

You make a difference

2011-2012

Annual Report

Our Mission is to end abuse and violence by empowering women and their children through the provision of safe shelter, counselling, education and community partnerships.

Whether you have assisted Women's Place of South Niagara through your volunteerism or provided financial support, you have made a difference in the lives of the women and children we support.



MESSAGES FROM OUR President & Executive Director

In last years AGM Report we focused on “Telling our Story”. That communication was a powerful tool to share real life situations as a means to inform the community of our shelter’s ability to help women and children escape abuse. We all strive to make positive changes in the lives of women and children suffering abuse, so this year we want to acknowledge that we are “**Making a Difference**”.



We know we Make a Difference. We see it in the efforts of our volunteers; in the hours they so generously give of their own free will. We also see the dedication of our employees that are committed on a daily basis, to meet the needs of those living in our shelters, help women who call our crisis lines for support or access our Family Court Support Worker or Transitional Housing Programs. Our government, corporate and individual donors make it possible for us to maintain the delivery of our programs and services so that women and their children can escape the trauma of violence and abuse and begin living healthy and meaningful lives.

If you look up the word difference in the dictionary it states: “*a significant change in or effect on a situation.*” SIGNIFICANT...that’s a powerful word. Does Making a Difference really have to be significant to impact a person’s life for the better?

To express in words just how great an impact these efforts make became a challenge for me, as the Board of Directors does not personally interact with the women who seek refuge and assistance from our organization. Nonetheless, I know we make a difference when I read the testimonials and quotes from women who have utilized our services, some of which you will see in this AGM Report.

We travel through life and often times don’t realize how or when we help others. Even a simple smile can lift the spirit of someone who is feeling sad. Can you remember when a colleague or friend brought to your attention a situation that happened years ago when you said or did something that helped them deal with an issue in a positive way? However, you don’t recall or remember having said or done anything special. I would venture to guess everyone who reads this report has experienced this situation. We are frequently unaware how our words or actions make positive changes in someone else’s life. Do we need to know? It’s always nice to hear, but that isn’t why we reach out to help people. We do what we do because we care and want to help others.

Our combined efforts have had and will continue to make a difference in the lives of so many. Our agency envisions a community where women and children live free from abuse and violence. That is why we continue to raise funds, volunteer our time and work as a team to meet the needs of those in distress. Take pride in what you do because it does indeed - Make a Difference.

September will be the end of my term as President. September is also the beginning of a new year, which means 2013 will be the final year, of my six year term as a Director on the Board. As I reflect on the past few years I ask myself... Did I make a difference? Single handily – no – but I do know that collectively we have made a difference working together to help women and children escape abuse. And that my friends, is **SIGNIFICANT**.

With Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Frances Gregotski".

Frances Gregotski
President, Board of Directors

Our Mission is to end abuse and violence by empowering women and their children through the provision of safe shelter, counselling, education and community partnerships.

Board of Directors

Fran Gregotski
President

Assunta Piccini
Vice President

Melissa Stack
Treasurer

Beverly Lenchyshyn
Secretary

Connie Guadagno
Director

Marsha Hunt
Director

Stephanie Thomson
Director

Leigh Whyte
Director

Ruthann Brown
Executive Director

We envision a community where women and their children live free from violence and abuse.

You Make a Difference

Although acts of evil now demand our attention as they are paraded before us in the media, acts of goodness come into our lives more quietly, sometimes so invisibly that we hardly notice their power, or appreciate their effect on us. At WPSN we notice.

Hope springs from the women and men, young and old, who have the courage to dream big dreams and the determination to act for the greater good. Against violence, against indifference, against exclusion; for mutual respect, for dialogue, for equality. Together, their actions are reinventing the world where it is most needed.

WPSN is not simply a job, or only a profession. It is a *life's work*. We could not ask for a more significant purpose: to provide the fundamental conditions – shelter, safety and empowerment for human dignity and development. What we do matters every day – to the women and children who are fleeing abuse and violence; to the 1 in 3 women who will be abused in their lifetime, to the **footprint** we make for the generations of women who will follow.

Milestones this year include, being picked to receive the new funding from the Ministry of the Attorney General for the Family Court Support Worker Program for the Domestic Violence Court in Welland and our active involvement in the Coalition to End Violence Against Women (CEVAW) which lead to domestic violence now being recognized as an issue in the Niagara Research and Planning Council 2011 Living in Niagara Report. Additionally, our agency took the lead in bringing the Ontario Women Abuse Screening Project to Niagara bringing woman abuse, mental health and addiction services agencies to the table. Through forthcoming agency cross-training and the establishment of meaningful working relationships we will be able to ensure that abused women can access mental health and addiction services that are woman abuse/trauma-informed and vice-versa.

In Fiscal 2011/12, 171 women and 116 children sought refuge in our two shelters. A total of 415 women were supported through our office visit program and hundreds more received support through our crisis lines and outreach programs and services. Our services, working in concert with the many agencies we are thankful to have strategic alliances with, provide the gateway to lives free from violence.

The demand for our services coupled with the economic realities presented significant hurdles this year. However, our resiliency and adaptation to these dynamic times - comes from a rich chemistry of people - people with heart, vision and perseverance. That includes the stewardship of our governing Board, the stick-to-itiveness of our Management Team, the unwavering dedication of our staff, along with the unmatched selflessness of our volunteer workforce and the faithful generosity of our donors. To all of you who have made the work we do possible, I extend my profound appreciation. It is with, through and because of YOU that we are changing lives and making a difference!

Respectfully Submitted,



Ruthann Brown
Executive Director



PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Our Staff Make a Difference

Our two shelters operate crisis lines and provide emergency shelter 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year for women and children who are victims of abuse. We provide other intervention services as well. Services are provided to residents in the shelter, as well as on an outreach basis to women living in our community.

- We assist in the development of safety plans for women and their children.
- We work with women to develop and implement their transitional plans.
- We provide services or referrals in the following areas: parenting support, educational upgrading, job training, income support, legal services, health and wellness services, court support, appointment accompaniment.
- We provide advice in the areas of finding and maintaining housing including budget management and life skills.
- We provide advocacy with third parties, where necessary including landlords, interactions with Family and Children's Services, court appearances, etc.
- We provide counselling and support to children who have witnessed or been victims of abuse.

	Nova House Niagara Falls	Serenity Place Welland	Agency Total
Women Served in Shelter	95	76	171
Children Served in Shelter	63	53	116
Women Served with Office Visit Counselling	254	161	415
Crisis Calls	1,230	707	1,937
Family Court Support Worker Program	199	213	412
Transitional Housing & Support Program	135	102	237
Women and Children Referred Elsewhere Due to Lack of Space	12 women 17 children	21 women 22 children	33 women 39 children



*"Thank you for being here for me and my child."
- Client, Nova House*



*"The staff is wonderful and we will miss you all."
- Client, Serenity Place*



*"When I arrived at Nova House, I found out that I am not alone and that there is someone willing to help me every step of the way."
- Client, Nova House*

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Revenue & Expenses

Revenue

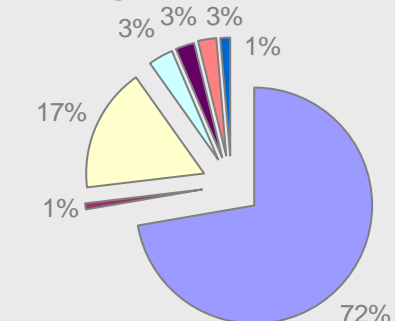
	2012	2011
Ministry of Community & Social Services - annualized funding	1,360,712	1,360,912
Ministry of Community & Social Services - one-time funding	42,021	103,503
CEVAW**	31,180	57,071
Ministry of the Attorney General (MAG)	16,250	
Donations & Fundraising	333,988	318,592
Federal Government (Summer Student)	4,890	3,352
Regional and Municipal Funding	60,906	54,341
United Way Funding	51,239	51,239
Special Projects	48,784	
Trillium Project		12,811
Investment and Misc Income	20,665	10,616
	<u>1,970,635</u>	<u>1,972,437</u>

Expenses

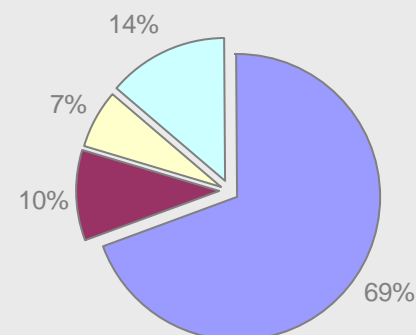
	2012	2011
Emergency Shelter	1,339,866	1,338,856
Legal & Housing Support Services	200,989	189,945
Fundraising & Public Education	129,669	121,529
CEVAW**	31,180	57,071
Administration & Operations	266,577	265,036
	<u>1,968,281</u>	<u>1,972,437</u>
Surplus (Allocated to Stabilization Fund)	2,354	

** WPSN is the transfer payment agency for the Coalition To End Violence Against Women (CEVAW). CEVAW's revenues & expenses are not reflected in the pie charts because the funds are not part of agency operating/administrative expenses.

REVENUE



EXPENSES



Women's Place of South Niagara Inc. is generously



DEVELOPMENT

Our Volunteers & Donors Make a Difference

To be a difference maker is to impact others, to support, inspire and show your dedication. The development and growth of our agency, and in turn our community, is derived from you – our donors and volunteers, a group we often refer to as the heartbeat of Women's Place.

Your gestures of support for our clients and staff come in many forms. Your financial support has provided us the opportunity to maintain our programs and services through the economic crisis. During the Christmas season, 8 year old Kathryn came by our shelter with her Dad to donate all that she had in her piggy bank to help a family at Christmas. Two months later, we received a donation from the Royal LePage Shelter Foundation for \$16,029 to support our clients. These two gifts, although different are actually quite similar. The outcome is the same - by giving of themselves, they are making a difference in the live of our clients.



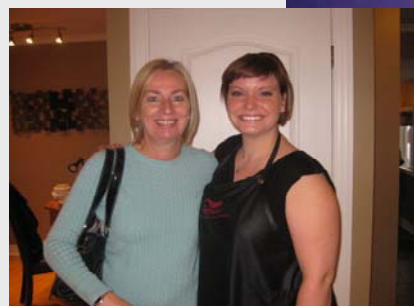
Anna & Michael Olson prepared Christmas Dinner for our residents

We are grateful to have the support of so many in our community. The amount of volunteer hours donated to our shelter each year is equivalent to 6 full-time employees! Our volunteers support us through fundraising events, donations and countless hours dedicated in our shelters, allowing us to spend more time directly servicing our clients. Thank you for all that you do to assist our staff in providing the best care and support to women and children in our community who need it most!

35th Annual Nova House Book Riot



Cut it Out



Third Party Fundraising Events



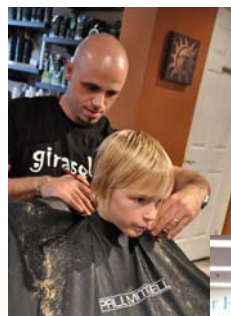
Our volunteers make a difference

Volunteering is the most fundamental act of citizenship and philanthropy in our society. Our volunteers offer their time, energy and skills to improve the lives of women and children in our community who are affected by abuse. By caring and contributing to Women's Place our volunteers make a difference daily in the lives of our clients.



Students at Jean Vanier in Welland present WPSN with a \$9,000 cheque to support our programs and services

Women's Place volunteers often work independently of staff. Our Annual Nova House Book Riot takes more than a year to prepare. Hundreds of volunteer hours are dedicated to maintaining an organized storage facility in preparation for the following years Book Riot. Our Cut it Out event has brought a new group of volunteers to our shelter. Salons from all over South Niagara donate their time, to help us raise awareness about domestic violence in our community. Our Strike Out Violence Bowling Committee is another exceptional example of volunteers helping us to raise awareness and furthering our mission in our community. They give their time freely and with no expectation of monetary reward. Their hours of service ensure that many activities are accomplished and many people are helped.



"I greatly appreciate the care and support given to me and my daughter during our stay. We are so thankful for the kind words which helped us during this difficult time in our lives."

- Client, Serenity Place

Event Committee Members

We are grateful to have the volunteers who assist us in the planning and execution of our three signature fundraising events. Special THANKS to the following members of our event committees:

35th Annual Nova House Book Riot

Stephanie Thomson
Rhonda Armstrong
Bea Greenizan
Wendy Kuhn
Millicent Owens
Cheryl Scott
Marilyn Woodruff
Gail Woodruff

Cut it Out

Assunta Piccini
Cassandra Best
Kim Bolan
Sue Fitzpatrick
Connie Guadagno
Beth Lacasse
Sherry Jeffs
Kaytee Smith
Pat Spano

Strike Out Violence Bowling Tournament

Tammy Hollard
Cecil Bradley
Michael Dorschner
Wayne Genders
Bill Muir
Guy Norio
Tom Snodgrass
Joe Talarico

OUR VALUE STATEMENTS

RESPECT

We treat every person with respect and recognize each person's unique abilities and choices

DIGNITY

We affirm that every person has the fundamental human right to be safe and free from violence and abuse

EXCELLENCE

We promote leadership in achieving quality and continually pursue new ideas and opportunities

COLLABORATION

We pursue and build effective partnerships and relationships with members of our community

INTEGRITY

We ensure effective stewardship of our resources through transparency and accountability

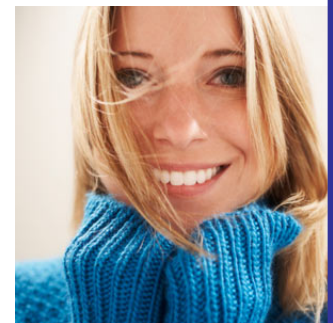
"We will forever have a special place in our hearts for your staff and volunteers. Thank you for teaching us how to live the happy and healthy life we have started living."

- Client, Nova House



"Thank you for your help, support and encouragement. I have a great sense of relief, knowing that there is a safe place to turn."

- Client, Serenity Place



24 hour crisis lines:

Nova House

(Niagara Falls, Greater Fort Erie and surrounding areas)

905-356-5800

Serenity Place

(Welland, Port Colborne, Wainfleet, Pelham and surrounding areas)

905-788-0113

