs and services, so they can make the most successful referrals to women and youth that they also work with.



MESSAGE FROM THE *Executive Director*

- Thirdly, we have been focused on continuing to build our community response to Human Trafficking, both with our own youth residence program as well as ensuring our staff are joining forces at community committees and tables within Grey and Bruce whose focus is also on prevention and raising awareness while supporting the survivors in our communities. We will continue to audit the program and review good/promising practices in the anti-human trafficking service space, and further implement recommendations for program enhancements. This program relies on volunteers so if interested, please reach out. For more information on our Anti-Human Trafficking Youth Program, to make a referral for a youth in need, or for general inquiries, please call or text 226-668-0357.
- Our final focus is on assessing our organizational brand and conducting a review of any updates/enhancements that are required, specifically ensuring our programs align with our vision, mission, mandate, and current service offering.

This upcoming year brings with it more exciting initiatives including expanding our VAW programs - pending multi-year funding from grants, foundations, and other major donors - to enhance services to children staying at the Emergency Shelter and Second Stage Housing. We will continue with community outreach to strengthen our community partnerships, and conduct awareness campaigns and educational workshops.

While we celebrate our successes, many noted on the following pages of this years Annual Report, we also acknowledge the challenges we face. The need for fundraising has increased, and the demand for our services continues to grow, yet we are committed to meeting these challenges with resilience and innovation. We will explore new funding opportunities to ensure programs are fully funded, and where opportunity presents itself, expand our services.

As we move on in the new year, our focus remains on providing comprehensive support to survivors of violence. None of this would be possible without the dedication of our staff, volunteers, and supporters. Your generosity and compassion have made a profound impact on the lives of those we serve. Thank you for standing with us in this vital work. Together, we are making a difference.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Heather Sheldrick, Executive Director



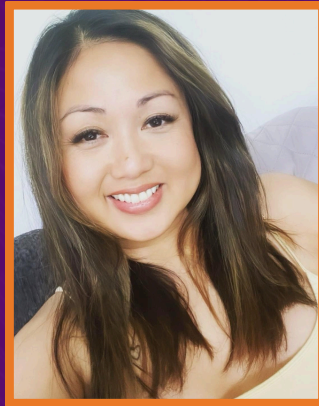


MEET OUR *Leadership Team*



HEATHER SHELDRIK

Executive Director/
Board Secretary



MARY THOMPSON

Second Stage Housing
Program Manager



JOYCE ANN JOHNSTON

Violence Against Women
Shelter Program Manager



LINDSAY BROWN

Anti-Human Trafficking
for Youth Program Manager



JODIE HORNETT

Payroll & Accounting
Manager



STACEY BARRY

Fund Development &
Communications Manager



MEET OUR *Board of Directors*



NATALIE BROWN
Board Chair



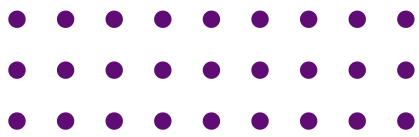
ALISSA ANGEL
Vice-Chair/
Interim Treasurer



KATE VANDERWIELEN
Director



ERICA WEPPLER
Director



LETTER FROM THE *Outgoing Board Chair*

Dear Supporters and Community Members,

I hope this message finds you well. As I come to the end of my term as Chair of the Board for The Women's Centre Grey Bruce, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on our journey together and express my deepest gratitude.

Since joining the board in 2018, we have faced many challenges and celebrated numerous successes including navigating through the COVID crisis successfully while maintaining our ability to provide services for our community. The beginning of our AHT program in 2020, and further opening a new home for our at-risk youth this past year has helped us be able to offer not only a safe place, but to further educate our communities about this growing crime. Together, we have provided a haven for women, their children and at-risk in need, expanded our services, and strengthened our community's commitment to ending violence against women and human trafficking.

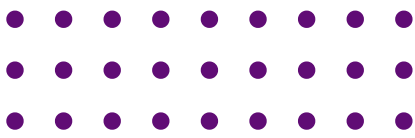
I am immensely proud of what we have accomplished. Our achievements would not have been possible without the dedication and support of our staff, volunteers, donors, and community partners, Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services and Grey County. Your unwavering commitment to our mission has been truly inspiring.

As I step down from my role, I am confident that The Women's Centre Grey Bruce will continue to thrive under new leadership. I am excited to welcome Alissa Angel as the new Board Chair. She brings a wealth of experience and a deep passion for our cause, and I am certain that she will lead our organization to great heights. One of the goals that are board has for 2024/2025 is to expand of board members so please reach out if you are interested in serving our charity in that manner.

Serving as the Board Chair has been an incredible honour and a profoundly rewarding experience that I will cherish all my life. Thank you for the trust and support you have shown me during my tenure. I look forward to continuing to support The Women's Centre Grey Bruce and my community in new ways witnessing the incredible impact we will continue to make together.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Natalie Brown, Outgoing Board Chair



OUR

Programs & Services

THREE CORE PROGRAMS

The **VAW Emergency Shelter Program** is a twenty-bed facility with security and main floor accessibility offering twenty-four hour crisis intervention and supportive counselling.

The **Second Stage Residential Program** is a safe 12-unit townhouse complex that provides transitional and supportive counselling within a geared-to-income rent program.

The **Anti-Human Trafficking Program for Youth** includes counselling, outreach, and housing for at-risk youth 15-18 years of age.

The **Outreach program** assists women in the community and clients staying at The Second Stage Residential Program connect with local support and services

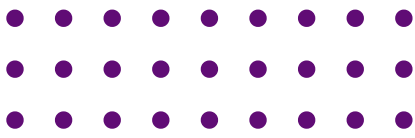
SERVICES

Public education about abuse and women's issues is shared with community partners including schools, community groups, and service clubs.

Family & Criminal Court support is provided in partnership with other community agencies to support abused women while they navigate through the Court system.

Walk-in **crisis support** is available twenty-four hours per day at the Shelter and during business hours at Second Stage. Trained staff provide phone and text crisis support, information and referrals for women, children, and youth in crisis, twenty-four hours per day.

Individual and group **counselling** is available at the Shelter and Second Stage, for all women regardless of their situation.



PROGRAM

Spotlight

VAW EMERGENCY SHELTER PROGRAM

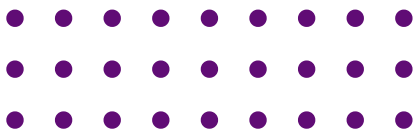
The Women's Centre Grey Bruce is one of the first Shelters in Ontario to become pet friendly, both for staff and for the women that we serve. We made that wonderful decision back in 2018 and tested the idea for a few months before fully implementing.

For staff, being able to bring your pet to work for the past 7 years has really boosted moral and made our workplace more enjoyable. Pets are a great icebreaker, encouraging social interactions among coworkers which has often led to improved comradery. We all work under a great deal of stress; it is often reduced due to having an animal in the workspace. Sometimes just holding or petting a dog relieves anxiety.

Many women in abusive situations delay leaving their abusers due to concerns for their pets' safety. Studies indicate that up to 59% of women experiencing domestic violence delay leaving because they fear for their pets.



Allowing pets in shelters can significantly reduce the emotional trauma for survivors and their children. Pets provide comfort, companionship, and a sense of normalcy during a tumultuous time. It has been extremely beneficial for women coming into the shelter to be allowed to bring their pets with them. Knowing they can keep their pets safe, with them, helps women with their decision to leave their abuser. In the past women would stay in the abusive situation to keep their pets safe. Women bringing pets into the shelter even helps women who do not have pets with them feel more comfortable while in the Shelter. We are so thankful we can support our clients with bringing their pets with them.



PROGRAM

Spotlight

The rental vacancy rate in Owen Sound was **3.1%** in 2023. A low vacancy rate indicates a tight rental market, making it difficult for people to find affordable housing.

SECOND STAGE RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM

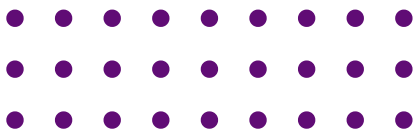
A lack of safe and affordable housing is a primary reason women return to their abusers. Access to stable housing can provide a sense of security and stability, which is crucial for VAW clients who may be fleeing abusive situations and need a safe place to rebuild their lives. Transitional housing serves as a bridge between the emergency shelter and permanent housing, helping our women to gradually move towards self-sufficiency and long-term stability. The Second Stage Residential Program is a one year program, allowing women access to stable housing which is crucial when fleeing abusive situations and need a safe place to rebuild their lives while waiting for permanent housing to come up.

During the 2023/2024 fiscal year, the Second Stage Residential Program saw many updates for the women and children in our program. 3 units were fully repainted and refreshed, and two bathrooms were updated. An energy audit was performed and new energy efficient lightbulbs were installed replacing 50 lightbulbs. All 8 units received new fridges, new microwaves and now have drying racks.



Access to programming was increased by creating a 2nd evening group for women. A new Summer Camp program was created to support the children in our programs lead by a Summer Camp Coordinator that took place from the beginning of July to the end of August. The area was made fully accessible by installing a new bridge to both youth portables in the backyard.

Lastly, a new food pantry was added for all of our clients to access!



PROGRAM

Spotlight

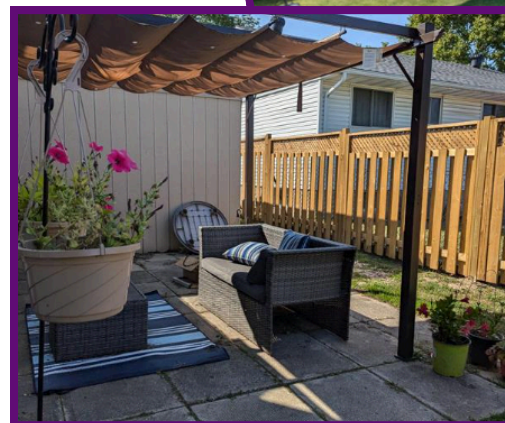
- 39 youth accessed the 24/7 crisis hotline
- 16 youth accessed residential services at AHT
- 57 safety plans were created
- 42 youth were served within our programs
- 20 of those served were between 15-17
- Total number of days youth stayed at AHT 1,040

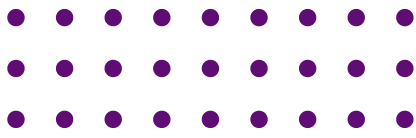
ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING YOUTH PROGRAM

Human trafficking is one of the fastest-growing crimes worldwide. The average age of recruitment into sex trafficking is 13 years old. Over 70% of human trafficking victims identified by police are under the age of 25. In Ontario, the majority of reported cases involve sexual exploitation, which may also be referred to as sex trafficking. Young women and girls are particularly at risk, though boys, men and people who identify as 2SLGBTQ+ are also targeted.

In early 2023, The Women’s Centre Grey Bruce purchased a house for the AHT Youth residence, the program had outgrown the previous rented space. Extensive renovations were required to obtain a Residential Children’s License via MCCSS to house 8 youth. A 4-bedroom traditional home was converted into an 8-bedroom youth house, equipped with essentials for participant counselling and education. The backyard received new fencing and landscaping to include a seating area, a fire pit with muskoka chairs and a storage shed.

The **Adopt-a-Room** campaign was launched to raise over **\$150,000** for the renovations. A plaque is now displayed over the bedroom door of each room that has been adopted. When we have open houses and tours, members of the public can see where the generosity has come from to help keep this program fully funded.





THANK YOU

To our Donors

\$25,000+

Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services | Grey County | Community Foundation Grey Bruce

\$10,000+

Ontario Trillium Foundation | The Home Depot Canada Foundation | The Shoppers Drug Mart Life Foundation | Paul & Kathy Walker Family Charity Foundation | Timothy D. Mayer Charitable Foundation | Trillium Mutual ROOTS Community Fund | The Joan & Jim Patterson Foundation | Robert's Farm Equipment | Royal LePage Locations North | Royal LePage Shelter Foundation | Government of Canada

\$5,000+

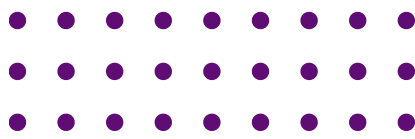
St. John's United Church | Bruce Power L.P. | J.P. Commercial Contractors | Howick Mutual Insurance Company | OREA Realtors Care Foundation | Bob & Kelly VanDolder Family Charitable Foundation | Elizabeth Wilson | Stephanie Stuart-Vanderburg | The Estate of Christine Drake

\$2,500+

United Way of Grey Bruce | Owen Sound District Secondary School | Doug Haslam | Scott Crowther | Bert Leeder

\$1,000+

Unifor International Department | Township of Georgian Bluffs | First Christian Reform Church | Bayshore Broadcasting Corporation | Charlene Codner | Tricia Pool | Nancy Bradley | Dobbinton United Church | Sydenham & District Optimist Club | North Grey Women's Institute | Owen Sound & District Junior Optimist Club | Ruthann Carson | Patricia Smith | Bente Fogh | Benedict Electrical Contracting Limited | M. Elizabeth McKinlay | Larsen & Shaw Limited | Elementary Teachers Federation Ontario Bluewater Local (ETFO) | Nadia Danyluk | Carol Rushton & Larry Culp | Ralph Suke | Three Eggs Foundation | Jane and Sid Dykstra | Shannon Cameron | Cathryn Kennedy | Peninsula Service with Assist, Nurture, and Support (SWANS)

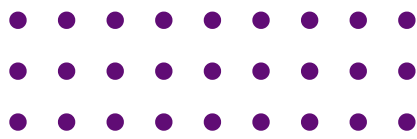


2023-2024

Financials

THE WOMEN'S CENTRE GREY BRUCE CASH FLOW STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Cash provided by (used for)		
Operating activities		
Excess of (expenditures over revenue) revenue over expenditures	(135,540)	349,042
Charges not involving cash		
Amortization of property and equipment	103,951	84,764
Amortization of deferred contributions	(73,497)	(72,496)
	<u>(105,086)</u>	<u>361,310</u>
Change In		
HST receivable	(9,993)	42,181
Prepaid expenses	-	(6,484)
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	8,949	3,921
Deferred contributions	-	(43,513)
	<u>(106,130)</u>	<u>357,415</u>
Investing activities		
Deferred contributions related to property and equipment	-	76,553
Purchase of property and equipment	(724,417)	(106,191)
Deposit on new property	530,381	(530,381)
Decrease in investments	37,753	1,060
Net contributions to restricted housing funds	14,033	12,816
	<u>(142,250)</u>	<u>(546,143)</u>
Financing activities		
Principal repayment on mortgage	(31,793)	(45,800)
	<u>(31,793)</u>	<u>(45,800)</u>
Change in cash	(280,173)	(234,529)
Cash at beginning of of year	<u>759,270</u>	<u>993,799</u>
Cash at end of year	<u>479,097</u>	<u>759,270</u>

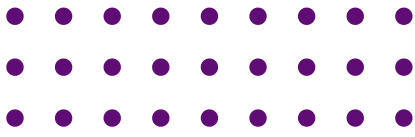


2023-2024

Financials

THE WOMEN'S CENTRE GREY BRUCE STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Revenue		
Ministry of Children, Community & Social Services	1,558,421	1,414,184
Grey County housing	213,578	217,555
Adopt A Room Fundraising	97,350	-
Donations and fundraising	271,684	774,414
Other	8,765	6,587
Housing rental income	62,948	35,568
Investment Income	23,789	42,359
	2,236,535	2,490,667
Expenditures		
Allocated administration	118,149	99,358
Second Stage Mortgage Interest	800	3,363
Administration	60,104	61,929
Advertising and promotion	28,711	25,135
Client purchased services	175	12,240
Communication	14,781	11,920
Covid-19 Expenses	-	2,850
HST expense	40,322	14,876
Insurance	40,556	22,832
IT services and supplies	26,742	21,151
Other services	14,816	17,828
Other supplies and equipment	56,910	55,039
Professional	72,239	54,112
Repairs and maintenance	89,387	162,805
Salaries and benefits	1,690,563	1,499,974
Training	6,385	3,823
Travel	7,532	3,985
Utilities	64,353	47,699
Contributions to replacement reserve	9,096	8,438
	2,341,621	2,129,357
Excess of (expenditures over revenue) revenue over expenditures before amortization	(105,086)	361,310
Amortization of property and equipment	(103,951)	(84,764)
Amortization of deferred contributions	73,497	72,496
	(30,454)	(12,268)
Excess of (expenditures over revenue) revenue over expenditures	(135,540)	349,042



2023-2024

Statistics



90
WOMEN RECEIVED
COUNSELLING
SUPPORT



231
WOMEN
ACCESSED
OUTREACH
PROGRAMS



54
WOMEN & CHILDREN LIVED
IN TRANSITIONAL HOUSING



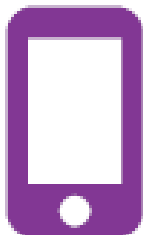
108
WOMEN SUPPORTED
IN COURT



405
DAYS OF PET STAYS

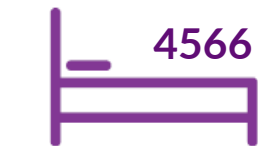


150
WOMEN AND CHILDREN
STAYED IN THE SHELTER



1562
CRISIS CALLS &
TEXTS RECEIVED

1311
SAFETY PLANS
DEVELOPED



4566
DAYS OF
RESIDENTIAL STAYS



The Women's Centre Grey Bruce's crisis line is available
24 hours a day, 7 days a week:



CALL 519-371-1600



TEXT 226-974-0755



TOLL FREE 1-800-265-3722



www.thewomenscentre.org



facebook.com/twcgreybruce



instagram.com/twcgreybruce



linkedin.com/company/twcgreybruce



2048 A 9th Avenue East
Owen Sound, ON N4K 3H2

If you have any questions about **The Women's Centre Grey Bruce** or if you are interested in learning more about our programs or facilities, please contact us.

If you or someone you know are experiencing gender-based violence and need immediate assistance, **call 911**.



THE
WOMEN'S CENTRE
GREY BRUCE