



A Safe Place

Support & Resources for Domestic Abuse

**ANNUAL GENERAL REPORT
2020 – 2021**

OUR VISION

To create a community free from domestic violence and abuse in any form.

OUR MISSION

A Safe Place is driven to create safe and lasting solutions for those impacted by domestic violence and abuse.

OUR VALUES

Safety & Security | Compassion | Inclusivity
Connection | Empowerment | Innovation

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A HISTORY OF EXCELLENCE

Since 1982, A Safe Place has been empowering women to attain lives of peace, connection, and freedom. In 1984, we opened the doors of our 35-bed emergency shelter to the community. Since that time, skilled professionals, passionate volunteers, dedicated donors, and proud allies have served tens of thousands of women and children from Strathcona County, the greater Edmonton area, and beyond.

We continue to provide comprehensive services, including advocacy, education, court support, counseling, supported referrals, Community Outreach, New Beginnings, and so much more. A Safe Place continues to be a safe place to call, to connect, to learn and to be when home is no longer safe.

A Safe Place operates on Treaty 6 First Nations territory and the home of the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 4. A traditional meeting grounds, gathering place, and traveling route to the Cree, Sauteaux (So-toe), Métis, Dene (De-nay), and Nakota Sioux (Sue), we acknowledge the many First Nation, Métis, and Inuit who have marked these lands for centuries.

"A Safe Place helped me realize my daughter and I deserve a better future. There were there for me when no one else could be."

BOARD PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

“

The Shelter Society is grateful to have the support of a group of dedicated and passionate volunteers, as well as long-time sponsors/donors who embody the spirit of compassion.

”

For the Strathcona Shelter Society, 2020 this past year has been a notable year on many fronts.

Twelve months ago, we were in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic with little hope for a return, if ever, to what one could call normal. And with the help of some diligent work on the delivery of vaccinations, we're ending the year with at least a glimmer of hope for a respite from a daily focus on social distancing, and the use of personal protective equipment like face masks and sterilant. Restrictions are now being relaxed significantly as cases of infection and hospitalizations drop. Unfortunately, the stress of the pandemic on individuals, and families is likely to be felt for some time to come. There has been a marked rise in cases of domestic violence and abuse.

A very hearty thanks goes to the Executive Director and the staff of A Safe Place who have worked diligently to ensure the health and safety of clients and staff. They have ensured all Alberta Health Services guidelines are followed and that the impact of the virus is minimized. Our appreciation to Karen and the staff for all they do on a daily basis.

Our Board is comprised of a group of dedicated individuals, from varied backgrounds, that has worked tirelessly and often beyond the usual business of the Shelter Society. Virtual meetings and distanced interaction became the norm. Through the year the Board, in collaboration with our Executive Director and management staff, has successfully

- Launched a re-branding and new marketing efforts to better communicate our programs, maximize awareness of our services, and increase understanding of needs to our community.
- Commissioned a fund development audit and implemented a multi-year fund development plan to bring a renewed focus on our fundraising and introduces a number of improved and best practices to our fundraising efforts.
- Completed a building condition assessment of our existing facilities with an eye to considering some short-term improvements to bring better services and accommodation to our clients and staff.
- Adopted a multi-year strategic plan that affirms our mission and lays out a number of strategic goals. Among them, the Executive Director and Management Team will be examining the spectrum of programs and services offered relative to sheltering, intervention, prevention, and potential change in clientele.



In recent months, two new members joined the Board. Their skills, knowledge, and experience have added welcome input to the board activities. With the coming year two, long-term Board members have announced they will not be seeking new terms. We thank them for their very generous contributions during their service and wish them the best in any future endeavors. This past year has been my first year as President of the Board of Directors. I thank each and every board member and the Executive Director for their dedication, commitment, and insight.

I also wish to thank Newman Consulting (Rhonda Newman), Veritas Solutions (Bob Stenhouse), Avison Young (Brian Stephenson), Onward (Brigitte Baradoy), MNP, Sonder Creative, and others who have provided key services and consultation to the Shelter Society Board this past year.

Grants continue to provide the mainstay for our funding requirements. A very generous thank you to the provincial government, Ministry of Community and Social Services which continues to make available core funding which forms an essential base by which we are able to deliver the services so needed by our clientele and community. We also thank the County of Strathcona for Volunteer and Community Collaboration funding. We were also fortunate to be beneficiaries of special COVID relief assistance from both the federal and provincial governments. A thank-you to all those involved in helping to defray added costs and challenges incurred, particularly as a result of the pandemic.

We applaud the people who work at A Safe Place. They work in many diverse roles and are crucial in making A Safe Place effective within the community in which it serves. The challenges are constant. Innovation and ideas to assist services for the clients are always embraced. The Shelter Society is grateful to have the support a group of dedicated and passionate volunteers, as well as long-time sponsors/donors who embody the spirit of compassion. The funding received from your annual donations and fundraising efforts during the pandemic has been unprecedented. Without you, your efforts, and your donations A Safe Place could not function.

Kris Sakowsky

President, Board of Directors
Strathcona Shelter Society Ltd.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

The past year was one of the most challenging in our organization's history due to adjusting to the constantly changing requirements the pandemic COVID-19 posed. We made the difficult decision to reduce our residential capacity by limiting our Shelter admissions and adjustment of programs and procedures to ensure social distancing as set out by health experts. We enlisted the expertise of our current nurse and expanded her role to make pandemic prevention and the safety of our clients and staff and facility paramount. We kept our families and staff as safe as we could in this uncertain time, including using alternative accommodation when necessary. Through it all, we saw the dedication and passion of our staff who continued to work tirelessly to support those who needed safety and security. We attempted to connect in ways that were meaningful, creative, and safe.

This past year was one of development for us, as we managed to develop a new symbol, a butterfly. Representing hope and growth, we forged ahead with plans to strengthen our organization on all levels including programs, procedures, our building condition, and needs as well as our ability for fund development. We continued to connect with key community partners and our sister shelters in the province.

We strengthened our involvement with community initiatives led by Strathcona County Community Services and other key partners and sought ways to reach those who may have been socially isolated. We participated in leadership roles in domestic violence task force committees and plans to collectively address trauma and violence in our community. We worked on developing a strong leadership team through it all.

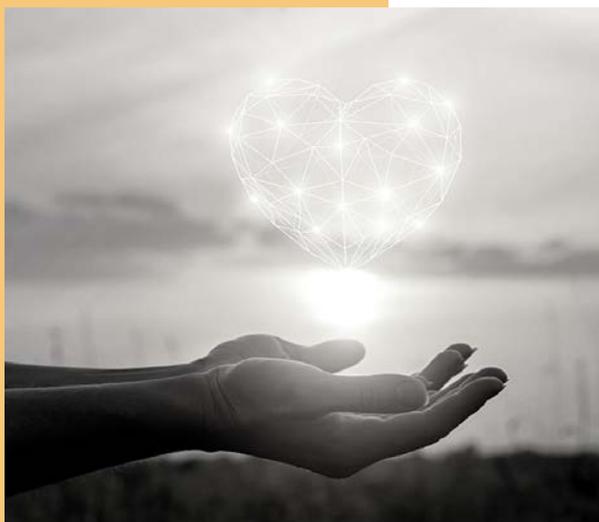
Thank you to our generous supporters who believe in what we do. Your gifts of time, funds, and supplies went far in helping us care for our families.

Thank you to the Board of Directors who supported many new projects and initiatives this past year in order to govern our organization and establish a strong foundation to move forward.

Thank you to the incredible and passionate staff who pushed through the uncertainty in order to continue to support families in shelter and in our outreach programs.

Karen Kadatz

Executive Director

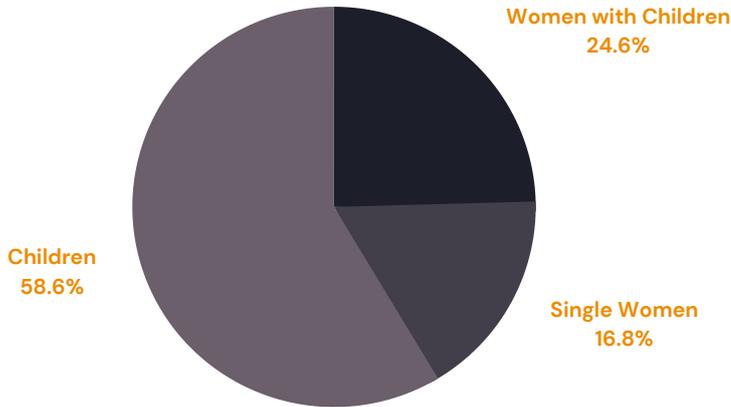


“ Through it all, we saw the dedication and passion of our staff who continued to work tirelessly to support those who needed safety and security. ”

BY THE NUMBERS



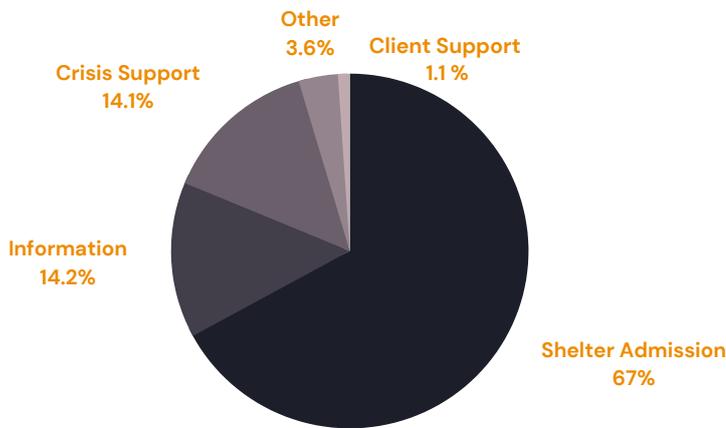
Emergency Shelter



232 Shelter Residents

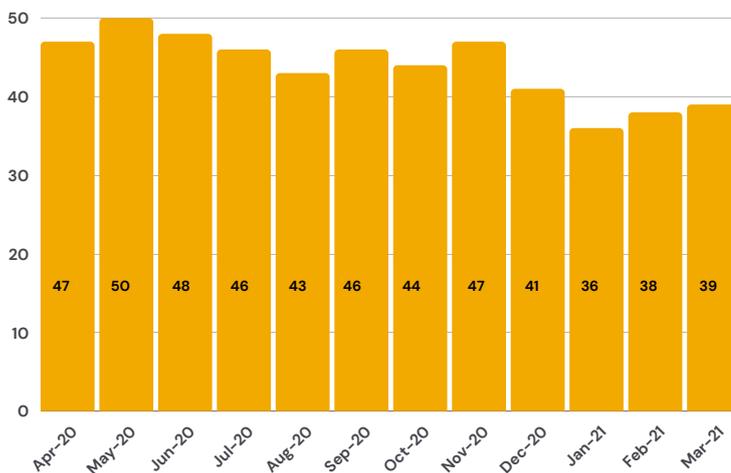
96 Women
136 Children

Crisis & Shelter Intake Line



18, 226 Crisis & Shelter Intake Line Minutes

Outreach at a Glance



76 Outreach Families



OUR PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Crisis & Shelter Intake Line

24/7 support for anyone looking for domestic abuse, domestic violence, or elder abuse support or information.

Emergency Shelter

A 35-bed residential facility that provides a safe, secure environment for women and children as they transition to longer-term supports.

Second Stage Housing

Three second stage units bridge the gap to long-term stability, by addressing the barrier of affordable housing.

Outreach

One-on-one supports for non-residential clients navigating domestic abuse and/or violence.

Public Education

Responsive programs that build community capacity for addressing domestic abuse.

Aboriginal Elder Support

Our Elder is deeply committed to sharing knowledge, providing guidance, and supporting healing through prayer, smudging and indigenous teachings.



SARAH'S STORY

My ground zero was two years ago. We had no milk, fresh fruit or bread again. No gas in the car. I asked for money we should have had. Maybe I should have kept quiet. Maybe it was just time to diffuse the situation. He lost it.

I can't tell you where he hit me, but I can tell you what he said. "Leave with these kids and you'll never see the light of day again," I said nothing as he sped off, drunk again.

Through my shame, I saw the fear in my children's eyes. "Never again. It ends today," I whispered to myself. I packed our bags and found myself at A Safe Place.

I can't remember much about my first few days there, but I can tell you how it felt. It felt safe. And, in a short time, I felt in control of my life again. Fast forward two years. I have my own place, a job, and my two, happy children.

It wasn't easy, but because the help I found, we are free from the fists, and the fighting. Because of A Safe Place, we are free.

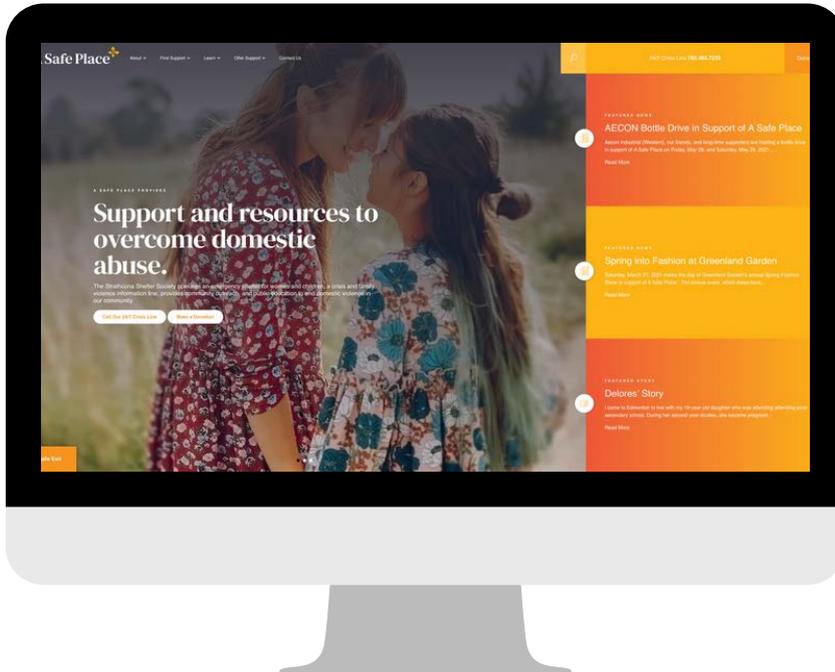
"RISING TO THE
CHALLENGES
OF COVID-19"



RESILIENCE IN THE FACE OF A GLOBAL HEALTH THREAT

Our on-site Resource Nurse provides expert guidance, support, and leadership that has kept residents, clients, staff and volunteers healthy and safe during the pandemic. Because of continued screening, stringent cleaning, use of PPE, and organizational support for safe work practices, A Safe Place services have not been halted due to a COVID-19 outbreak.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MESSAGE



No stranger to supporting victims of domestic abuse, A Safe Place has served more than 25,000 women and children since opening its doors in 1984. Like other organizations, we've had tremendous support adapting to COVID-19 and are preparing for continued increases in demand for our domestic abuse and violence services. Because we know only a small percentage of women report domestic violence or connect to services, we saw the pandemic ramp up on communication to encourage more women to connect.

Supported by COVID19 funding from the Government of Canada and the Canadian Women's Foundation, we launched a new visual identity that draws attention to the power of change. Our new logo features a butterfly because it is a metaphor for change and it better represents the work we do. We provide a wide range of services that extend well beyond shelter walls, such as our crisis line that operates 24/7, community outreach program, and public education program. The new message is simple. More than bed, we want you to think of A Safe Place as a safe place to call, to connect, to learn, grow, and to be when home is no longer safe.

We know vulnerability is a gateway to change and storytelling can connect, heal, and support this growth. And, after nearly forty years of being supported by this great community and many volunteers, we want to give back by sharing more stories of impact and community action to inspire change.

Like so many projects, this project was volunteer-driven. Thank you to Mike Cameron from our Board of Directors who led the development of the new identity with Sonder Creative and Emma Small, our Communications Intern from MacEwan University who was instrumental in rolling out this rebrand.

IMPACT OF ENGAGEMENT

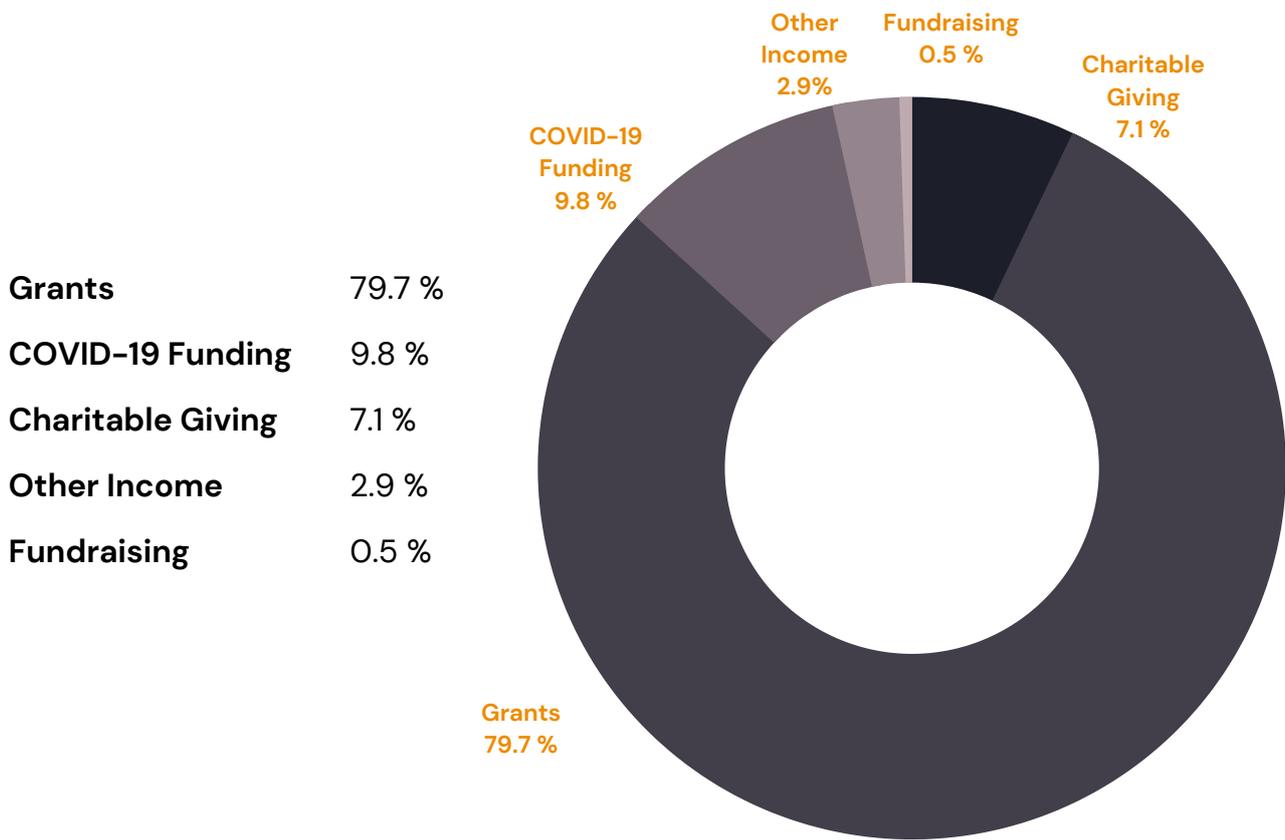


FUND DEVELOPMENT MESSAGE

It's never easy to secure the financial resources needed to provide high-quality supports for women and children navigating domestic abuse and violence. The money needed to attract and retain highly skilled staff; deliver responsive programming; maintain our emergency shelter and second stage housing; and ensure our clients have everything they need to move forward with lives free from violence, can feel overwhelming, to say the least.

While our organization has clearly felt the impact of COVID-19 on charitable revenue, A Safe Place residents continue to receive everything they need to move forward with their new lives. Our crisis intervention team, facility staff, child care workers, outreach workers, our Elder, and on-site registered nurses can provide coordinated care to ensure vulnerable individuals and have A Safe Place to be when home isn't. More than the warm bed, healthy meals, clean clothes, and other essentials, new grants, and our outstanding donors have continued to fund programs and services to help these families find their way new beginnings. Whether you answered our call-out during the Tree of Hope campaign; supported Celebrations of New Beginnings; planned your own fundraiser, donated online or by mail; or dropped off in-kind donations, you've changed lives.

THANK YOU for continuing to make A Safe Place a safe place to call, to connect, to learn, and to be, when home is no longer safe.



THANK YOU TO OUR CORE FUNDERS



AND THANK YOU TO OUR MANY INCREDIBLE DONORS





VOLUNTEERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

On behalf of everyone at A Safe Place, we wish to thank our volunteers, including our Board of Directors for their outstanding support, service, and dedication.

To the volunteers who bring our New Beginnings program alive, we thank you for your role in supporting the transition of our families to lives of independence, and freedom from abuse.

To the volunteers who continued to deliver essential supplies to our emergency shelter, thank you for keeping the shelves stocked.

To our Tree of Hope volunteers who stood behind our annual fundraising campaign at Sherwood Park Mall, we thank you for connecting with the community.

To all those who gave their time, energy, and talent to us at events, or virtually, thank you for making a difference.

To all those who patiently held ground as we navigated the impact of COVID-19, thank you. Like you, we can't wait to welcome you back home.

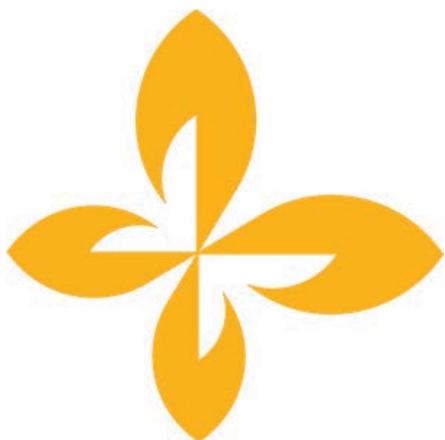
Last but not least, to our Board of Directors, thank you for sharing your skills, expertise, experience, and time to build a stronger, more resilient organization. Your leadership continues to make A Safe Place, the place to call, connect, learn, and to be when home is no longer safe.

Our Board of Directors

Kris Sakwosky	President
Jeff Woodliffe	Director
Don Thorson	Treasurer
Scott Waters	Secretary
Mike Cameron	Director
Sandra Hanington	Director & Past President
Mariann McGuire	Director
Lungile Tinarwo	Director
Kathy Vasko	Director

We'd like to thank exiting Board Members Jeff Woodliffe and Mariann McGuire for their exceptional service to A Safe Place and welcome Lungile Tinarwo and Kathy Vasko for joining our team.

“*Those who can do, do.
Those who can do
more, volunteer.*”



A Safe Place

Support & Resources for Domestic Abuse

www.ASafePlace.ca | [#ASafePlace](https://twitter.com/ASafePlace)

Shelter Intake & Crisis Line: 780.464.7233 / 1.877.252.7233

Charitable Registration 11920 0327 RR0001