



Fall 2021 newsletter

“ I feel warmth and love and deep gratitude. I am excited for the possibilities and am hopeful. The agency not only saved my life, it healed my mind, body and spirit. ”

MAGGIE'S STORY

I was running from a man I knew would never let me go. My adult children, beloved pets, home we built, network of lifelong friends and fulfilling and engaging professional career all left behind. I travelled in the middle of the night with few belongings. I had trouble seeing the road through my tears as I drove away. I was scared and alone but I knew what I had to do and that if I didn't do it, I most likely wouldn't survive.

I knew I needed help and was familiar with the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter and the work that they do. Hoping I never would have to be on the receiving end of that support because of the stigma and fear that comes with it, but was always comforted on some level that it is there for women and children when they need it. I had no idea what was ahead of me when I placed that initial call to the 24-Hour Family Violence Helpline.

My words will not adequately describe the overwhelming feeling of gratitude I have for my experience with the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter. I am not exaggerating when I say that they saved my life.

Arriving in Calgary, I was struggling with isolation, more than I can recall ever before. I fled a dangerous relationship in my home town, and left everything I knew. The psychological effects were devastating and the man I left continued to manipulate and control from a distance which increased my anxiety and fear. I felt completely alone and contemplated taking my life.

The support and counselling I received changed my life. I barely recognize the woman I am now. The perspective and support I was given, set up a foundation where I could begin to heal and trust. I was able to take control of my life without living in constant fear and paralysis. I was committed to becoming well, and embraced the support from my counsellor. I discovered things about myself and life that made me stronger and more confident. Everything looks so different now.

I feel warmth and love and deep gratitude. I am excited for the possibilities and am hopeful. The agency not only saved my life, it healed my mind, body and spirit. The ripple effect of people helping people in ways such as this, is what makes humanity so beautiful and inspirational.

I am eternally grateful to the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter for the hand that raised me up.

**Name has been changed*

Message from our Chief Executive Officer

KIM RUSE



As cooler weather starts to settle in and we brace ourselves for the ongoing uncertainty of the pandemic, the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter remains committed to meet and exceed the evolving needs of those in our community impacted by family violence and abuse.

For those individuals and families living in unhealthy and dangerous situations, the COVID-19 pandemic has created additional barriers. While enhanced safety protocols and social distancing are helping with the fight against COVID-19, the increased isolation and anxiety that comes with it, are leading to higher rates of violence, while putting a strain on the wellbeing and health of victims. Those we serve continue to deal with uncertainty, changing family dynamics and increased levels of danger, and now more than ever need somewhere to turn. **WE ARE HERE TO HELP.**

Our staff continue to respond with compassion and professionalism, and remain committed to supporting individuals, families, and communities to live free from family violence and abuse. Throughout this pandemic, our top priority has always been the safety and wellbeing of our clients, residents and staff. We continue to take every precaution and regularly assess our procedures to keep everyone safe. As needs change and become more complex, we continue to adapt and be responsive, and look for innovative ways to provide the best services possible.

- Our 24-Hour Family Violence Helpline and Emergency Shelter remain open 24/7.
- The Men's Counselling Service, Community Services Counselling and Take A Stand webinars are still being offered virtually.
- Child, Youth and Family programs are being offered in person with safety protocols and social distancing measures in place.
- As schools have re-opened our Healthy Relationships program is offering in-person individual counselling (with safety protocols and social distancing measures in place) and are providing online group sessions to youth.

We encourage those experiencing family violence and abuse to reach out - whether you are a victim, friends or family looking to support someone, or men looking for help. **Call our 24-Hour Family Violence Helpline: 403-234-7233 (SAFE), Email: help@cwes.ca, text: 403-604-6689.** If you are in danger, call 911.

Even in these times of extremes and challenges, we have a renewed sense of optimism and are inspired by the resilience of those we serve in our community. We are grateful for the ongoing support from our supporters and staff who are dedicated to our mission and embrace our work.



JOIN US FOR A MEMORABLE & INSPIRING EVENING

APRIL 21, 2022 | 6 PM

A New Day

2022 TURNING POINTS FUNDRAISING GALA

INFO & TICKETS

(403) 290-1552 ext. 410
CalgaryWomensShelter.com



CO-CHAIRS

Suzan Hauszner

Shelly Norris

HONORARY PATRON

Scott Haggins

PLATINUM SPONSORS



GOLD SPONSORS



Join us for a memorable and inspiring evening at **Turning Points**, our signature gala, on **April 21, 2022**. Your support will make a difference in the lives of many individuals and families in our city striving to live free from violence and abuse, as well as bring awareness to the important work of our agency in the community.

There are a variety of sponsorship opportunities available. Please contact Ann O'Donnell, Director of Resource Development and Communications at anno@cwes.ca or (403) 290-1552 Ext. 406.

For more information about Turning Points 2022: info@cwes.ca, 403.290.1552 Ext. 410.

CalgaryWomensShelter.com

Calgary Co-op Cares

Donor Spotlight



Started in 1956, the first Calgary Co-op store was opened by local farmers, ranchers and food producers. They now have over 440,000 members, 3,850 employees and stores throughout Calgary and the surrounding areas. With a focus on supporting local farmers and ranchers from the beginning, community has always been at the heart of everything they do.

This is evident in the ongoing support that Calgary Co-op affords to the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter. The Calgary Co-op Foundation provides support to some of our most vulnerable community members, including: seniors, children, the homeless and families at risk. Through the Foundation, members, vendors and employees can donate online and in-store, with the Foundation matching donations up to \$25,000. As one of the charities supported by them for several years, we have been the grateful recipient of over \$80,000 in donations.

Financial support is not the only way Calgary Co-op is supporting families experiencing family violence and abuse. They have organized donation drives at store level, ensuring that our families have the basic essential items they need when they arrive at the Emergency Shelter facility. They helped us launch our "Feeding Families at the Emergency Shelter" initiative, sharing their community kitchen space at their Midtown location, and supporting the program in a variety of ways.

In March of 2020, when the impacts of COVID-19 became clearer and tighter restrictions were put in place, Calgary Co-op reached out to see how they could best support the agency and our clients. Knowing that it was more difficult for victims to make a phone call to our Helpline or ask for help from someone they know, we had quickly developed text and email options for victims to reach out to us. Calgary Co-op was there to share these options with the community through in store and online messaging to their members and beyond.

"Enriching our member communities is very important to Calgary Co-op," says Sage McIntosh, Communications Director, "Supporting the important work of the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter on behalf of our members, helps ensure the agency can continue to provide critical support to women, children and their families when they need them most."

Calgary Co-op have shown over and over that we are all working "Together for Good". We are extremely grateful to Calgary Co-op, their members, vendors and all their staff for their support. On behalf of the clients we serve, thank you for Taking a Stand Against Family Violence and Abuse.



Take A Stand

In New Languages

To help reduce barriers for seeking help, we have partnered with **ActionDignity** to support families and communities to build awareness and improve access through the *Take A Stand Cultural Program* initiative.

The Take A Stand initiative adopts culturally relevant programming by offering training in the first language. Trained ActionDignity facilitators will deliver these information sessions to groups, and organizations from the **Filipino, Arabic, Urdu, Punjabi, and Hindi** speaking communities. Individuals are invited to these group presentations.

“Family violence and abuse affects everyone from all cultures and backgrounds,” says Kim Ruse, CEO of the Calgary Women’s Emergency Shelter, “This collaboration with ActionDignity will make access to information and services inclusive to people from diverse backgrounds. By developing and implementing culturally specific programs, we help address barriers such as language, communication differences and other issues. Overcoming these barriers can be lifesaving.”

This approach improves understanding and skills of community members to support people experiencing family violence. By expanding the capacity of the Take A Stand program, community awareness increases, as well as the capacity to effectively Recognize, Respond, and Refer individuals who have been affected by domestic violence and abuse.

Thank you to the **Calgary Foundation** for supporting this initiative.

For more information about Take A Stand visit:
CalgaryWomensShelter.com.



Thank you to our Volunteers

Due to physical distancing and gathering restrictions during the pandemic, we have been unable to see many of our volunteers. We are eager to have them back when it's safe to do so. Until then, we would like to thank all our volunteers for their continued support and hard work.

We could not accomplish all the work we do without our volunteers. This dedicated group of individuals of all ages and backgrounds are an integral part of our agency.

Our volunteers are true heroes, who are willing to contribute their personal time, talents, and energy to help us succeed. By volunteering for the Calgary Women’s Emergency Shelter, you are taking a stand against family violence and abuse and we THANK YOU!

APPLY NOW – BECOME A VOLUNTEER!

Volunteer with us in various roles and at different events throughout the year. For more information: volunteer@cwes.ca or visit CalgaryWomensShelter.com.



Support for the complex challenges of men's mental and relational health

Men& is an online resource that offers trusted, accessible support, information and resources for the complex mental and relational health challenges men face. It is a non-judgmental, accessible source of reliable, helpful information for men seeking help and support.

Men& is streamlining access to various supports by partnering with key resources to offer a 24-hour call centre, therapeutic expertise and a provincial network of services for men who are seeking to have healthy and nonviolent relationships with themselves, their partners and families, and in community.

We believe that nobody should feel alone in their pain or feel like looking for help carries the risk of further judgment. **Support for the complex challenges of men's mental and relational health should be easy to find, trust and access.**

Men& makes it easy for men to read, listen and watch great and trustworthy content, connect with resources, supports and community to keep men invested and accountable. We will be here adding great content, ready to talk when then are, or connect them with people in their area who are working towards healthy ways of being a man.

Men& will be launching on November 19th. Check back for more details. For more info or questions: info@cwes.ca.

We are grateful to the Calgary Foundation for the generous support of Men&.

A New Virtual Tour: About the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter

Join us for a new virtual tour inside the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter, and learn how our programs and services support more than 15,000 individuals impacted by family violence and abuse each year.

View the tour at CalgaryWomensShelter.com or youtube.com/CalgaryWomensShelter

We are grateful for our wonderful volunteers who donated their professional services to create this video:

Craig Comstock (script development) – DRScreative.ca

Glenn Howard (narrator) – GlennHowardVO.com

Bobby Ogston (video production) – btovisual.com



Family Violence Prevention Month - November

November is Family Violence Prevention Month in Alberta. Throughout this time, we are able to raise awareness and educate Albertans about how to identify and prevent family violence and abuse, as well as ways to support victims. During this month we hope to encourage discussion and highlight the resources available at our organization and in the community. Everyone plays a key role in providing support and encouraging victims to seek help.

Together, we can all Take A Stand Against Family Violence and Abuse.

We will be teaming up with other Calgary Domestic Violence Collective (CDVC) agencies for the annual launch of Family Violence Prevention month on November 1st. Details to follow.

Keep an eye on CalgaryWomensShelter.com/Events for updated information about the launch, and other upcoming events and promotions taking place throughout the month.

CTV Toy Mountain

November 22 – December 23

We are excited to partner once again with CTV Calgary, CJAY92, Virgin Radio, Funny Radio, Brookfield Properties, and AMJ Campbell for CTV's Toy Mountain Campaign from November 22 - December 23. The campaign helps us collect funds, basic essential items and toys needed not only during the holidays, but all year round. In addition to collecting items and cash donations, the campaign raises awareness around family violence and abuse.

With COVID-19 precautions this year, the campaign will be a bit different. Stay tuned for more details on how you can support vulnerable families in our community.



Events

Shoppers Drug Mart LOVE YOU program October 9 - November 5

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

Family Violence Prevention Month November

Check back for more information on ways you can Take A Stand Against Family Violence and Abuse during the month of November.

Men& Launch November 19

Launch of Men&, a digital resource for the complex challenges of men's mental and relational health.

Men Helping Men Initiative

Involving men in addressing family violence and abuse is critical to help nurture healthy families in our community and to help keep them safe. For more info about supporting our Men's Counselling Service: mcscalgary.com.

CTV Toy Mountain November 22 - December 23

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

Giving Tuesday November 30

Giving Tuesday is dedicated to giving back during the holiday season to help those in need. Make a pledge to the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter. Your support will help women, children, youth and men live free of family violence and abuse.

Calgary Expo April 21-24, 2022 - BMO Centre

Visit our booth at one of Calgary's biggest fan culture attractions. fanexpohq.com/calgaryexpo

Turning Points April 21, 2022 - Calgary TELUS Convention Centre

Our signature annual fundraising gala. Enjoy an elegant evening, an auction and raffles while raising money for our agency.

Save A Stamp

To be added to our distribution list for our e-newsletter, 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

Donate online

CalgaryWomensShelter.com/donate or scan this QR code.



@end_abuseyc



@end_abuse



Stay in touch with us!