



2021/22 ANNUAL REPORT

**THE WOMEN'S INTERVAL
HOME OF SARNIA-LAMBTON**





The Women's Interval Home of Sarnia-Lambton provides 24-hour emergency and short-term shelter, individual and group counselling, transitional and housing support, and child witness counselling services to abused women and children. Our vision is a safe and supported community where all voices are heard, and everyone lives free of abuse.

Our Mission

We provide:

- emergency shelter and crisis services, outreach, and education to our diverse rural and urban communities
- Advocacy and support to individuals, families, children, and youth
- Community education and awareness to counteract abuse, promoting social change through inclusive feminist work
- Support in navigating community social services through our active collaboration with our community partners

Our Values

Safety
Resilience
Empowerment
Education
Advocacy





Dear Friends and supporters,

This past fiscal year for 2021-22 has been one of renewal, growth, and expansion for the Women's Interval Home of Sarnia-Lambton (WIHSL).

We expanded our board membership and are thrilled to welcome new insights and voices to the table to help us best continue to serve our community. Further, under the guidance of Kate Wiggins from Collateral Conversations, WIHSL developed a strategic plan for 2022-2027. We are confident that under the innovative and empathy driven leadership of our Executive Director Jennifer Vansteenkiste and our strong team of dedicated staff, the strategic goals developed through this process will guide our approach to the planning of programs and services we offer to best serve the needs of our clients.

We cannot express our gratitude enough to the Sarnia-Lambton community for their support through fundraising efforts, individual, group, and corporate donations, shelter wish-list item donations, and volunteering. Your investments into the important work of WIHSL demonstrates a strong commitment to ending gender-based violence and supporting survivors of abuse. This support allows us to continue offering emergency shelter and essential programming free of charge to women and children who have experience abuse in our community.

Together, we can create a safe and supported community where all voices are heard, and everyone lives free of abuse.

Sincerely,

The Women's Interval Home of Sarnia-Lambton Board of Directors

STRATEGIC PLAN

The Women's Interval Home of Sarnia-Lambton's strategic planning process began in July 2021. Its strategic goals have been identified through a thorough consultative process with Kate Wiggins of Collateral Conversations. These goals guide our approach to the planning of programs and services.

WIHSL Strategic Goals 2022-2027



Enhance services through evidence-based innovation and community partnerships



Enhance resources to serve people experiencing gender-based violence



Enhance board value and contributions



WIHSL Year at a Glance

April 2021 - March 2022



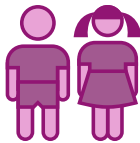
1395 crisis calls answered



165 safety plans created



111 women admit to shelter



65 children admit to shelter



109 non-residential clients served



53 non-residential children served



10 clients served via outreach services

In Shelter Nutrition Program

Patrice our in shelter cook provides an average of **170 freshly cooked meals** during the week and **30 homemade freezer meals** over the weekend. We provide a continental breakfast, and individually packaged and served lunch and dinners for all of the women and children staying in our emergency shelter.



All dietary needs both health related and cultural are accommodated. All of our meals are homecooked and nutritionally balanced using seasonal fruits and vegetables when possible.



EMERGENCY SHELTER SPONSOR A ROOM CAMPAIGN 2021/2022



The Women's Interval Home would like to acknowledge and thank several community partners for their contributions in sponsoring the renovations of our emergency shelter resident rooms. With the support of our community, we are happy to report that all 10 resident rooms received the following renovations: new flooring, paint, mattresses, and clothing dressers. **These renovations will provide a safe place to live for women and children leaving abusive relationships as they start their journey to build a life free from violence.**



Community Partner Sponsors

Shoppers Drug Marts of Sarnia-Lambton (\$14,621)
Kel-Gor Limited (\$4,779.90)
Seaway Kiwanis Club (\$2,500)
Royal Le Page Shelter Foundation (Adam Dumond
and Mike Cullis, \$13,124)
RBC Social Impact Foundation (\$5,000)
Rotary Club of Sarnia (\$7,870)
Sarnia Legion Branch 62 (\$2,000)



Outreach and Non-Residential Counselling

The Non-Residential Domestic Violence Counsellor is available to provide support and information for any questions you may have relating to abuse and the impact it may be having on your life. Risk assessment and safety planning are available by appointment, walk in or by phone.

All our services are free and confidential. Interpreters and childcare can be arranged when necessary. This service is available to women in the community who are experiencing domestic violence. You do not need to be living in our emergency shelter to access our non-residential counselling.

109 non-residential
clients served

10 clients served via
outreach services

Outreach Client Story

"I've been a client of the outreach program for almost a year now. I don't know where I would be without it! To be able to have in person, and phone call counseling, has been a blessing. In times of crisis, and in my journey of healing, its nice to know that I can reach out and someone is there. Someone that listens, understands and has the tools I so desperately needed and still need today.

I can't say enough about this program and the support I received, and continue to receive. Thank you Woman's Interval Home from the bottom of my heart for your Outreach Program and all that you do."- anonymous client



CHILD WITNESS PROGRAM

Supportive counselling for children and youth plays a vital role in the prevention of repeating the cycle of abuse. Tailored programs and services would not be possible without the continued support received from donors in our community.

Program Served:
53 children and youth

2 child witness counselling groups ran. These groups ran for 8 weeks with a focus on domestic violence exposure, safety planning, feelings around separation/ divorce, family, and self esteem.

Advocacy for clients included: CAS support, letters for lawyers, referrals for additional mental health support, parenting support for caregivers.

IN SHELTER CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Children are escaping a home of violence and in most cases are grieving the loss of their parents' separation. Our Child and Youth Counsellor (CYC) meet both the parent and child where they are at, and builds supports around them. The entire focus is on the child and how we can support the parent to provide support and understanding to their child while they are both dealing with their own complicated feelings while transitioning out of an abusive environment. Our CYC services are available ongoing after the child discharges from shelter for support since even after escaping domestic violence, the trauma does not end when you are removed from the situation.

By the numbers...

58 children and youth served

40 individual sessions provided

220 documented advocacy engagements provided



Thanks to the Women's Shelters Canada Grant we were able to do capital upgrades to our shelter. This includes a new staircase and ramp to make our backyard more accessible for our clients.



SUPPORT GROUPS

Thanks to the generous support of donors like you, we were able to offer a variety of support groups over this past year that were completely free of charge and confidential for women and children in our community.

Women's Support Group: The Women's Support Group consists of a 10-week group for women who have experienced abuse in their relationship. It gives women an opportunity to share their stories in a safe, supportive and confidential environment.

Empowering You: Regardless of age, social or financial position, women can gain a great deal from Life Skills topics. The group runs one evening per week year round.

Child Witness Group: Offered to children 4-16 who have witnessed woman abuse. This group gives children a safe and supportive environment to process the violence and the abuse of power and control they have witnessed.

Virtual Kids Craft: A program offered every month for children ages 6 through 12. The program is designed to provide fun and creative activities to enhance the children's self-esteem as they go through the difficult transitions involved in dealing with domestic violence. It is led by our Child and Youth Counsellor and all craft materials are provided free of charge to participants.



A special kids craft was hosted by Call the Chef and children made tacos for dinner.

Youth Relationship Program: A 10-week LGBTQ2S+ inclusive program designed to educate youth on the precipitating factors of domestic violence.



TRANSITIONAL AND HOUSING SUPPORT

A total of 132 women received safety planning and transitional planning. Many referrals and collaborations were made with other community agencies to ensure that women were receiving the most appropriate supports and services.

50 women secured housing. This includes renting their own unit, room rentals, being offered a unit through housing programs such as Lambton Housing, and being able to return to the matrimonial home without their abusive partner.

30 women opted to stay with family or friends due to not being able to secure their own unit or for continued support through the difficult period of ending a relationship.

Program Served:

80 in shelter clients

52 non residential clients

“Thank you so much of all of your help. I will make sure to share all your services with friends and family members who need support.” – anonymous client

Success Story

A woman and her child were admitted to our emergency shelter where she received domestic violence counselling, connected with other agencies, and secured a unit for herself and her child. Thanks to your generous donations and various community programs, she was able to furnish her unit and reported that she and her child have been doing wonderful since moving in. This is the very first unit that she has rented in her name and said it feels like “home.”

“I don’t know what I would have done without the Women’s Interval Home during that time. I was so confused and didn’t know what supports were available to me.” – anonymous client



Community Support



Thank you to the ladies charity golf tournament hosted at Kingswell Glen Golf Club in Petrolia. (\$4,194 raised).



Thank you to the Girl Gang and Valley Axe for hosting the Backyard Market which raised \$2,643



Thank you to the Tin Fiddler and Girl Gang for hosting Christmas in the Courtyard which raised \$6,159!

A big thank you to Unifor Local 914 for their generous donation of \$5,000! This donation is on behalf of the Clean Harbors Striking Members supporting our community.



Thank you very much to Global Donuts for another very successful donut fundraiser on Dec. 6th National Day of Remembrance and Action to End Violence Against Women. (\$1,300 raised and split with Sexual Assault Survivors' Centre).



Thank you to Refined Fool on London Rd. Our charity takeover raised \$1,059!



THE WOMEN'S INTERVAL HOME OF SARNIA LAMBTON PRESENTS

Walk a Mile

We are so thrilled with the outcome of our Walk a Mile fundraising event for 2021. Those walking showed their support for survivors and helped to raise awareness on domestic abuse and gender-based violence. We exceeded our fundraising goal raising \$19,000!!!!



We would like to thank all of our sponsors, participants, volunteers, staff & board members, and community members who made this possible. Without the support of our community, our important work of offering emergency shelter, counselling, outreach, and transitional services to women and children experiencing abuse would not be possible. Thank you Sarnia-Lambton!!!



Our Generous Sponsors:



THE FENCE PROJECT



The goal of the Fence Project was to engage community members in a thought-provoking performance that reflects upon things that contribute to gender-based violence, as well as barriers that people face that affect people's overall wellbeing in society. In partnership with local artist Mary Abma, we kicked off The Fence Project in November during Walk a Mile, and ended it in April at Lawrence House.

John Howard Society



Lawrence House

Diversity Ed



Christmas Gift Program

Our Christmas
Gift Program
supported:

43 families
& 104 children



Thank you Sarnia-Lambton!!!

Statement of Operations

Revenue April 2021 - March 2022

Fundraising & Donations	\$	313,047.35
Province of Ontario	\$	1,287,912.00
Women's Shelters Canada	\$	116,492.09
Ontario Trillium Foundation	\$	31,869.38
Interest	\$	4,842.46
Other	\$	153.00

Expenditures April 2021- March 2022

EXPENDITURE	
Advertising	9,285
Bank charges	247
COVID relief	31,277
Employee benefits	172,187
Food and supplies	70,163
Infection Prevention and Control	-
Insurance	22,424
Office	41,949
Response and recovery	76,323
Professional fees	71,709
Rent (Note 8)	9,840
Repairs and maintenance	36,459
Sarnia Community Foundation	-
Staff development	16,324
Telephone and cable	16,020
Transportation	6,917
Utilities	28,267
Violence against women	14,383
Wages and salaries - pay equity	8,352
Wages and salaries	940,448
	<u>1,572,574</u>



Notable Years of Service

During the 2021/2022 Fiscal Year

Heather

5 years

Lindsay

10 years

Rene

5 years



Closing Remarks From Our Executive Director

To begin, I would like to extend my gratitude to the staff and Board members of the Women's Interval Home of Sarnia-Lambton (WIHSL) who work tirelessly with grace and generosity to extend services to women and child survivors of domestic and intimate partner violence. The work of this dedicated team results in meaningful change in the lives of people who are working to survive and thrive after violence.

This year was busy for the team. We accomplished several long-needed facility upgrades, developed a five-year strategic plan, brought on new Board members and event volunteers, added a full-time Concurrent Disorders Coordinator position, and began an ongoing process of updating and evaluating all programs and policies through an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion lens.

Our facility upgrades included new flooring on the first and second floors, new furniture in the residential rooms and offices, and new exterior stairways and accessibility ramps. These improvements were possible through generous donations from the community of Sarnia-Lambton and the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services.

New funding was secured from Women's Shelter Canada which allowed us to hire a Concurrent Disorders Coordinator to help address the issues of mental health and addiction experienced by women surviving violence. Further, this fund has made possible mental health and addiction training across all levels of management and frontline workers, and Board governance training for new and existing Board members.

The changes do not end here. Women's Shelter Canada also allowed us to hire Vink Consulting to conduct a needs assessment demonstrating a need for 15 to 18 full 1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom transitional housing units. We continue to work with the community and various levels of government to achieve this critical project during an extreme and ongoing housing crisis.



Closing Remarks From Our Executive Director

WIHSL's 5-year Strategic Plan was developed in a participatory and inclusive manner, facilitated by Kate Wiggins of Collateral Conversations. The plan outlines the Values, Mission and Vision of WIHSL and will guide us to achieve several new initiatives as well as continue the good work of WIHSL for survivors. One of these initiatives is to update our policies and procedures, to remove systemic barriers that may exist within our agency and to ensure all clients of WIHSL are given equitable access to our services and community resources. Going forward we continue to reflect on our work considering the 94 calls to action, our commitment to reconciliation, and to learn from the Indigenous community in terms of restorative practices.

Reflecting on Board activities, I would like to congratulate and thank Cara Mathieson for stepping into the role of Board Chair and a grateful acknowledgement to Judy McKeegan for the two terms she spent in this role and her continued guidance with the Board as treasurer. Further, I extend a warm welcome to all our new Board members and volunteers and a warm thank you to those who continue to work with us. Without all of you our work here at WIHSL would be much more difficult. Along this same line, I welcome all the new staff at WIHSL and say a heartfelt goodbye to those who have decided to move to new work opportunities. All of you have brought wisdom and skills to WIHSL.

Finally, I cannot close out the 2021-2022 fiscal year without thanking everyone for their diligent attention to COVID protocols. While the province reopened, we experienced a double challenge. First, the number of residents increased as women and children were able to escape their abusers to find refuge in our agency. Second, our staff had increased exposure to COVID-19. This meant that as our workload increased we experienced staff shortages, yet our team at WIHSL rose to the challenge covering extra shifts and never leaving the team or clients short. The efforts of the WIHSL staff has meant zero outbreaks in our congregate living facility. THANK YOU TEAM!

Sincerely