



Spring 2021 newsletter

“I am forever grateful for your support.”

Sophie's Story

It's been a year since we talked and since you rescued my daughter. I'm certain that so many people go through your doors and it's probably rare that you get to follow up, but with your support, she is now safe and healing, and I wanted to let you know just how much you have helped her.

I was feeling helpless when I contacted you last year. I was terrified for Sophie's well being. Living far away, in a different city at the time, I wasn't able to be there for her. I will never forget how your staff did all they could to help her, in any way they could. Your team went above and beyond, and for this, I will be forever grateful.

When she left the Emergency Shelter, she was able to find safe housing, and take time to work and support herself. She has been doing exceptionally well while going to school at the same time. With the continued support from her counsellor, Sophie has been able to accomplish some major achievements for herself!

I could not be more proud. Not just of her, but of your dedicated staff and the Calgary community that helped her get there. Community wrap-around is so critical in helping those who are facing adversity become successful. It really does take a community. And I could not be more thankful for your part in supporting Sophie. Thank you so much for everything you do.

**Name has been changed*



Message from Kim Ruse

Chief Executive Officer



2020 was a year of change, bringing with it challenges as well as opportunities no one could have imagined. As the pandemic continues, everyone continues to adjust and adapt to the changes and the way we do business.

Individuals and families in our community continue to be impacted by violence and abuse, and need somewhere to turn. The Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter remains a symbol of safety and hope, providing support during dangerous situations and in crisis.

Calls to our 24-Hour Family Violence Helpline trickled to a stand-still in the first weeks of the pandemic as the community came to grips with what was happening.

The first few months we saw our demand move up and down. Throughout these months, we hit new highs and spikes in service demand.

The number of admissions to our Shelter steadily increased reaching peak in the fall and winter. We have seen a rise in women reporting injuries as result of abuse, and the danger and risk of lethality has also increased. Children are also increasingly exposed to or are victims of abuse compared to pre-COVID.

When schools closed in March 2020 and online learning became the new normal, we had to find new ways to support youth in the community. This continues to be a focus and challenge.

Our 24-Hour Family Violence Helpline and Emergency Shelter remain open 24/7, and our community based programs and services continue to provide support and counselling virtually.

We continue to take every precaution to protect clients, residents and staff, and are regularly assessing our procedures and protocols to keep everyone safe, and to provide the best services possible.

It has been a year like no other, but I am hopeful looking forward. We continue to look at innovative ways to provide our services and reach out to our community, as well as engage with our partners to help end family violence and abuse. Despite the challenges ahead, I know our community is in this with us. Thank you for your generous and ongoing support.

COVID-19 - Impacts on Victims of Family Violence and Abuse

65% increase in Crisis calls from April to September, compared to the same period last year.

Danger and risk of lethality and murder increased by **40%**

Increase in reported injuries as a result of abuse

Most common reported abuse is: emotional/psychological abuse (**64%**) and physical abuse (**40%**).

On any given night, over **56%** of our beds are filled by children.

21% increase in children being exposed to, or who are victims of violence and abuse compared to prior to COVID

Women who received support during the pandemic, report:

95% feel safer; **92%** have new skills and strategies to keep themselves and their children safe; **95%** gained knowledge of resources to help them live a life free from family violence.

**numbers taken over a six month period during the pandemic*

Turning Points 2021

Virtual Event



CALGARY WOMEN'S EMERGENCY SHELTER

THANK YOU



**TURNING
POINTS**
VIRTUAL EVENT

THANK YOU



Thank you to everyone who joined us for our first virtual event!

It was a great evening of conversations with our host, **Dave Kelly**, actress **Cathy Jones**, our CEO - **Kim Ruse**, **Calgary Police Chief - Mark Neufeld**, **Lana Wells**, frontline staff from our agency and the Calgary Police Service, and inspiring stories from those impacted by abuse. Community leaders and guests joined together to Take A Stand and help raise awareness and change the conversation around family violence and abuse.

Big thanks to all our sponsors, donors, supporters, volunteers and committee members. As an agency working to ensure individuals and families are kept safe and healthy, support for Turning Points 2021 makes a difference in the lives of many women, children, youth and men in our community. Proceeds from the event help fund our innovative safety, healing and prevention programs. This year's event raised **\$372,000**.

Special thanks to our Turning Points 2021 Virtual Event Sponsors

Platinum

Norris Family Foundation

Gold

Borger Group of Companies | Cask Global Canning Solutions | Postmedia | Royal LePage Solutions

Silver

BD&P | Calgary Flames Foundation | GDI Facility Services | Mawer | RBC

Bronze

AMGAS | ATB | Brookfield Residential | Enbridge | Homes by Avi | Jaguar Land Group Ltd. |

Jason Baba - RBC Dominion Securities | McLennan Ross LLP | NexusV | Valentine Volvo

Cask Global Canning Solutions

Donor Spotlight

In the fall of 2019, Peter and Carol Love, Co-Owners of Cask Global Canning Solutions, read an interview in the Calgary Herald with our CEO, Kim Ruse. In it, Kim describes the escalating urgency to support victims of family violence and abuse because of increases in reported incidents and demand for our programs and services. Moved by Kim's words, Pete and Carol responded quickly with a generous donation.



As a family-owned business, Cask takes to heart family values and showing up for the community. Pete and Carol, along with their three sons and Co-Owners, Russell, Neil and Chas, inspire company-wide involvement in giving back. They believe Calgary is a better city when everyone is given the opportunity to succeed.

Their gift was compassionate but they also wanted to bring more awareness to the issue. Together with Cask employees, they attended an information and chilli making session, pre-COVID. They made dinner for the families and learned more about the services of the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter. It was an exciting afternoon as they came to understand the impact of their support.

In 2020, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, they stepped forward again. They spearheaded a matching campaign that encouraged other local businesses to donate. News reports were telling the story that the pandemic was further elevating risk to women and children experiencing family violence as they isolated with their perpetrator. Carol and Pete hoped their donation would inspire others to give – and it did. We are grateful for their foresight.

Now, the entire Cask Family is involved, with over 80+ employees enrolling in our mission. Through a virtual tour of the Emergency Shelter, they learned about our innovative community-based programs and how to safely respond to victims who disclose their abuse. They safely helped sort donated toys we received in December and even used their manufacturing knowledge to make the process efficient and safer for everyone there. We are hoping to get them back soon!

Thank you to Pete and Carol, and everyone at Cask for their philanthropic leadership.

William Herron

In Memorium

William (Bill) Herron was a much treasured donor of the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter who passed away over the holiday season. Bill will be sorely missed by all of us at the agency.

Alongside his beloved wife Carol, Bill experienced many adventures in his life, from his high-flying days as a pilot to his time as an award-winning rodeo competitor and a decade operating Mount Norquay. Bill was a passionate storyteller and great company, and we will all miss his and Carol's impromptu visits to our offices, where more often than not they were dropping off a donation.

Men's Counselling Service



We work with all members of the family impacted by family violence and abuse, including victims and perpetrators. With June being Men's Health Month, we'd like to highlight our Men's Counselling Service.

The program offers counselling for men who are concerned that their anger and abusive behaviours are negatively impacting their family members. The vision of this program is for men, women and children to have safe, satisfying, healthy interpersonal relationships, free of abuse and violence.

It provides a safe, respectful, and non-judgmental environment where men can discuss their concerns with professional counsellors who specialize in abuse/anger management issues. Our program is provided to clients free of charge. When a man enters our program, we also offer support and counselling to his partner.

"Being in a non-judgmental environment is the most important thing, and helping me to understand what I am doing wrong and how to correct it. I was very surprised at the openness of the guys in the group. My awareness of my past behaviour is the key to becoming a better person, so I never treat anyone the way I have in the past. Thank you very much!"

Over the past decade, hundreds of men and women have taken part in our program. Through individual and group counselling, our clients have recognized their abilities and power to change and to create a more peaceful and happy life for themselves and their families. Last year, 590 men courageously participated in this program.

For more information: www.mcscalgary.com





Take A Stand Webinar

The Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter offers free webinars focused on supporting individuals and families during this time of crisis and beyond.

Learn about:

- Different types of abuse
- How to recognize, respond and refer
- Barriers victims face
- Myths and misconceptions
- Statistics and research around family violence and abuse

"Sometimes it just takes one empathetic listener to give the victim the courage to make positive changes."

Our Take a Stand program has partnered with ActionDignity to provide adapted programming to better serve Calgary's diverse cultural communities. Information and materials have been translated into five languages: Arabic, Filipino, Hindi, Punjab, and Urdu.

For more information and to register for an online session:
www.calgarywomensshelter.com/learn/take-a-stand-initiative

Stanley on the Shoulders of Giants

How Children Respond to Violence

This month we launched *Stanley on the Shoulders of Giants* in collaboration with The Centre for Response Based Practice, and Women and Gender Equality Canada.

This book was written for children, parents, perpetrators of violence and professionals that work with children to showcase how children respond to and cope with violence and abuse.

Follow Arlo's journey to safety lead by his fearless stuffed dog come to life, Stanley.

"The ability to respond to and resist violence in ways that appropriately matches their circumstances is demonstrated by children of all ages."

Email info@cwes.ca to request a copy, or download a digital copy at calgarywomensshelter.com





Disclosure to Protect Against Domestic Violence Act

On April 1, 2021, **Clare's Law** - *The Disclosure to Protect Against Domestic Violence Act* came into effect in Alberta. This new legislation is intended to help people who feel at risk of domestic violence access relevant information about potentially harmful partners, so they can make informed choices about their safety.

The Act is modelled after *Clare's Law* in the United Kingdom, which was named after a young woman who was killed by an ex-partner with previous convictions of domestic violence.

Half of all young women and girls who are victims of domestic violence homicide in Canada were murdered by someone with a prior conviction. – Alberta.ca

The Act emphasizes the right to ask and the right to know, which will allow any Albertan to apply online for disclosure regarding if their current or former intimate partner has a history of domestic violence or related acts. The individual whose information is being disclosed will not be informed that an application was made about them. This information is intended only to give those at risk, the information necessary to make an informed choice to help protect themselves from harm.

"Providing as many tools as we can possibly give people to help prevent family violence and abuse is critical. We know from our work in the community that abusers will often repeat that pattern and so this law gives people the support and information needed, to stop it from happening to them." – Kim Ruse, CEO

Alberta continues to experience high rates of domestic violence and with the COVID-19 pandemic, incidents continue to increase, making it even more important that additional safeguards be implemented wherever possible. Clare's Law is important in helping take a proactive approach to family violence prevention.

Disclosures are allowed under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act and safeguards are in place to ensure personal information is protected.

For more information: www.alberta.ca/clares-law.aspx

Imagine Canada and the Canadian Accreditation Council

The Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter is accredited under Imagine Canada's national Standards Program and the Canadian Accreditation Council for governance, accountability and transparency. With this achievement, our dedication to operations and service delivery excellence across the organization continues.

The Canadian Accreditation Council (CAC) Standards Program is a Canada-wide set of shared standards for charities and non-profits with the goals to increase transparency, and to strengthen public confidence in individual organizations and the sector as a whole. Being accredited through CAC shows that our agency has viable structures, processes and practices to ensure stability and success, offering the best possible services to those impacted by family violence and abuse.

Being accredited through Imagine Canada shows excellence and compliance in five key areas of operations: board governance, financial accountability and transparency, fundraising, staff management, and volunteer involvement.

For more information about the **Canadian Accreditation Council**: www.canadianaccreditationcouncil.ca.

For more information about **Imagine Canada** and the **Standards Program**: www.imaginecanada.ca.



Ways You Can Help

Through a variety of giving options, you can make a difference and help end family violence and abuse in our community. Your support will help us keep women, children, youth and men safe during this critical time.

We are all in this together.

Thank you for supporting the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter.

For more info and to donate online:
www.calgarywomensshelter.com

Events

For a list of community events check out:

www.calgarywomensshelter.com/events

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!



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