



Annual Report 2019-2020



SAFETY

SHELTER

SUPPORT

Table of Contents

- 1 SOWINS Impact 2019-2020
- 2 Governance Report
- 3 SOWINS Strategic Plan 2020-2023
- 4 Operations Report
- 7 PEACE Program
- 8 Stopping the Violence Counselling Program
- 9 Intake Outreach Advocacy
- 10 Community Based Victim Services Program
- 11 Housing Programs
- 12 Transition House Program & Emergency Youth Bed
- 14 SAFExst Program
- 15 Human Resources
- 16 Donations

We are a compassionate group dedicated to the vision of a society where women and children live their lives free from violence and abuse. Collaborative and co-creative for the benefit our clients and community, we partner with peer agencies, work on response and policy development committees, and provide educational information about abuse to the general community.

Values

- Accountability
- Compassion
- Inclusion
- Diversity
- Respect

Beliefs

- Every person is an individual deserving of respect and dignity
- Abuse is a societal issue, not a private one, and we all have a personal and collective responsibility to end violence
- Addressing and coping with abuse requires ongoing individualized support from a variety of community and personal supports for both victim and offender
- Violence is a learned behaviour and can be addressed through education, counselling and accountability
- Relationship violence impacts everyone in the family
- Abuse can have devastating impacts on all aspects of self
- All forms of abuse are unacceptable
- Healthy relationships are cooperative, balanced and equal



SOWINS IMPACT 2019-2020

5885

Women's Bed Stays at
the Transition House



3510

Children's Bed Stays at
the Transition House



2050

Crisis calls answered



1195

Referrals to the
Transition House



337

Days the Transition
House was at capacity



307

PEACE counselling
sessions for children &
youth



58781

Rent subsidy support
by the Homeless
Prevention Program



1529

Women's Counselling
& Support sessions



302

Community Based
Victim Services
Program clients



10840

SAFExst Program
client contacts



17756

Kms driven by the
Mobile Outreach Van



9000

Harm Reduction
Supplies distributed



3303

Naloxone Kits
distributed



2468

Harm reduction litter
picked up



90

Volunteers supported
the Share the Spirit of
Giving Campaign



534

Individuals supported
by the Share the Spirit
of Giving Campaign



Governance Report

At present, the Board of Directors of SOWINS is comprised of the Board Chair and four Directors whose primary function is to provide sound governance in accordance and in compliance with: the BC Society Act, Imagine Canada Ethical Code and SOWINS' own Vision, Constitution, By-Laws, and code of Ethics and Values. Our decisions align with the Strategic Plan and support the Executive Director through sound and informed governance. We do our work through the following committees: Finance, Governance and Board Development.

In October 2019, our entire Board and our Executive Director attended a full-day Governance Workshop facilitated by Deb McClelland of OnBOARD Training. As a Board, we continually look for ways to understand and execute our roles and responsibilities wisely and effectively. We found this workshop to be highly beneficial. We recently completed our Three year Strategic Plan with the facilitation of Deb McClelland.

Our Board continues to work very effectively with our Executive Director, Debbie Scarborough. She continues to liaise with and speak to so many individuals and groups, thus increasing awareness of what we do and creating new connections to benefit women and children. With the onset of COVID-19, this has been a very challenging year for SOWINS. Debbie has worked tirelessly to keep our programs open, safe, secure and well-funded during this pandemic.

The key to the success of our society lies in the dedication of its outstanding staff, supportive volunteers and strong governance. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank Debbie Scarborough for her strong leadership. We recognize and thank our staff who have shown commitment and collaborative effort this past year.

Lastly, I would like to thank the members of our Board of Directors. We are a diverse group of people with a variety of backgrounds and strengths and it is a pleasure to work with you for the benefit of our organization.

Peggy Nicholson
President, Board of Directors

SOWINS Board of Directors at March 31st, 2019

Peggy Nicholson,
President

Rod Fru,
Vice-President

Maimie DeSilva,
Secretary

Heather Seminiuk,
Treasurer

John Archer,
Director

Our Vision

All individuals have the ability to make choices to live a safe and healthy life

Our Mission

Supporting individuals in their recovery from the impact of violence and abuse while working to prevent violence and abuse in our communities.

SOWINS Strategic Plan 2020-2023



Organizational Excellence

Developing our people and processes to increase our proficiency and value

- Develop further the Board's governance best practices
- Ensure effective supports are in place for all operations
- Develop a staff attraction and retention plan



Client-Centered Programs

Ensuring our programs are meaningful for our clients and the community

- Ensure client safety in all our programs
- Address gaps in service to enhance current and future programming



Collaborative Relationships

Working with new and existing partners to address the needs of our clients

- Enhance our relationships with service providers to further eradicate violence and abuse
- Work with other agencies and local governments to expand our services to other communities in the South Okanagan
- Identify the gaps in service regarding intersectionality and seek new relationships to help eradicate violence and abuse



Informed Community

Improving public engagement and perception of our organization

- Increase awareness and understanding of our services
- Educate students and educators within the school system on violence, abuse, and healthy relationships
- Educate first responders to identify and respond effectively to violence and abuse

Operations Report

Violence and abuse against women present in many forms and impact every aspect of a woman's life and those of her children. SOWINS exists to meet every individual where they are at in their healing journey, assisting to overcome their trauma while working to prevent and eradicate future violence and abuse from occurring.

Like most pre-COVID-19 times, the end of fiscal year March 2019 seems like a life time ago. It was a time when we were focusing on practicum students from Okanagan College and UBCO, working to create learning plans that not only benefit those we serve but to attract these students to the sector. April typically means prep work for our annual Walk to End Abuse yet we with the entire community, were responding to the five person homicide in Penticton and the ripple effect it had throughout the South Okanagan.

Presentations during the last fiscal year were done on a frequent basis as agencies, schools, and local groups were focusing on new beginnings and what each could do to support healthy relationships and the prevention of violence and abuse. I presented at a National Women's Retreat with four other presenters over three days in Victoria which was an amazing opportunity to talk about what it means to deliver trauma informed programming, work with passion and compassion within our sector. It was an honour to be amongst women that held positions such as ADM's, authors, CEO's, Lieutenant Governor, entrepreneurs, and top ranking female within the RCMP and Military Intelligence, to name a few of the 104 women in attendance.

May 24th Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing Selina Robinson spoke at SOWINS announcing the opening of our first long term, safe, affordable housing project called Tamarack. This was history in the making for SOWINS and the South Okanagan as there has never been this type of housing for women and their children who have experienced violence and abuse.

Rotary members Lori Lalonde and Natalie Ferebee requested \$10,000 from the local Rotary Club to purchase items in order to make kits for women moving out on their own after experiencing intimate partner abuse. The Kits include pots, dishes, cutlery, towels, bedding, cleaning supplies, pillows, and other house wares – essentials one needs to start out.

SOWINS was thrilled to hear that for the first time in our 39 year history we were nominated for "Non-profit of the Year" at the Penticton Business Awards. SOWINS was successful in winning the award, a testament to the incredible work our team does in serving the community.

I continue to sit on two provincial boards (BC Society of Transition Houses and Community Social Service Employers Association) in order to bring the issues of SOWINS and the South Okanagan to the Provincial tables and to bring provincial news to SOWINS and the South Okanagan.

August has historically been one of the busiest months and 2019 was no exception. Not only was our Transition House full to capacity and our other programs busy providing services, we were also busy



Penticton Rotary Club Presents cheque donation and "Hope Chests" for women starting a new life after fleeing abuse

Operations Report

fundraising and creating awareness of our services. We heard from United Way that we were approved for partial funding for the receptionist position. Rona chose SOWINS to be the recipient of their “Lowe’s Hero” fundraising initiative this year from August 31 to Sept 28 where at the end of all their hard work, we were presented with a cheque for over \$13,000. Hidden Chapel a longtime supporter of our work, donated all their tasting fees throughout the season to SOWINS.

September was the month to garner our 2020 Walk sponsors and for the first time we hit a total of \$29,000. We also began costing out a new van for the Transition House as with 34 women and children we sometimes need two vans to do school runs and outings. We hosted our third SOWINS LIVE event which was another incredible success where staff shared how SOWINS works to increase and preserve the health and safety of our communities to our donors. Mid-September was the start of Share the Spirit Campaign, looking for volunteers, donations and securing venues. We supported United Way Drive Thru by volunteering and we co-hosted Take Back the Night with two sister agencies.

We try and stay informed with regards to our sector and housing so a few times a year staff attend Annual Training Forums by BC Non-profit Housing Association, Ending Violence Association of BC, BC Society of Transition Houses and Community Social Services Employers Association Conference.

SOWINS continues to do interviews with Global, CBC, Castanet and local newspapers ensuring that violence and abuse against women and children is a topic that is discussed and owned by all community members. Internally knowledge sharing is done at our Mind Mapping sessions held quarterly for Board and staff to learn and share about the new programs, staff and changes at SOWINS.

In December I was honoured to receive the Paul Harris Fellow award from Rotary. SOWINS was also chosen as the VEES Community Hero for the month. There was much media coverage regarding Share the Spirit of Giving and many media stories of giving, donations, and of those in need.

Share the Spirit Campaign was the best ever after getting underway in September with a volunteer fundraiser. The campaign was comprised of five different projects: The Christmas Shop, Hampers for clients and their children, Backpacks for those living in homelessness, SOWINS Christmas Party for clients and their children, and Fundraising for SOWINS operations. In total 91 volunteers were involved with the five projects (some volunteers working at more than one event), benefiting over 534 families and raising over \$110,000.



SOWINS received the 2019 Non-Profit Organization of the Year Award at the Penticton Chamber of Commerce Excellence Awards



SOWINS was the recipient of “Lowe’s Hero Campaign” and received a donation over \$13,000



SOWINS Walk to End Abuse raised funds and awareness on violence and abuse in our community



The flag installation at SOWINS Walk to End Abuse represents the number of clients that accessed services in the past year

Operations Report

Then March arrived and COVID-19 was upon us, spreading around the globe. Everything changed around the world and at SOWINS. We worked diligently to ensure all services would continue albeit differently. This took an incredible amount of work, calls with our National and Provincial counterparts on what would be the best practice without any historical context of a global pandemic. New Policy and Protocols were drawn up. Every site was altered in some way. Criteria was established for staff to work remotely. Ergonomic tests were done at home sites with equipment and supplies purchased. New staff were hired to assist in our response to new cleaning protocols. SOWINS was often the agency that others called for support on how to respond within our sector. Hours were spent on ZOOM and conference calls with government, service providers and funders to learn and share. What we did know is with any crisis, or disaster, Intimate Partner and sexual Violence increases therefore we formulated our responses accordingly preparing for increased demand of our services. We launched a video filmed in Penticton with the message “you are not alone. We are open and here for you”. We worked to have our 24 hour staffed crisis line receive text messages and we built our first live chat on line so that women and youth trapped in isolation with their abuser, could still reach out for help. We with BC Housing provide support to ten rooms at a local motel to house the overflow from our Transition House. We know that COVID-19 is here for a long time therefore all policy, procedures, programming and services are inclusive of best practice(s) when it comes to working during a global pandemic. We are all finding our way together, supporting one another and those we serve as we learn and grow during this unprecedented time. On behalf of myself, SOWINS staff and those we serve I extend our heartfelt appreciation and thanks to our Board members Peggy, Rod, Heather, John and Maimie for their incredible support and guidance throughout the year and beyond.

Wishing everyone good health,

Debbie Scarborough
SOWINS Executive Director



Penticton Rotary Club presents the Paul Harris Fellow award to Debbie Scarborough



Soup making event at Brodo with JCI'S Community Spoons



Penticton Eagles Club gift donation to the Share the Spirit of Giving Campaign



Donation presentation by Monster Vineyard to the Share the Spirit of Giving Campaign

PEACE Program

Provided under contract to Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The PEACE Program (Prevention, Education, Advocacy, Counselling and Empowerment) continues to support children and youth ages 3-18 through a mandate that aims to stop the intergenerational cycle of violence. This is done through many forms including art, expressive play as well as numerous educational resources. Through these methods children and youth are able to share their stories in ways that makes sense to them while simultaneously processing what they have experienced.

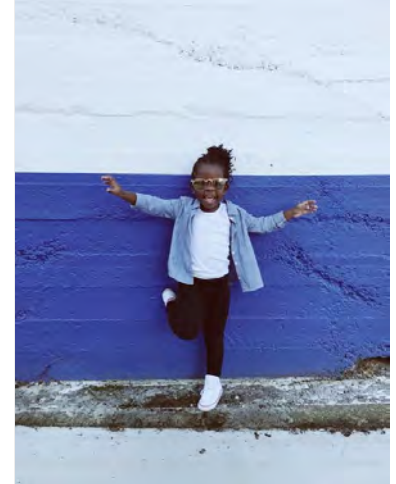
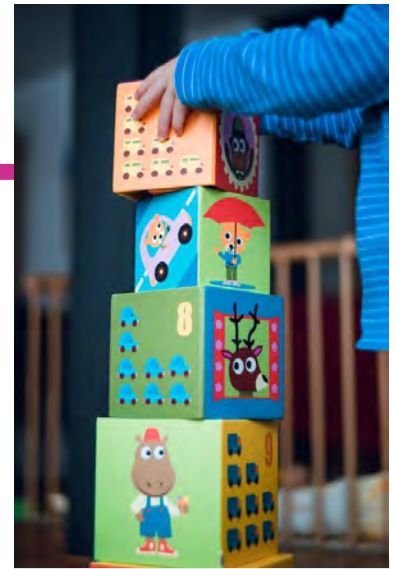
The program supports children and youth as well as families who are healing from trauma. We meet with parents and guardians to help them understand how violence can affect their children and provide them with resources to support them.

There have been some big changes to the PEACE Program in the last year. Erica Markus-Pawliuk, who previously ran the program for many years, moved into another position and I, Jessica Lutz, began my role in the PEACE Program in August 2019. With extra office space available I was able to move my work space out of the play/meeting room which opened up space for us to put in a table and chairs where we can work on all kinds of arts and crafts.

The VIP (violence is preventable program) continues to be offered in elementary, middle and high schools. VIP Presentations increase awareness of the effects that domestic violence has on students while connecting those experiencing violence to PEACE Program counselling. The program ran at the beginning of the year with the support from our wonderful practicum students. Additional dates were set to start in the spring, but unfortunately they had to be put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic. VIP will continue to run once it is safe, so that we can continue to educate and inform students about violence, safety, and healthy ways to express emotions. This program is very important as it is a way to reach many children and youth who are in need of support, but who are often not to the PEACE program.

Finally, I would like to thank the Board and all the volunteers who have supported us throughout the years.

Jessica Lutz
PEACE Program



Stopping the Violence Counselling Program

Provided under contract to Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The Stopping the Violence program provides counselling for women of all ages that wish to work through the impact and recovery of intimate partner abuse and sexual violence. Some of the older clients are faced with issues due to historic abuse, elder abuse, and living with physical disabilities and chronic health concerns due to a life time of abuse and violence. Often older survivors' face a multitude of barriers in accessing services therefore we are able to assist them in navigating through and overcoming the barriers that stand in their way to living a healthy, abuse free life.

The waitlist for counselling continues to be lengthy and something that we struggle to eliminate. With SOWINS being a service provider for almost forty years in this community, women will wait months to see one of our counsellors. In order to assist the women on the waitlist, a new position called the Intake Outreach and Advocacy (IOA) was created. The IOA support worker reaches out to every woman as they request counselling and while on the waitlist, to ensure they are supported and assists them with referrals and advocacy.

Referrals continue to come from a variety of our community partners including RCMP Police Victim Services, One Sky, Interior Health, Pathways. Access Centre, the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) and Penticton Regional Hospital to name a few.

Our team is also committed to the prevention of abuse and violence therefore we continually connect and reach out to various community partners and agencies. We participate in the Violence in Relationships (VIR) committee, which works at supporting and bringing change for women who are experiencing abuse in their relationships and Interagency Case Assessment Team (ICAT), which monitors high risk files where there is a risk for domestic homicide.

"A woman that accessed our counselling program struggled to address the trauma of her past, was unemployed and was refused access to her children by her abuser. During our time together she found her voice and confidence, and developed the ability to stand up and advocate on her behalf. The regained confidence has seen her in a healing path with many milestones, like completing school, beginning a career in her field of study and gaining regular access to her children, while working on building a positive, healthy relationship with them. This story is one of many stories of success that we witness every day".

We would like to thank our Board members, volunteers, funders, and everyone who continues to support us. Without you, we would not be able to do the work that we do.

Erica Markus-Pawliuk and Stephanie McAllister
Stopping the Violence Counsellors



Intake Outreach Advocacy

Partially funded by Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The full time Intake Outreach Advocacy (IOA) position was created in response to the growing wait list during the latter part of 2019 . Prior to the IOA position, the STV counselors took turns covering drop-in hours, with a reduced time dedicated to counselling. The IOA is now taking care of all drop-in hours, enabling our agency to support an additional number of clients and reducing the waitlist for counselling, by allowing the STV counsellors to focus on providing counselling.

The IOA support worker also manages the counselling wait list, by checking in with clients regularly and offering emotional support. This has assisted clients with feeling they are not alone or forgotten while they are waiting to access counselling services. Many of the women have expressed gratitude for the regular check-ins.

In addition to emotional support, the IOA supports clients with advocacy and accompaniment in a variety of situations such as family court and mediation appointments so that clients are not having to face their abusers alone. Some examples include attending appointments with the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (MSDPR) which has proven helpful as applying for MSD can be overwhelming for victims of violence, and providing support to clients working with the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), by assisting women with completing forms which again can be overwhelming after experiencing intimate family violence.

Together with the STV counselors, the IOA has been working on the creation of psycho-educational half day group workshops, covering a variety of topics, such as recognizing the signs of abuse, addiction, self-esteem, and mindfulness.

The IOA position has been incredibly successful in meeting the needs of women and youth accessing SOWINS services, by responding to applications and requests for service in a quick and efficient manner, helping the women and youth feel valued and heard.

"I can't thank you enough for doing all of this. You may not necessarily play the major role in this whole thing/outcome, but you're definitely an integral part in my healing process as I navigate this system. Your effort, combined with others, will be my saving grace. For that as I said before, I truly can't thank you enough. What you do every day, big or small, really makes a great impact on women's lives. We are so fortunate to have you and the SOWINS team".

Becky Thomson
Intake Outreach Advocacy Support Worker

Community Based Victim Services Program

Provided under contract to Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The Community-Based Victim Services (CBVS) Program has had another busy year supporting survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence in the South Okanagan. In 2019, we supported over 200 victims of crime and their families. The CBVS program provides numerous services to clients including emotional support, safety planning, information and updates on RCMP investigations, criminal court proceedings, court preparation, court accompaniment and referrals to community resources. We have ongoing collaboration with local RCMP detachments, Crown Counsel and other community service providers to enhance client service. CBVS also co-chairs the South Okanagan Interagency Case Assessment Team (ICAT) to address high-risk domestic files which could result in grievous bodily harm or death.

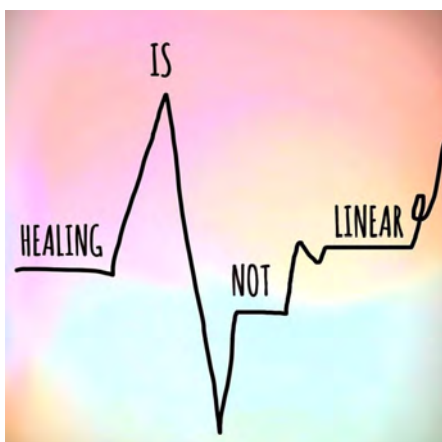
In 2019 we received referrals from the Penticton RCMP Victim Services, Penticton Crown Counsel, the Ministry of Children and Family Development, Interior Health, Child and Youth Mental Health, OneSky Community Resources, the Calgary Police, Vernon RCMP, the Central Okanagan Elizabeth Fry Society and other programs within SOWINS.

Our program has continued to strengthen relationships with service providers in our community, such as Crown Counsel, the Penticton Regional Hospital's Sexual Assault Response Team (SART), the newly formed Special Victims Unit at the Penticton RCMP, School District 67 and other Victim Services providers across the province. At this time, we are partnering with the Penticton RCMP and School District 67 to implement a sexual assault protocol within the school district. This protocol will ensure that all students receive appropriate supports following the disclosure of a sexual assault.

Through our positive relationship with the Penticton RCMP, CBVS staff were able to assist two clients in bringing forward complaints regarding Penticton RCMP investigations. In addition, we have submitted seven Third Party Reports, allowing survivors to anonymously report their sexual assault, while engaging in support services, seeking medical assistance through the SART Team, and providing valuable crime data to the Penticton RCMP.

This year, the CBVS team was fortunate to attend the Ending Violence Association's Annual Training Forum and *Supporting victims of Crime: Addressing the Evolving Communications Concerns of Social Media and Mobile Devices*, presented by Jesse Miller.

Katherine Harris and Nicole Linza
Community Based Victim Services Workers



186
New clients



116
Average ongoing
clients

Safe Homes, Second Stage Housing, Homeless Prevention and Safe Affordable Permanent Housing

Provided under contract to BC Housing

There are four specific services offered within SOWINS Housing Program. Our Safe Homes Program currently has one unit available in Penticton. A Safe Home is a community member who has a room or suite available to SOWINS clients on a short term, emergency basis however since the opening of our new, expanded Transition House, requests for Safe Homes have decreased dramatically.

In 2015 the Homeless Prevention Program (**HPP**), funded through BC Housing was added to our list of services provided. The HPP provides a monthly rent supplement for women who have experienced intimate partner violence and are at risk of homelessness. For up to twelve months, HPP recipients work with staff on their personal success goals which include returning to school, employment, applying for other rent supplements they may qualify for (SAFER/RAP), counselling, etc. When women receive their final supplement, they will have created a more financially stable situation and are better able to sustain their housing and succeed on their own. This minimizes the financial barrier many face when leaving an abusive relationship, which is one of the most likely reasons many return to their abuser.

Our Second Stage Program (SS) is part of our Transition House and currently offers 6 units plus 1 completely independent apartment. Single women and families are able to stay for up to six months (one year in the independent apartment) while they work on their goals with the support of staff on site 24/7. Rent is calculated at 30% of their income or their shelter portion of income assistance. Through stable, safe and affordable housing with support staff on site, women are able to heal and work through the long term impacts of violence and trauma in their lives. This may include focusing on sobriety, mental health, reuniting with children who may be in care, job searches or educational goals. This year we had our first Youth in SS and with the support of her Social Worker, she was able to transition from SS to living independently in the community.

Finally, our independent, subsidized, 12 unit apartment building referred to as the “Tamarack” tenanted its first tenants in May 2019. Each unit has two bedrooms and houses a total of 12 single mothers and 18 children. Prospective tenants are not required to be SOWINS clients, however they are required to have experienced intimate partner violence. Below is a letter we shared with Minister Selina Robinson from one of our first tenants describing what

Liz Gomes
Housing Coordinator



I would like to express my most heartfelt thank you for the opportunity for my child and I to live in such a beautiful home. Finding this supported housing program has changed the course of both mine and my daughter's life. It has given me hope for the future, as I am able to provide my daughter with a safe and stable environment in which to grow up. The careful design and thoughtful details of the building are unlike anything I have lived in before.

I hope similar programs may be available to other mothers who find themselves in vulnerable positions with young children. I recognize the need for more support for single mothers in the community so that our children may be given the best starts possible.

I will never forget the day I was told I could afford to live in such a beautiful home and be proud to raise my daughter in.

Forever grateful,
A Tamarack resident

Transition House Program

Provided under contract to BC Housing

Youth Emergency Bed

Provided under contract to MCFD

The Transition House program has grown through another year of providing supportive shelter services. Throughout the year there has been changes in staffing that has brought new visionary members to the team, who offer fresh insight and creativity into the work the program does. The program continues to evolve and remain proactive in its commitment to provide current best practices.

During the past year there have been heavy moments and moments that will forever be fondly remembered. The Transition house has been operating at full capacity for the most part. At the onset of the pandemic we saw a decrease in number of calls but this quickly changed to quite an increase. The global pandemic brought forward our need to be solution focused in providing measures for staff and residents to feel safe and remain healthy. A lot of work, thought and sanitation measures were incorporated. Staff were provided with scrubs and shoes specifically for work. Hand sanitizing stations were set up and increased house sanitizing was initiated. Meals have changed from self-serve in the dining room to being provided to residents in disposable products. Furniture was changed from cloth to resin so we can easily disinfect and wipe down.

We are still doing new intakes with protocols in place should they have symptoms or feel unwell. Some are required to self-isolate for 14 days or wear a mask in the communal area of the house for 14 days. Gloves are required and provided in common areas. Residents are educated on the latest health recommended practices albeit with some frustration with the ever changing environment. As we work through the pandemic within the Transition House we have also been able to provide safe emergency housing and support to those unable to access the Transition House.

This past year we created an on-site counselor position which makes counselling far more accessible to the residents. Our counsellor conducts her sessions face to face with social distancing, telephone, and various virtual methods. These options have been incredibly helpful, as anxiety and depression increase during times of crisis and isolation.

Trauma informed Yoga is still popular with residents on Tuesday nights. The residents constantly share with staff about the benefits of these classes.

The multi-purpose room has been a great asset to the program. Clients with specific diets are able to use the kitchen to prepare meals, group meetings, are held there along with individual meetings and program activities.



Mural paintings in the Transition House offer a warm and inviting environment for the women, youth and children staying at the shelter

Transition House Program Youth Emergency Bed

Provided under contract to BC Housing

Provided under contract to MCFD

Our kennel has been well utilized with large and small dogs, and a variety of cats. Women who have small support dogs have been able to have the dogs stay in their owner's rooms, of great benefit to those women living with anxiety. Cats remain in the kennels and their owners visit with them there. As we journey through changes and adaptations we are evolving and growing in our awareness of how important connections are with animals, our environment and ourselves.

One of the greatest highlights of this past year began two years ago when a woman with her two children walked into Admin. looking for help. As an immigrant woman she has faced a multitude of challenges. The family worked diligently on establishing their lives through education, counselling and determination. The two children have thrived scholastically. Learning languages, musical instruments, cooking and being a part of the community. We, the staff at the Transition house became their family. Staff birthdays were always acknowledged by the children who made cards and gifts. The Transition House manager received a homemade card and a jar of goop! Such a special gift, the gift of giving and of receiving. Most recently they were finally able to move into their own housing. Imagine yourself living in a shelter for two years in a small bedroom. This truly speaks to the determination, resilience and capacity this small family have while being supported by the program and services SOWINS offers.

The Second Stage rooms have been continually occupied and clients have shown great benefit from a longer term stay. Our self-contained Second Stage apartment resident has been able to secure great employment, take courses and thrive without worrying about housing.

The two Youth Beds, funded by MCFD have provided youth with a safe space to understand their experiences and to move forward with support, on the next part of their journey. Some youth have gone into Second Stage rooms once they have a youth agreement while still connecting with the staff for support.

So with another year of providing safe, supportive shelter, the Transition House program continues to evolve, staying updated with best practice in the Anti-violence sector. Our past year has seen 5,885 women and 3,510 children bed stays in the House. 2,050 Crisis Calls were answered, and we received 1,195 referrals.

Congratulations to the Transition House team for all the great work done in keeping women, children and youth feeling safe and supported.

Irene Jabbusch
Manager of Residential Services



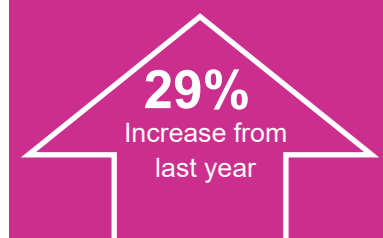
9,395

Bed Stays



2,050

Crisis calls
answered



SAFEXST Program

Provided under contract to Public Safety Canada and Interior Health Authority

The SAFEXST program (The Centre drop-in program and the Mobile Outreach Van) has evolved its scope of services over the past year, introducing exciting new developments to program delivery. **The Centre** engages with a growing and changing community of women in the South Okanagan seeking resources and support for circumstances such as homelessness, substance use, poverty, and reliance on sex work for survival. There are two full-time Support Workers available at the Centre to provide support with personal wellness, referrals and applications, and healthcare and governmental system navigation. The services available at the Centre have expanded to include in-reach services from the BC Ministry of Social Development, Interior Health outreach nursing, and sexual healthcare services including on-site STI, pregnancy, and blood-borne infection testing. The addition of these services has centralized access to health and government systems for many Centre clients, and aligns with our literal and ethical objective of “meeting people where they’re at”.

The Mobile Outreach Van (MOV) is a vital resource for overdose prevention and harm reduction throughout the South Okanagan and has expanded its operations to six days a week. This addition has allowed the MOV to connect with rural communities requesting increased access to health promotion resources. This has been necessary for communities such as Princeton, which continues to experience disproportionate rates of overdose deaths; The 2019 BC Coroners Report determined that Princeton experienced the highest overdose death rate per capita in 2019, highlighting the need for greater access to overdose prevention resources and education.

COVID-19 impacted the program greatly when the public health emergency was declared in March 2020, and the decision was made to close the Centre due to health concerns. However, through creative protocol development and dedicated staff the MOV did not experience any service disruption and was in fact able to increase its presence in the community. For individuals that often experience significant health inequities and precarious access to health and hygiene resources, the MOV has been a vital COVID-19 response service for health promotion and disease prevention.

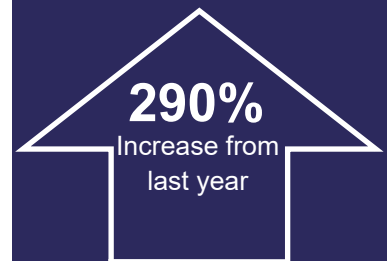
SAFEXST statistics illustrate the astounding degree to which the program continues to expand its presence and accessibility within the South Okanagan. Each number represents a person that has overcome significant barriers, is making positive connections with resources, and is engaging with opportunities for improved social well-being and health outcomes.

Cleo Neville
SAFExst Manager



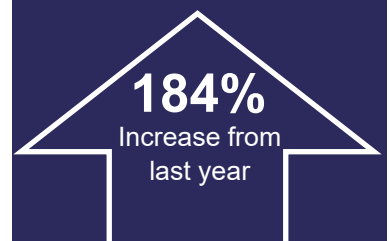
3,303

Naloxone Kits Distributed



9,000

Harm Reduction Supplies distributed



Human Resources

At March 31, 2020

Administration

Dawn M, Accounting & Payroll Manager
Debbie S, Executive Director
Gary M, Facilities & Maintenance
Kimberley W, Human Resources Advisor
Sharon M, Budget & Policy Manager
Tara D, Receptionist
Rebecca N, Receptionist
Tracy B, Bookkeeper
Val M, Policy Writer
Veronica M, Executive Assistant

PEACE Program (Prevention, Education, Advocacy, Counselling and Empowerment)
Jessica, L, Counsellor

Counselling & Community Based Victim Services Programs

Erica MP, Stopping the Violence Counsellor
Stephanie M, Stopping the Violence Counsellor
Katherine H, Community Based Victim Services Worker
Nicole L, Community Based Victim Services Worker
Becky T, Intake Advocacy Outreach Support Worker

Safe Home, Homelessness Prevention, Permanent Safe Affordable Housing and Second Stage Housing Program

Liz G, Housing Programs Coordinator

Specialized Employment Services Program

Sheena S, Employment Services Coordinator
Rhea R, Employment Counsellor

SAFExst Program & Mobile Outreach

Alissa A, Mobile Outreach Worker
Amy G, Mobile Outreach Worker
Amy M, Mobile Outreach Worker
Angela C, Centre Support Worker
Ashley W, Mobile Outreach Worker
Cleo N, Manager of Harm Reduction Services
Erin M, Centre Support Worker
Jerome A, Mobile Outreach Worker
Jordain L, Mobile Outreach Worker
Simon s, Mobile Outreach Worker

Sondra B, Mobile Outreach Worker

Transition House / Youth Bed

Amanda P, Women Support Worker
Amritdeep K, Women Support Worker
Arathi G, Women Support Worker
Bonnie M, Women Support Worker
Brianna S, Women Support Worker
Bridgette H, Women Support Worker
Brittany D, Women Support Worker
Cathryn M, Cook
Chelsea B, Women Support Worker
Dawn A, Family Support Worker
Diane K, Women Support Worker
Dianna F, Women Support Worker
Emily C, Child Support Worker, WSW
Fiona N, Child Support Worker
Frankie B, Women Support Worker
Irene J, Manager Residential Services
Jenna R, Youth Support Worker
Jennifer T, Women Support Worker
Katie VG, Women Support Worker
Lauraine D, Women Support Worker
Margaret S, Women Support Worker
Marsha H, Women Support Worker
Melissa E, Women Support Worker
Michelle T, Women Support Worker
Minden P, Women Support Worker
Priscilla H, Women Support Worker
Rona S, Women Support Worker
Shannon B, Women Support Worker
Sheila R, Counsellor
Stephanie F, Cook
Suzanne H, Food Service Support Worker
Shelbie P, Women Support Worker
Tamara A, Child & Youth Support Worker
Tanis, S Women Support Worker
Tammy F, Women Support Worker
Tara J, Senior Women Support Worker
Yvonne K, Women Support Worker
Tracy W, Women Support Worker

Funders & Donors

A special Thank you to SOWINS funders, sponsors and donors. Everything we accomplished in the last year was only possible thanks to your support.



Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada



United Way
Southern Interior BC
unitedwaysibc.com

Government

BC Housing
Interior Health Authority
Ministry of Children and Family Development
Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
Public Safety Canada
Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen
City of Penticton

Community

Amethyst Foundation
Community Foundation of the South Okanagan-Similkameen
Christopher Society Of Penticton
Food Bank
Girls Can Talk Club
Knights Of Columbus
JCI Penticton
Ladies Auxiliary
Soupateria
The International Association of Fire Fighters
Penticton Eagles Club
Penticton Speedway Foundation
Penticton Lodge 147
Penticton Shriner Club
Rotary Club Of Penticton

Corporate

Aveda
Bell Media
Bench 1775 Winery
Berry & Smith Trucking
Big Jay Concrete
BMO Bank of Montreal
Boston Pizza
Brodo
Cantex Okanagan
Castanet
Cobs Bread Bakery
Courtesy Taxi
Ellis Creek Kitchens
Hideaway Bakery & Café
Hidden Chapel Winery
Home Hardware
IG Wealth Management
IMG Industries Inc
Loblaws Inc
Local Security
Monster Vineyards
Noble Ridge Vineyard
Parker's Chrysler
Peerless
Penticton Foundry
Penticton Golf and Country Club

Penticton Skaha
Pilates & Movement Penticton
Poplar Grove Winery
Pro Builders Supply
RE/MAX South Okanagan
Robinson Lighting
Rona
Royal LePage
Scott Mayhew Contracting
Shoppers Drug Mart
Starbucks Canada
Tim Hortons
Total Restoration
Wells Gray Tours

Legacy:

Estate of Marvin Thiessen

All businesses, organizations and individuals who donated to Walk to End Abuse & Share the Spirit. We apologize for any omissions. Please let us know if you would like to be added to the list. Your support and contributions are highly appreciated!