

2016 - 2017

# Medicine Hat Women's Shelter Society

Report to the Community







## **OUR VISION**

All individuals live free from violence and abuse.

## **OUR MISSION**

The Medicine Hat Women's Shelter Society supports individuals impacted by family violence by providing them with safe shelter, education, advocacy and access to community resources. We are committed to social change by providing programs and services that promote treating all people with respect and dignity.

## **OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- We believe that violent and abusive behavior is a deliberate choice;
- We honor that victims always respond and resist to abuse and violence;
- We believe that people have the capacity to change;
- We are committed to providing a socially responsible and financially accountable organization to the community;
- We value innovative practices and strong advocacy that offers a strong public voice;
- We believe that dedicated and compassionate staff can effect change.

## **OUR 2016 - 2017 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

President: ..... Brent Secondiak

Vice President: ..... Jase Cowan

Secretary: ..... Keith King

Treasurer: ..... Amanda McCrie

Director: ..... George Best

Director: ..... Carol Heese

Director: ..... Heather Koch

Director: ..... Angela Kolody

Director: ..... Ken Marran

Director: ..... Sandy Redden

## **OUR STAFF**

In 2016 - 2017, the Medicine Hat Women's Shelter Society included:

- Executive Director
- Director of Programs and Services
- Director of Administration and Operations
- Phoenix Safe House Emergency Shelter: Program Manager, seven full-time and five relief Crisis Intervention Workers as well as one Household Support Worker
- Musasa House Supported Housing Program: Program Manager, three Family Support Workers and one Child Support Worker
- Children's Programs: Three Child Support Workers and two Child Care Workers
- Outreach Programs: Program Manager, two Community Outreach Workers, a Community Education and Awareness Worker, and two SFIT (Safe Families Intervention Team) Workers
- Housing First Program: Housing First Program Manager and three Housing First Outreach Workers
- Administration Team: Human Resources Administrator, Community Relations Coordinator, two Administrative Assistants and one Facility Maintenance Worker

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

It is an honor to bring you greetings on behalf of the Board of Directors from the Medicine Hat Women's Shelter Society (MHWSS). The Board's role is to monitor MHWSS's progress towards our vision, mission and values that reflect our communities' needs and priorities. Our current board has a variety of members with a broad spectrum of experience and professions within the City of Medicine Hat. I am thankful for the dedication and commitment of all of the Board members.

Looking back on the past year, so much has been accomplished by the dedicated staff and volunteers at the Women's Shelter. The Ridge outreach office location is open, and is providing much needed support in our community and much needed updates have been made to the emergency shelter building to ensure that Shelter support is provided for many years to come in our community. An independent review was completed of our Safe Families Intervention Team (SFIT), to look at and evaluate effectiveness of the programming. The results were excellent and have shown that our efforts with outreach and support are working!

Shelter promotion and fundraising activities occur throughout the year, and this past year was no different. The Bread and Roses Gala continues to be a major community event and allows the MHWSS to continue programming and support for our community.

The Board of the MHWSS wishes to thank Natasha and all the staff and volunteers that allow the Shelter to continue to be leaders in the community and supply much need resources and supports. We look forward to the future and our goal of making a difference in our community and ending domestic violence.

Brent Secondiak

## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**“When it comes to human dignity, we cannot make compromises. ”**

*Angela Merkel*

I always look forward to the fall and the opportunity to once again share our Annual Report to the community and reflect on the past year. As I think about our small corner of the world, I can't help but consider what is happening around the world, and knowing that our commitment to stand up against violence has become even more prevalent. In a society that is too often characterized by fear, control, racism and bullying, we must continue our efforts to be the safe haven for families who are experiencing family violence in their lives.

For the past 37 years, the Medicine Hat Women's Shelter Society has continued to grow and respond to the changing needs in our communities. This year we began another leg of our journey to identify our vision, mission and principles that guide our beliefs and values. With the support of staff, Board and volunteers we are committed to social change by delivering programs and services that promote treating all people with respect and dignity and providing positive social responses.

We are led by principles that allow us to expand our efforts to meet the diversity of the needs in the communities. We believe that victims always respond and resist abuse and violence and we honor their resistance. We also believe that violent and abusive behavior is a deliberate choice and that people have the capacity to change. These fundamental beliefs allow us to build the foundation for future programs and services which includes prevention and intervention services to the family and to the community. Our focus remains on strengthening community knowledge and skills; engaging men and boys by asking and listening to them; providing community education; educating service providers and practitioners and fostering partnerships.

We also recognize that prevention and intervention of services must focus on the family unit including the abuser. This year we began a pilot project that provides a program to individuals who are concerned about their abusive behaviours towards those they love. The first five months have proven to be successful and we are optimistic that this will be a milestone for our work against family violence.

Lastly, I am excited to share that we also fulfilled a long time dream to open a community outreach building and on March 8, International Women's Day, we held a grand opening at the Ridge. The opening of our offices provides inclusive and respectful services allowing us to reach more families in the community.

As I complete this report, I am reminded that since our last Annual General Meeting, we have continued to grow and fulfill many of our goals. I am also reminded that this work is not only important to me, but to staff, Board and volunteers that make a difference each and every day and I thank you all for your contributions and support. I am also excited that our community understands that we have the power to reach out, take a stand against violence and change the lives of many families. Thank you.

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

## 2017 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:

### **Big Damn Van**

We are very thankful to have the support and assistance of Big Damn Van to help us move our clients into their new homes and pickup donations of furniture. We couldn't provide the same level of service without their support. In addition to everything they already provide, their generous offer to not only deliver, but assemble the play-set we raffled off this summer was an enormous help and allowed us to provide additional value to the winner.

### **Panago Pizza – Medicine Hat**

Panago Pizza – Medicine Hat has been providing us with complimentary pizzas for the families in our emergency shelter each and every month for over a decade. The assistance of their restaurant gives our families a comforting, family-friendly meal each month and allows staff a reprieve from meal preparation so they can focus on assisting our clients in other ways. Additionally, the support they provide to our annual fundraisers like the Bread & Roses Gala and the Scotiabank Group Charity Golf Classic allow us to provide additional value to our attendees and we are so grateful for their support.



## 2016 - 2017 Clients Served Statistics

964 adults  
received services  
through our programs

Our Youth Support Group  
saw an increase in  
participants by 25%

49% of Emergency  
Shelter admissions  
were between 25-40  
years of age

384 children  
received support from  
our programs

35% of children  
admitted to shelter  
were between 7-12  
years of age

## New Initiatives

### Time for Change

MHWSS recognizes that in order to continue to make a difference in family violence, we must provide programs and services to the entire family. In March, we launched a new program "Time for Change" for individuals who are concerned that their behaviors are hurting those they love and want to make changes to improve their relationships. The program is delivered out of the Outreach Building and already 24 individuals have received support.

### Rural Program – Oyen

MHWSS covers a large rural geographical area which includes the community of Oyen. Oyen decided as a community to take a stand against violence and developed a plan to assist families experiencing violence. Several organizations including; Oyen FCSS, RCMP, School and Town Council approached us to form a partnership to provide outreach services on a regular basis. FCSS provided office space and the school ensures space and time for presentations and RCMP play a huge role for referrals and transportation of clients to safety. An Outreach Worker goes to the community on a monthly basis. We are excited about what is happening in Oyen and the example they are able to set for other rural communities.

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

## LET YOUR LEGACY LIVE ON ...

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@mhws.ca](mailto:natashac@mhws.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\*
- Robin & Stan Krause
- 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\*
- Marlene & Kevin Semrau
- Sons of Abraham Congregation\*
- St. Paul Lutheran Women's Missionary League\*
- Deena & Mark West\*
- Jim & Anne White\*
- Ken Marran
- Tara Williams
- Anonymous Shelter Supporter\*

\* 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:**

