

ANNUAL
REPORT
2019- 2020

WINhouse



MISSION

Throughout Edmonton and area, for 52 years, WINhouse has given women and children of all ages and cultures a safe place to flee from domestic violence. From passionate professionals and volunteers, to dedicated donors and champions of the cause, we're committed to providing safety, support, relief and resources for abuse victims.

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Board President's Message

Looking back on the past year as the new president of the board of directors for WINhouse, I am thrilled to relay that the organization is showing tremendous growth as a whole and continuing in its diligence to ensure that women and children fleeing domestic violence have a safe space to feel secure. The staff, board of directors, volunteers, and supporters alike have all provided insightful commentary and ideas on how we can all work together as a collective to stop the cycle of insidious violence that permeates our community and hurts those in its grips.

We had a very productive year as a board including the success of our annual retreat held at the lovely EPCOR Tower in downtown Edmonton. Facilitated by Synergist, the Board of Directors were able to successfully complete a new 5-Year Strategic Plan blueprint for the 2019-2023 fiscal periods. We were also able to complete a Board Governance and Organizational Audit with all recommendations being adopted and prioritized for inclusion into the agency Operational Plan. Overall, a tremendously successful gathering.

As an organization, the board also approved the staff to research what it means to move toward a low-barrier model of entry in shelter. Such an approach may be better able to deliver client-centered and evidence-based services to abused women who may otherwise be turned away due to their choice in how to cope with trauma.

In relation to a low-barrier model, a harm reduction assessment room began construction in one of our shelters in anticipation of helping clients struggling with addiction and mental health issues access supports needed to begin to stabilize.

As I close off the books for this past year, I want to acknowledge and thank our dedicated staff for their consistent care and concern for those we serve daily. I also want to thank our board members who help guide this organization. For board members leaving us and for those that will now be joining us, thank you for choosing to come along with us as we move through the next year and whatever it may bring.

Marg Sebzda
President, Board of Directors

Executive Director's Message

When I look back at the year that was for WINhouse, I am reminded of how far this wonderful organization has come since its inception 52 years ago and its unfailing commitment to opening its doors to women-in-need fleeing domestic violence. It is quite amazing to note that throughout this time, well over 40,000 women and their children have found some semblance of solace through us in a most traumatic, fearful, and uncertain time in their lives.

I am also reminded of how hard our dedicated staff work to ensure that our clients' time spent in shelter is welcoming, positive, and meets the individual needs each may have in this auspicious turning point in their lives. Whether it is our front-line staff, our housekeepers, childcare, or office support, each are there because the well-being, health, and safety of every woman and child we service daily is of upmost importance. It makes me proud...

This past year continued to showcase how community engagement and support can help fulfill a need that is growing by the second – the need to create a safe space for traumatized children and youth. Thanks to the financial and physical support of our benefactors, construction on a multi-sensory room was able to begin at WINhouse 1. Through the Family Empowerment Program, trained staff offer shelter children and their mothers a means to help identify, acknowledge, and validate the trauma they have experienced at home. Through trauma-informed care techniques and learned coping mechanisms, each are then better equipped to start the long process of healing. We expect work will be completed this year when we will also begin construction of a sensory room at WINhouse 2.

WINhouse was very fortunate to welcome Honourable Premier Jason Kenney and his wonderful team to our organization twice. The first time was in May when he visited one of our shelters and was provided a tour of the space. Joining Premier Kenney was the Honourable Leela Aheer, Minister of Culture, Multiculturalism, and Status of Women and the Honourable Rajan Sawhney, Minister of Social Services and Community as he announced that the Alberta Government would continue to provide over \$51M annually to support women's shelters and stands firm in their commitment to address and prevent family violence.

The second time was a press conference held at the WINhouse business office where Premier Kenney introduced Clare's Law which is a policy currently established in the UK that will now allow police to disclose a partner's violent past to their partner. As a further measure to protect women from domestic violence, Kenney also promised \$2 million to expand the use of specialized electronic monitoring technology. We were thrilled to be able to witness firsthand such exciting announcements that will better protect those suffering from abuse.

Executive Director's Message



As one of Canada's largest and oldest emergency shelters of its kind, invite everyone to keep WINhouse top of mind in the area of domestic abuse and we will continue to lead the way in breaking down barriers that frame this important societal work.

Through programming opportunities, more accessible services for those who come to us in their time of need, providing more public education and awareness through all types of media platforms, and continuing to partner with organizations and individuals that can help reach a larger community, I am confident that this upcoming fiscal year will be one of our most progressive yet.

Stay tuned for this new year and the many years after as WINhouse is here to not only raise the bar on taking a stance against domestic violence, but to also share more open dialogue with the community at large on how to inspire healthy change in gender-based attitudes, lower tolerance for abuse, and ultimately break the inter-generational cycle of domestic violence. Thank you for all the support and generosity that helps keep us going so we may always be there to #shinealight on abuse and welcome those who need us into our homes.

Tess Gordey, MSW
Executive Director

WINhouse History

WINhouse has one purpose: to give victims the hope and help they need to overcome domestic abuse. We're here when you need us most. We always have been, and we always will be.

Since 1968, for over five decades, we've given women and children of all ages and cultures a safe place to flee. From passionate professionals and volunteers, to dedicated donors and champions of the cause, WINhouse is committed to providing safety, support, relief and resources for abuse victims.

Today, WINhouse accommodates up to 71 women and children at a time (up to 21 days in our emergency shelters and a number of months in our second stage shelter) with meals, clothing, nurses, crisis intervention support, child support, pet care, valuable links to housing, legal, employment and educational services, and numerous post-shelter goods and services. It often starts with a call to our 24 hour Helpline (780) 479-0058 – It's a step towards hope, help, love, and to making a plan to overcome all obstacles.



PURPOSE

LEGACY

VISION

JENESSA'S STORY

I used to judge women in domestic violence situations. I used to think "why didn't she just leave? How could she stay with him?" I didn't understand how someone could say it wasn't that simple.

This is Canada after all! Women are free here. Just leave.

I used to judge these women, until I became one.

It doesn't look like abuse at the start. It looks like loving gazes, gentle kisses, many compliments, "I love you"s. It looks like happiness. But red flags are hard to see when looking through rose coloured glasses and behind closed doors it was my personal hell. I didn't look like the stereotypical victim either, I wasn't this shy, quiet, noticeably broken person. I was outgoing, smiled a lot and was told I was always bubbly and chatty. But that was the mask I wore, and I did so because I was ashamed that I allowed myself to be controlled the way I was. To the world I was this confident young woman with all the self esteem one could want but on the inside I was screaming for help.

I was begging for someone, anyone to notice that I wasn't okay.

I was only 17 and already head over heels in love with this older boy when he first called me "a pathetic, blubbering b***h" as he stood over me, watching me cry and hold my face where his fist had just been. It was the first time he had ever hit me, but it wasn't the last. I thought about leaving him that night. But I convinced myself that he loved me, he didn't mean to do it, he was drunk, I made him mad, I deserved it, I love him, maybe if I try harder...the list goes on with excuses I made for him. I was convinced that if I just hung on long enough for him to get sober again, we could be happy. I could be happy. In the morning he rushed to apologize, saying he wouldn't do it again, it was just the booze, he would stop, he loved me. He promised. And the cycle began.

Over the next few years I learned to see myself through his eyes, I learned to hate myself, to view myself as ugly, stupid and worthless. I learned to accept his beatings as punishments I deserved. I learned how to cover up bruises with makeup, I learned how to use a well placed scarf, how important sunglasses were, how jackets and long sleeves were a must and how to perfect a lie about where a bruise came from or why you hadn't seen your family and friends in weeks. I learned how to trick my own mind into believing I was free when I was living in emotional chains. He had convinced me he was the best I could get and that I should be grateful that he puts up with me.

I believed everything he told me, because I believed this was just how love looked for me.

In the end I did leave him, I called the RCMP and they saved my life. I didn't tell many people at first, almost everyone I knew at the time knew him as well, which made it difficult to come forward. Would they view me as a liar? Would they take his side? What will they say of me? All the things every victim is afraid of was running through my mind, trying to convince myself to forgive him, that it would be easier just to say I made it all up and take him back again. It would be easier, but I wouldn't have survived. It would be easier but only until the next fit of rage. Only until the next drink. Only until the next time I catch him cheating or until the next time I cut my hair and he doesn't like it. It would be easier. But easier also meant deadlier. I had to make a choice between him and my own life. So, for the first time in a long time, I finally chose myself.

It isn't easy, getting out and getting help. But it is possible! You have to believe in yourself, even if for only a moment hold onto that moment and push through. Reach out, to someone, anyone. Do not be afraid of what will come because once you leave, once you make room for the positive in your life, it will flood in. It will change your world. It will save your life. But most of all...it will be okay.

I stand here today living, breathing proof that not only can you survive, you can thrive!

No, I did not leave unscathed, I have C-PTSD (complex post traumatic stress disorder) but I don't see it as a negative, it just is what it is. It's a part of me now. I know how to help myself through the hard days, I've learned some amazing coping strategies, I live a very full and happy life despite my diagnosis and past. I have met an amazing man who has turned into the most supportive and loving fiance and we have a beautiful baby boy. I am doing things I enjoy everyday, I am shown true unconditional love and I now know how to better give that to myself too.

If I gave up all those years ago, if I stayed, I wouldn't be here today. My baby boy wouldn't be here today. I would have died not knowing just how amazing my life could be. Please, for all the wonderful things waiting for you in the future, seek help. Reach out. Leave anyway you can. It's scary starting over, but you will find love again, you will breathe easy again, you will smile again and you will be happy again. And if you know someone in an abusive relationship, please, help them. Reach out to them. Let them know you won't give up on them, stick it out with them. Sometimes it takes time, but with love and support anything is possible. And if you are thinking "I don't have that though", read this carefully,

***I am here. I believe you. I believe in you. You can do this.
Take that first step, it will be okay, just take it one day at a time.***

Jenessa

WINhouse Statistics



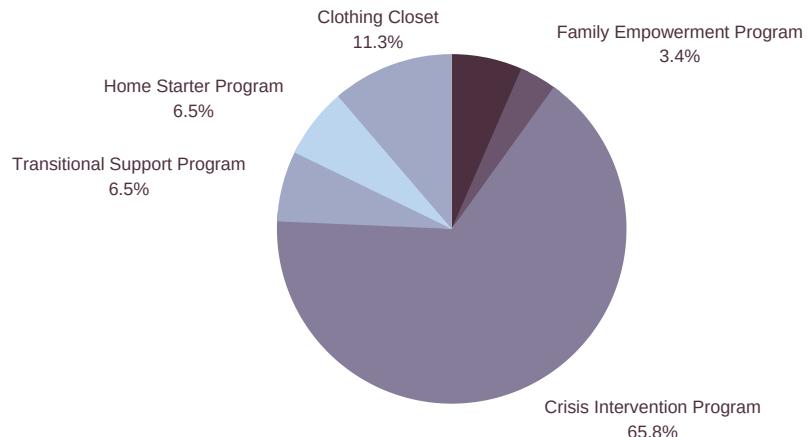
3396

Calls to our
Helpline



96%

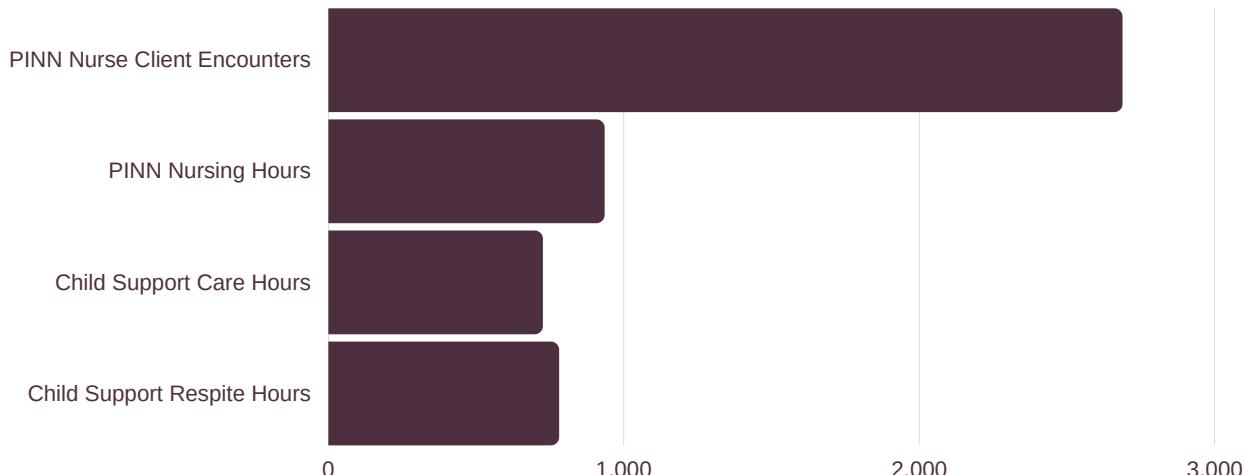
WINhouse
Shelter
Occupancy



WINhouse
Support Programs

*"....all I can say is thank you very much from the bottom of my heart, I was at my worst but the stay (at WINhouse) made me feel good, happy, and confident.
Anything is possible if you believe."*

2019/20 WINhouse shelter client



WINhouse

Client Programs

Crisis Intervention

24 hour helpline, referrals, legal resources, registered nurse visits, interpreters, and cultural Services

Child Support

School maintenance program, one-on-one support work with individual families, childcare when required, and respite care.

Outreach Programs

Practical and emotional support for women during their stay, and once they have left the shelter to independent living. Outreach also runs a weekly women's support group, addressing any and all struggles women may face while in shelter.

"I wish every staff (of WINhouse) to be recognized and awarded for their hard work. I'll go home and start a new life in a safe environment because of the WINhouse staff..."

Intensive Case Counselling Program

Counselling for women who are experiencing abuse in their relationship who would benefit from one-on-one work in the community if there is no space to offer in the shelter/if they are not ready to come in.

Pet Program

Clients can focus on their journey knowing their pets are taken care of through the Alberta SPCA's Pet Safekeeping program.

WINhouse 3

provides interim housing as well as comprehensive and culturally sensitive support services to immigrants, refugees, and victims of human trafficking.

Family Empowerment Program

Children exposed to domestic violence face a unique set of challenges. The program is aimed to help these children and their families gain the tools and coping mechanisms to be resilient for their own health and wellbeing.

Community Programs

Public Education Program

Free to the general public, we offer information and education on family violence/ the cycle of violence, and healthy relationships.

Volunteer Programs

Volunteers are an instrumental part of our organization. Volunteers help out in the office and at our annual and community events.

This year alone, volunteers contributed nearly 1400 hours to WINhouse.

Donation Program

Donations of necessities allow us to give women the means to set up new homes with the basics, as well as provide them and their children with clothing during their stay at WINhouse. Last year we provided 107 Household Packages to women and children leaving the shelter and 185 families accessed the clothing closet during their stay.

"As someone who has lived through domestic violence, I found a deep sense of healing in offering my time as a volunteer of WINhouse. Helping empower others to thrive was the greatest gift of a difficult season in life. Not all have disposable income to give but we all have time, that is the greatest gift you can give another... " Anonymous

Fund Development Message

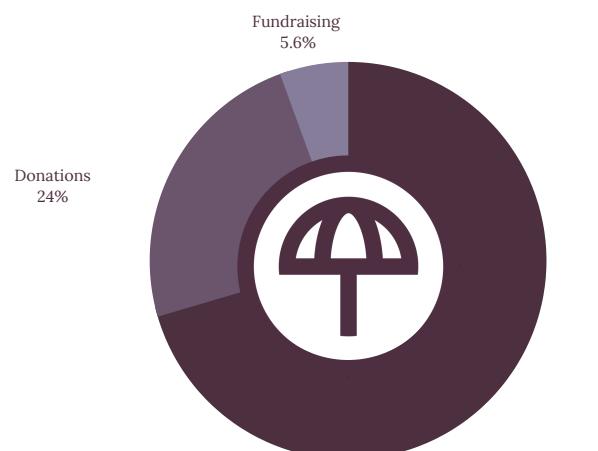
Each year, when we look at the client and shelter financial needs required for WINhouse to continue to provide a safe place for women and their children escaping domestic abuse at the hands of a loved-one, we kind of gulp. It takes a pretty penny to consistently provide top-notch service, programming, and the resources needed to make a clients' stay at WINhouse impactful enough to help her move forward in her and her children's lives.

When we consider the facts that we house and/or provide outreach to over 900 women and children a year in any one of our three shelters and employ over 60 shelter staff, the costs add up fast and only seem to increase year-by-year. But, when we dig down, crunch the numbers, and truly think about the reasons and details of what we are able to provide for each and every person that comes through our doors in a pivotal point in their lives, it is remarkable.

Every client, child, and pet(s) that comes to us in their extreme time of need are provided what they need in that moment of their lives, that is so pivotal and vital to moving forward. Whether it is our frontline staff, housekeepers, childcare, office staff, registered nurse, or volunteers, we all do our part to ensure they are safely hidden away from their abuser, given a warm clean bed, have their personal hygiene needs met, enjoy healthy meals and snacks, offered clean clothes and shoes, and have unlimited access to a myriad of our programs and services that are designed to help them re-focus, re-gain strength, and re-start their lives.

So, when we look at what needs to be fiscally accomplished, we gulp, we hunker down, and we remember that we never have and never will do it all alone. For 52-years, the Edmonton community has continuously embraced our mission to further non-violent relationships and environments for women and children and our vision that they are safe and free from abuse.

Grants:	\$ 3,483,974
Donations:	\$ 1,185,619
Fundraising:	\$ 275,655



For additional Financial disclosure please refer to the 2019 - 20 Audit Report on our website. <https://winhouse.org/about/annual-report/>

Grants
70.5%

Fund Development Message

Through community grants, sponsorships, third-party events, estate gifts, corporate and individual donations, and more, our fundraising activities and the supporters who help make it happen are second to none. For example:

Grants: the grants we were provided with helped us create new office space in WINhouse 2, purchase inexpensive household items for when we ran out and needed to provide a client who found a safe new place to live with the basic necessities to start over, helped pay for a few badly needed appliances in some of the shelters, and helped fund a portion of the shelter staff so we could continue to provide quality programs, and so much more.

WINhouse Signature Events: Our golf and gala events continued to bring together the community to celebrate the fact there is always hope that can come from trauma and violence...if we all come together to make it happen.

Last June, our golf tournament not only did that and more, it was also a fantastic time held by all! For all of our cash sponsors for helping us cut down costs, and our crazy, fun hole sponsors who went above and beyond to bring something cool to the table (a.k.a. their hole), to the golfers who joined in and golfed their hearts out, and the volunteers who helped make it run smoothly.

Our gala last November was a lovely and impactful event. By choosing the theme of unmasking the stigma that surrounds victims of domestic violence, the evening spoke to how we can all help those living in violence find a way out and know they are not alone. Our cash appeals brought in over \$73,000 and will help fund a huge portion of our food, transportation, household packages, and shelter “hand-up” so we don’t have to let our clients’ go without.

Backdoor Giving: The amount of in-kind donations made by people in the community helped us ensure we could provide fresh, clean pajamas, cozy hand-made quilts, toothbrushes and toothpaste, tampons and diapers, and everything in-between to those in shelter. When it is quantified, the amount is staggering. We so appreciate the thoughtfulness and generosity we are shown every time the backdoor bell rings and we know there is something there that can help someone feel/know they are not alone.

Third-party Community Events: The events that were held for WINhouse by individuals and companies alike not only helped bring in much-needed funds, they also helped share facts and awareness about domestic abuse and how one can get help or give help. These events highlighted the love and support our community has for our clients and the range and scope vary.



Because of you...



Fund Development Message

From someone having a garage sale, hosting a fundraising event, holding a spin class, collecting new and used clothing, shoes, shampoo, diapers, and more, to playing a poker game or showcasing an Edmonton band or filling the back of a Lexus, the creativity was endless. We even had two of our supporters trek 100 miles through the Sahara Desert to raise money for us, a 12 year-old boy donate his birthday money, our friends at Paris Jewellers who “Pay it Forward” each year with b-o-g-o custom jewelry their customers can buy and give to a loved one with proceeds coming to WINhouse, and an entire community share their love at Valentine’s through Seva (selfless giving), chocolate and teddy bears.

Community Connections: With each existing and new relationship we build, we take pride in the fact that they become more than just a donation...they become closely knitted into our organization. Case in point is our valuable connection with the Urban Bulldogs Against Kids Abuse (UBAKA), a non-profit organization of bikers who advocate for children and youth who have been sexually, physically, and psychologically abused. Not only does UBAKA raise thousands of dollars for WINhouse and sponsor our events, they are also partner with our Family Empowerment Program that works with mothers and their children in shelter learn coping and escape techniques related to their trauma, and offer emergency services and courtroom support when needed. As we head into our third year with UBAKA, we cannot wait to see what we more we can accomplish together next.

At the end of the day, at the end of the year, we recognize and are extremely thankful for the love, care and concern of the Edmonton (and beyond) people, its corporations and levels of government, for stepping up and stepping into our efforts to do what we can to eradicate domestic violence once and for all.

Without the fervor, drive, and generosity of our WINhouse community-at-large, our volunteers, and hard-core supporters, our financial needs could not be met – not just to operate, but to deliver on our promise to ensure that women in need get help. Thank you all for being there with us every step of the way.

“The ones who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones that do.”

Albert Einstein

2019 - 2023

Strategic Priorities and Goals

Client Support - Provide a high standard of emergency women's shelter's services

- Provide safety and shelter to women and children fleeing domestic violence
- Refer women to post shelter community resources
- Seek ways to expand services offered and increase capacity of shelters

People- Attract, retain and mentor excellent and diverse personnel

- Facilitate staff training and development in alignment with the latest industry standards
- Promote a culture that fosters a collaborative, respectful, diverse, and effective organization

Financial Sustainability- Ensure the financial sustainability of WINhouse

- Optimize EWS infrastructure, resources, and business processes in accordance with operational excellence

Education and Advocacy- Advocate for domestic violence prevention

- Seek ways to reduce the demand on emergency shelters
- Align with organizations that can help champion our cause
- Educate women and children in shelter on the cycle of violence

EMPOWERING WOMEN TO RISE



WINhouse

WINhouse Board of Directors

On behalf of all of us at WINhouse we would like to formally thank our dedicated board of directors for their continued support, service, and loyalty. Your time and direction has helped shape the future of our organization. With deep gratitude we salute your service, expertise, and devotion to guiding us in our continued mandate of providing safety, support, relief, and resources for abuse victims.

WINhouse would also like to officially welcome our newly elected board members. Thank you for your service

We would also like to recognize and thank outgoing Board President Terry McRobb as well as welcome our new board members voting in prior to the end of the fiscal year: Courtney Knox and Alyssa Haunholter.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead

Margaret Sebzda	President
Tiffany Chow	Treasurer
Kiersten Walker	Secretary
Omolara Oladipo	Director
Colleen Maykut	Director
Robert Cowie	Director
Debra Schick	Director
Larry Sarabin	Director
Lisa Ground	Director
Heidi Besuijen	Director
Courtney Knox	Director
Alyssa Haunholter	Director
Terry McRobb	Outgoing President



WINhouse

WINhouse.org

#shinealightondv
#whenhomesnotsafe
#whyigivetowin

helpline 780.479.0058
Charitable Registration #107283301 RR0001