



Annual Report

April 1st 2018 - March 31st 2019

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

Margaret Mead

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SOWINS IMPACT 2018-2019



8443

Women and children
bed stays in our



1580

Crisis calls answered



1118

Women counselling
sessions



593

Children counselling
sessions



165

Services by the
Specialized
Employment Program



130

Families received
Christmas Hampers
from our Share the
Spirit Campaign

Governance Report

Housing has always been an on-going issue for our clients. This year SOWINS has been able to provide not only short-term housing in our Transition House, and second-stage housing (longer stays up to 6 months), but also permanent housing for some of our clients. This has been possible through the support of BC Housing and we are all grateful for the staff who worked on the plan and implementation for this program.

When SOVAS closed its doors, we acquired two new contracts: Community Based Victim Services on August 13, 2018, and Stopping the Violence Counselling on September 1, 2018. Our offices are full and we have had to add office spaces in our meeting room.

At present, the Board of Directors of SOWINS is comprised of the Board Chair and six Directors, whose primary function is to provide sound governance in accordance and in compliance with: the B.C. Society Act, Imagine Canada Ethical Code, and SOWINS' own Vision, Constitution, By-Laws, and code of Ethics and Values. As a governance Board we create the Strategic Plan that guides the work of our organization. Our decisions align with the Strategic Plan and support the Executive Director through sound and informed governance. We do our work through these committees: Policy, Finance, Executive, Fundraising and Public Relations, and Board Development.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank our Executive Director, Debbie Scarborough for her tireless work as a leader, and as an advocate for people in the South Okanagan Community. Thank you also, to our management team and to every staff member for your hard work and support of those we serve. Volunteers are much appreciated especially in

helping with our fundraising activities.

And finally, I would like to thank the Board of Directors for your time, wisdom and your insights. Your contributions are essential to the future of our organization.

Peggy Nicholson
SOWINS Board President

Board of Directors at March 31st, 2019

Peggy Nicholson, President
Trudy Hanratty, Vice-President
Maimie DeSilva, Secretary
Kelly Lindsey, Treasurer
Heather Seminiuk, Director
Rod Fru, Director
John Archer, Director

OUR VISION

Our vision is one where all individuals have the ability to make choices to live a safe and healthy life.

OUR MISSION

SOWINS works to prevent abuse and increase awareness about the impacts of abuse. Through creating dynamic, life-changing opportunities for empowerment of individuals and families, we will support their physical, mental, emotional, and financial wellness.

Operations Report

SOWINS continues to grow and foster new relationships with Federal, Provincial and Municipal governments as well as with agencies and programs in the South Okanagan. Collaboration with our community partners remains imperative to establishing and practicing the 'no wrong door' approach for those we serve.

We support each other with sharing resources, policies and procedures. One such relationship is with the South Okanagan Immigration Community Services, SOICS of which we sit on their Local Immigration in Partnership council. Last year SOICS purchased an EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing) machine for our counselling department.

Embracing relational practice translates to SOWINS not only sitting on committees but volunteering at other agency fundraisers. One example is the annual Drive-Thru breakfast fundraiser for United Way which a number of us will volunteer at. United Way provides funding for our full-time receptionist position.

With the addition of Community Based Victim Services, CBVS and Stopping the Violence, STV, we built more offices. With CBVS we are able to support survivors from the time they report Intimate Partner Violence or Sexual Assault, through court until the sentencing. Having CBVS we also have the designation for Third Party Reporting, TPR. CBVS works with the Sexual Assault team at Penticton Regional Hospital to assist survivors through the TPR process of seeking medical treatment, support, and reporting the crime to the RCMP while remaining anonymous.

We continue to work with the City, Interior Health, RCMP and other local agencies to reduce overdoses. Our Mobile Outreach Van,

MOV, travels around the South Okanagan distributing harm reduction materials, naloxone, while establishing relationships with individuals living with homelessness, addictions, and mental health concerns.

SOWINS LIVE event is our opportunity to thank our donors and funders each year. Staff from each of our programs' set up to explain the work that is done within their program and answer questions. Donors and staff alike loved this event therefore we hope to be hosting another in the Fall of 2019.

SOWINS has become a great place for students to take their classroom learning and apply it to the workplace. We now have practicum students from Master of Social Work, MSW students from UBCO, Human Service Worker, HSW students from Okanagan College, and Aboriginal Community Service Worker, ACSW students from Okanagan College, along with a few others. Setting up and supervising practicums is a lot of work however an investment towards our future workforce as many do apply to work with us upon their practicum completion.

Our programs have also grown and evolved this past year. Ministry for Children and Family Development approved our request to fund a second youth bed at our Transition House. This funding allows us to hire a part time staff to support the youth occupying the beds. Our maximum number of residents at Hughes House is 34 women, youth, and children.

Our counselling program has a waitlist which we are working to alleviate as our goal is to operate without any waitlist.

Our Community Based Victim Services program is busy and is in court most weeks.

Operations Report

SOUP SISTERS has been extremely successful this last year. The soup is more than providing women and their children with food and nutrition, it is reinforcing the belief that they are not alone and that there are people in the community supporting and cheering them on.

Community Action Support Table, CAST continues to meet every week. We and twenty three other agencies have the opportunity to change and potentially save lives.

This has definitely been a year of learning. As many of us that were able, went to Kelowna to learn about the latest work being done on Traumatic Brain Injury, TBI with regards to Intimate Partner Violence. Some of us attended a day with Ivan Coyote, author and advocate for transgender individuals. We also hosted a day with Dr. Vikki Reynolds who works internationally with survivors of torture, those on death row, Intimate partner violence survivors, and front line workers in the trauma field. Ongoing training for first aid, vicarious trauma, naloxone, bullying and harassment and many others, continues.

This year I was elected to two provincial Boards, Community Social Services Employers' Association of BC, CSSEA, and BC Society of Transition Houses, BCSTH. This is extremely helpful to the work SOWINS does in relationship to learning about new practices, funding and policies around the province.

Attending the annual BC Non-Profit Housing's training continues to be the catalyst for many conversations with other housing providers and non-profits. This year's conference resulted in the query from BC Housing regarding operating a small apartment building. With safe affordable housing being in our Strategic Plan, SOWINS officially became the operator of a brand new

twelve unit apartment building for women and their children. This long term housing allows for women to leave their abuser without the fear of becoming homeless. Minister Selina Robinson joined us at the SOWINS administration office for the announcement in May.

This year we hired our first Human Resources Advisor which has made our growth so much easier. Kim has been extremely busy working with the union on local agreement issues, grievances, developing and revising job descriptions, posting jobs, screening, interviewing and hiring.

Mind Mapping continues to support Board and staff in keeping up with our pace, new staff and policies. We invited one of the founders of SOWINS to attend where she was able to hear each of the programs explain what they do and then thank her for her ground breaking work.

With the Launch to the Walk and the Walk to End Abuse complete, we are tallying up the donations. This year was another great year and likely to raise more than our goal! SOWINS is fortunate to have volunteers that put their heart and soul into these fundraisers so that we can do the work we do.

In 2019, with support from the board, we added programs and positions, built more offices, lost one program due to loss of funding, bargained a new collective and local issues agreement, completed renovations at our Hughes House, succeeded in our strategic goal to offer safe, affordable and long term housing to women and their children - just to name a few successes. What a year it has been however we know there is more to be done. We look forward to seeing what together with our supporters, we can accomplish in 2020!

Debbie Scarborough
Executive Director

PEACE Program

Provided under contract to Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The mandate of the PEACE Program (Prevention, Education, Advocacy, Counselling and Empowerment) is to stop the intergenerational cycle of violence. Through various mediums of art, expressive play as well as numerous educational resources, children and youth are encouraged to share their experiences about the abuse they have faced in their homes.

We provide both individual and group counselling. I work with children in my office and at their schools. It is often very difficult for parents to take their children to counselling due to work or financial limitations, therefore the schools in our district have been very generous providing a safe space to meet.

The VIP (Violence Is Preventable) program is offered at schools. This program has expanded this year to include middle schools. The VIP program helps children and youth learn about their feelings as well as healthy ways to express them. This program is very important because it reaches families that are often not referred to our program, but greatly benefit from it. This year I partnered with a school counsellor to co-facilitate the group. Each participant was chosen due to concerns the school had identified.


We facilitated a Children's Support group this spring, which was successful and fun. Children benefit from being in a group, as they see they are not alone in what they have experienced in their homes. Children often feel ashamed about the violence in their homes and this group helps them share their stories in a safe and confidential setting.

This year I developed an eight week Parenting Program. Dawn Allen, the Family Support Worker from the Transition House co-facilitated

it with me. The goal of the program was for parents to receive support, share ideas, and develop self-awareness through mindfulness and sharing. The parents developed an understanding of how violence affects their children and themselves. This program was very successful from the feedback of the participants and we hope to run it again in the fall as we have received many calls from parents and the community requesting it.

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

Erica Markus-Pawliuk
PEACE Program Coordinator



“A child who lives with violence is forever changed, but not forever “damaged”. There is a lot we can do to make tomorrow better”.
(Author unknown)

Women's Counselling Program (Ages 19-49)

Provided under contract to Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
BC Housing Women's Transition Housing and Supports Program

Our counselling programs have been flourishing over the past year and we have had amazing opportunities to grow and expand again. With the acquisition of the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General's (PSSG) Stopping the Violence (STV) Counselling contract in October 2018, this past year has been extremely busy within our counselling programs. This is a testament to the amazing work that our team has been doing as the referrals from community providers are abundant.

Over the past year we have been collaborating and receiving referrals from Penticton, and surrounding communities. These referral sources include: RCMP, Police Based Victim Services, Community Crisis Response team (CCRT), YMCA, WorkBC, Interior Health, Mental Health, Sexual Assault Response Team (SART), Pathways, Physicians, Psychiatrists, Private Counsellors, Access Center, Family Justice Counsellor, OoKnakane Friendship Centre, ARC Programs, Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), South Okanagan Immigration and Community Services (SOICS), Adult Probation, Youth Probation, Onesky Community Resources, Child and Youth Mental Health, Martin Street Outreach Clinic, School District 67, Canadian Mental Health Association, Desert Sun (Oliver), Lower Similkameen Community Support Services (LSCSS, Keremeos), and Elizabeth Fry (Kelowna),

We have been fortunate in applying for and receiving the 2019/2020 Public Safety and Solicitor General's (PSSG) Civil Forfeiture grant once again, which means that our additional Counselling position will continue to be partially funded for another year. This position focuses on the trauma counselling for individuals who have experienced Intimate Partner Violence

and/ or have been the victims of Sexual Assaults.

Additionally, we have been able to focus on implementing group therapy to service more clients prior to them being able to participate in individual counselling. These groups focus on a variety of topics including: defining abuse and the cycle of abuse, the effects of abuse, understanding partners who abuse, leaving the cycle of abuse, co-dependency, boundaries, understanding trauma, healing from abuse, and self-care.

Our counselling staff have been connecting with community partners as well, by participating in the Violence In Relationships (VIR) committee, which aims to bring systemic change for women who are experiencing violence in relationships; Interagency Case Assessment Team (ICAT), which monitors high risk files with the potential for domestic homicide; and Community Action Support Table (CAST) which is a community initiative which aims to monitor high risk individuals who are identified as having acutely elevated risk. This involvement has resulted in several referrals being brought to our attention allowing us to connect with some women who would have otherwise gone unsupported.

"Strong women aren't simply born. We are forged through the challenges of life. With each challenge we grow mentally and emotionally. We move forward with our head held high and a strength that can not be denied. A woman who's been through the storm and survived. We are warriors."

Anonymous



Women's Counselling Program (Ages 19-49)

Provided under contract to Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
BC Housing Women's Transition Housing and Supports Program

Furthermore, we have had opportunities to educate others in our community regarding violence in relationships. We connected with School District 67 and provided information regarding the cycle of abuse, and what abuse looks like in intimate partner relationships to students in the various middle and high schools. Additionally, we participated in the Okanagan College's Student Wellness day and had the opportunity to interact with and provide resources to students regarding abuse and what services SOWINS has to offer. This fall we will again collaborate with some community partners to facilitate Trauma Informed Practice (TIP) training to staff from various organizations in the South Okanagan and Similkameen areas.

Our counselling staff has attended a variety of trainings which have helped to further our

skill sets. These trainings included: The Ending Violence Association of BC (EVA BC) Annual General Training and Forum, Third Party Reporting Training, Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing Therapy Training (EMDR), and Working with Sexual Assault Survivors training.

Moving forward, our focus will include increasing our services to women of Indigenous descent and finding additional funding sources. We look forward to the busy year ahead and continuing to help individuals who have experienced intimate partner violence and sexual assaults.

Lindsay Bysterveld

Manager Counselling and
Community Based Victim Services

Stopping the Violence
Program
Women served

117

Stopping the Violence
Program Counselling
sessions

249

Number of women who
participated in trauma
therapy or counselling
sessions

679

Number of EMDR Training
Sessions completed

260

Number of hours
completed (sessions
average 1-1.5 hours)

1069

50+ Program

Provided under contract to BC Housing Women's Transition Housing and Supports Program

There have been many changes made to the Outreach 50+ Program including a decision to close this program at the end of May 2019. I will be moving into a new position as the Transition House Counsellor. A manager for all counselling programs was hired, a much needed addition. A new client data based computer program called Apricot was introduced, new counseling forms were created and how request for services are processed was changed.

Each month the Outreach 50+ program receives about 12 requests for services. Each month I scheduled about 40 appointments with 30 individual women. The majority of women require short term support (5-15 appts.) while a few others require longer term help.

The Outreach 50+ program is also responsible for coordinating our Christmas hamper program called Share the Spirit of Giving. We work with community partners to provide hampers to families who have used the services of SOWINS in the past year. We provided support to 130 families, comprised of 210 children. This was up significantly from last year. This was also my last year of coordinating this program and I must say it has been a very rewarding part of my job.

I have now been in this position for two years. There are some significant differences in working with women 50+. I have notice that there are far fewer resources for women between the ages of 50 and 65. For example there are no subsidized housing units unless they have a disability designation. There is little financial support available except Income Assistance, which pays just over \$600.00 for a single person and all earnings must be deducted. Financial support improves after the age of 65, but in today's world, it barely covers the cost

of their basic needs.

The opportunity to retrain or establish a career has limitations for women over the age of 50. It can be harder to find employment because of ageism. Many clients also have physical or mental wellness issues because of complex trauma, injuries or the aging process which can also limit employment opportunities.

Abusive partners are more likely to abuse and neglect women when her health deteriorates. They may push her to complete tasks that are beyond her ability. Several women reported that their partners failed to get them medical help, or to provide the care they needed, in order to recover from an injury or illness.

Lastly, women over 50 might be experiencing abuse from their adult children. Most of these adult children have a history of witnessing or experiencing childhood abuse. Many have developed substance abuse issues or physical/emotional/mental wellness problems. These mothers fear something tragic might happen such as their child becoming homeless or an overdose death. This is a real possibility given the Opioid crisis. They struggle with how to help their adult children without compromising their own safety, financial resources, or wellness.

Thank you to the Board and all the other volunteers who help make SOWINS a success. I really appreciate all you do.

Sheila Robertson
50+ Program

Community Based Victim Services

Provided under contract to Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

In August of 2018, SOWINS began operating the Community-Based Victim Services (CBVS) Program for the South Okanagan-Similkameen. CBVS provides support to victims of sexual assault and domestic violence as well as to their families including information and regular updates on RCMP investigations and criminal court proceedings, court preparation and accompaniment, referrals to community resources, collaboration with Crown Counsel and the RCMP, safety planning, and emotional support.

CBVS team members have had the opportunity to attend numerous trainings such as Trauma Informed Practice, the Ending Violence Association of BC's (EVA BC) Annual Training Forum, and the EVA BC Supporting Survivors of Sexual Assault Training.

In addition, we were able to partner with EVA BC and the Community Coordination for Women's Safety (CCWS) to provide Third Party Reporting training in our region. Local RCMP, RCMP Victim Services and the Penticton Regional Hospital's Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) collaborated to implement local Third Party Reporting protocols. Third Party Reporting allows victims of sexual assault to provide valuable information about a sexual assault to the RCMP in an anonymous report, while engaging in support services and medical care through the CBVS program and SART.

We take a leadership role in community collaboration initiatives such as the Interagency Case Assessment Team (ICAT) and the Violence in Relationship Committee (VIR). We attended a staff meeting at Child and Youth Mental Health in Penticton and the AGM for Desert Sun Counselling and Resource Centre in

Oliver and Osoyoos to provide information to their staff about our program and services that may be available to their clients. SOWINS also hosted an Open House for service providers in the South Okanagan-Similkameen as well two semi-annual regional meetings between our Community-Based Victim Services Program and RCMP Victim Services from Penticton and Summerland, Oliver, Osoyoos, Keremeos, and Princeton.

In the first ten months of this program we supported 165 victims of crime and their families. We received referrals from RCMP Victim Services in Penticton, Kelowna, Vernon, Cranbrook and Chilliwack, Calgary Police, Crown Counsel, Probation, the Ministry of Children and Family Development, One Sky, the Penticton and Area Access Centre, the Elizabeth Fry Society, the YES Project and Unity House as well as from other programs within SOWINS.

Katherine Harris

Community-Based Victim Services Worker

"Each time a woman stands up for herself, without knowing it possibly, without claiming it, she stands up for all women."

— Maya Angelou



Housing Programs

Safe Homes, Second Stage Housing, Homeless Prevention and Safe Affordable Permanent Housing
Provided under contract to BC Housing

With the addition of **Permanent Housing** Units, it has been another year of growth in the Housing Department at SOWINS. As of January 30, 2018, BC Housing became the new owner of a 12-plex building and entered into an agreement with SOWINS to be the Operators. After some upgrades and changes that were necessary for the purpose of housing women and children fleeing abuse, we began to accept applications in April. Our first tenant moved in mid-May and several others followed early June, with the remaining in late June and July. Each unit is 2 bedrooms, 2 bath, with in-suite laundry. They are new and bright and rent is 30% of the individual's income, or the shelter portion of their BC Benefits if on assistance.

It has been exciting to see the faces of many women when they learn they will have permanent, safe and affordable housing for themselves and their children. Finally, they can put roots down and focus on their next steps, without having to worry about affording rent and safety.

For those who are not eligible for the 12-plex apartments, our **Homeless Prevention Program** assists with rent supplements for up to twelve months. Single women, senior women and those with children are eligible and while they receive the supplement, Housing staff support them in accessing other options/programs so that they can sustain their rent once the twelve months expires. Damage deposits, utility arrears and moving costs can also be covered under the HPP and some individuals receive one time only funding for these type of expenses.

Our Safe Home Program continues to operate with one community safe home at this time and can accommodate a woman with up to 2

children and a small pet upon approval. As many women fear for the safety of their pet when they are fleeing abuse, the option of a pet friendly safe home has been incredibly helpful for clients.

At the Transition House-Hughes House, our **Second Stage (SS) Program** continues and currently we have our third resident in the independent SS apartment. The remaining six units are located within the TH itself and have been at capacity since inception. Second Stage offers women with or without children the opportunity to stay up to six months paying a subsidized rent amount. During this time they work on personal goals that they have set which can include the following; await for a bed in treatment, counselling and healing from trauma without the stress of maintaining and affording housing on their own, search for work and stabilize before starting out on their own, as well as other, various, unique and individual needs that require time and planning. While communal living for this length of time can be challenging, it also provides a supportive environment with staff 24/7 to assist women with the many changes ahead in their lives.

Liz Gomes
Housing Programs Coordinator



Kitchen of permanent Housing Units

Transition House Program

Residential Programs: Transition House - Second Stage Housing
Provided under contract to BC Housing

Another fiscal year has brought about many inspiring moments and opportunities for women and children to embrace life challenges within a safe and supportive environment in the Hughes House. There have been staffing changes, upgrades to security and administrative processing. All the changes have brought their unique challenges and opportunities to improve the work done in the program in order to provide safety, and up to date service.

Over the past year the house has been operating very near to capacity each month. With each bedroom being utilized whether it be a single woman being placed in a family room to ensure her immediate safety is established or a woman is supported longer than the standard 30 day stay without being housed in 2nd stage.

The children's program which initially was comprised of a Family Support Worker and a Child and Youth worker now has a part-time Youth Support Worker, with the addition of a 2nd Youth Bed being funded by the Ministry of Children and Families. The first Youth Bed contract has been renewed for another year as well.

The Apricot system was incorporated into the administrative requirements of the Program. The system is still being modified to meet the specific needs of the program, however it is proving to be very beneficial to users as it assists staff in directly linking clients to appropriate programs. With time this tool will offer efficiency in providing reports and keep SOWINS up to speed with today's technology.

Security at the Transition House has experienced some upgrades. The security cameras have become very helpful in assisting staff in identifying unsafe situations. Work continues to offer superior security by having fencing

installed along the west and east sides of the property and a glass vestibule in the front entry-way of the building.

The Transition House program has been the benefactor of an abundance of food donations from some local grocery stores through the networking the current chef has done. The chef's dedication towards creating tasty meals within a limited budget while partnering with local community resources has greatly assisted the grocery budget and offered residents insight into safe food management. Individual dietary needs can be challenging when providing nutrition for a vast and diverse population. The chef and staff have worked closely with residents in providing alternative solutions. In particular residents who are living in 2nd stage have the option of eating meals prepared by the chef or cooking some of their meals in the multi-purpose room kitchen.

Over the past year the Transition House program had 1673 Requests for Services, and provided supportive shelter to 1202 women and 332 children.

The Transition House program continues to provide supportive shelter for women transitioning from incarceration. The program has also seen an increase in mature women accessing services over the past year.

Mature women are now able to come into the house because we are fully wheelchair accessible.

The Transition House Program applied and was selected for a pilot project, the ROWY project, which provided staff training for Trauma Informed Yoga. The Trauma Informed Yoga has been running for the past few months and women are reporting they really enjoy Yoga.

Transition House Program -

Residential Programs: Transition House - Second Stage Housing
Provided under contract to BC Housing

The program continues to participate in local supportive service meetings such as ICAT, CAST and Supportive housing assessments. Staff regularly participate in training opportunities such as RentSmart, Trauma Informed Practice (TIP), Indigenous education, Crisis Intervention, and Mental Health First Aid.

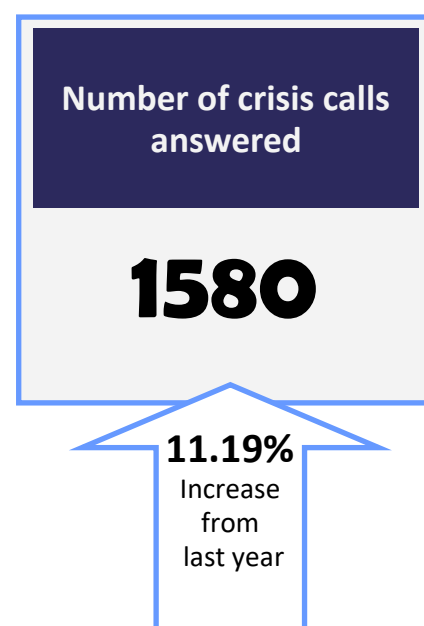
The Kennel saw its first pet temporarily housed. The pet came with a Youth, during the winter months. The pet did not fall under the category of a cat or dog but none the less was a pet.

The program has worked with a very diverse population ranging from infants to mature women who have become surrogate grandmas and aunties. There has been many cultures with or without language barriers, a variety of spiritual beliefs, and in various stages of immigration status throughout the year.

When we think of domestic violence and how families are impacted through generations and how education, counseling and supportive shelter can impact future generations one family

who entered the Transition House really stands out. The woman had accessed services several years ago. She came from a systemic culture of abuse, and immigrated to Canada without family supports. Her intimate relationships were fractured. She ultimately ended up struggling with addiction and her own family was torn apart. The woman fled a couple of extremely violent relationships, ending up homeless, without her children and pregnant. She came into the Transition house where she worked diligently with her supports, to maintain recovery, regain the care of her younger children, and gave birth to a healthy baby. The family stayed in the house in second stage for an extended period of time so that she could confidently get to a place within herself to believe that she could manage on her own. I believe with the positive strides the woman took that her children will be impacted and so will her children's children.

Irene Jabbusch
Senior Program Coordinator



Emergency Youth Bed Program

Funded by Ministry of Children and Family Development

Over the last year, the Emergency Youth Bed has proven to be a valuable resource for young, vulnerable women under 19 that are struggling with a risk of violence, exploitation, homelessness, addictions, gang involvement or street entrenchment. Intense family conflict is often a catalyst for youth seeking help. The Youth Bed offers safe shelter, with risk assessments and support assisting youth to identify needs, goals and make positive healthy connections with community service providers.

Youth come into the house with a variety of complex, intersecting issues that are challenging yet offer the team many opportunities to brainstorm with the youth for solutions with positive outcomes. Youth often present at Hughes House lacking basic life skills necessary for day to day living, such as how to do laundry, self-care, positive and safe hobbies and healthy eating and cooking.

SOWINS was able to work closely with MCFD to secure funding for a second bed during 2018. Both rooms offer a cozy space with their own private bathroom and shower. Rooms are tastefully decorated and kept clean by the youth with the offer of a \$5/day allowance.

Relationships with many community stakeholders have been developed over the past year which has created dialogue around networking for wise practices, homelessness, life skills, safety, resources, crisis support, addictions and child and youth mental health.

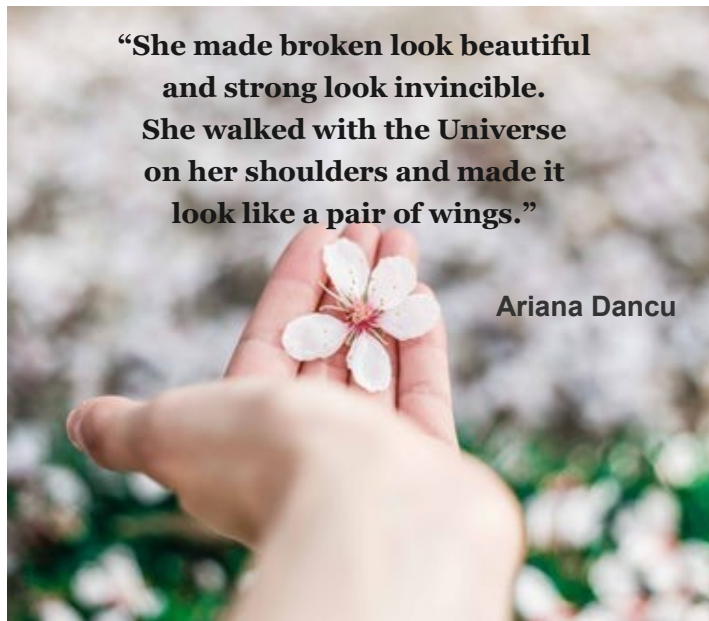
Young women or any service provider can call the House 24/7 to seek support, guidance, resources and discuss the possibility of an intake. Posters with all the information about the Youth Bed have been disseminated by staff, throughout the South Okanagan.

The Transition House Youth Bed Program has many success stories however one stands out in particular. A very shy, quiet, exhausted teen arrived at Hughes House with her Child and Youth Mental Health Worker after leaving an abusive, violent relationship. Upon arriving, this youth reconnected with her teacher at school, completed her last class (with 98%) so that she could graduate from grade 12! She was an active participant in setting and meeting goals, helping around the house, learning basic life-skills that will serve her for the rest of her life. She was engaging with her supports, increasing her physical exercise, self-care, maintaining a healthy relationship with her parents and setting goals for her future – she will be attending college in the Fall!!

Tamara D. Aspell
Child and Youth Care Worker

**“She made broken look beautiful
and strong look invincible.
She walked with the Universe
on her shoulders and made it
look like a pair of wings.”**

Ariana Dancu



Specialized Employment Services

Provided under subcontract to YMCA and Open Door Group

The Specialized Employment program provides services to women who are unemployed or underemployed, and have experienced abuse. Women can access individual counselling or a combination of individual counselling and the six week workshop series that focuses on healing from the impacts of abuse and the development of life skills and employment readiness skills.

Over the past year we've received 45 new referrals and provided 262 services to 54 women. Apart from the group and individual counselling services, we have provided crisis support, referrals to other programs within SOWINS and other community agencies, and post-grad support groups. We have also provided some transportation when needed and facilitated volunteer opportunities for workshop participants.

Highlights

Staffing: Sheena welcomed Amanda to the facilitator position in July. Her warmth, enthusiasm and evident care for the participants is appreciated.

Program material: It has been gratifying to use the revised workshop content and see the increased engagement of participants. Although program content is always a work in progress, content revisions have deepened the workshop experience for participants. Group emphasis on self-reflection and self-compassion have been pivotal to clients' growth and healing. One client stated that the program helped ... "awareness, insight and desire to take a deeper look at my patterns and behaviours that were impacting my life."


We have found that incorporating more exercise, crafts and mindfulness breaks help

participants process the material and provide ongoing practice to increase coping mechanisms and deal with triggers.

Outreach: Apart from advertising in Penticton, we have promoted the program in surrounding communities: OK Falls, Princeton, Keremeos, Oliver and Osoyoos. Although there is an interest, travelling to attend a workshop in Penticton is a barrier to many women in rural communities. With this in mind, we are intent on bringing the workshop and counselling to other communities within our catchment area.

Funding: As of March 2019, guaranteed funding is no longer available through the new WorkBC contractor, forcing the closure of this program. We are searching for other funding sources with the hope to once again deliver these beneficial services to women in the South Okanagan. Funding apart from WorkBC would give us more autonomy in the program structure and would open the program up to a wider range of women.

Sheena Schonwald
Employment Services Coordinator

A photograph of a woman with long, wavy brown hair, wearing a light pink jacket, blowing a dandelion seed head. The seeds are floating in the air around her face. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting an outdoor setting.

"And the day came
when the risk to
remain tight in a
bud was more
painful than the
risk it took to
blossom."
Anais Nin

SAFExst Program

Provided under contract to Public Safety Canada and Interior Health Authority

The SAFExst program continues to operate two harm reduction-centered programs under a low-barrier mandate – the Mobile Outreach Van (MOV), and a drop-in centre (The Centre). The staffing and management of the program underwent some significant changes in the past year, and the new structure includes a full-time manager, extended MOV and Centre hours, and a growing group of full-time and casual staff. The hours of operation and the services provided have evolved and expanded to better serve South Okanagan communities and to be flexible to the unique needs of individuals experiencing marginalization.

The Centre is open five days a week, and continues to work with an expanding and contracting client base of women who are currently or at risk of using the sex trade as a means to survive. This mandate is a broad brush, as we feel that many factors including homelessness, extreme poverty, under-addressed substance use or mental health challenges, or many other marginalizing factors, can be considered to put someone at risk for sex work to be a viable means of survival. The Centre operates with two full-time Support Workers, a full-time Manager and regular casual staff, and provides social services as well as community programs and supports.



The MOV shifted its operating hours to Tuesday – Friday, and has experienced a steady increase in its client engagement and community buy-in. There is a solid and growing client base in Penticton, but we continue to experience challenges in establishing the MOV as an accessible resource for people in outlying communities. Through the assistance of an Interior Health Overdose Prevention Services contract the MOV has the funding to dedicate two days specifically for connecting with broader South Okanagan communities (this contract, originally 9 months, was renewed as a 12 month contract in March).



Mobile Outreach Van

Currently, the strongest connections are in Summerland and Oliver, but we are still working to establish the uptake to have consistent service provision – as such we are currently servicing those communities on an as-needed/on-call basis. We are hoping to strength our relationships with Keremeos, Oliver, Osoyoos, Princeton, and Summerland to improve our continuity and establish consistent schedules and locations (there are many community partners, including Interior Health, who would like to support us in these efforts).

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As the weather improves the MOV is seeing a record number of daily clients and naloxone distribution, which we anticipate continually increasing.

SAFExst's relationship with our program evaluators, Reciprocal Consulting, continues to be extremely positive, with valuable collaboration contributing to their knowledge- and data-gathering on the program. The Centre has been coordinating ongoing collaborative

case-planning meetings with the Interior Health Intensive Case Management Team with the intention of improving continuity and communication between services and providing clients a thorough wrap-around of supports.

Cleo Neville
Manager SAFExst Program

April 2018-March 2019 By the Numbers

Number of request for service

142

Number of client contacts

3794

Number of support sessions

393

Number of referrals / applications

116

Number of Naloxone kits handed out

834

Number of harm reduction supplies handed out

3067

Human Resources

At March 31, 2019

ADMINISTRATION

Debbie Scarborough, Executive Director
Sharon Morrow, Budget & Policy Manager
Dawn Merritt, Accounting & Payroll Manager
Kimberley Woodward, Human Resources Advisor
Veronica Mora, Executive Assistant
Sophie Le Poidevin, Receptionist
Val McKinnon, Policy Writer
Gary Merritt, Facilities & Maintenance
Vanesse Harder, Janitor

Employment Specialized Services

Sheena S, Employment Services Coordinator
Rhea R, Employment Counsellor
Amanda P, Employment Services Facilitator

PEACE Program (Prevention, Education, Advocacy, Counselling and Empowerment)
Erica M, Program Coordinator & Counsellor
Dawn A, Child & Youth Support

Counselling & Community Based Victim Services Programs

Lindsay B, Manager Counselling & Community Based Victim Services
Samantha R, Clinical Counsellor
Sheila R, 50+ Women's Counsellor
Jody S, Stopping the Violence Counsellor
Katherine H, Community Based Victim Services Worker
Katie M, Community Based Victim Services Worker

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

Liz G, Housing Programs Coordinator

SAFExst Program & Mobile Outreach

Cleo N, Manager of Harm Reduction Services
Jessica L, Centre Support Worker

Christine F, Centre Support Worker
Brian M, Mobile Outreach Worker
Alissa A, Mobile Outreach Worker
Chris VS, Mobile Outreach Worker
Amy M, Mobile Outreach Worker
Ashley W, Mobile Outreach Worker
Amy G, Mobile Outreach Worker
Jerome A, Mobile Outreach Worker
Cherylee W, Mobile Outreach Worker

TRANSITION HOUSE / YOUTH BED

Irene J, Manager Residential Services
Dawn A, Family Support Worker
Tamara A, Child & Youth Support Worker
Shannon B, Women's Support Worker
Lauraine D, Women's Support Worker
Dianna F, Women's Support Worker
Melissa E, Women's Support Worker
Bonnie M, Women's Support Worker
Fiona N, Child Support Worker
Brianna S, Women's Support Worker
Rona S, Women's Support Worker
Jenny M, Cook
Becky T, Women's Support Worker
Marsha I, Women's Support Worker
Tara J, Women's Support Worker
Jennifer T, Women's Support Worker
Glenna B, Women's Support Worker
Tammy F, Women's Support Worker
Pricilla H, Women's Support Worker
Diane K, Women's Support Worker
Minden P, Women's Support Worker
Basia P, Women's Support Worker
Michelle T, Women's Support Worker
Katie V, Women's Support Worker
Tracy W, Women's Support Worker
Julie W, Women's Support Worker
Heather T, Women's Support Worker

61 Employees

24 Full-Time: 11 Part-Time: 2 LTD: 24 Casual

Donations

Parkers Chrysler Dodge Jeep
 Penticton Foundry Ltd.
 Cendek Railings Ltd.
 Cantex Okanagan Construction Ltd
 Poplar Grove Monster Vineyards
 Peerless Ltd
 The Vanilla Pod Restaurant
 Pro-Builders Supply Ltd - Home Hardware
 SMC Ltd.
 Andrew Sheret
 Amethyst Foundation
 Knights of Columbus #3127
 Ladies Auxiliary
 TELUS Community Ambassadors
 Loblaws Inc - Save it Forward Campaign
 Quota International of Penticton
 Royal LePage Shelter Foundation
 Okanagan Falls Winery Association
 The Christopher Society of Penticton
 Hidden Chapel Winery
 Summerland United Church
 Valley First Credit Union - Main Branch
 Walmart Canada Corp
 Penticton Historic Auto Society Peachland
 Joie Farm Winery
 Canadian Women's Foundation - Winners
 BA Robinson
 BMO Bank of Montreal
 100 Men Who Care
 CUPE Local 4595 Beaverlodge
 Paris Jewellers
 Penticton Speedway Foundation
 Mavco Plumbing & Heating Ltd.
 First West Credit Union
 NWM Private Giving Foundation
 Penticton Vees
 Adrich Management
 St Barbara's Church
 Victory Church
 Fraternal Order of Eagles 4281
 Christian Science Society
 YMCA Work BC Employees
 Westbench Elementary School
 Disbursement Endowment Fund
 Penticton Line Dancers
 Penticton Golf & Country Club
 Ikhaya Day Spa
 Summerland Heritage Cider Co
 Okanagan Motorcycle Riders Association

The Lake Village Bakery
 Pro Physio Clinic
 VanCity Community foundation
 Artus Bottling Ltd
 Okanagan Correctional Centre Employees
 Perseus Winery
 Inner Bliss Belly Dancing
 Provincial Employees Community Service Fund
 It Figures Tax & Accounting Service
 Noble Ridge Vineyard and Winery
 The Nest & Nectar
 BC Housing Community Connections
 R Denesiuk Construction
 Dr. Condren R. Berry, Chiropractic
 Underwriters Insurance Brokers
 Link Snider Real Estate
 TOPS BC
 Catholic women's League, St Ann's
 Blasted Church Vineyards
 CUFA BC
 Safeway Employees
 Out to Lunch Bunch
 White Lioness Metaphysics
 Penny Morrison, Realtor
 Catholic Women's League, St John Vianney
 MedPro Respiratory Care
 Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
 Okanagan College Nursing Students

Donations in Memory of:

Erika Holler Ricker
 Chrissy Archibald
 Dee Duggan
 Olive Welsh

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!

