

NORTH YORK WOMEN'S SHELTER

V. 1.0

1984 - 2017

2016

ANNUAL REPORT



Hope Lives Here



CONTENTS

OUR TEAM	1
A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	2
2016 BY THE NUMBERS	4
FOUNDATIONAL STATEMENTS	6
PROGRAMMING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	8
WOMEN IN SOLIDARITY	10
SHINE CHARITY GALA	12
OUR SUPPORTERS	14
VOLUNTEERS	16
THE FUTURE	18
FINANCIAL SUMMARY	22



OUR TEAM

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Michele Robitaille, **Chair**
Sondra Wiseman, **Vice-Chair**
Vidula Shetye, **Treasurer**
Sayran Sulevani
Yasmin Ali
Cameron McAlpine

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mohini Datta-Ray

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Linda Akpan

DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Jiin Yiong

INTERIM PROGRAM MANAGER

Vicky Sage

MANAGER OF DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS

Michelle Johnson

VOLUNTEER AND OUTREACH SUPERVISOR

Taylah Harris-Mungo

FINANCE MANAGER

Vanessa Costa

FINANCE ASSISTANT

Emma McNabney

WOMEN'S COUNSELLORS

Amy Clements, Kim D'Eath,
Paz Humana, Sophy Osoro,
Marcia Francis, Shyamali Pal,
Jennifer Gray

RELIEF WOMEN'S COUNSELLORS

Angelica Lorca, Monis Ahmed,
Myra Santone, Rosa Arredondo,
Tanya Zupanic, Sandra Seepal,
Nariman Shabo, Terri-Ann Lewis,
Rolena Sharmin, Phuong Thi Huynh,
Marka Hrivik, Waleska Gomez-Castillo,
Karen Brown

CHILDREN'S SERVICES WORKERS

Yvonne Annobil, Leanna Tuba,
Kaelah Mizzi (Relief)

EXPRESSIVE ARTS COUNSELLOR

Victoria Matta

HOUSING SUPPORT

Mary Ferrazzo

HOUSE TEAM

Volta Eliabachus, Idalmis Martinez,
Abiodun Adedokun, Mary Garcia
(Relief)

FOOD SERVICES TEAM

Isabel Casallas, Ann-Marie Peart (Relief)

A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & BOARD CHAIR

DEAREST NYWS FAMILY,

A beautiful poster hangs in the North York Women's Shelter office that reads,

"Remember, Dreaming is an Act of Resistance."

This year, with so much turmoil across the globe - much of it directly impacting women, people of colour and the economically marginalized - this is an especially important reminder. We know that we are impacted by that turmoil. Even when that news can seem "elsewhere", women's lives, communities and realities transcend borders, and we continue to live with staggeringly high rates of violence against women right here in Toronto. But at NYWS, we are never afraid to dream resistance into being and that reminder to dream is what keeps us going.

NYWS recognizes that more than ever, this is the time to be bold, to be creative and to be determined. This is the time for organizations such as emergency shelters to redouble their commitment to hold the line with those who are vulnerable; and resist, through action, advocacy and education, those who attempt to abuse their power.

In that spirit, **2016-2017** saw many significant changes at North York Women's Shelter. We brought on a number of incredibly creative and talented individuals into key roles at the agency, drawing on their expertise in the violence against women sector, in fundraising, in finance, and in operations. We also refreshed our foundational statements to ensure that any work we do, from our administrative tasks to our front-line services, is guided by the needs of our residents. We looked at our approach with fresh eyes and considered what women were telling us their priorities were as they rebuilt their lives. We also moved our administrative offices to a much smaller, more efficient space, closer to the shelter.

Together we marched for an end to violence against women, for gender equity and for an end to sexual violence. Together we held space and mourned for women who lost their lives to intimate partner violence. And we stood in solidarity with those pushing for an end to the ongoing tragedy of missing and murdered Indigenous women. As an organization, we celebrated a number of significant holidays in 2016 such as Eid, Diwali, Black History Month, International Women's Day, Christmas, and Hannukah; reflecting the diversity of women who made NYWS their home. We expanded our programming to include trauma-specific Expressive Arts Therapy and started the process of expanding our Outreach initiatives. We received a beautiful children's library from the Turning the Page Committee at Act to End Violence Against Women - a dedicated and determined Jewish women's group. We had the joy of hosting a dinner for Artisans of Syria - a group of women who wanted to reach out to women in Toronto who had, like them, survived acute violence and were now building lives anew.

Our sold-out 2016 Shine Charity Gala was another fantastic success, where we came together as a community, in joy and hope, but also in resolve to support the work of NYWS. The evening helped raise over **\$60,000** in support of the shelter.

The upcoming year is going to be an immense one for NYWS with many important changes ahead. We were successful in our application for major capital funding from the Federal and Provincial Social Infrastructure Funds (SIF) and as a result, have started the process of rebuilding the shelter. The \$8.84 million we were granted allows us to truly dream big and build a state-of-the-art, accessible and trauma-informed facility with critical wrap-around services for women in our community. As always, women and children with lived experience were the experts in our approach to building a new shelter and we listened closely to what services they needed to build lives free of violence. We are so excited to design this new, beautiful survivor-centric facility in our rapidly growing and incredibly diverse community.

We are so very excited to expand what it means to be North York Women's Shelter and to be able to build a facility that reflects the needs of our growing city and shrinking world. As we continue to imagine a more just future for us all, **we thank you** for another year where you have resisted violence and dreamed of that brighter future alongside us.

In solidarity,

Mohini Datta-Ray, **Executive Director** & Michele Robitaille, **Board Chair**



2016 BY THE NUMBERS

Number of calls
from women in crisis:

258

Average length of stay:

9

MONTHS

Number of residents:

41

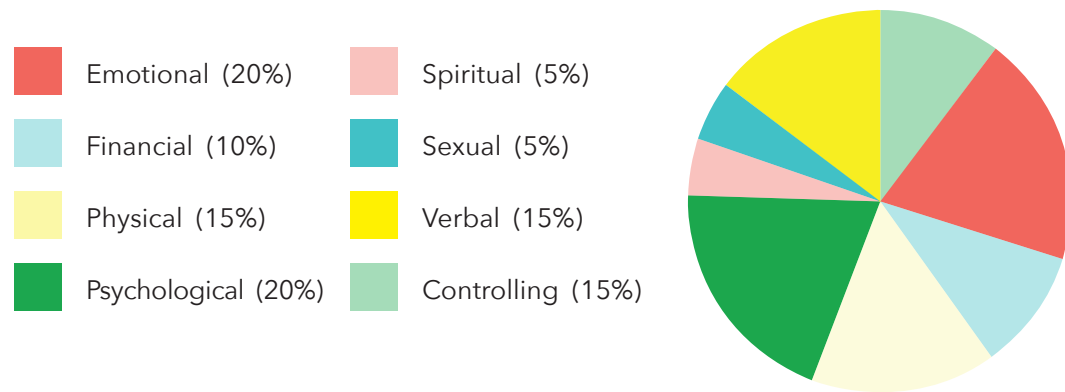
Number of safety
plans created:

41

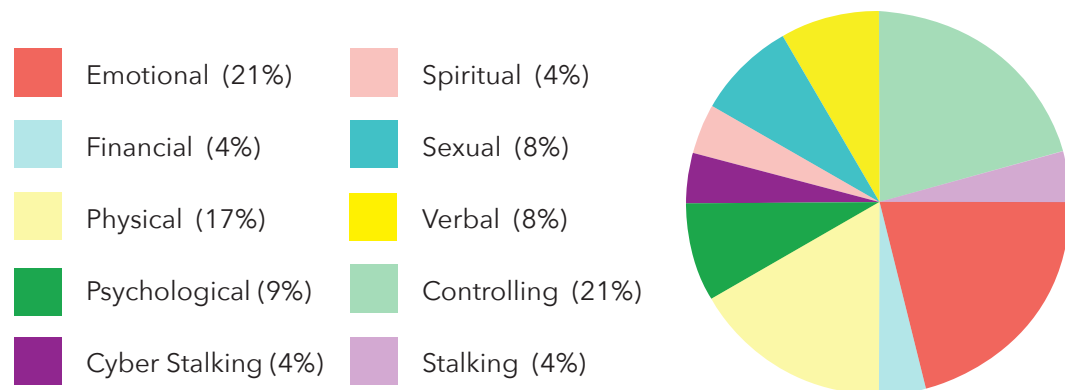
Number of instances
of cultural interpretation:

84

ABUSE TYPES CITED BY CALLERS TO THE CRISIS LINE



TYPES OF ABUSE CITED BY RESIDENTS



FOUNDATIONAL STATEMENTS

MISSION

A community characterized by **gender equality** where women and their children are **empowered and safe**.

VISION

North York Women's Shelter **actively supports the rights of women and children to build lives free of violence** by providing non-judgmental safe shelter, advocacy, and a range of programs & services including 24-hour crisis support.

VALUES

1. Non-Judgment:

NYWS works to create a welcoming intersectional feminist environment that is centered on affirming the needs and desires of women and their children, no matter her life experience, employment status, use of substances, sexual orientation, gender expression, relationship status etc. We are committed to sex-positivity and harm-reduction.

2. Respect:

NYWS works to create a respectful environment where women and their children feel heard and seen as unique and valued individuals, with agency, autonomy, lived experience, dreams and desires. NYWS is committed to creating a respectful and accountable environment among both its staff and its residents

3. Complexity:

NYWS recognizes the impact of structural violence and values and honours complexity and the dynamics of difference. NYWS is committed to cultural competency, anti-racism and anti-oppression and in valuing individuals as whole and unique persons. NYWS recognizes the impact of trauma and actively seeks to resist re-traumatization.

4. Active Participation:

NYWS acknowledges that women and their children are the drivers and experts of their own lives. NYWS is committed to transparency, accountability and informed consent in all decisions regarding women and their children.

5. Unique needs of children:

NYWS acknowledges the rights of children as separate and distinct from their parents. NYWS is committed to creating responsive, evidence-based programs and services for children impacted by violence and trauma.

6. Service Excellence and Innovation:

NYWS is committed to offering responsive, evidence-based programs and services that meet or exceed standards of excellence. NYWS measures the impact of its programs and services on an ongoing basis and actively seeks collaboration, innovation and feedback from service users, community members and partners by which to improve them.

PROGRAMMING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

PROGRAMMING AT NYWS ranges from ongoing individual safety assessments and risk management for both women and children; case management; housing support; a culturally competent food services program; and children's programming.

Like all emergency shelters in the city, North York Women's Shelter often functions at 100% capacity year-round. When housing 30 residents - all of whom have come to the shelter to escape acute violence - our programming is focused on being flexible, responsive and evidence-based. It is also feminist and self-aware. And of course, although we are a Violence Against Women (VAW) shelter, the majority of our residents (usually about 60%) are children, so we have programming that recognizes and focuses on their unique needs.

In 2016, we were incredibly grateful to open our brand new children's library which was donated by the Turning the Page Committee at Act to End Violence Against Women. It replaced our largely unused youth lounge and was a much needed creation of serene space to an otherwise crowded shelter. In this space mothers and their children were able to have a quiet and beautiful room to put their feet up, bond and spend time with books, toys, and art supplies.

We were also thrilled to introduce an **Expressive Arts Therapy Program** at NYWS. Expressive Arts is an arts-based approach to psychotherapy that engages and supports clients through a process of creative expression. Expressive Arts offers interventions that integrate the use of visual arts, creative writing, drama, music, voice and movement as catalysts for personal inquiry, discovery and growth. It is evidence-based and shows to be an effective way to provide support to survivors of trauma, and has the benefit of being an alternate resource for women for whom talk therapy can seem culturally unfamiliar and often invasive. We hired our first Expressive Arts Women's Counsellor, Victoria Mata who had worked for years as a relief counsellor at NYWS and was already very familiar with the shelter. She is an amazing artist and choreographer in her own right, and holds a Master's in Fine Arts. Through Victoria's guidance, the Expressive Arts program at NYWS has become immensely popular with the women and children at the shelter. We saw increased rates participation from residents and an increase in former residents coming back to the shelter to continue participating in the program. In 2016, the program engaged in everything from mosaic projects to dance, yoga and meditation, large mixed media projects, poster making, a children's parade, a photography project and documentary making. We envision the Expressive Arts program to continue to grow at NYWS and see it as a cornerstone of culturally competent and trauma-centered feminist programming at the shelter.

IN 2016, we actively increased our involvement in the community and our presence in the violence against women (VAW) sector by attending events, meeting with other service providers, and participating in advocacy events. Some of the highlights from last year include participating in the International Women's Day march, speaking at a December 6th memorial event to nurses at North York General Hospital, attending Take Back the Night, and participating in the Move for Gen1 festival. We also created new collateral for events including a new table set-up, postcards, a banner, different types of give-aways, and we created a pocket card with our crisis line information. It is our goal in 2017 to continue improving our presence in the community, produce new and engaging outreach materials and develop violence prevention and anti-violence curriculum.



WOMEN IN SOLIDARITY

On September 22 2016, the women living at North York Women's Shelter cooked up a delicious meal to welcome the women from **Artisans of Syria** for an evening of food, dancing and an exchange of gifts. Artisans for Syria is an initiative made up of a group of skilled women from Syria living in the GTA who have organized together around their handicrafts. Earlier that month, they contacted NYWS to arrange a visit to the shelter with gifts for the residents, as a way to connect with other women in Canada who had also survived trauma and building new lives for themselves.

We spent a wonderful evening together that was beyond language barriers; sharing in the sense of a united resistance against violence and injustice and in the powerful, creative force of dreaming of a new future. The impact of global conflict is felt every day in 'Violence Against Women' (VAW) shelters, particularly in urban areas such as Toronto. The majority of NYWS's residents are impacted by issues around immigration and a high proportion are living in Canada under refugee status. Although there were no women from Syria living at the shelter during that time, the sense of shared experience and solidarity was profound and palpable. Conflict, war and violence is unfortunately all too familiar for many of the women and children who come to NYWS. As an organization pushing for gender equality and social justice, we were honoured to host this incredibly powerful group of women.

The Artisans offered beautiful handmade gifts for the residents, while together we feasted on a dinner that represented at least half a dozen different cuisines. There was a good deal of media attention on this event but after a while the women asked all media and the few men who were helping coordinate to leave so we could crank up the music and have a backyard dance party.

As with any good party, we were full and inspired and reluctant for the evening to end. We can't wait to do it again.



SHINE CHARITY GALA

#Shine4HER

The shelter's annual Gala took place on Thursday October 13th, 2016 at the Eglinton Grand with over 220 people in attendance to support North York Women's Shelter. The newly branded Shine Charity Gala featured a keynote address from the Honourable Carolyn Bennett, music and performances, a three-course dinner, as well as an art installation created by residents of the shelter.

The Gala was our opportunity to highlight some of the amazing SHERos that have had a positive impact on NYWS. Thank you to all of the award recipients who continue to be leaders in our community:

Beth Jordan the Turning the Page committee of ACT to End Violence Against Women, Birthday Angels, Nicola Simpson, and Ankita Mittal.

Thank you to our sponsors for making this beautiful night possible:

Guardian Capital, Home Trust, Spirits Canada, Bluemoon Productions, Succulents Chocolates, and the Chocolate Tulip.

Through the generosity of our sponsors and guests, over **\$61,000** was raised for the shelter.



OUR SUPPORTERS

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

North York Women's Shelter receives funding from the Ministry of Community and Social Services. We thank them for enabling us to provide essential services to women and children building lives free of violence.

We also thank the United Way for making us a member agency and supporting the shelter for almost three decades.

ESTATES

We honour the memory of individuals whose legacy was realized in 2016:

June Ardiel
Johanna Burt

DONORS

We would not be able to provide vital services to women and children without the generous support of our donors. Thank you!

\$10,000+

Clifford Rhee,
Lowe's Companies Canada ULC.

\$5,000+

Anthony Melman,
Toskan Casale Foundation,
TJX Canada Foundation,
Anonymous.

\$2,500+

Guardian Capital,
J.S. Cheng & Partners Inc.,
Kaarel & Tiina Betlem,
Viginia Holmes,
Bernice Smirle Charitable Fund,
The Henry & Berenice Kaufmann
Foundation Grants,
The RLS Charitable Giving Fund.

\$1,000+

Joe & Jeanine Essaye,
Home Trust,
Canadian Women's Foundation,
Royal LePage Shelter Foundation,
Rand Kildare Charitable Foundation,
Michele Robitaille,
Sayran Sulevani,
TD Canada Trust,
Esther Greenglass,
Mills & Mills LLP,
Alex Pankratz,
Dale & Sandra Pyke,
Huong Pham,
Anonymous,
Blue Chip Leasing Corporation,
John and Olive Carey,
Marlene Hurlburt,
IBM Canada Limited,
Ted Macklin,
Spirits Canada,
SSQ Financial Group,
Warner Bros. Entertainment Canada Inc.,
Willowdale Presbyterian Church.

MONTHLY DONORS

We thank all of our generous monthly donors for offering financial security and stability to NYWS.

FUNDRAISING EVENT ORGANIZERS

We thank our partners in the community for organizing events that raise awareness and funds that support the shelter:

Anytime Fitness, Sydni Lazarus, Ryerson University, VDAY,
and York University Nursing Students

IN-KIND DONORS

We are so thankful for our generous community of supporters who provide in-kind gifts throughout the year to support the women and children that have called NYWS home. Their support has ensured women and children get everything they need when entering shelter and when starting a new life after leaving shelter.



VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteers have helped us achieve so much in 2016. From preparing welcome packages, to wrapping gifts during the holidays, to planning our Gala, to planting a beautiful garden at the shelter - volunteers ensure North York Women's Shelter is a place of warmth and healing.

We thank all of the amazing people in our community who have volunteered their time or services to ensure NYWS can continue to help women and children build lives free of violence.

BY THE NUMBERS

3,714

total volunteer hours
in 2016

279

individuals
gave their time

68

projects completed
thanks to the support
of volunteers

15

languages spoken
by NYWS volunteers

14

**corporate and
community groups**
donated their time



THE FUTURE

The future is bright for North York Women's Shelter. On April 19, 2017, the Federal and Provincial governments announced a \$8.84 million investment to rebuild North York Women's Shelter. Shortly following the announcement, in May of this year, we closed the emergency shelter at NYWS for 18-24 months as we prepare to move forward with rebuilding a new facility. We are in the wonderful position of being able to dream of and build a beautiful healing space for women and children fleeing violence with readily accessible services.

We have engaged Levitt Goodman Architectural Partners who are known for their commitment to creating sustainable, contextually-sensitive and socially-minded architecture to build NYWS Version 2.0. Taking into consideration our evolving understanding of trauma, access to services, and the emotional impact of healing in beautiful spaces, we are designing a new facility that both meets the immediate needs of women and children fleeing abuse, but also creates a space in which they may be empowered to heal.

At a proposed **24,000 square feet**, the new facility will be about **8 times the size** of the current shelter. It will house **30+ residents** with **17 bedrooms** and attached bathrooms of different sizes to accommodate single women and entire families. Knowing that we see increasingly large, sometimes intergenerational families come through our shelter doors, we seek to ensure that entire families may be accommodated by having doors that can be unlocked in order to join suites. All single-occupancy rooms will be fully accessible and we will have two elevators servicing the facility. The new NYWS will be purposefully built around facilitating healing from trauma; with multiple spaces for quiet meditation, counselling, creative arts, dance, yoga and play.

Acknowledging the importance of preserving and fostering familial bonds, we will have multiple spaces for smaller gatherings, a residential kitchen (as well as a larger industrial kitchen) and outdoor cooking stations. As VAW advocates we have learned that all too often women find doubly difficult to leave abusive situations for fear that their pets may be harmed as a part of coercive abuse. We hope to address this barrier to seeking safety by providing temporary emergency pet accommodations. The new facility will therefore have kennels designed into the shelter to house pets until they may be safely fostered.

As part of a growing and increasingly diverse city where income inequity and the housing crisis continues to rise, like many social service organizations, NYWS has struggled to support the complex needs of women experiencing violence. The new facility will therefore offer wrap-around services that will be accessible to women impacted by violence who may not be living in the shelter itself. Services such as legal supports, counselling services and even women-centric primary health care are all planned as part of the growing facility. As we know, gender-based violence and misogyny can only truly be addressed if we change the structural factors that make it possible. To those ends, NYWS is very excited to develop a research and advocacy department, focusing on a community-based research model where the participatory research itself leads to systems change.

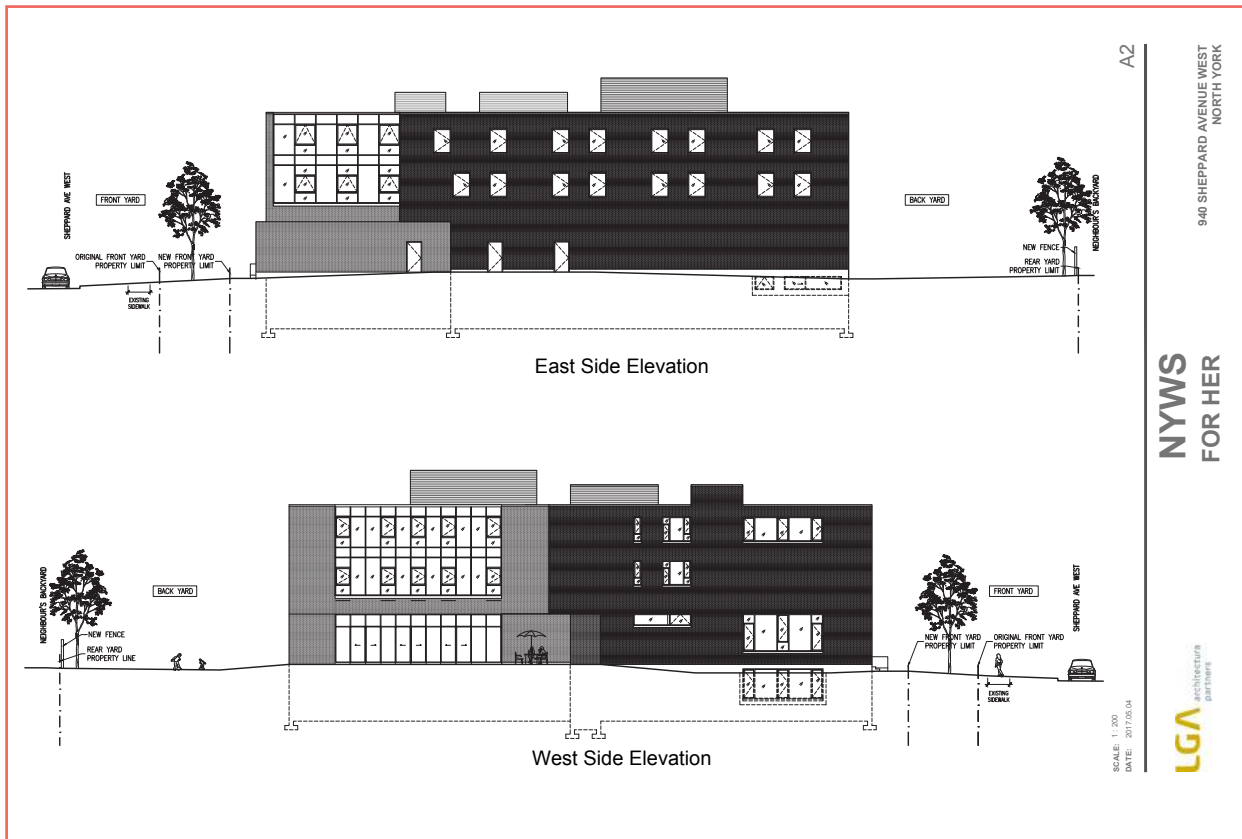
CONT. ON NEXT PAGE ►



THE FUTURE CONT.

This year has been and will continue to be one of **optimism, passion and hard work**. We are inordinately grateful to the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS), particularly to Minister Helena Jaczek, and to the Government of Canada, particularly to MP Michael Levitt, for their support to creating this new facility for women and children at NYWS. We would also like to thank Councillor Pasternak for his unwavering support of this exciting project in his ward. The staff at MCSS and the City of Toronto have been incredible resources to us throughout the process of applying for funding and we extend our sincere thanks to them. Our architects, LGA Architectural Partners and our construction management firm Ellis Don have been wonderful in leading us through our vision to design from a place of sensitivity, empathy and a critical understanding of sustainable design.

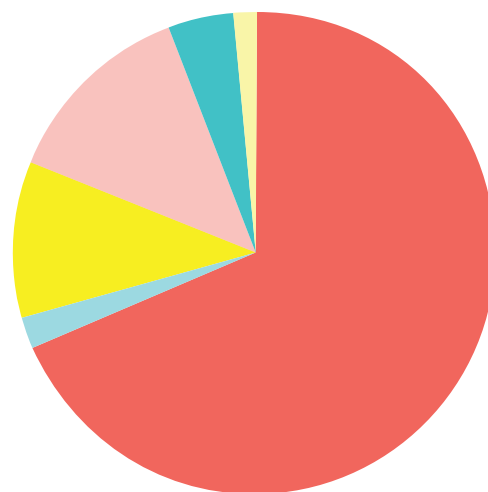
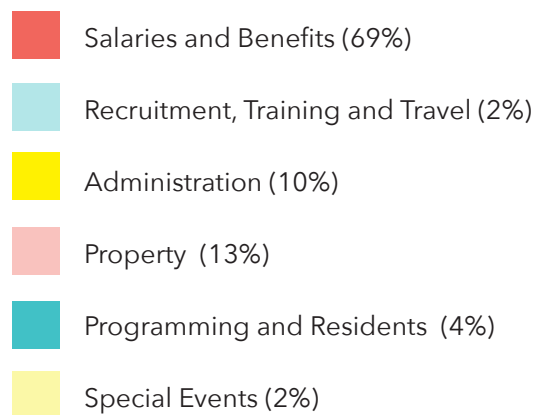
We are so fortunate to be able to draw from highly skilled volunteers and consultants; our volunteer Architectural Advisory and Adobe Consulting were instrumental in this project becoming a reality. Our skilled Board and Staff have ridden this wave of change with great enthusiasm for the possibilities this brings and we cannot thank them enough. And of course our biggest thank you goes out to the women and children who have drawn from their lived experience of violence to guide us in our vision.



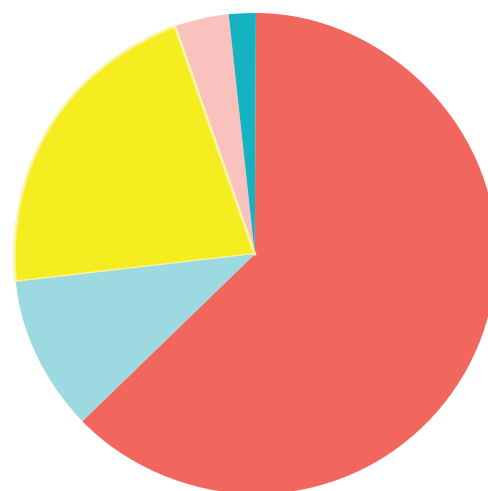
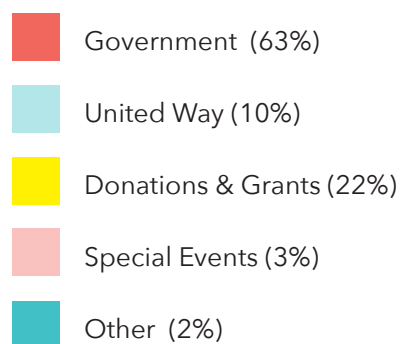
FINANCIAL SUMMARY

REVENUE	2016	2015
Government & United Way Operating Grants	\$1,304,231	\$1,237,319
Donations and Corporate Grants	\$372,467	\$363,214
Foundation Grants	\$12,203	\$62,523
Shine Charity Gala	\$61,380	\$37,340
Investment Income	\$12,820	\$37,123
Amortization of deferred capital contributions	\$19,205	\$21,006
Fees for Service	(\$450)	\$9,634
Total	\$1,792,856	\$1,768,159
EXPENSES		
Staffing	\$1,476,473	\$1,286,264
Administration	\$218,338	\$340,323
Property	\$276,620	\$252,143
Residents	\$42,059	\$55,783
Supplies	\$47,585	\$38,625
Gala	\$30,920	\$19,759
Capital Campaign	\$0	\$368
Total	\$2,091,995	\$1,993,265
REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	(\$299,139)	(\$225,106)

2016 EXPENSES



2016 REVENUE



NORTH YORK WOMEN'S SHELTER

2016 ANNUAL REPORT



Hope Lives Here



United Way
Toronto & York Region



