



2015 - 2016

# Medicine Hat Women's Shelter Society

Report to the Community







## **OUR VISION**

All individuals have access to resources that empower them to live a life free of family violence.

## **OUR MISSION**

The MHWSS supports individuals impacted by family violence by providing safe shelter, education, advocacy and access to community resources. The Society raises community awareness by providing programs and services that promote treating all people with respect and dignity.

"This place is literally saving my life and showing me how to live a healthier and happy one."

~Outreach client

**"A very positive experience for me, in dealing with my circumstances and having the steadfast support in creating a better outcome and lifestyle"**

**~Emergency Shelter Resident**

"This program is one of the most helpful and valuable that I have ever experienced. Please keep this program going so that others can access it. You are all wonderful. Keep up the great work!"

~Safe Families Intervention Program Client

## **OUR 2015-16 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

President: .....Sandra Redden  
Vice President: .....Brent Secondiak  
Secretary: .....Keith King  
Treasurer: .....Amanda McCrie  
Director:.....Jase Cowan  
Director: .....Don Dempster  
Director: .....Carol Heese  
Director: .....Heather Koch  
Director: .....Myrna Lang  
Director: .....Ken Marran

## **OUR STAFF**

In 2015-16, the Medicine Hat Women's Shelter Society included:

- Executive Director
- Assistant Director
- Phoenix Safe House Emergency Shelter: Program Manager, 6 full time & 8 relief Crisis Intervention Workers and a Household Support Worker
- Musasa House Supported Housing Program: Program Manager and 4 Family Support Workers.
- Children's Programs: 3 Child Support Workers and 2 Child Care Workers
- Outreach Programs: Program Manager, 2 Community Outreach Workers, Community Education & Awareness Worker, and 2 SFIT (Safe Families Intervention Team) Workers
- Housing First Program: Housing First Team Lead and 3 Housing First Outreach Workers
- Administration Team: Administration Manager, Human Resources Administrator, Community Relations Coordinator and an Administrative Assistant
- Facility Maintenance Worker

## **FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**“Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love.”**

**Mother Teresa**

An outstanding year for the Medicine Hat Women’s Shelter Society is definitely an understatement! It is the hard work of many who make this society continue to grow and meet the needs of families in our area.

As we meet here today, the new Outreach Centre is under construction and set to open later this fall. Last year at this time, we celebrated the long awaited funding announcement for Musasa House and this past July marked Musasa’s 10th anniversary. I admire the dedication of Natasha, her team and all of the volunteers who work tirelessly to provide services that meet the needs of our changing community. Promotion and fundraising all throughout the year helps to keep violence against people front and centre and to bring MHWSS goals to reality. Due to enhanced funding, the team at MHWSS have been able to focus more on staff training and development and prevention-based endeavors.

A very special thank-you goes out to all the staff and volunteers at the many functions throughout the year. The annual Gala was more successful than last year, the Scotiabank Golf Tournament continues to raise substantial funds every year, along with many other events like Charity BBQs and Murray Chevrolet Cadillac Women’s Drive to Empowerment gala and fundraiser, etc. It is through the hard work of many that allows the team at MHWSS to help women and families escape violence and start on new journey.

Sincerely,  
Sandy Redden

## **MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**And that is how change happens. One gesture. One person. One moment at a time. – Libba Bray**

2016 marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in my role as Executive Director for the Medicine Hat Women's Shelter Society. As I reflect over the past ten years, I allow myself a smile of satisfaction and pride for all the changes. Ten years ago we sent a message to the community that we would embrace the belief that we do not get better by chance, but we get better by change and that we will be the change we wish to see in the future. In the past ten years significant growth and expansion has lead our organization. In 2006 we celebrated the opening of Musasa House, Treehouse Child Care program opened in 2009 and in 2010 we took on the challenge of providing programs to homeless through the Housing 1<sup>st</sup> program. By 2014 Phoenix Safe House had grown from an eleven bed emergency shelter to thirty beds. We didn't stop there! In 2014 we partnered with the Medicine Hat Police Services and developed the Safe Families Intervention Team. In 2015 we recognized that we had a large number of males requiring services and we made a commitment to also work with male victims. This year I excitedly celebrated my 10<sup>th</sup> year anniversary as Executive Director with the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Musasa House

At last year's Annual General Meeting we announced that Alberta Human Services was now funding Musasa House and that funding was secured to expand the Outreach Program. We also made a commitment to focus our energy on providing inclusive and respectful services to reach more families through the development of enhanced programs and services. With that goal in mind, we increased the number of Outreach Workers at Safe Families Intervention Team to three, added a new Child Support Worker, a Youth Worker and a Rural Outreach Worker. I am proud to share that our Outreach program has grown from two to seven Outreach staff and this winter we are opening a brand new Outreach office located in The Ridge professional building.

As I reflect over the past ten years, I am reminded of how far we have come, how many changes we have made and wonder where our journey will go next. It hasn't always been easy, there have been financial and contract worries and the stress of continuing to keep up with the demand for services but through it all I have always been surrounded by a group of dedicated and compassionate staff, Board and volunteers and of course our biggest supporters, the community. Today I am proud to share with the community how far we have come and how far we are going. We are the change we want to see for the future and I can't wait to see what tomorrow will bring!

Sincerely,  
Natasha Carvalho, B.A. M.Sc. R.S.W.

## 2016 Community Partner Awards

Each year Medicine Hat Women's Shelter Society recognizes community members, businesses and/or organizations who have worked with us to ensure families in our community have the resources they need to live lives free from family violence. This year we wish to recognize the following:

### **Flag Five Inc**

Medicine Hat Women's Shelter is very thankful to have the support and creative talent of Flag Five Inc. to help us effectively communicate with potential donors and educate the community. We could not create such effective and professional looking advertising campaigns without their support and assistance, and in turn, could not provide the same level of quality programs and services to families without the success of these campaigns.

### **Scott & Dan Pahl**

We are so blessed to have supporters and friends like the Pahl family. Not only do they give willingly to help make a difference in the lives of the families that we serve, but they encourage others to do the same. We could not continue to keep our doors open and provide programs and services to families impacted by family violence without the support of friends like them.



## 2015-2016 Client's Served Statistics

980 Adults  
Received services  
through our programs.

Housing First has been so  
successful in housing  
homeless women &  
children that their caseload  
decreased by 20%.

351 Children  
Received support  
from our programs.

Our overall services  
saw an increase of  
13% in the number of  
people served!

Our Helpline saw  
a 13% increase  
in calls!

### Words of Gratitude

The comments from our clients not only reflect on the work we do, but also on how the support from our community makes a difference in the lives of the individuals we serve. So thank you to our community and partners!

- ✦ "I couldn't do it without this shelter. I am very thankful! God bless you all!"
- ✦ "It's a very wonderful feeling that these places are very welcoming & comforting and extremely helpful. Thank you all ever so much for the help that I received. I know God blesses all who help the innocent ones & the unfortunate. Sincerely please continue being so wonderful & helpful. Thanks."
- ✦ "Thank you so so much to all of you! We are forever grateful and will miss you."
- ✦ "I do, and sincerely wish to, thank each and every staff person who assisted me in several ways during my stay in the current shelter. Thank you all very much for your dedication and assistance!"
- ✦ "I'm going to miss every single worker who works here, they have welcomed me with open arms and love when I was broken and now I'm better, better than I ever was emotionally and mental."
- ✦ "I am so grateful for the skills and tools I have learned from my work at the shelter. I finally can love myself fully."

## Medicine Hat Women's Shelter Society's Shelter Legacy Program

### **YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**

Join a remarkable group of individuals who have taken steps to ensure that programs and services are available for victims of family violence.

### **WHAT IS AN ENDOWMENT FUND?**

An endowment fund is an income source where the principal is never spent. The interest from the Endowment Fund is the only portion of the fund spent to support the work of the Medicine Hat Women's Shelter Society.

### **ENDOWMENT OPTIONS**

**Bequests:** Gifts or personal property, real estate or a specific sum of money.

**Life Insurance:** Through an existing policy or transfer ownership of existing policy.

**Direct Gifts:** Recognized with a Tax Receipt.

**Retirement Funds:** A charitable gift of all or any portion of funds remaining at death.

**Gifts That Give Back:** Gifts that provide a future gift for the society and a lifetime of income for the donor. This type of gift is irrevocable and provides immediate tax benefits for the donor. E.g. Remainder Trust

### **TALK TO US!**

We will explain more fully each of these gift plans, and assist you in meeting your financial needs and philanthropic desires.

For more information about the Shelter Legacy Program, contact Natasha Carvalho at (403) 527-8223; email [natashac@mhwss.ca](mailto:natashac@mhwss.ca) or visit our website at [www.mhwss.ca](http://www.mhwss.ca)

## Shelter Legacy Program Members

Thank you to these individuals and organizations who are Shelter Legacy Program members. This remarkable group has taken steps to ensure that programs and services are available for families impacted by family violence – now and in the years to come.

### Shelter Legacy Program Members

- Drew & Francis Barnes\*
- Gerry Carter\*
- Natasha Carvalho & Michael Salmon\*
- Joyce Condon\*
- Don & Doris Dempster\*
- Craig & Donna Elder\*
- Dianne & Cecil Finch\*
- Gerald & Elaine Freedman\*
- Muriel Glenn
- Lyn Gordon & Toni Ward (In Memorium)\*
- Kambi & Paul Heywood\*
- Carol & Joel Heese\*
- Hillcrest Church\*
- Dan Kammerer & Cheryl Shabatura\*
- Heather & Danny Koch\*
- Randy & Linda Lehr\*
- Victor & Myra Link
- Noel & Miles Maughan\*
- Amanda & Grant McCrie\*
- Andy & Sherry McGrogan\*
- Hilary Munro & Gerald Borch\*
- Rose & Michael O'Donnell-King\*
- Catherine Ohama\*
- Todd & Darlene O'Reilly\*
- Sandra & Kevin Redden\*
- Sons of Abraham Congregation\*
- St. Paul Lutheran Women's Missionary League\*
- Deena & Mark West\*
- Jim & Anne White\*
- Anonymous x 2\*

\* Names marked with an asterisk notes Shelter Legacy Program Founding Members\*



**The Medicine Hat Women's Shelter Society gratefully acknowledges the support of the following major supporters:**

