

ONTARIO ASSOCIATION
OF INTERVAL &
TRANSITION HOUSES

YEAR 2021

ANNUAL REPORT 2021



2021 AGM



Ontario Association of Interval & Transition Houses



A YEAR IN REVIEW: ADAPTABILITY

As I look back over the last year there is so much to be thankful for when it comes to the outstanding accomplishments of Amber Wardell our Communication & Resource Coordinator and Lauren Hancock our Policy & Research Coordinator. Our Board of Directors have been responsive and engaged in the governance needs of OAITH at a time when their organization needs them most. Most importantly however is the engagement, expertise and the extraordinary efforts our member organizations have made this past year. In preparing to share these accomplishments and reflections there is one key theme that I believe has been the foundation of OAITH's success in 2020-2021; Adaptability!

As we all know, the reality of COVID 19 came quickly and together we faced many unknowns, new opportunities and ways of working together. As COVID 19 stigma, fear, discrimination, grief, loss, trauma, surveillance and policing strategies began emerging, there was a familiarity for me through my previous work in HIV/AIDS organizations and with the 2SLGBTQ+ communitie(s). The parallels between the two, while concerning, were also motivating to embrace previous lessons learned in understanding and supporting our members in responding to COVID-19. The impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the criminalization of HIV/AIDS on Indigenous Peoples, 2SLGBTQ+ People, Drug Users, Sex Workers and Racilaized Communities, here in Canada and across the globe has been profoundly defastating. More than 40 years later there is still no vaccine or cure, but there is testing, universal precautions, treatment and prevention. I knew the road ahead would be hard to address COVID 19, but felt prepared in some ways.

With all of this in mind, there was still another consideration on how a global pandemic would lead to an increase in the occurrence of gender-based violence, but also increased severity and lethality, against the backdrop of public health measures and discourse that erased these risks and realities. It was difficult to grapple with how much worse gender-based violence would become, given the crisis we were already in. It was time to act and to act quickly, or to pivot, as the term goes. It would mean a change in how our team worked with our member organizations, government, media and our partners.



What I learned quickly was that as a provincial organization we would need to adapt as a means to support our members, but also to educate the government and the public about how 'stay at home measures' would impact survivors in ways we haven't experienced before. To do this we went from meeting with our membership from once a year to weekly and then monthly online meetings. We had to have a constant line of communication and ways to collect information with members, government and elected officials as information and policy were changing daily. We had to make room and adapt ourselves for online conversations on health equity, racism, social movements, loss and grief, Ontario's opioid crisis (to name a few), and how these issues were interconnected to gender-based violence and COVID 19. We had to understand the role and impact COVID 19 was having on our leaders and advocates. We had to find new ways to take care of others, our communities and ourselves. We had to adapt our role at OAITH to ensure your voice(s) were brought forth in more timely ways, taking into consideration the size, scope and regional variations with 75 autonomous member organizations.

Thank you to all of our member organizations for adapting to ensure survivors in your community have been supported throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marlene Ham'. The signature is fluid and cursive, located below the thank-you message.

MARLENE HAM
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2020-2021 HIGHLIGHTS

OAITH
VISION

An Ontario that is safe, equitable and just for all women, girls and gender-diverse communities

OAITH
MISSION

OAITH works towards ending all forms of gender-based violence and oppression through advocacy, education, research and training

ADVOCACY

- Stabilization and Annualization of Funding for Ontario VAW Shelters
- COVID 19 Funding for Infection Prevention and Control of COVID 19 in VAW Shelter

EDUCATION & PUBLIC AWARENESS

- 2019-2020 Femicide Report: An examination of femicide demographics and media analysis results
- Development of a digital marketing strategy for OAITH's Wrapped in Courage Campaign
- Creation of COVID 19 Resources and a COVID 19 Working Group

RESEARCH

- Lakehead University and OAITH Partnership for the COVID 19 Alternative Residential Options Study
- Contributions to and dissemination of various GBV specific studies about COVID 19.
- Development of new tools to track and measure our government relations and advocacy progress
- Completed the Knowledge Development Phase of the Rogers Project

TRAINING

- Development of Leading For Impact Leadership Program
- Development of Online Course: The Neurobiology of Gender-Based Violence Across the Lifespan
- Development of Crisis Call Training Video
- Increased our online learning community accessing the training hub by 215%

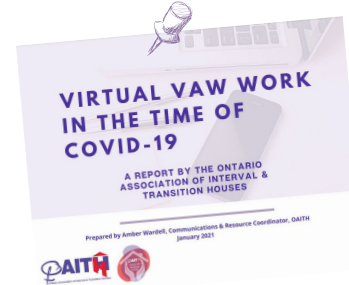
COVID-19 WORKING GROUP HIGHLIGHTS



BY AMBER WARDELL,
COVID-19 WORKING GROUP
CHAIR

Since March 2020, OAITH's COVID 19 Working Group has been collaborating to develop and promote resources focused on assisting VAW services and survivors in navigating challenges associated with the pandemic. All members of OAITH were invited to participate and contribute their expertise and resources related to social media, resources, and violence against women within the COVID-19 crisis context. Work of the COVID-19 Working Group Includes:

- “Virtual VAW Work in the Time of COVID-19” Webinar, Environmental Scan and Report
- Resource fact sheets including “Increasing Zoom Security” and “Resources for Children & Youth During COVID-19”
- Creation of a new OAITH Member Share drive with links to over 70 resources across 18



categories including fundraising strategies, policy examples and VAW virtual work

- Hosting 8 “Tea and Chat” Communities of Practice Sessions with over 100 counsellors, THSP workers, VAW educators and managers focused on reducing isolation and addressing current challenges

In particular, the COVID-19 Working Group would like to thank everyone who participated in one of our Tea & Chat Communities of Practice sessions. We look forward to continuing to explore challenges across VAW roles and pathways forward during 2021-2022 “tea times”.



WRAPPED IN COURAGE REPORT



BY AMBER WARDELL, COMMUNICATIONS
AND RESOURCE COORDINATOR



This past November marked many new accomplishments for the Wrapped in Campaign, which for the first time was completely digital! 66 participating shelters helped to engage local influencers and engage Ontarians to text to donate \$5-25 to support the campaign. The digital campaign was designed to reach new audiences through provincial and local influencers and images utilizing national and provincial statistics related to gender-based violence.

2020 Provincial Campaign Champions included Bif Naked, Rick Mercer, Blue Rodeo, Tegan Quinn, Shy-Anne Hovorka and 2020 Provincial Influencer Award Winner Pluto and Pluto's Mom of Pluto Living! Other award winners recognized at the 2020 Virtual Campaign Awards Ceremony include Mattawa Women's Resources Centre for the "Social Media Platform Newcomer Award", Women's Shelter, Saakaate House for the "Spirit Award" and Beendigen for "Most Impactful Video Award." 11 other honorary mention awards were also presented under the categories of "Most Impactful-In House Influencer", "Best us of a Purple Scarf after November", "Multi-Influencer Engagement", "Engaging Men" and "Highest Number of Video Views Per One Influencer."

Highlights from the 2020 campaign include:

- A new campaign website- wrappedincourage.ca featuring new graphics, messaging and provincial Influencer media
- Over 1,250 new followers of OAITH and participating shelter Social Media pages
- Over 2200 shares and retweets from OAITH social media pages
- An increase of 2,490% to the followers of the Wrapped in Courage Facebook page
- Over 332,000 post impressions across social media platforms (OAITH pages)
- 41, 746 engaged Facebook users across all OAITH Facebook pages
- Nearly 1000 shares of the 2020 Provincial Influencer (Pluto and Plutos' mom) on the Wrapped in Courage Facebook page
- Support from MPPs across Ontario helped #WrappedinCourage to reach trending status on November 25th for the first time!

Thank you again to all of the participants of the 2020 Wrapped in Courage Campaign, we look forward to another year of creativity and collaboration as we work towards creating greater awareness of gender-based violence in Ontario and the unique needs of OAITH members.

POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT



BY KENDALL TREMBATH,
POLICY COMMITTEE CHAIR,
WOMEN'S SHELTER,
SAAKAATE HOUSE INC.

At OAITH we are constantly developing and reassessing our policies to make sure they reflect and respect our mission, vision, and values of the organization. A policy is a set of guidelines that inform how our association will respond, operate day to day and anticipate different situations. In combination with sound procedures the aim is to create a positive culture for those working at OAITH, those working with and, of course, our OAITH member agencies.

In 2020 – 2021, while navigating COVID-19 restrictions, the Policy

committee has remained steadfast in the development of policy that is informed, responsive and current. These policies include but are not limited to a revised Anti Racism Anti-Oppression Policy (ARAO), and a complaint policy. We reached out to our previously named Associate Members (Now Known as Ally Organizations of OAITH) to get a sense of how they would like to be referenced. The new title for the policy relating to this group is now known as Membership and Ally Organization Definition and Fee Structure Policy.

Thank you to the policy committee members (Arlene, Carol and Lorris) for their thoughtful insights into policy development, their collective wisdom and vast experience. Marlene, thank you for another productive and thoughtful policy development year. While this work is never done, it certainly makes it easier when working with a wonderful group of dedicated members.

NATIONAL ACTION PLAN ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE - COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SESSION HIGHLIGHTS



BY LAUREN
HANCOCK, POLICY
AND RESEARCH
COORDINATOR

As a part of the national Community Engagement Initiative coordinated through YWCA Canada and with funding provided through the Women and Gender Equality Canada's Women's Program, OAITH received funding this year to conduct Community Engagement Sessions with OAITH members across the province. OAITH virtually held 5 regional Community Engagement Sessions with a total of 54 participating organizations attending the sessions. The majority of

participants indicated that they were the executive directors of their organizations (79.6%). The sessions included questions from the five pillars within the national action plan as well as one foundational question. Several regional sessions were also asked a region specific question to identify and highlight unique regional challenges/ barriers for survivors and for staff.

The participants identified many key considerations throughout the Community Engagement Sessions:

- Pre-existing systemic barriers were exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic
- Northern, Rural and Remote communities have experienced unique challenges in implementing digital/online service due to lack of accessible and affordable internet
- There is a need to improve outcomes for survivors by ensuring access to affordable and safe housing, childcare and income support
- Greater relationships with funders existed throughout the pandemic allowing organizations with the necessary autonomy and flexibility to best serve the needs of survivors
- Greater relationships with funders existed throughout the pandemic allowing organizations with the necessary autonomy and flexibility to best serve the needs of survivors
- There must be a shift from a band-aid solution to addressing the root causes of gender-based violence as well as an accountability mechanism to ensure governments at all levels implement the National Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence.

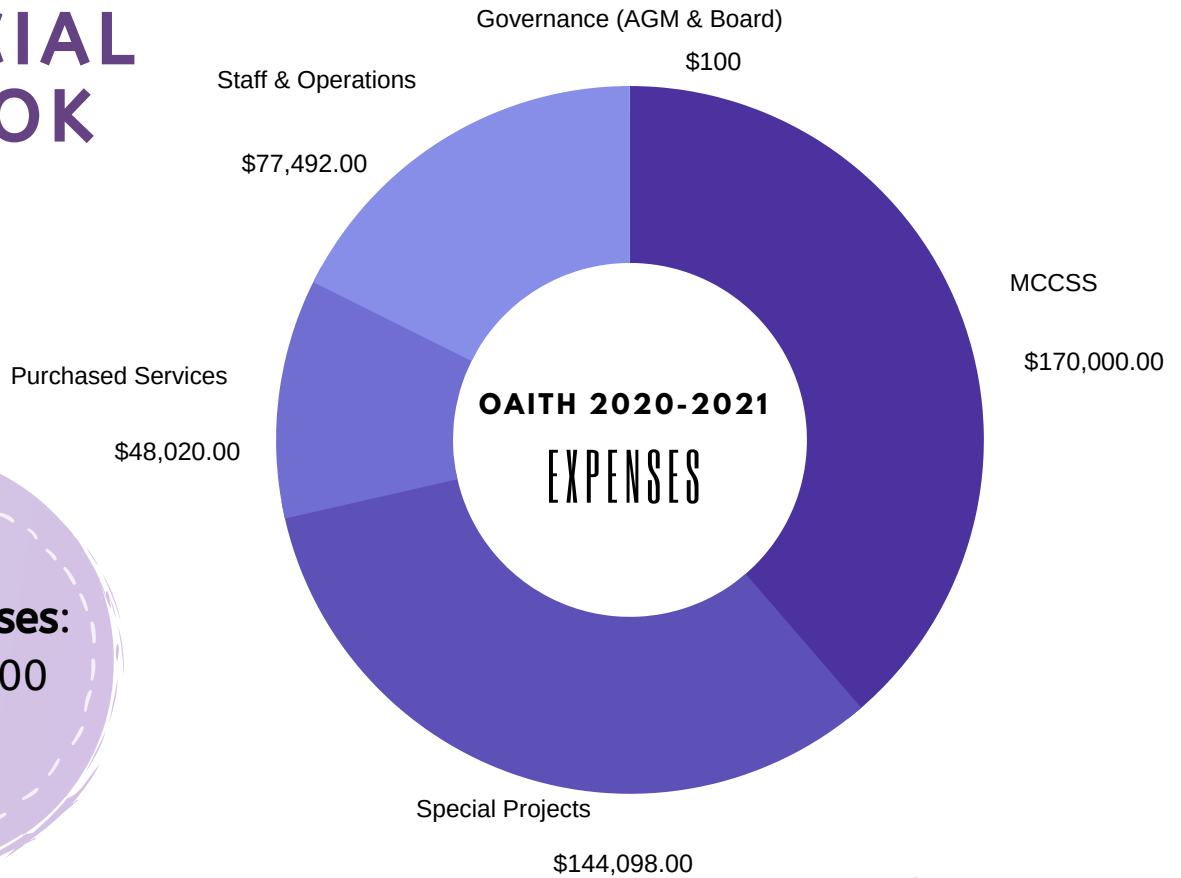
accountability mechanism to ensure governments at all levels implement the National Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence.

- The VAW sector must strengthen relationships with Indigenous organizations and support their expertise in addressing violence against Indigenous Women and Girls
- There is a need to re-examine congregate living in shelters, in light of the Covid-19 pandemic, and to also adequately support and meet the diverse needs of the survivors accessing shelter
- Alternative models to justice and support must be available to improve outcomes for survivors who do not wish to engage in a criminal justice system
- There is a need for a stronger focus on prevention through the education system and sustainable and flexible funding to support prevention and education initiatives

Following the Community Engagement Sessions, OAITH created a total of five regional reports outlining the many recommendations and considerations that were highlighted throughout the sessions. These reports were submitted to YWCA Canada on March 5th and were included in a final report sent to the federal government by YWCA Canada. In April 2021, the federal government announced it was allocating \$601.3 million over the next five years in the development of a National Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence. Thank you to everyone who participated and provided their expertise and recommendations.

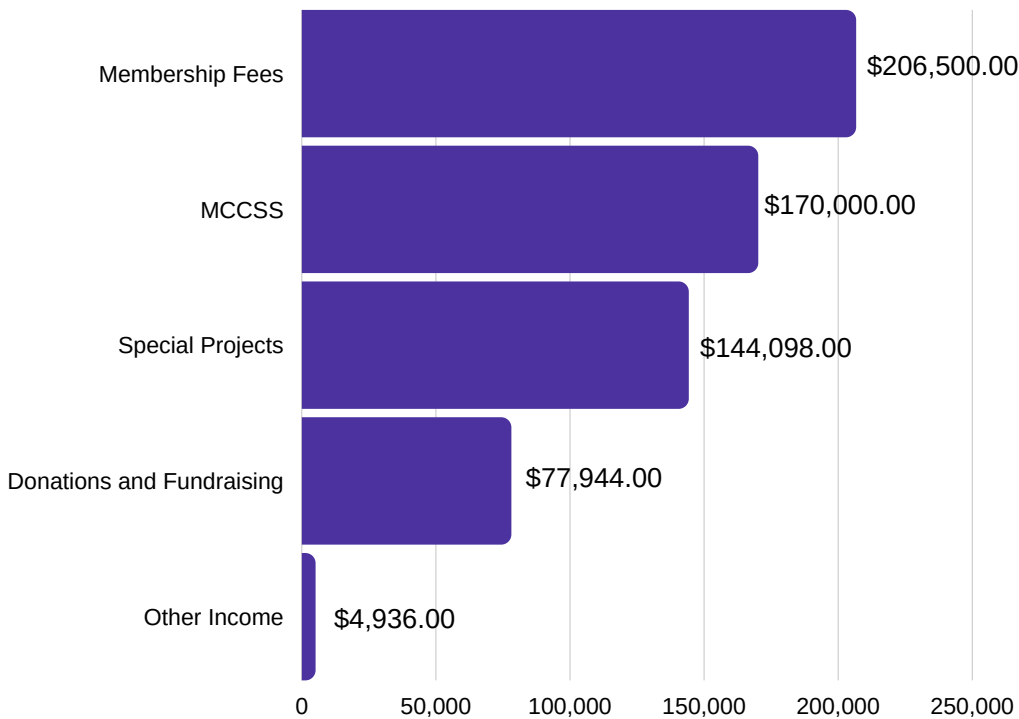
FINANCIAL OUTLOOK

Total Expenses:
\$439,710.00



OAITH 2020-2021

REVENUES



Total Revenue:
\$603,478.00

WITH TREMENDOUS THANKS TO OUR DONORS IN 2020-2021

- Ontario Nurses Association
- Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation
- Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association
- AMAPCEO Ontario's Professional Employees
- Innergex
- South & Metcalf Non Profit
- Enticing Icings
- Pixel To The Left-In Kind



2020- 2021 FUNDER PROFILE

- Women's Shelters Canada
- Canadian Women's Foundation
- YWCA Canada - Wage
- Ministry of Children, Community & Social Services




Women and Gender
Equality Canada

Femmes et Égalité
des genres Canada

Canada



ACKNOWLEDGING THE OAITH TEAM 2020-2021



OAITH
BOARD MEMBERS

PRESIDENT- Arlene McCalla, Interval House
VICE-PRESIDENT- Sue Weir, Lennox and Addington Interval House
TREASURER- Lorris Herenda, Yellow Brick House
SECRETARY- Kendall Trembath, Saakaate House Inc.
ASOO DESIGNATED POSITION- Jeanine George, Aboriginal Shelters of Ontario
GENERAL DIRECTOR- Silvia Samsa, Women's Habitat of Etobicoke
NORTH- Jennifer Chamberlin, New Starts for Women
EAST- Sandy Watson-Moyles, Three Oaks
TORONTO- Carol Latchford, The Red Door
WEST- Angie Marks, Women's Interval Home Sarnia-Lampton Inc.
CENTRAL- Sly Castaldi, Guelph Wellington Women in Crisis

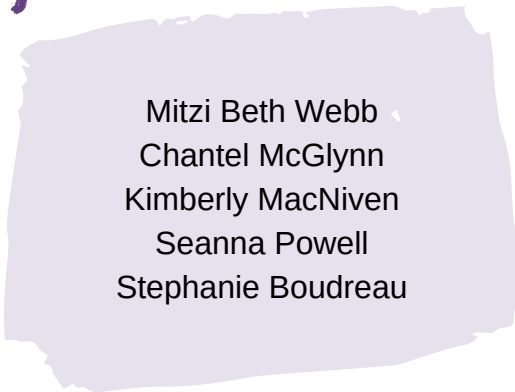


OAITH
STAFF

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR- Marlene Ham
COMMUNICATIONS & RESOURCE COORDINATOR- Amber Wardell
POLICY AND RESEARCH COORDINATOR- Lauren Hancock

Thank you!

TO OUR
2020-2021
LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY
SOCIAL WORK FIELD
PLACEMENT STUDENTS



Mitzi Beth Webb
Chantel McGlynn
Kimberly MacNiven
Seanna Powell
Stephanie Boudreau

