



Fall 2018 newsletter

“ The agency helped us more than I could have ever imagined with all aspects of our life that had been impacted by our years of abuse. ”

Jenna's Story

The police were called to my home and that's when I realized how serious my situation had become. Here I was six months pregnant along with three other children under the age of ten, dodging household items being thrown at me amongst the screaming. My children and I lived in fear for our lives – it was heartbreaking to see them unable to have the worry free and safe childhood they so deserved. The Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter took us in, and that's when everything began to change.

The agency helped us more than I could have ever imagined with all aspects of our life that had been impacted by our years of abuse.

They helped us heal emotionally – simple things such as allowing my children to play and be kids was a big deal, since they were not allowed to play at home. Hearing my children laugh and play evoked such emotion that I will never forget.

I was concerned for my children's safety and well-being. The mental toll the abuse had on my oldest daughter led her to display self-harming and risky behaviour. She would often tell me that she wanted to die so that her 'dad would stop being mean to her' - words that no mother ever wants to hear. The counsellors spoke to my daughter about her feelings and arranged to be further assessed at the children's hospital, where I was able to visit her every day.

Throughout this journey, it was easy to forget about my own well-being, but the counsellors ensured I was checking in with myself as well, and that I had all I needed to continue to keep my family safe. The nurse practitioner at the Shelter also helped me physically - I was able to manage my health problems and have access to medications that were being kept from me by my partner.

The Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter helped me connect with numerous resources and supports in the community to address the needs of myself and my family. Through this journey, they were able to save my family and me, and give us hope for the future.

*Pseudonym Used

Message from our Executive Director

Kim Ruse



At the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter, we are always reviewing and seeking to learn more about what works best in our services. Two years ago, we started a unique journey to discover what really works in shelter. We asked ourselves "What makes shelters the most effective possible?"

We pulled together some of the best thinkers in (and outside of) our sector to strategize on how to improve the impact of women's shelters to help end family violence and abuse. Over the past two years, we reviewed best and promising practices and examined current practice

shifts in both the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter and the YWCA Calgary. The result is [Shelter 2.0](#), a collaborative discussion on how women's shelters can be enhanced and reimaged to focus deliberate practice and interventions to better support women in achieving safety, and lives free from violence and abuse. The result of this work proposes four key shifts for shelters that support the broad goal of preventing and ending violence in our community.

These shifts include:

1) Taking a Broader World View: Comprehensive and Inclusive Practice

This means working with families, all genders, ethnocultural communities, perpetrators, communities, informal supporters, and creating partnerships to support this approach.

2) Shelters Without Walls: The Right Service at the Right Time

Not everyone seeking services needs shelter. We need to be deploying our outreach services and counselling services effectively and as part of a continuum.

3) One Agency Can't Do it All: Systems of Care Approach

Agencies need to work together as a more seamless system to support families in accessing the support they need.

4) Shelters Aren't Enough: Investing in the Prevention Continuum

Shelters are a valuable part of the continuum but we also must be developing the early intervention and prevention services.

Through the journey we found that some of the shifts were already in motion in both the YWCA Calgary and the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter. This work allowed us to capture where we as agencies were already doing ground-breaking work, but also identify where we needed to adapt and implement new strategies to continue improving.

The entire [Shelter 2.0](#) report is available on our website and the larger research report is also available for review. The agency team will be integrating the findings to advance our services over the next year and we will be tracking and reporting on our progress and shifts in our outcomes.

We are proud of this work and the process we took to reach this discussion paper and the recommendations. I would like to thank the generous support of the **Westman Charitable Foundation** and the **Nickle Family Foundation** for making this research project possible. I would also like to thank our partners in the work, the YWCA of Calgary, Lana Wells of Shift and Alina Turner of Turner Strategies. The work was also guided by a community "think tank" of local experts who provided guidance and support throughout the project.

We thank all of you for your support as we continue to learn and improve our services, to best serve families and communities impacted by family violence and abuse.



Take A Stand Against Family Violence

Turning Points 2018



On Thursday April 26, 2018, we held the 24th annual Turning Points Gala at the TELUS Convention Centre. *Take a Stand Against Family Violence and Abuse* celebrated the courageous individuals and families in our community striving to live free from family violence and abuse as well as commemorate the important work of our agency. 650 distinguished guests, and community leaders joined together to Take A Stand and help raise awareness and change the conversation around family violence and abuse.

The event raised a record-breaking **\$676,000** towards our agency's programs and services supporting families and communities, and building safer happier lives for women, children, youth, and men.

Thank you to our Turning Points Honorary Patron: Bill Borger, Co-Chairs: Sherri Logel and Shelly Norris, the Turning Points Committee and our sponsors, donors and partners.

Turning Points 2018 sponsors:

Platinum: Cardel Lifestyles, Logel Homes, Norris Family Foundation and Royal LePage Solutions

Gold: Borger Group of Companies, Homes by Avi and Qualico

Silver: Brookfield Residential, Calgary Sun, GDI Integrated Facility Services

Bronze: A-1 Cement, Artisan Homes, ATB Financial, Boyden, Canyon Plumbing & Heating Ltd, Classic Kitchens and Cabinets, Contempa Carpet Company, Crystal Waters Plumbing, Emerson Clarke Printing, Giusti Group of Companies, Hoover Mechanical, Igloo Building Supplies, Keyera, Laurie M. Anderson & Debbie D. Johnson of Calgary Family Law Associates, Lawson Lundell LLP, McLeod Law LLP, Melcor, Mercedes-Benz Downtown Calgary, Moving Joy Design Group, New Interiors, NexusV, Optimum Dentistry, Pekarsky & Co., Peter The Plantman, Ply Gem Building Products, RBC, Saunders Landscaping, Silverhill Acura, Valentine Volvo and Werklund Foundation.

Event Supporters: brooks & dodd, Bill Marsh Photography, Evolution Audio Visual, Dave Kelly, Kelly Brothers Productions and Orange Frog Productions.

Save the Date for the 25th Annual Turning Points Gala on Thursday April 25, 2019.



Donor Spotlight

Westman Charitable Foundation

Two years ago, the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter partnered with YWCA Calgary on an exciting project that has the potential to change the way shelters are run across Canada. [Shelter 2.0](#) was an opportunity for both organizations to look at the way we run our shelter facilities and come up with a plan to make them even better.

With the support of the Shift: Project to End Domestic Violence at the University of Calgary, we have created a set of best practices for emergency shelters that is being implemented by our organization and the YWCA Calgary. The purpose of Shift is to conduct and mobilize primary research to empower others to create social conditions to prevent domestic violence. Recommendations from this study look to the future of supporting victims of family violence and abuse, and have allowed us to see where we as an agency excel, and where we can improve.

This project would not have been possible were it not for the dedicated support of the Westman Charitable Foundation. The foundation was founded in 2015 by entrepreneurial philanthropist siblings Jay Westman and Diana Joseph. The pair were eager to support projects that would positively impact Calgary's underprivileged with sustainable and lasting results. Their approach is to align with organizations and initiatives that support building healthy communities, and benefit a wide and visible group of people.

"The Westman Charitable Foundation supports initiatives that follow our core beliefs - health, shelter, and education. The ongoing, forward thinking of the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter make it an easy and rewarding partnership," said Diana Joseph of the Westman Charitable Foundation.

Diana has been our champion at the Foundation, providing valuable insight early in the project. Her philanthropic experiences have taught her that "incremental improvements to a person's quality of life can have a dramatic effect", and she saw that value exemplified in the Shelter 2.0 project. We are very fortunate that the Westman Charitable Foundation see the value in our work, and chose to support the Shelter 2.0 project. Thank you for Taking A Stand with us.





Toy Mountain

November 19 - December 21, 2018

Toy Mountain returns in 2018! We are delighted to be the charitable recipient once again and partner with CTV Calgary, CJAY 92, 98.5 Virgin Radio, Funny 1060 AM, Bankers Hall, Brookfield Place Calgary, Fifth Avenue Place, Suncor Energy Centre, and AMJ Campbell.

Taking place from November 19 – December 21, this campaign helps us collect much needed funds, toys, and basic essential items which are needed all year long. The event also raises awareness around family violence and abuse.



2017 was a record-breaking year, raising **\$512,827** in financial donations, toys, and basic essentials. Stay connected for more information about how you can Take A Stand and support vulnerable families in the community.

Adopt a Family at the Shelter



You can make a difference in the lives of families fleeing violence and abuse.

Help us support a family's stay at the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter and their journey to a safer and happier life.

By donating funds to Adopt a Family at the Shelter you are providing shelter, meals, clothing, transportation, referral services, safety planning, and counselling. Your support will reach out to families fleeing violence and abuse throughout the year, ensuring their needs are met.

For more information or to register, please contact info@cwes.ca or visit www.calgarywomensshelter.com



Interview with a Healthy Relationships Facilitator



For more information on Healthy Relationships and the rest of our programs, visit www.calgarywomensshelter.com

How would you describe the Healthy Relationships Program?

The Healthy Relationships Program (HRP) is a violence prevention program for children aged 12 – 21, primarily offered in our local schools. It's considered a secondary prevention program so it's for kids who have experienced something in relationships that's challenging, so either conflict, chaos, violence, or abuse in their family relationships, their peer relationships, or their dating relationships.

What is a typical day like?

Typically two of our HRP facilitators show up at a school, they connect with our liaison, which is usually a guidance counsellor, and find out if there are any new referrals, they check in about anything that's happening in the school that might be relevant to the kids that are participating in the program. They might see an individual client or two, and then they would do a group session. A group would be 10 – 12 students who would meet together for usually about an hour and a half, and talk about the what is going on in their life. The groups are process focused, rather than psycho-educational, so there's not a curriculum or set topic for the groups, instead it very much depends on what the kids in the group want to talk about.

Every day looks very different, so our team is typically out in the community. They do a lot of running around and responding to a variety of different needs.

Why do you think it's beneficial/important to have the Healthy Relationships Program?

The program's need in the community has evolved since it started in the 90s when nobody in schools was talking about prevention of violence, or what is a healthy relationship. At that time we were the only agency doing it. But over the last 20 plus years that's really changed in our community and it's integrated more in curriculum, the community and our schools are talking about it more, so the need has shifted, and our need primarily is for young people who may have an opportunity to learn about healthy relationships but don't have the opportunity to process their experience in relationships. They are maybe experiencing things that they are uncomfortable with, or not sure about, but it's not something you would typically talk about in a classroom when you're talking about violence or abuse.

The other benefit of the program is we provide our services primarily in school locations. It is highly accessible so most of the kids who participate in the programs might have barriers to access other services. We get a lot of kids who access the program who without the program probably wouldn't get help.

Our belief is that if young people can talk about these things when they're young, they are less likely to have challenges in their relationships when they're older.

What's your favourite part about being a Healthy Relationships Facilitator?

Our whole team loves working with teenagers because they are so wise. They often crave to be heard by adults because adults unfortunately typically discount their opinions and their experiences, and chalk everything up to 'you're just young, you don't know what you're talking about.' But young people are wise and have so much to offer, so my favourite part is seeing young people have the opportunity to talk about things they know, but don't usually have the chance to do so. And to see them find their voice, is a big part of the work we do. Whether that's with their parents, or their peers, or their dating partners.

Most memorable/impactful moment?

We had a client who came to us when he was in grade nine, it was the first time he had participated in group and he was a stereotypical difficult teenager. He started fights all the time, was disrespectful to people, the teachers didn't like him. He was very challenging. When grade nine ended and he left the school, we didn't know if we would ever see him again. But in grade ten at another school where we also have the program, I was walking down the hallway, and 'tough teenage boy' whose only emotion he liked to show is contempt and anger ran up to me and says, "I'm so excited you're here, can I do group again?" He actually participated all through high school and when he left the teachers thought he was the kind of person everybody wanted to hang out with. So he went from being a difficult kid to the one who was seen as a leader. Of course he wasn't perfect – he was still a teenage boy, but he now had aspirations for the future. He wanted to be a policeman and wanted to be able to intervene when things were going sideways. He was the kind of young adult in group who would tell others that 'you deserve to be respected' and 'you deserve to have people treat you like you're a person.' It was cool just to see him change in such a positive way.





Host an Event

Host an event on behalf of the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter and raise awareness and financial support for our organization. Events held by community partners allow us to provide much needed programs and services in the community.

Fundraising events are a fun and meaningful way to help us get one step closer to our mission of ending family violence and abuse.

Some examples of third party events include:

- Tournaments
- Birthday or Holiday Parties, Anniversaries, or team building opportunities
- Corporate or Individual Challenges
- Auctions and Raffles

Be creative! All events, no matter if they are big or small, are welcome.

For more information on how we can support your fundraising efforts, please visit our Host an Event page on www.calgarywomensshelter.com or contact us at 403-290-1552 or info@cwes.ca.

Family Violence Prevention Month *November*

November is Family Violence Prevention Month in Alberta. This yearly campaign is to raise awareness and educate Albertans about how to identify and prevent family violence and abuse and ways to support victims.

During this month we hope to encourage discussion about family violence and abuse, and shine a spotlight on the resources available in the community and at our organization. The community plays a key role in providing support and encouraging victims to seek help.

We will be teaming up with other Calgary Domestic Violence Collective agencies at the launch of Family Violence Prevention month on November 1st. Stay tuned for more details at cdvc.ca.

Together, we can all Take A Stand Against Family Violence and Abuse. Everyone has a responsibility to end violence in their community by focusing efforts to increase awareness and promote prevention and public education.



The purple ribbon is a symbol of support for the victims of family violence and abuse.

Bridging Communities

Tuesday November 13 9:00am – 4:30pm
Ross Glen Hall, Mount Royal University

An annual conference on family violence prevention for professionals in Alberta. The conference is part of the Calgary Domestic Violence Collective's (CDVC) commitment to provide educational opportunities, increase public awareness and engage the community in ending domestic violence.

This year's speakers will be Lisa Fontes and Rachel Crowder.

cdvc.ca



Myths and Barriers

About Family Violence and Abuse

The conversation around family violence and abuse in our society is full of myths that lead to biased misconceptions, unrelated to the reality of this serious issue. By dispelling myths, the community can better understand the facts and complexities of family violence and abuse, and learn how it affects victims, and what can be done to help support them.

Common myths and misconceptions

Myth: Only certain kinds of people become victims.

Family violence and abuse has no boundaries. Victims come from all walks of life, cultures, educational backgrounds, income levels, and religions. It can and does happen to anyone.

Myth: Physical abuse is the most serious type of abuse

Abuse is more than hitting, or slapping. It comes in many forms, all of which are serious, harmful, and unacceptable, including (but not limited to) emotional, verbal, financial, psychological, and sexual.

Myth: Family violence and abuse is rare in Canada

Every five days in Canada, a woman is killed by her intimate partner. (Source: Statistics Canada 2016) In our city, the Calgary Police Service responds to approximately 19,000 domestic related calls a year. This statistic reinforces just how serious family violence and abuse is in our community.

Myth: The best way to help a victim is to tell them to leave

There are no easy answers and many reasons women remain in dangerous and difficult situations. Victims are often judged, blamed, and disbelieved. They face other barriers to leave including fear, guilt, financial difficulties, unavailability of affordable housing, safety concerns, pressures from family and friends and many more.

Myth: Family violence and abuse is a woman's issue

Family violence and abuse is not just a woman's issue. Men play an important role in preventing it. Including men in solutions can make a difference in promoting healthy respectful, non-violent relationships with women and shift attitudes.

By learning more about myths and ways to refute them, we can all get involved in supporting individuals and families in their efforts to live free from family violence and abuse.

Learn more about family violence and abuse, and how you can support victims – Book a Take a Stand presentation.

For more information or to book a presentation for your organization or workplace:

Phone: (403) 290-1552 Ext. 426

Email: takeastand@cwes.ca





Upcoming Events

Breakdance Showdown

September 26

Trolley 5

Sure Systems celebrates their 15th birthday by hosting a dance battle between some of Calgary's top break dancers.

Shoppers Drug Mart

October 6 – November 2

37 stores throughout Calgary will be raising funds in support of our programs and services.

Calgary Woman's Show

October 20 and 21

BMO Centre in Stampede Park

Come visit our booth at this two day event, filled with fun, entertainment, education, fashion, celebrity guests and shopping. www.calgarywomansshow.com.

Calgary Flames

October 27 + November 19

\$10 from each ticket sold goes to CWES. Tickets must be bought through this link: <https://bit.ly/2QCYrHO>

Family Violence Prevention Month

November

Look out for our banners and signage throughout the month and help Take a Stand Against Family Violence and Abuse.

Witches Night Out

November 3

A witch themed costume party, this annual event raises funds in support of the clients we serve and raises awareness to help other women.

Visit www.witchesnightouttyc.wordpress.com.

Bridging Communities

November 13

Ross Glen Hall, Mount Royal University

An interdisciplinary conference on Domestic Violence Prevention. cdvc.ca.

Trivia Night

November 17

Kilkenny Irish Pub

A night of trivia, silent auction, raffles and prizes.

Presented by Xi Alpha of Beta Sigma Phi.

carolynbridge@shaw.ca for more info.

CTV Toy Mountain

November 19 – December 21

Stay tuned for more information about how you can donate funds, provide toys, and basic necessities for women and families this holiday season.

Giving Tuesday

November 27

Giving Tuesday is a day dedicated to giving back during the holiday season to help those in need in our community. Make a pledge to help women, children, youth and men live free of family violence and abuse. For more info: GivingTuesday.ca.

Joelle's Noelle

December 7

Live show in support of CWES and the Food Bank. More information at justjoelle.com.

Turning Points

April 25, 2019

Telus Convention Centre

Stay tuned for more information about the 25th annual Turning Points fundraising gala.

Save A Stamp

We have moved to an electronic version of our newsletter. To be added to our distribution list, please send your full name and e-mail address to info@cwes.ca. Please specify E-NEWSLETTER in the subject line.

Share Your Stories

Tell us your story. Inspire others. Change lives. We would like to reach out to past clients, volunteers and staff of Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter. We encourage you to share your story and would love to hear from you! For more information: please contact Hanna at: HannaD@cwes.ca

It's fast, easy and convenient

Donate online

www.calgarywomensshelter.com

Text to Donate

Text ENDABUSE to 587-800-1588. You'll receive a link to complete your donation of any amount by credit card.

