



THANK YOU



2022–2023
Gratitude Report



WOMEN'S CENTRE
OF YORK REGION

Embracing Change. Empowering Women.

Vision

Women thriving socially, emotionally, and economically.

Mission

Using a strengths-based, trauma-informed feminist approach, we provide opportunities, support and resources to all persons who identify as women on their journey of self discovery and empowerment.

Values

At the Women's Centre of York Region, we are guided by the following values in all the work we do:

Inclusivity: We breakdown barriers and equalize the power imbalances to create a culture of respect and support that focuses on the individual needs of staff, volunteers, and people participating in our activities

Collaboration: We achieve great things by working together, embracing change, and seeking possibilities

Innovation: We encourage learning, exploration, and creativity in the those we support and ourselves

Empowerment: We support, trust, and empower staff, volunteers and people participating in our activities to develop the confidence in their individual talents and capabilities.





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WOMEN'S CENTRE
OF YORK REGION

322
WOMEN
took part in the
MAKING
CHANGES
PROGRAM



27
GROUP
CYCLES

Modules: Self-Empowerment, Living Purposefully,
Assertive Communication, Healthy Boundaries
Getting Unstuck, Reaction To Response

THE
FINANCIAL
EMPOWERMENT
PROGRAM

Served

126
WOMEN

Provided

\$3,720
in Grocery Assistance

WINTER
WARMTH

Provided
192 women
and children
distributing \$21,790.00
in gift cards and small gifts

26 Hours of One-on-One
Financial Coaching
to 42 Women

13
FINANCIAL
SEMINARS

13
GROUP
CYCLES

Distributed \$1370 provided in emergency grocery cards,
\$803 in transit assistance,
\$800 in personal hygiene packages
to 132 individuals

THE
ENTERPRISING
CAREERS
PROGRAM

SERVED
95 WOMEN

Provided
\$1,500
in Interview Clothing Support

68
Hours of One-on-One
Career Coaching

19 GROUP CYCLES **9** NETWORKING EVENTS

WCYR
COUNSELLING

1418
HOURS

of Individual,
Transitional and
Housing Support
Counselling to

231
WOMEN

Transitional Counselling
specifically helps women
exit abusive
relationships safely




749

In 2022,
we helped
749 women
and their
families!

LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Investing in women's futures is at the core of who we are and what we do!

After celebrating 45 years of serving our community, we are so excited to share with you our new program, The First Step. With the dramatic increase in gender-based violence and the current economic climate, disproportionately affecting women, WCYR has the infrastructure and evidence-informed services to address these urgent issues. We are proud announce the provincial government's investment in The First Step program. This investment is enabling us to address the intersection of these issues by providing both anonymous and drop-in support to all individuals who can benefit from this multi-resource program. The program will serve 250 individuals annually.

Through difficult times and times of prosperity, our dedicated Board of Directors and staff team have shown up every day with a passion, diligence, and commitment to making our community a better place. Our funders and generous donor's commitment to our mission has enabled us to prosper in these challenging times. The women in our community who courageously reach out for supports are the reason we thrive today. To each and every one of you, THANK YOU!

With Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Liora Sobel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Executive Director
Women's Centre of York Region

PROGRAMS & SERVICES

First Step Program

First Step Program provides service navigation, case management, informational workshops and employment support such as volunteer experiences and digital literacy groups; The program provides a central access point to take the first step.

Making Changes Life Skills

A group program that enables women to develop basic skills necessary to become clearer and stronger decision makers. Focus is on developing confidence and accepting responsibility for choices they make in their lives.

Enterprising Careers

An exploration program helping participants take the first steps to become “job ready” by showing them how to access their current skills, make informed decisions.

Exploring Self Employment

Participants weigh risks and benefits to understand if this option is right for them.

Financial Empowerment

Participants are empowered to take greater control of their personal finances to progress toward their life goals. Lessons include household budgeting, buying a car, managing debt, saving for education and more.

One-on-One Counselling

Individual counselling for women who experienced violence, domestic or otherwise, helping them regain confidence and work towards a sustainable livelihood, free from abuse.

Transitional Housing and Support Counselling

Provides emotional and practical support to ensure women and their children can leave an abusive relationship safely.






WOMEN'S CENTRE
OF YORK REGION
Empowering Women • Inspiring Change

CELEBRATING 45 YEARS

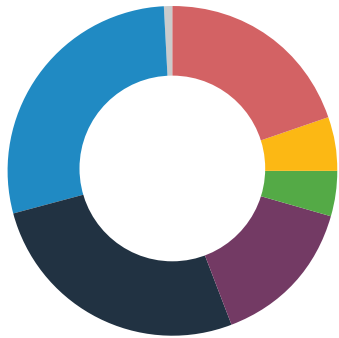
Join us on October 27, 2022 to celebrate our successes and milestones over the past 45 years! The evening will include **Jully Black** as the keynote speaker, hors d'oeuvres and networking!

OCTOBER 27
6:00PM - 9:00PM
NewRoads
Performing
Arts Centre

Get tickets & learn more by scanning the QR code or visiting www.wcyr.ca/celebrating-45-years-event

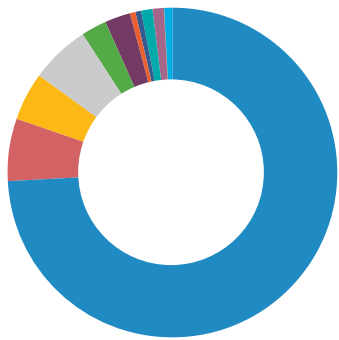


DONATIONS AT WORK



2023 Revenues

The Regional Municipality of York	\$ 226,236
United Way of Greater Toronto	62,129
Ontario Trillium Foundation	49,400
Third party grants	169,106
Donations and fundraising	305,371
Ministry of Community and Social Services	325,537
Provincial grants	7,051
	<hr/>
	\$ 1,144,830



2023 Expenses

Salaries and benefits	\$ 712,265
Occupancy	58,671
Office and general	46,839
Professional fees and insurance	54,385
Client support	24,815
Fundraising and promotion	24,052
Education	4,594
Telephone	6,561
Subcontractors	11,050
Travel	8,981
Bank charges	569
Depreciation	6,622
	<hr/>
	\$ 959,404

“ CLIENT STORY

In the shadows of my own life, I found myself ensnared in a web of fear and isolation. My partner, a tech-savvy manipulator, had crafted a sinister cage through threats of violence, control, and digital surveillance, suffocating my every attempt to seek help. The suffocating grip of my reality seemed inescapable.

Then, like a beacon of hope, I stumbled upon the Women's Centre of York Region (WCYR). The First Step Program promised a lifeline of support, a promise of anonymity that I so desperately craved. Hesitation clung to me, but I knew this was my chance for a way out.

As I entered the welcoming embrace of the Centre, a tremor of hope rippled through me. The service navigator, a warm presence radiating empathy, gently guided me towards the transitional support counselling. There, in the quiet sanctuary of trust, I began to unravel the layers of my pain.

And so, with every passing day, I took one step closer to freedom, leaving behind the shackles that had bound me for far too long. The Women's Centre had not just given me refuge; it had ignited a fire within me, a fire that would light the way for others who walked the same path.

Giving Together





We would like to extend a special thank you to the community partners who have helped us, help others.

"It takes someone with a very big heart to gift their time."



LETTER FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR



Women's Centre of York Region is a place of hope, support, and inspiration for women who are embarking on transformational journeys. We are very proud of the services we provide to help empower women to thrive emotionally, socially, and economically.

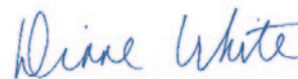
We have touched the lives of thousands of women over the years with our diverse programs, our counselling services, and invaluable resources available at our multi-resource centre.

There is an increasing need for our strengths-based, trauma informed feminist approach to help women experiencing gender-based violence, social stress, and uncertainty in their lives.

In Year Two of our Strategic Plan, we are delighted to report on accomplishing numerous goals. We have launched innovative programs to serve our community better such as our new The First Step program and our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives. We strive to evolve. Our goal is to meet the changing needs of women in our community.

Our extraordinary passion for our work and unwavering dedication of our team and community is evident in all that we do, and we are confident in creating a legacy of community service for many more years to come.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to our Community Partners and Funders, our Board members, our Staff and Volunteers, for their support this past year. We are on a journey together to help women and families in need to make a meaningful impact in their lives. Let's move forward and create lasting change.



Chair of the Board of Directors

THANK YOU

A special thank you to our past Board of Directors members for bringing your passion, intellect, insight, experience and resources to the table.



Jennifer Gibbs



Caroline Lee



Taiwo Olubamise



Judith Puttock

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Diane White,
CHRL, ACC, M.Ed.
Chair

An experienced Certified Human Resources Leader and Professor, Diane has worked in the retail sector, as an educator, and as a Human Resources Consultant for over 35 years. She has experience in strategic planning, organizational design and change and in leadership development. Diane is the founder of her own Career & Life Coaching business and she is an Associate Certified Coach with the International Coaching Federation. A resident of Aurora for over 30 years, Diane is committed to her community and to serving women to help them learn, grow and thrive. She brings human resources expertise and leadership to the Board.



Lena Azzou
Vice Chair

Lena is the Vice President of Strategy and Transformation at Metrolinx, and is part of a multidisciplinary team leading the largest transportation investment in Canada's history. She is responsible for leading the organizational strategy, transformation plans, continuous improvement, project management, and corporate services in an organization leading \$80 billion in construction projects, the operations of GO Transit, UP Express and PRESTO. Lena was named one of Canada's Top 100 Most Powerful Women Award Winner in 2021 with the Women's Executive Network, and is the Executive Sponsor of the Metrolinx Women's Network. Prior to joining Metrolinx, Lena worked in both the structural engineering and telecommunications industries where she took on responsibilities for both technical and customer experience specific programs.



Aleksandra Pressey
Vice Chair

Aleksandra is a lawyer at a human resources law firm, where she practices in all areas of labour, employment, and human rights law. She advises and represents employers on a broad range of issues. She also regularly conducts workplace investigations and workplace culture reviews as a third-party investigator for organizations across industries. Aleksandra writes and presents on educational topics for employers and human resources professionals. She is committed to promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion, and is passionate about empowering and supporting women to allow them to thrive.



Shelina Devji,
Treasurer

Shelina is a Finance professional in both private and public sector with over 20 years experience. Shelina has a broad range of expertise, including accounting advisory, budgeting, forecasting, reporting, and ERP project planning and implementation. Working in multiple industries, ranging from small firms to large organizations, she has built teams from the ground up, leads projects and committees that promote lean thinking, cross-functional relationship building, and foster engagement. Sitting on several Women's Network forums and mentoring young growing professional women, she is passionate about empowering and supporting women's growth professionally and personally. Shelina holds a Bachelor of Arts degree, Certificate of Management and is a Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA, CMA).



Sara Thomson
Secretary

Sara is known for her passion for our business, strategic thinking and inclusive leadership. She currently leads TD Wealth's Shared Services function. Prior to her appointment as Senior Vice President, Wealth Shared Services, Sara led Human Resources for the Bank's Corporate Functions and the Bank's Diversity & Inclusion centre of excellence. Prior to joining HR, Sara held several executive positions in Business Banking. Sara has a track record of leading teams to aspirational business outcomes and delivering on complex initiatives, including a multi-year transformation strategy across Business Banking segments.

Sara holds a Bachelor of Business Administration from Wilfrid Laurier University and a Masters of Business Administration in Finance from the University of Calgary. She leads the Women at TD employee resource group for Canada's Wealth business.



Elle Meija
Director

Elle started her real estate career in the industrial sector at Cushman & Wakefield in 2010, before attaining her real estate license. In 2015, Elle moved into retail leasing for a private company, completing high level retail leasing transactions across Canada, the United States, Germany, the Netherlands, Singapore, South Africa, and New Zealand. Her "deals done" portfolio is inclusive of high street, AAA shopping centre, airport retail, and open air centre locations. In 2014, Elle founded PrettyGirlsWork, an online community for women founders & entrepreneurs, where she currently serves as lead for both the Retailers & Real Estate Houses. She is a competent, professional coach, teaching both time-tested & modernized strategies. Elle finds balance through yoga and reiki.



Toyin Omotoso
Director

Toyin is a lawyer with a focus on human rights, ADR, workplace investigation, and training. Her areas of expertise include women's rights, Indigenous Peoples rights, and anti-Black racism. She has served at various levels of government, including the City of Toronto and the Province of Ontario. She has several years of experience in policy development and advisory roles, using both formal and informal resolution mechanisms to achieve legislative compliance. Toyin has a Master of Laws degree from the University of Saskatchewan. She is a member of the Law Society of Ontario, the Nigerian Bar, and ADR Institute of Ontario (ADRIO). She lives in the York Region where she volunteers as Council Member of a School. In her spare time, Toyin enjoys reading classics and gardening.



Jojo Lai
Director

Jojo is a finance professional with work experience across private equity, corporate finance and financial accounting. Through her various roles, she has consistently worked with companies and complex information sets to assess business strategy and financial performance to drive next-level performance. Jojo is passionate about social justice and empowering women and all minority groups, as shaped by her personal and professional experiences. She actively seeks opportunities to connect with like-minded women and to give back to her immediate communities. She holds a Bachelor of Business Administration from Simon Fraser University and obtained her CPA, CA designation in 2013.



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OF YORK REGION

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wcyr.ca

THANK YOU TO OUR
FUNDERS, FOUNDATIONS, DONORS,
COMMUNITY PARTNERS
AND VOLUNTEERS

*Your generosity has been
life changing for a woman
in our community.*