Annual Report

SAFETY. POWER. SISTERHOOD.

2020-2021



We Acknowledge

Let us acknowledge what it means for us to be on this land we work on. NYWS gathers at the meeting place of Indigenous communities including but not limited to the Wendake-Nionwentsïo, Mississauga, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, Anishinabewaki, and Haudenosaunee.

As settlers, we must learn what it means to be on this land. Indigenous peoples made treaties including the dish with one spoon wampum and two row wampum treaties, which imply shared land and separate governance. These are legally binding documents that were dishonored by European Settlers. This land is not owned by anyone but is a living and breathing thing that exists in a mutually dependent relationship with humans.

As settlers, we have been responsible for genocide in the Indigenous community through introduction of colonialism, patriarchy, and racism. Part of this genocide has been the residential school system, the 60s scoop, and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2-Spirited People, an inquiry report on which was released in 2019. This genocide is ongoing in so many ways. The notion of *terra nullis* or empty land, the premise of white settlers forming a colony on this land, is threatened by expressions of Indigenous sovereignty and thus the state's integral mission is to diminish Indigenous sovereignty to establish Canadian supremacy over this land. The constant and sometimes violent struggles by Indigenous communities against RCMP and other police are an important expression of Indigenous resistance, which has allowed them to survive years of colonial oppression.

We are grateful for this land and this opportunity to create a safer space for Indigenous and non-Indigenous individuals. As bearers of the responsibility to support Indigenous communities in their journeys of healing and finding connection with this land, as well as creating a safer space for Indigenous women, children, and 2-Spirited individuals, we acknowledge the need for reflection at any important moments of celebration and decision making. We also acknowledge the need for reflection on our actions in the past. We ask you to join us at NYWS as we continue to listen to Indigenous voices, learn about Indigenous issues, and reflect.

Leadership Message

This has been a monumental year for NYWS. As you may know we reopened the doors to our new anti-violence centre in March 2020. We want to begin by saying thank you. Thank you to all those who supported us through the HER Build. From our government partners to supporters of our community campaign and to all the survivors who shared their expertise to build this historic, paradigm shifting anti-violence centre from a 3,000 sq ft shelter to our 24,000 sq ft state-of-the-art, accessible, trauma-informed shelter and Anne Marie D'Amico Community Collective. Lastly,thank you to all those who supported us through the first year of the Covid-19 pandemic.

After opening our new facility, Covid-19 acted as our first big challenge. Within our shelter our team acted swiftly by implementing and promoting high standards of cleaning practices and an extensive number of safety protocols meant to contain the transmission of infectious disease, while continuing to provide a calm and comforting home to individuals who have experienced violence. However, these changes have had a huge impact on our residents and our courageous, hardworking staff and we did everything in our power to support them through this time. Throughout the year we looked at ways we could increase support for our residents by providing them with mental health support above and beyond our regular programming. This included:

- providing technological supports
- culturally specific mental health and food supports
- increased transitional supports
- schooling resources for 60% of our residents who are children and youth
- continuously looking for ways to increase wellness supports such as physical activity and holiday celebrations.

We also were able to offer our increased services to more women, trans, and nonbinary folks and their children, through an increase in our capacity by 33%. There is an immense need for services during the pandemic and exacerbated the shadow pandemic of gender-based violence, which has only been highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In our new space, survivors also had access to our new Anne Marie D'Amico Community Collective.

Although we have not been able to be fully open for the larger community, this space has been integral in providing COVID-safe programming and resources to our residents, and has enabled us to offer an on-site school for our school -ged children.

It has been an important year for our fundraising and communications after shifting our fundraising program from donor-centered practice to community-centric fundraising principles that better aligns with NYWS values. With great success, we increased annual revenue by 40% through this change. This involved months of consultation with staff, management, and community members that resulted in us implementing several changes in our fundraising practices which we share in this report.

We also want to acknowledge our previous Executive Director, Mohini Datta-Ray, who was an integral part in creating this new anti-violence space and steering our staff and community through the first year of this pandemic.

As we look to the next coming year as our city opens up, we are steadfast in our work, by staying committed to survivors, our mission, vision, and trauma-informed principles.

In Solidarity,

Michele Robitaille Board Chair, NYWS **Vanessa Costa**Acting Executive Director,
NYWS



Inside our Shelter space

With our new shelter building, not only were we able to increase the number of survivors we could house, with an increase from 30 beds to 40 beds, and the programming we could provide, but it also provided us with the potential for forming meaningful partnerships. The Shelter and the Community Collective, both, have acted as essential resources during the Covid-19 pandemic for survivors across the GTA, as we were able to provide wrap-around services within these spaces.

We need to remember that social isolation for survivors can mean increases in experiences of violence. Domestic or family violence can be made worse by pressures, such as stress, or economic instability. It was vital that we continue to provide space and support for survivors during this time of a shadow pandemic of gender-based violence.

The beauty of our new building is that we have the space and the ability to safely physically distance ourselves with 17 private bedrooms and private bathrooms. Families were able to safely quarantine and avoid experiencing more displacement than they already had. We worked with a limited number of staff in the office and continued to evolve our programming over the year by listening to the needs of our residents. We were also able to have three vaccination clinic days on-site where staff and residents above the age of 12 could get vaccinated against Covid-19.

Survivors served by NYWS

35
Adults

30 Children 12

12,

Children attended the on-site school at NYWS 21 🛎

Survivors were served past their stay at the shelter 12

On average, each trauma counsellor at NYWS worked with 12 survivors



Trauma Counselling support is an integral part of care that NYWS provides for survivors. Our Trauma Counsellors understand how the mental health of survivors at the intersection of race, gender, and class is affected. Working within this paradigm, we extend support for survivors that is guided by their needs and individual requirements.

As the Covid-19 pandemic has progressed, we have been able to maintain one-on-one case management and counselling support for survivors. The shadow pandemic made trauma counselling an essential support. With experiences related to isolation and general lack of support becoming commonplace among survivors, Trauma Counselling have served as anchors for survivors during this time at NYWS.



Our Food Security and Food Justice
Programming is stemmed in the belief that
food has different meaning in everyone's life.
For many of our residents, food has been
used as a tool of violence. Being mindful of
these things, we designed our program to
improve access to culturally diverse, nutritious
food to create autonomy around food.

As part of our new building, we have an industrial kitchen and a kitchen area for residents. Throughout Covid-19, we have been able to provide culturally specific meals for our residents, while providing space for them to have personal cooking times. We also have been able to provide one-on-one cooking classes among residents so they can share their cultural foods with fellow residents, while following Covid protocols. Due to the pandemic, there has been an increase in food costs, and community financial support has been integral to this program. It has also helped us provide gift card support for groceries when residents are transitioning out of the shelter.



Pet Friendly

In 2020, we became the first pet-friendly VAW shelter in Toronto. We know that pets are a part of the survivors' families and they often delay entering the shelter system because of the lack of supports in our system for pets. In our new shelter space residents are welcome to have their pets in their rooms but we also have a kennel for pets, as well as a pet lounge and a backyard area for them to play! The pet kennel has served as a space that allows survivors and especially their children peace of mind of knowing that their animals are safe. We have also partnered with Safepet to provide safety support and other support for survivors with pets.



Expressive Arts Therapy

NYWS believes that every survivor is different and has a different way of healing. Therefore, we found diverse ways of delivering services to cater to survivors who respond to different modalities. Expressive arts therapy has helped residents express themselves through creativity.

Expressive Arts Therapy is especially beneficial for children and youth at our shelter. Expressive arts not only helps them find sustainable coping mechanisms but also acts as an extracurricular for children who had been out of school most of last year.

Anne Marie D'Amico **Community Collective**

While designing our new shelter, we knew there were a limited number of beds but an immense need for services which has only been highlight by Covid-19 because of the shadow pandemic. The vision for our Community Collective is to offer violence prevention programming, trauma-specific care, and services to both our residents and members of our community. We designed and built the space to be able to serve as many people in the community as possible.

We opened our doors to this brand-new building 2 weeks before the first Covid-19 lockdown in Toronto and like many other organisations open to the public, our vision for the

Anne Marie D'Amico Community Collective

had to shift.

The Anne Marie D'Amico Community Collective has been integral in providing Covid-safe programming and resources to our residents. This space has been home to counselling sessions to support women through their trauma, it has been the site of our vaccination clinics, has enabled us to have space for children programming, and a necessary wellness space within our gym. Further, the home of our primary health clinic in partnership with Black Creek

Community Health, which has provided us immense support during this time through vaccine education, primary healthcare for our residents, therapy support, and countless other services.

The first floor of this building was home to our on-site schooling program last school year. Over 60% of our residents are under 18 at NYWS. The pandemic disrupted the daily routine of school. As education was quickly converted to virtual learning, a lot of students had to adapt to a completely new mode of learning and socializing. NYWS quickly assessed a need for on-site educational support. Through government and community support, we were able to hire a full-time teacher for children and youth.

Apart from the invaluable benefit of reducing risk of transmission, having a teacher on-site 5 days a week ensured that children and youth would not risk falling behind in class. The teacher worked closely with counsellors to support them in their academic and emotional development and was essential in the personal growth for the children and youth. It also provided them much needed routine and stability, as well as an additional trusted figure of care and support within the shelter.

As the city opens up so does our vision for this space. We will continue to open up our primary health clinic to the community- specifically for survivors of violence that can also be converted into a bookable program space for the community. We are happy to say we have our first booking in place for the next coming weeks. We are also continuing to partner with organizations whose values align with ours to use our space as satellite work stations. This includes social workers, lawyers, etc. This space is vital to our community, and we are excited about the future.

This collective space was supported in partnership with the Anne Marie D'Amico Foundation. 3 years ago, while in the midst of our capital build we were introduced to this amazing family. They brought with them a commitment to honour their beautiful daughter and sister Anne Marie.



Anne Marie lost her life with 9 others on April 23, 2018 in the Toronto Van Attack. 16 people were also injured and countless others were affected by this hate crime with misogyny at its core.

In grief and remembrance people take many directions to honour loved ones. We are honoured that the D'Amico Family chose to remember Anne Marie by starting the Anne Marie D'Amico Foundation to directly support the build of our Community Collective and ongoing programming within the space by committing to raise \$1 million from our Her Build Campaign for NYWS.



HER Build

We are incredibly grateful for the support we received from our build partners and our community for our capital build. With community support we were able to raise over \$3 million for our HER Build Campaign. This support was integral to build this essential space and provide necessary funds to begin our essential programs.

\$17,548,623
Government Support

\$3,100,000

Community Support



Community-Centric Fundraising

For the past year, we have been part of the movement towards Community Centric Fundraising. We have made efforts to inculcate the principles of Community-Centric Fundraising into our operations through:

- Storytelling: all stories became centred in sharing with our donors and community the systemic issues we were trying to challenge as an organization and moving away from poverty tourism.
- Donor Acquisition: We created an advocacy-first donor acquisition program, and communication strategy grounded in anti-oppression and anti-racism.
- Donor Engagement: We set a standard with our team that all donors and volunteers are created equal and created standards on donor dialogue, so our team had the organizational support to call in donors to learn and engage with NYWS through an ARAO lens.

"Community-Centric Fundraising is a movement to evolve how fundraising is done in the non-profit sector. Its goal is to support fundraisers and other non-profit professionals to re-examine every fundraising philosophy and practice they have been taught, engage in vigorous ongoing conversations, and explore doing fundraising in ways that reduce harm and further social justice."

- Communitycentricfundraising.org



NYWS Shop

The NYWS Shop, launched in 2020, has allowed us to collaborate with local BIPOC artists and create a sustainable means of supporting the shelter as well as the artists a portion of all proceeds will be going back to support. The mural paintings created by these artists are prominently displayed on our shelter walls, as well as available on clocks, tote bags, pillow covers, and much more, through the NYWS Shop.

NYWS SHOP

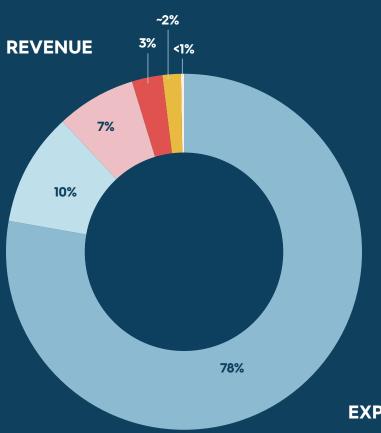


Fight for Justice

The Fight for Justice Campaign was created with the intent to bring attention to the issues within the larger fight to end gender-based violence. Fight for Justice allows us to bring activism to the community. As we commit to act for the promotion of affordable housing, universal income, food security, and against systemic racism, we are able to promote other organizations as well as hold our representatives responsible towards the people.

FIGHT FOR JUSTICE

Financial Overview



Operating Revenue

\$3,140,398

Operating Expenses

\$3,174,939*

Capital Campaign Revenue

\$157,717

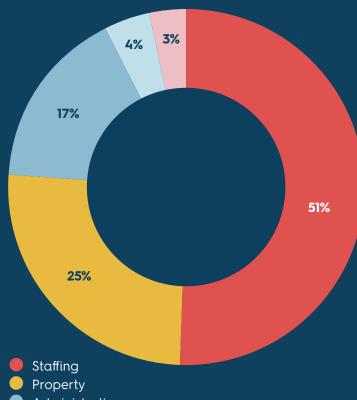
*does not include depreciation

Government Grants

- Donations & Corporate Grants
- Foundation Grants
- Capital Campaign
- Rental Income
- Investment Income



EXPENSES



- Administration
- Residents
- Supplies

Ongoing support from our community

People from the community come forward in different ways and lend support to NYWS each year. We want to thank everyone who has helped us during this crucial year. With the domestic violence endemic taking hold of our country and the world at large, we are grateful for your help and belief in us.

With support from our funders, individual donors, foundations, partner organizations, and the government, we were able to continue supporting survivors to the best of our ability by creating a safer space for them.



HER Build Partners

CHARITIES

The Isberg Charitable Trust
PetSmart Charities
Of Canada
United Way Toronto &
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COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

408/437 Toronto-York Wing Association Of Registered Graphic Designers (RGD) Design Thinkers Conference Benjamin's Park Memorial Bishops' High School (Guyana) Alumni Association **Elementary Teachers'** Federation of Ontario ETFO Toronto OT Local Masonic Lodge Benevolent Fund Rotary Club of North York Shoppers Drug Mart Life Foundation St. Clair Gardens BIA Toronto Wolfpack Rugby

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North York
Willowdale Lawn
Bowling Club

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Adam Dumond
Adam Henderson
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Alba Paspalovski

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Susan Murray Susan Reisler Susan Rimmer Susan Ward Susanna Ng Susy & Louie Costa

Suzanne Farley
Suzanne Gibson
Sylvia Ejercito
Sylvia Soyka
Tai Chang

Tanuja Saha Tara & Tim Vanderheide

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Tatiana Moran

Tanika Newman

Tatianna Mohnachev

Ted Macklin

Teresa Norte Da Silva

Teresa Wood
Tessrah Baptiste
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Tim Mccartney

Timothy Alberdingk Thijm

Timothy Swift
TIna Bettencourt
Tota-Kosoy Roxane
Trinh Truong
Tulip Syed

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Valerie Mensch
Valerie Spriet
Vanessa Gutierrez
Vanessa Holding
Vanessa Johan
Vanessa Najera
Vanessa Ospina
Vanessa Vanclief
Vera Kan

Vicki Hornsby Vicky Tran

Victor & Anna Araujo

Victor Zuck Victoria Amaral Victoria Fodor Victoria Turner Victoria Zwicker Vidula Shetye Virginia Kairys Vita Altomare Vitor Fonseca Vivian Moens Vivien Lee Vivienne Cutten Vojin Stefanovic Wanda Chirnside Warren Gibson Wendy French Wendy Scott

Will C
Xiao Guo
Yaseen Ali
Yasmin Ali
Yasmin Mohseni
Yoed Goldstein
Yona Lunsky
Yuliya Tsoy
Zazie Chandler

Wendy Youens

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Thank you.

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