



GRATITUDE REPORT
yellowbrickhouse
2020-2021

Domestic violence increased by 30% during COVID-19.
Thank you for keeping Yellow Brick House open and safe for women and children escaping violence.

“My abuser’s words were imprinted on my soul. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, he began working from home and took away any respite I had from his abuse.”

Core Programs & Services

Two Emergency Shelters

Women and children escaping abuse and violence have a safe home in our shelters. Yellow Brick House offers 51 beds and cribs.

24/7 Crisis & Support Lines

Counsellors are available 24/7 to help individuals in crisis assess their level of danger and take appropriate action.

Virtual Public Education

- *Healthy Homes*: abuse prevention workshops for newcomers and immigrants to Canada
- *Schools for Change Program*: abuse prevention workshops for grades 7-12
- *Stepping Up*: a peer-facilitated program aimed to support post-graduate students in exploring the best ways of helping their peers who may have experienced violence
- Online facilitator training: to assist youth and adults in having discussions about healthy relationships
- Organizational training: Recognizing & Responding to Abuse, Bill 168

Counselling & Support Services

For Women

- Individual counselling
- Group support: *When Love Hurts* teaches about the cycle of abuse and how to make healthy, safe choices in future relationships
- Parenting support groups: *Handle with Care* and *Mothers in Mind*® enhance parenting skills
- Family court support: a specialized service that helps individuals dealing with difficult family law and other legal matters
- Transitional and housing support: assists individuals in finding safe, stable housing and resources in the community

For Children (to help them recover from experiencing or witnessing violence)

- Individual counselling
- Group support: 10-week *Let's Talk Child Witness to Violence Program*: helping mothers and their children who have experienced violence in learning ways to overcome the negative impact of the experience



In the last year, Yellow Brick House, our community, and the world have experienced truly unprecedented times.

From a multitude of stay-at-home orders, to increased isolation, physical distancing and losing loved ones, this pandemic has stretched us all incredibly thin.

As we all continue to traverse this ever-changing new normal, one thing is more certain than ever. **We are resilient.** We overcome adversity and continually find innovative ways to support the women and children in our community who have been impacted by domestic violence and abuse.

COVID-19 has changed the world, and it has certainly changed the way many of us do things, including our team at Yellow Brick House. But we are committed to ensuring that our doors remain open to serve the women and children in our community who are suffering the atrocities of violence and need support.

Our shelters have been and remain open and COVID-19 free, and our 24/7 Crisis and Support Lines are available to help all who ask. **We could not have achieved this goal without your support.**

Canada has seen a 30% increase in domestic violence since the start of the pandemic – but many women have been trapped in their homes with their abusers, unable to access our services. As restrictions around isolation and distancing

begin to loosen and fewer barriers prevent them from seeking our services, **we expect an influx of women and children** seeking our support. Yellow Brick House is ready to answer their calls. During 2020-2021, Yellow Brick House provided life-saving support to 4,035 women and children.

The movement to end violence in our communities must continue, and we need the support of our amazing community, donors, volunteers, and staff. Together, we can continue to save thousands of lives.

On behalf of all the women and children you have helped us save, and for the thousands more you will help us save, we are deeply and profoundly grateful. Thank you for your generosity.

The time is now to create change, end gender-based violence, and hold accountable all who endanger the lives of women and children in our community. Let's continue the movement to create a community free from violence that provides equality for all.

With gratitude,

Lorris Herenda
Executive Director

Rehana Doobay
President of the Board



“I realized that I did not deserve to be in an abusive relationship. I could live independently and focus on my own needs.”

PROGRESS ON 2019-2023 Strategic Plan

Service Excellence

- Enriched staff and client access to technology to address complex client issues
- Completed a comprehensive assessment on prioritizing program and services



Sustainable Resources

- Implemented a revenue development plan to generate sustainable revenue
- Enhancing sustainable channels of funding



Governance Optimization

- Increased Board engagement in advocacy
- Maximizing Board’s engagement in creating impact



Community Engagement & Action

- Building a strong public education presence in schools
 - » *Stepping Up* program on dating violence and abuse prevention
- Implementing marketing and communication strategy
- Event engagement
 - » Break the Silence *Step in My Shoes* Walk: 100+ participants, raised more than \$55,000
 - » Break the Silence Virtual Gala: 700+ attendees, raised more than \$275,000



Darya’s Story

Before I came to Yellow Brick House, I was trapped in a verbally, physically, spiritually and financially abusive relationship with my husband. I was 18 when we were married. We now have five children between the ages of three and thirteen.

Before we were married, I was happy and outgoing. I loved school and wanted to become a social worker, but my husband’s belittling made me believe that I was “stupid, ungrateful, ugly, and good for nothing.”

His words were imprinted on my soul.

When he allowed me and the children to visit my parents for Eid, I called Yellow Brick House from their home for support and was able to flee that day.

It has been difficult to remember the confident, intelligent person I was before I married, but through counselling and consistent support from staff I have regained much of my self-assurance.

I have been accepted to the Social Service Worker program at Seneca and found housing for myself and my children that is close to my family.

I am determined to move forward and give my family a peaceful, successful life, and I am forever grateful to Yellow Brick House for giving me this chance.



A woman in Canada is murdered by her intimate partner every two and a half days

"I thought a great deal about suicide, so that I would have peace and not have to fear the next violent episode from my husband."

Awards

2020 Richmond Hill Business Excellence – Non-Profit of the Year; 2020 Vaughan Chamber of Commerce Business Achievement; Executive Director nominated for 2020 RBC Canadian Women Entrepreneur; 2021 Aurora Chamber of Commerce Resilience; 2021 Canada Prestige

Board of Directors

Thank you to our Board of Directors! These leaders from our community give their time and talents to Yellow Brick House. We are deeply grateful for their commitment to end violence against women and children.

Top row: Rehana Doobay (President), Stephanie Kremer (Vice President), Dharmesh Morjaria (Treasurer). *Row 2:* Zak Bhamani (Secretary), Tami Brisland, Nicole DeKort. *Row 3:* Mary Elias, Paula Liness, Meeta Gandhi. *Row 4:* KC Shendelman, Carolyn Skinner, Lorris Herenda (Executive Director)



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Thank You!

When a woman in crisis contacts our crisis and support lines, your support ensures that her call is answered. Your contributions help us provide life-saving emergency shelter, individual counselling, group support, family court support, transitional and housing support, and other supportive services. We also invest in prevention programs to educate youth and our community about dating violence, healthy relationships and workplace harassment and violence.

Thank you for helping women and children begin their journeys towards lives free from violence!

Vision

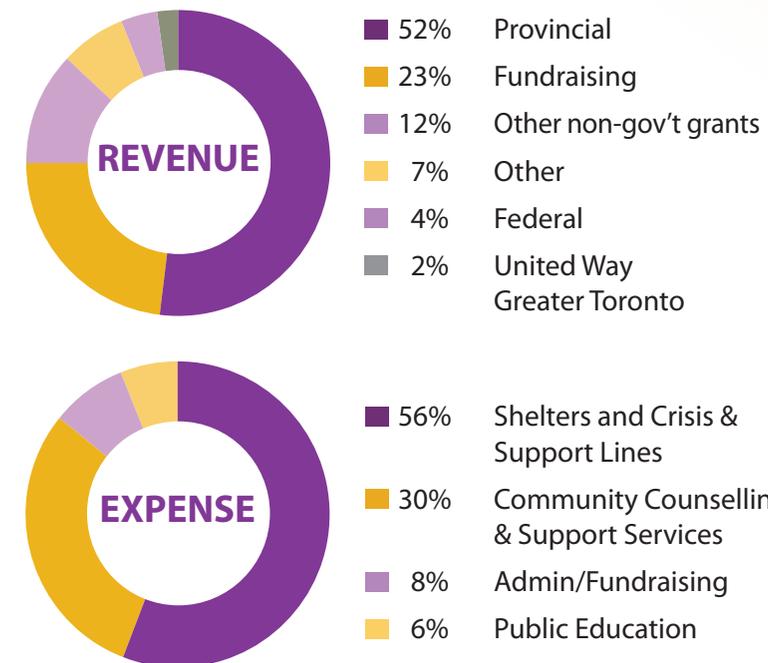
Freedom from violence. Equality for all.

Mission

Yellow Brick House provides life-saving services and prevention programs to meet the diverse needs of individuals, families, and communities impacted by violence.

Your Gifts in Action

Thank you for entrusting us with your generous gifts. This section gives an overview of where our funding is generated and how it serves the women and children of Yellow Brick House. Our audited financial statement is always available to share, and we are more than happy to answer any questions.



Special thanks to our \$50,000+ donors: Community Foundation of Canada; Mohari Canada Inc.; Shoppers Drug Mart Life Foundation – LOVE YOU Campaign; and The Citrine Foundation of Canada.



SAVE THE DATE – SAVE LIVES

BREAK THE SILENCE
Virtual *Step in My Shoes* Walk:
Sunday, November 7, 2021

BREAK THE SILENCE
Virtual Yellow Brick House Gala:
Friday, March 4, 2022

Your Impact BY THE NUMBERS

15,783

*counselling and court
support hours provided
to women and children*

\$13,434

*donated in gift cards for
women to buy what they
need, when they need it*

294

*women and children
stayed in the safety of
our emergency shelters*

500

*transitional packages
to help women start
rebuilding their lives*

**Your donation to Yellow Brick House provides
life-saving services and prevention programs
to thousands of individuals impacted by
violence every year.**

yellowbrickhouse.org • Crisis & Support Line: 1-800-263-3247
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