

ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021



surrey
women's
centre

20/21

The Shadow Pandemic

Navigating Gender Equality
In Uncharted Waters

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3. REPORT FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

4. REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

5. BORN TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

6. HIDDEN REALITIES: HUMAN TRAFFICKING

8. REMEMBERING SHASHI ASSANAND

10. CHAMPIONS FOR CHANGE

12. CURTIS' STORY

13. SONYA BOYCE

14. FINANCIALS

16. DONOR RECOGNITION

17. PROGRAMS & SERVICES

18. ABOUT SWC

REPORT FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Navneet Mann

Dear friends,

I want to start off by extending my sincerest gratitude for each of you and your ongoing support during our most trying times. No one expected to still be amidst a pandemic at the end of 2021, but the way each of you has come together over the last two years really shows the love, resilience, and camaraderie Surrey Women's Centre is built upon.

This year was filled with many unknowns and ups and downs both as an organization and as individuals; yet our focus to serve and support women has remained consistent and strong. We know this work wouldn't be possible without the support of a like-minded and driven community. We recognize the importance of providing our support to those in the community who are doing impactful work in our space.

This past year we introduced our **Champions of Change** awards. The award allowed us to recognize members of the community who are dedicated to impactful and lasting change. On International Women's Day 2021, the Surrey Women's Centre had the opportunity to recognize two key figures in our community who have made a huge impact on our community: **Kasari Govender** and **Tracy Porteous** were recognized individually for their exceptional services in advancing equality and safety for vulnerable victims of gender-based violence.



It is in our most difficult and unpredictable times that it is most important to come together, thus I want to take this opportunity to personally recognize and thank the relentless work of dedication of those involved with the Surrey Women's Centre:

Thank you to our amazing staff, without whom our work would be virtually impossible, and to our board who has worked behind the scenes to ensure our doors remain open and staff remain supported. Thank you also to our executive director, Shahnaz Rahman, whose passion and devotion to this work is unparalleled.

A final thank you goes to our donors, who allow us to continue to be on the ground doing work and serving those who need it most. Your support matters more than ever now as we increase our efforts to support the most venerable survivors who need us.

Thank you,

Navneet Mann, BBA, LLB, PCC

Shahnaz Rahman

Dear friends and Supporters,

The COVID-19 pandemic that began in 2020 changed the world, exposing the fragility of an already at risk and marginalized group - survivors of gender-based violence. While the focus and attention were diverted to the pandemic itself, gender-based violence surged to unimaginable heights. Despite the constraint associated with the pandemic, our SMART program services remained operational for those who needed the support on the streets of Surrey. Last year alone, we served over 20,000 individuals through our crisis support, drop-in services, hospital accompaniment and our mobile services through SMART Van.

The generous support of foundations, government, and donors like you enabled Surrey Women's Centre to keep its doors open through Pandemic and take bold action in increasing safety for women, girls, youth, and other gender diverse groups. While the lockdown endangered the safety of many vulnerable victims, the COVID 19 response projects helped us increase safety, deter the threats of violence, ensure access to support services, and reduce isolation. Your support allowed us to shift our programming and working in new and safe ways while upholding our mission and vision of safety, justice and equality.



Amidst the fear, the sadness there were moments of inspiration to observe the impact of our support services on the front lines. Our staff put their hearts and soul in the work to ensure that our services remained accessible to those who needed us.

With the prolonged impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the year 2021 is proving to be even more challenging. However, as you our donors have demonstrated – this adversity only sharpens the resolve of our community to support others. Despite the adversity your support hasn't wavered. Your generosity and kindness, lets survivors know that they are not alone in this and that they have hope for a brighter future and a chance to fulfil their full potential. We remain indebted to you for your ongoing support.

Shahnaz Rahman – Executive Director

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF DONORS

Born To Make A Difference

While in college, the invaluable work that Surrey Women's Centre (SWC) was doing in the community caught the attention of Randip Mander. She wanted to volunteer at the centre, but between work and school, it never fit into her busy schedule.

However, she always kept the centre uppermost in her mind, and SWC has been her first stop when making Christmas donations over the past decade.

On one of her donation drop-offs, Randip met SWC's Executive Director. Shahnaz patiently walked Randip through the centre and explained their various programs. Randip was amazed at the range of services, from the Smart Van's mobile crisis response to the legal and court support offered.

"We hope this connection instills a lifelong commitment in our girls to continue charitable efforts with Surrey Women's Centre."

For many marginalized and poor moms, diapers are simply not affordable. Sometimes mothers will cut corners on food to ensure they have diapers for their babies. Touring the Sharing Closet where women can "shop" to get clothes and everyday essentials, Randip—a new mom at the time—knew diapers were very expensive. Recognizing this challenge for women in crisis, she saw a need for diapers in the shop.

Before their daughter Emily's first birthday, Randip and her husband Shavir elected to ask friends and family for diapers and donations for SWC in lieu of gifts. They continued with subsequent birthdays, and when their second daughter was born, they carried on the tradition with Cazzie as well.

The Mander family's diaper donations have made a remarkable difference in the lives of mothers that come to the Surrey Women's Centre. One year they delivered 3500 diapers along with a \$750 donation.

Randip is awed by the hard work of the SWC staff. In some ways, it breaks her heart, because of the emotional trauma they endure with this type of work, but at the same time, she is deeply grateful for the dedication and tenacity of the staff and volunteers who help so many in crisis.



Randip and Shavir's daughters, Emily and Cazzie, are SWC's youngest supporters. It is heartwarming for everyone at the centre to see these small girls excited to give rather than receive on their birthdays.

"We want our daughters to understand how fortunate they are and teach them how to give back to the community. We hope this connection instills a lifelong commitment in our girls to continue charitable efforts with Surrey Women's Centre."

Of all ills plaguing society, human trafficking remains well-hidden, mostly categorized as the stuff of movies with bad people in foreign places run by vast organized crime networks. Yet sex trafficking occurs far more frequently than we realize, in our quiet neighborhoods, often by one perpetrator at a time.

Hidden Realities: Human Trafficking



An issue of violence against women, the most vulnerable to sex exploitation are teens exiting foster care, kids subjected to family violence, the marginalized, youth with addiction and mental health issues, those in poverty, and homeless kids. Additional information has emerged revealing that international students are being targeted due to isolation, language and cultural barriers, and the high cost of university and housing. Making up only 4% of the Canadian female population, Indigenous women and girls represent 50% of sex trafficked victims in Canada.

Predators loiter around group homes and youth shelters, malls, schools, and universities. Many are independent criminals who view sex trafficking as a lucrative business with one abductee being used as “goods” over and over again for profit. They employ psychological manipulation and exploit teens’ insecurities and the need for approval and acceptance.

With the popularity of dating apps and social media platforms, traffickers can move covertly, with easier access to younger victims. Portraying themselves as potential boyfriends, they give small gifts, lavishly compliment, and offer a place to stay. By creating “debt bondage,” they use the tactic of being owed something by suggesting the girl sleeps with a friend to settle the debt.

Girls are frequently transferred from place to place, for secrecy, with controlled movement. They are isolated from friends and family to ensure they have no emotional support. Confused by mixed messages, seclusion, and sometimes drugs, girls often don’t realize the reality of the situation.

Living with an emotionally abusive mother, Melinda was 17 years old when she ran away from home. With no place

to go, she hopped from one friend's home to another. When things became awkward at a friend's family home, Melinda posted a profile on a popular dating app with the hope of being fed a few meals while out on dates.

A man began flirtatiously messaging her, and after a series of probing texts, he ascertained Melinda had no place to stay and offered her one of his various apartments.

Bringing her fast food only once a day, he made an offer that pandered to her sense of desperation: he would set up appointments online for sexual encounters. She was promised she would receive half of the fee in cash. Hungry and broke, she acquiesced.

After the appointments, he would drop by and take all of the money. Unsure of how the plan worked, she assumed he would pay her at the end of the month. The day he asked her to sell "party favors" to the men—cocaine—the epiphany hit her that she would, in all probability, end up addicted to drugs, or worse yet, dead.

Melinda devised an escape plan by enlisting a friend to send a text about a family emergency. She had previously mentioned to her abuser that her father had been ill and begged to go see him in hospital. Thankfully, he let her leave.

Seeking help from her high school counsellor and school police officer, she was connected with a victim services worker. Moving to Surrey, she heard about the many services Surrey Women's Centre offered and began trauma counselling, which greatly helped turn her life around and deal with her mom's abuse. At present, Melinda is married to a supportive and understanding man and is excitedly expecting a baby.

With the funding support of **Women and Gender Equality (WAGE)**, Surrey Women's Centre is exploring practices that support victims of the *Human Trafficking Project* to their span of services. They have identified a critical shortage of safe housing for sex trafficked victims. Services are fragmented and youth over 18 have limited and long wait lists for resources.

SWC will fast track intervention and coordinate services for sex trafficked clients. Case management is crucial; without quick mobilization of help, contact with victims is lost.

A training and education module is being created for existing partners; the RCMP, the Ministry of Family and Children Development, Forensic Nursing Services, and the Embrace Clinic.

Human sex trafficking predominantly affects females, mainly between 14-24 years of age, from all segments of society. It is vastly underreported due to an increased risk of

violent reprisal and a severe lack of services in this niche arena. Surrey Women's Centre's sole mandate is to support gender-based violence in Surrey. The development of this new program will help many women escape, recover and rebuild anew, and save young lives.



Indigenous women and girls represent 50% of sex trafficked victims in Canada.

We are very grateful to Women And Gender Equality (WAGE) for their generous funding support SWC to advance our work in supporting victims of Human Trafficking.

REMEMBERING Shashi Assanand

BY SHAHNAZ RAHMAN - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
SURREY WOMEN'S CENTRE

"My mum was a passionate advocate, visionary, and pioneer in supporting immigrant, refugee, and visible minority women and their children. Her passion was infectious and her capacities were remarkable. Beyond her extraordinary professional impact, my mum was the most warm, loving, and inspiring mother. She was, and always will be, my best friend, ally, cheerleader, confidant, and soul mate. With her compassion, grace, and wisdom, she will remain a guiding light for all of us." – **Susiana Assanand**, daughter of Shashi Assanand about her mother who recently passed away.

On September 29th, 2021 Shashi Assanand passed away peacefully in her home. Shashi was the founder and the Executive Director of the **Vancouver & Lower Mainland Multicultural Family Support Services Society (VLMFSS)** from 1991-2018. BC will miss her strong, uncompromising voice of justice for immigrant and refugee women in our province.

A Fearless Advocate

In the early 90's, domestic violence was often considered a taboo topic in various immigrant communities and openly tolerated in others. With her passion and commitment to this issue, Shashi broke new grounds as a visible minority woman challenging her



own community and other ethnic communities to talk about wife, child and senior abuse and the taboo topic of sexual violence. She was a vocal media spokesperson, authored articles and worked on front lines with women themselves. This was a time when there was a lot of resistance and opposition from few vocal male community members. However, her fearless commitment was unwavering despite the personal risk this line of work poses to visible minority women.

Shashi's Impact

My personal story is a testament to Shashi's vision and work. Shashi's support has had a tremendous impact on my life and the lives of my two children. My circumstances were a matter of life or death. I was at a breaking point, with no hope that my situation would change.

My mother referred me to Shashi for support. At the time, I was broken, struggling to cope with life and managing multiple vulnerabilities. Shashi brought hope to my life. She counselled me, giving me strength to make courageous decisions and appreciate the "bigger picture." With Shashi's

counselling and support, I was able to leave my abusive marriage of 14 years and survive and thrive as a single mother (with a 13-year-old son and 6-year-old daughter). Shashi's wisdom and counselling skills were critical in empowering me.

Shashi was instrumental in getting me up on my feet and enabling me to initiate my career. She recognized and honored my early childhood qualifications and involved me in the Children Who Witness Abuse Program as a counsellor. With her guidance and support, and 6 years of front line work, I stepped into the role of the Provincial Coordinator for over 90 Children Who Witness Abuse Programs across the province. Her ongoing guidance, both personally and professionally, led me to another provincial role at West Coast LEAF, where I worked on issues related to women's equality, with an emphasis on the experiences of women who are disadvantaged in matters of family law.



Eventually, Shashi's guidance and support led me to my current position as the Executive Director of Surrey Women's Centre. As I reflect on my career advancement, I recognize that Shashi's unwavering support was critical to the steady development of my career over the past 28 years. She has been a hero to me, supporting me through times of personal crisis, accompanying me through healing and trauma recovery, and championing me in my professional development.

Over the years, I have adopted Shashi's approach to empowerment—like Shashi, I work to empower those around me, including my children. My children have grown into responsible, civically-engaged adults. My son is a registered clinical counsellor and my daughter is a practising corporate lawyer. Shashi has been pivotal to their academic, emotional and social success. In addition to me and my children, Shashi also supported my mother through difficult times. Shashi's support has generated an impact across 3 generations. I remain grateful to Shashi for her insights, perspectives, work ethic, expertise, kindness, compassion, graciousness, and humanity. She is an example for her colleagues and the community.

Alongside her impact on me and my family, Shashi has been a hero to many others—including other vulnerable women and children whose lives she has changed through her aspirations

and work. She was a symbol of hope, light and grace. Her beauty was in being soft and yet a force of nature. Shashi will remain an icon and her legacy will continue through her gifts of empowerment. Shashi will remain an icon and her legacy will continue through her gifts of empowerment.

REMEMBERING: Louise M. Hara



Surrey Women's Centre would like to honor and remember Louise M. Hara, who lost her life to cancer in February 2021. As one of SWC's longest standing board members, Louise led with an open mind, attentive ear and understanding heart. From her first board meeting, she had a clear vision and unwavering commitment to improve the lives of women and children fleeing violence. She played a critical role launching new programs and partnerships such as the Embrace Clinic, the region's first community-based medical clinic for survivors of gender-based violence. Her legacy will be long and enduring as she continues to touch the lives of the women and children who walk through our doors.

CHAMPIONS for Change

Champions For Change Awards

On *March 20th, 2021*, in honor of **International Women's Day**, we presented our first ever Champions For Change Awards to **Kasari Govender**, Human Rights Commissioner, B.C. and **Tracy Porteus**, Executive Director, Ending Violence Association of BC. The Champions For Change Awards is presented to one or more individuals for their tireless efforts to advocate and fight for the human rights of survivors of gender based violence and discrimination.



KASARI GOVENDER

Meet the Commissioner

Kasari Govender took office as B.C.'s first independent Human Rights Commissioner on September 3, 2019. Her role is to lead the promotion and protection of human rights in British Columbia through the Office of the Human Rights Commissioner.

Govender has devoted her life to promoting human rights, with a focus on the rights of those most marginalized and vulnerable. She is passionate about using her skills as a lawyer and community builder to create a more equal and just B.C. She has worked closely with organizations and communities promoting gender equality, Indigenous rights, children's rights, the rights of people with disabilities and the rights of migrant communities.

In addition to her role as Human Rights Commissioner, Govender is a mother, an aunt, a daughter and a sister.

"I am honored to accept this award from such an important organization, and especially from my long time colleague in this feminist work, Shahnaz Rahman. I will treasure this award. There is a quote that I came upon recently from an author by the name of Mona Heltaway. She said, "Feminism is a daily revolution." I couldn't agree more. Every day that we walk alongside those experiencing abuse— as the Surrey Women's Centre does— or undertake systemic work that seeks to shift this province's laws, policies, and practice— as my Office does—we challenge some of our society's most deeply held biases. With our work, we shake these structures of power that make women vulnerable. Until finally, through our collective action, we tear them down."

– Kasari Govender, B.C.'s Human Rights Commissioner

TRACY PORTEOUS

Former Executive Director, Ending Violence Association of BC

Tracy is a leader in the Canadian anti-violence sector having worked for the last 39 years addressing gender-based violence, creating services for survivors and their families, developing policy and best practices for service providers, contributing to legislative advancement, and cross-sectoral training and collaboration.

In 2020, Tracy was inducted into the Order of British Columbia and was also bestowed an Honorary Doctorate from the University of British Columbia. Tracy is a three-time Governor General of Canada medal recipient, was a member of BC's Domestic Violence Death Review Panels, has testified to federal Parliamentary committees, spoken as a Canadian delegate at the United Nations, is a member of the National Domestic Homicide Prevention Committee as well as the Canadian Femicide Observatory for Justice and Accountability.

Tracy co-launched the ground-breaking, award winning Be More Than a Bystander: Break the Silence on Gender-Based Violence campaign with the BC Lions Football Club. Tracy is the former Executive Director of the Ending Violence Association of BC, a provincial association supporting over 300 anti-violence programs and initiatives across BC that respond to sexual and domestic violence, child abuse, and criminal and sexual harassment. Tracy is also Co-Chair of the Ending Violence Association of Canada.

"I am so deeply honoured to be recognized by BC's largest community based anti violence program, the Surrey Women's Centre for the work I have been blessed to do for 40 years in our province and country. For the past 20 years, I and other advocates have been in dialogue with our Province about the status of sexual assault response, the devastating cuts that were made in 2001 by the previous government to all sexual assault centres in BC, the need to restore funding for specific services for survivors, the need for police and other responders to have related trauma informed training and the need for a cross ministry sexual assault policy. Sexual assault is considered the most under-reported, violent crime in Canada, and while other violent crime is on the decline, sexual assault is on the rise. Early intervention, as well as emotional and practical support for survivors, have proven to be lifesaving. I am proud to say that while I was still the executive director of the Ending Violence Association of BC, (before I retired) in 2020/2021 the Province granted \$20 Million to us to distribute across BC by way of a grants program. This funding is allowing Indigenous Nations and community anti-violence agencies the ability to provide survivors with the emergency care they need to begin to heal. I look forward to the day that BC has in place trauma informed cross sector standards, training and policy to ensure survivors are treated with dignity. Thank you to the Surrey Women's Centre for honouring me with this prestigious Champions of Change Award." – Tracy Porteous, O.B.C., LL.D (h.c), R.C.C., Founder and Former Executive Director of EVA BC.



CURTIS' STORY

by Corrine Arthur

As I near the 1-year anniversary of his death, it is only in this last month that the shock of referring to him in the past tense has worn familiar.

Surviving partner suicide is a lonely grief. I imagine the grief of a partner is always especially lonely and private; the only one I know also carries the stigma of suicide. Surviving suicide is a pain few can comfortably (or uncomfortably) stand near. It is where my gratitude for Surrey Women's Centre begins, in her quickness to respond to where it is most painful.

In 2012 and 2013, when the success of the SMART model was being profiled, myself and our forensic nursing partners were asked frequently 'what is it that makes SMART work so well?' Invariably, the answer was summed up: by providing a timely

survivors of violence in this community recover without debilitating post trauma responses – like flashbacks, nightmares, and internalized rage. Surrey Women's Centre is there when others are not, without judgement, and offering unbiased empowering choice. Even in a pandemic. Even when the pain is surviving suicide among one of their own. The unsaid about SMART, and all the responses built at Surrey Women's Centre that included my hands, is that they were collectively a love letter to my partner of 20 years. A validation of his story, of his pain, and the triumph in his path as the survivor of early and repeat child abuse – first at the hands of a terrorizing stepfather, and then by a doctor renowned for his expertise in treating child abuse. Curtis' experiences and path; his trust in letting me bear witness to glimpses of his pain are embedded in every model built for survivors over the past 15 years: from our child protection teams to the Domestic Violence Unit, and of course, SMART.

The lifelong impacts of violence in Curtis' early life affected our lives together every day. From the early years of opiate addiction and penitentiary sentences to episodes of PTSD so severe, complex, and heartbreaking it was safest to support each other while living apart; then later his battle with end stage liver disease, and ultimately

Continued on page 16



From the early years of opiate addiction and penitentiary sentences to episodes of PTSD so severe, complex and heartbreaking.

compassionate response to someone who has just experienced a life-altering trauma. Because of that compassionate response and the availability of support in the aftermath, so many

Change Maker

SONYA BOYCE

As a Black teenage girl, Sonya Boyce became acutely aware of social injustices based on race and gender and began volunteering for non-profit organizations. An avid reader, she devoured books on gender-based violence and critical race theory.

Learning that marginalized women and girls are at increased risk of gender-based violence, and seeing firsthand the glaring inequities they face, SWC caught Sonya's attention. Commencing her career with Surrey Women's Centre as a counsellor in 1996, Sonya Boyce moved into the role of Executive Director in 2004 until 2017.

The urgency of need was one of the toughest adversities Sonya and her team faced. When a woman walks into the centre without shoes, she can find a pair to wear in the Sharing Closet (after it was created). But afterward, she still needs to choose between staying with a violent partner just to eat, or leave, with no place for her child to sleep. People who arrive on SWC's doorstep are in desperate situations and require assistance with immediacy.

Discovering their voice and mission, and developing new ways to share their work and stories, Surrey Women's Centre's donorship increased over the years Sonya was Executive Director.

Although most people would consider it a calling, Sonya says what she does is "heart work"— She saw a sister, a mother, an aunt, in the women, girls, and children she supported. She saw the people she loved in the faces of everyone who walked through SWC's doors.



"When I dare to be powerful, to use my strength in the service of my vision, then it becomes less and less important whether I am afraid." — Audre Lorde

Committed to advancing justice for women and girls, Sonya sees how complex social issues are grounded in structural inequities that are frequently viewed as private and individual problems.

"When a woman flees violence with nothing but the clothes on her back, it reflects the structural inequities woven into the everyday fabric of our lives. I would never want to see anyone I love in this position and not be able to help."

Remaining true to her passionate mission, Sonya is currently co-leading a national project; Advancing Gender Equity for Black Women, Girls, and Gender Diverse Peoples.

FINANCIALS 2020/2021

ASSETS

Cash and Receivables	\$534,000
Term Deposits	210,000
Prepaid Expenses	30,000
Capital Assets	112,000

Total Assets **\$886,000**

LIABILITIES

Bank Debt	0
Accounts Payable	89,000
Wages and Remittances	102,000
Deferred Contributions	454,000

Total Liabilities **\$645,000**

\$241,000 Net Assets



Our assets, including investments in capital equipment like computers to work remotely, grew over \$325,000!

Thanks in part to funding from the **Ministry of Public Safety** and **Solicitor General** AND the **Ending Violence Association of BC!** ... and we reduced our bank debt to \$0!

Thank You to our Loyal Donors who continued their support to help us make a difference in the lives of survivors. Although uncertain times make financial decisions more challenging, over 2,000 individuals and organizations donated in Fiscal 2021 and helped us continue to close the gender gap and offer critical services.

FINANCIALS 2020/2021

REVENUE

Government Grants and Contracts	\$1,650,000
<i>19% increase in government funding, primarily one time only (OTO) related to COVID-19 pressures</i>	
Donations	409,000
<i>You gave \$35,000 more when it was needed most!</i>	
Fee for Service	136,000
Capital and Other Grants	245,000
Other	8,000

Total Revenue **\$2,448,000**

Other Income (COVID Subsidies) +56,000

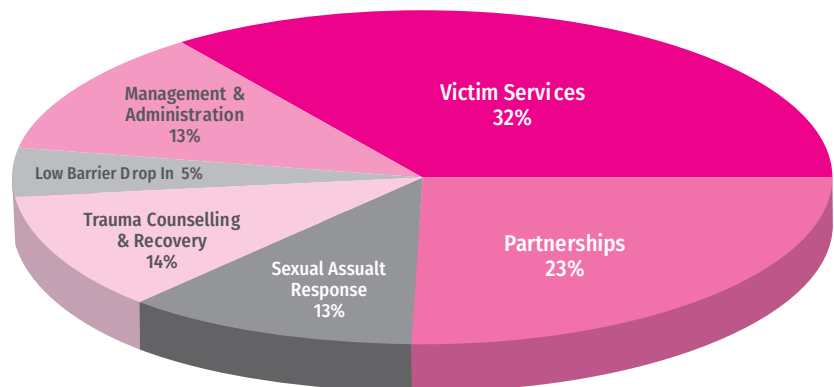
EXPENSES

Wages and Salaries	1,547,000
<i>Keeping invaluable staff employed with living wages & 6 new direct service FTE positions added!</i>	
Management and Administration	306,000
Fundraising	10,000
Program and Operating	453,000

Total Expenses **\$2,316,000**

\$188,000 Surplus

Our collective pandemic story continues, and we thank everyone for their support during such uncertain times!



DONOR RECOGNITION

We Are Stronger Together

Thank you to the generous support of:

- Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
- Ministry of Children and Family Development
- Department of Justice Canada
- Government of Canada Reaching Home
- Canadian Women's Foundation
- Lawson Foundation
- Women And Gender Equality (WAGE)
- BC Gaming
- Civil Forfeiture
- Service Canada
- Canadian Mental Health Association
- Vancouver Foundation
- Crime Victim Assistance
- First Nations Health Authority
- WorkBC



CURTIS

Continued from page 12

his choice to end his pain at his own hand last year; I am grateful to my husband for every experience he shared with me. I am a better, more empathetic, more awakened person for them. I know light and dark exists within all of us. The lightest, yet deepest, person I knew, spent many of his days in the dark wrestling his demons; braving another day and another for love and the promise it would get better. Curtis' life did get better. He influenced many with his openness. His bravery in owning that he was a child survivor of rape; his offer to the broken to throw down their worst shame so he could throw down two more, in his candid accountability, he'd heal you of your long-held burdens. His goodness shone in his honesty that he could never part with the monster inside. He may not have put him there but for every day after the monster was his responsibility to name, feed and cage. That's the torture of trauma – what happened is not your fault, and you're forever left to face its distorted aftermath. Only healing is our choice. And like surviving partner suicide, that healing comes easier in the company of trusted friends. Thank you with the deepest of gratitude to my friends at Surrey Women's Centre old and new.

PROGRAMS+SERVICES

Here are some innovative ways that SWC responded to the growth in service needs; How the pandemic affected services and what we did to innovate; Summaries from program managers.

CRISIS/COURT SUPPORT



We offer 24/7 crisis support to survivors of violence. Our crisis team assesses risks, helps develop safety plans and empower the survivors by building on their strengths. We connect women with the legal and justice community to safeguard that no survivor of gender-based violence falls through the cracks of the system.

MEDICAL SUPPORT



Survivors of assault are immediately accompanied to the hospital to ensure they are supported through the process of treatment and forensics. A SMART team member offers compassionate comfort through the examination process, and then assists women afterwards with subsequent legal procedures.

TRAUMA COUNSELLING



The ultimate goal of SWC is to assist women leaving a life of violence and fear behind to begin anew. One-to-one and group counselling is available for women who have experienced domestic violence, sexual assault, or childhood abuse.

SHARING CLOSET



We provide a process for empowering survivors and their families by ensuring they have access to their everyday needs. Women sometimes show up at the centre with little clothing. They have access to clothes, shoes, and toiletries, and we ensure they have a safe place to warm up with a cup of coffee or tea.

SMART



The Surrey Mobile Assault Response Team responds within minutes of an assault and fear operates 24/7, 365 days a year. The team provides comprehensive crisis response: safe transportation; urgent medical care; collection of evidence; filing of the police report; a comfort package; relocation to a safe place.

DIGNITY COUNSELLING SERVICES



Dignity Counselling Services is our private counselling program, where our counsellors work from a trauma-informed, harm reduction & anti-oppressive feminist framework.

How You Help Us Serve Our Community

Surrey is home to over 511,000 people (2016 Census Canada). Close to 220,000 of Surrey residents are identified as an immigrant population. Surrey is also the community of choice for recent or new immigrants. About a quarter of Vancouver's new immigrants live in Surrey.

Surrey is also home to a large indigenous community.

Surrey Women's Centre is the only charity whose sole mandate is to support gender-based violence survivors in Surrey. Our strength is in developing a social-safety network for survivors of gender based violence through partnerships with other service providers and partners who believe in the same goals.

Our Vision

Our vision is to provide "Safety, justice and equality for women, girls and other gender identities including cis, trans and non binary".



You Are Integral To Our Work

Thanks to the unwavering commitment of our donors, Surrey Women's Centre can save, support and transform lives and make this world safer for survivors of Gender-based violence.

Donor support is integral in the fight to curb the devastating impact Gender-based Violence (GBV) has on our communities.

Every year, over 8000+ women, girls and other gender identities including cis, trans and non binary are supported by Surrey Women's Centre.

Thanks to you - our supporters - many survivors of gender-based violence and their families are safer, have access to justice and can live a life free from violence.



Every survivor has the right to a life free of violence.
Let us make this a reality.

To make a donation call us at 604-589-1868

surreywomenscentre.ca