

john howard society

York Region

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As we wrap up the 2023/2024 fiscal year at JHSYR, we are humbled to look back at the incredible year we have had together. Our entire team takes pride in the multitude of ways we have served our community over the past 12 months, and we look forward to continuing this work in the year to come.

The John Howard Society of York Region has coined this past year as "The Year of Growth". We have shown growth in ways that far exceed what we had imagined, and it is this growth that has helped us to increase our impact in so many new and different ways.

This year, we grew in staff, welcoming many new crew members to our already exceptional team. Together we are a diverse group from many different backgrounds, living and playing in the York Region, and coming together to serve those most vulnerable in our community.

We grew in capacity, introducing new programs that have been designed to address specific identified service gaps within our region. We have adapted to the changing needs of those we serve, and ensured the most effective programming is in place for our clients.

We also grew in knowledge as we worked together to expand our expertise so we can better serve our clients' needs. Our team trained in areas of mental health; cultural sensitivity, health and safety; newcomer needs; and other areas relevant to the population we support.

We built on our desire to help, going further to increase our impact by volunteering at the food bank, cooking meals for the unhoused, and reaching out to partner agencies about how we can support their efforts to make change. We volunteered our evenings and weekends to attend events that strive for positive outcomes in our communities, and we worked together to be part of that change.

We expanded the ways in which we practice self-care, choosing to spend more time together as a team engaging in fun and exciting events together – like an evening cheering on the Toronto Blue Jays, and a day playing games together at Dave & Busters. We focused on personal wellness to help us remain grounded and focused and increased the tools in our toolbox that support a positive work/life balance.

And finally, we grew our unwavering commitment to the amazing work we do together. Our entire team – from the direct support staff to the leadership team to the Board of Directors – have grown in our dedication to the mandate, mission, and values of this agency.

After a year ripe with challenges, joy, and surprises, we know that the year ahead will not be any easier than the one that just passed. However, we know that with the unwavering commitment of our entire team, we will continue to create incredible change together.



Kimberly Thomas Board Chair



Shannon Speirs
Executive Director

OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kimberly Thomas

· Chair/President

Dwayne O'Connor

Director

Mark Pereira

Director

Neda Foroughian

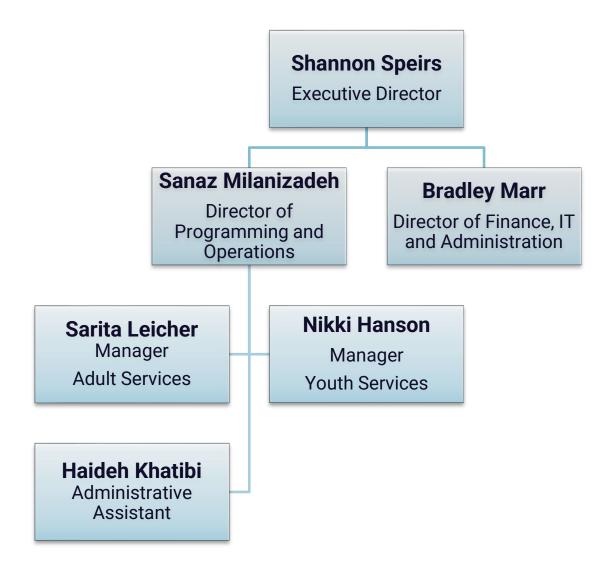
Treasurer

Vivian Sadeh

Secretary



OUR STAFF



OUR STAFF - ADULT SERVICES

Alexander Blake

Alexandra Thomson

Andrene Gregory

Anishar Nakimera

Armita Adib

Chandlar Chambers-Jones

Dominique Matthews

Erin Brandson

Giselle Palomo

Hayley Chan

Izzie Jones

Jamie Hayashi

Jason Ernewein

Jill Bates

Jillian May

Josh Kirstein

Karyn Tam

Katherval Gowtham

Laura Foster

Malavikka Sinnarasa



Maryam Eslahi

Megan Dalrymple

Michael Neblett

Monique Brent

Narmin Halabchi

Rain Chan

Shawna di Nardo

Sherelle Schoburgh

Tariq Aziz

Tim Pennock

Ushani Umachandran

OUR STAFF - YOUTH SERVICES

Aliyah Yagboyaju

Amanda O'Hara

Arielle Boshi

Carrie Castaldi

Cheryl Martin

David Patrick

Ernest Tam

Haley Aldred

Irene Tse

Janae De Torres

Jennifer Lloyd

Kenzie Wass

MaKayla Pelekis

Priya Singh

Sara Lockerbie



"I think for any young person who finds themselves in the legal system, it can be very intimidating and make a kid and their family feel really stressed and sad. Having the amazing support from the John Howard Society of York Region really made a big difference for us. Thank you so much from the bottom of our hearts for all your help."

OUR STUDENTS AND VOLUNTEERS

Abbas Mawji

Bethany Harris

Chelsea Wilson

Coco Wang

David Jakubiec

Felicia Cristalli

Felicia Cristalli

Glenn Babcock





Haley Chan
Julia De-Heer
Meher Plahay
Rosmery Fernandez
Sanjana Parmar
Tamara Nickie
Vanessa Acheampong
Zachary Harrison

WHO WE ARE

We are one of the 19 John Howard Society local offices in Ontario. Working together with our affiliate offices and our community partners, we deliver more than 80 evidence-based programs focused on prevention, intervention, and re-integration.

Our services cover a wide range of programs aimed at youth and adults who are facing challenges and difficulties. Our youth-oriented programs aim to assist them in developing life skills to help them realize their full potential. We also help families navigate issues of criminal justice and provide support for those leaving incarceration so they can become a valued member of their communities and contribute to their community in a meaningful way.

Our experienced staff remain current with community needs and societal trends and can quickly respond to client needs and effect sustainable and meaningful change in our clients' lives.

It is a living system of accountability, correction and growth that must work for the communities and individuals it touches. We believe that when our responses to crime are truly effective, they cost society less and provide us with more. When they are just, they create safer communities. And when they are humane, they reflect the potential everyone has for a better future. Our priorities are focused on

- Creating a framework to guide program design, development, and delivery in each service area.
- Respectfully support and champion the human rights of our clients, and deliver on our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Treat each person with dignity and respect in a non-judgmental manner.

Support our clients to change and grow, to make informed decisions, and to have the agency act on their own behalf.

Whether with policy or programming, advocacy, or service delivery, we strive for supporting and promoting human justice in Ontario.



Providing our community with the opportunity to thrive through continued improvement, second chances, and fostering connections.

Promoting systemic change through the creation of safe spaces that are responsive, innovative, and inclusive.



1. Commitment to Reducing Harm

We strive to reduce harm by building a community of awareness around stigma and nonjudgmental approaches to care.

2. Fostering Community Connections

We believe that the strength of our community lies in strong connections with one another; we seek to elevate agencies committed to inclusion and empowerment and expand program development through enhanced relationships.

3. Person-Centered Care

We are committed to acknowledging the value of every individual and implementing opportunities that contribute to their success.

4. Commitment to Change

We empower our community through the elevation of skills and knowledge. We are dedicated to investing in their stories and being responsive to their needs.

Va<mark>lue Statement</mark>

1. Commitment to Integrity

We commit to serving our community in a way that is fair and unbiased, promoting dignity and respect with the highest quality of service through evidence-based approaches.

2. Belief in the People We Serve

We recognize and celebrate the intrinsic worth in everyone and are dedicated to a culture of mutual respect and belonging.

3. Accountability and Compassion

We lead with compassion and care for one another, striving to foster accountability through recognizing strengths and promoting positive change.

4. Continuous Learning

We grow through our successes and learn from our evaluations; we are dedicated to listening to our community and responding through informed approaches.

2023 – 2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

Three-Year Vision

- Be responsive to the needs of our community through expansion of programs, enhanced service development, and providing educational and impactful programming.
- Amplify our impact by strengthening relationships with community partners and increasing our capacity for programming.
- Empower our people through the elevation of skills and knowledge and investing in their capacity to support the community.
- Build the agency's capacity for providing programming rooted in best practices by increasing our infrastructure and systems planning.
- Increase organizational capacity and growth through sustainable funding, diverse portfolios, and expansion of resources.

Strategic Priorities

- Employee Excellence
- Being Transparent and Pro-Active
- Providing Client-Centered Care, Always



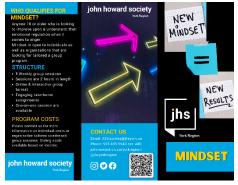
Our Programs



We aim to provide the community of York Region with wrap around support assistance for residents facing housing stability and security challenges, through individual, intensive case management.















Access to Home

Funded through Regional Municipality of York, Access to Home is tailored specifically for adults and provides additional components such as landlord/tenant mediation; harm reduction supports to ensure housing is not compromised due to substance use; financial literacy; and other relevant supports. It is designed to provide comprehensive case management to individuals who are precariously housed and support them as they strive for housing stability.

This program will focus more on individuals who are already housed, but at risk of becoming homelessness and is an expansion of our Home Again youth program.

During the 2023-2024 period, we supported 10 unique clients through this program helping them find stability and feel more grounded.

Direct Accountability Program

With the funding support of the Ministry of Attorney General, the Direct Accountability Program is made up of two alternatives to formal charges and/or prosecution for individuals who have been held over for specific minor criminal offences.

Adult Pre-Charge Diversion (APD) clients are referrals received directly from York Regional Police made at the time of a call out. Individuals are offered the opportunity to volunteer to participate in the program as an alternative to formal charges for specific minor criminal offences. Those in the program participate in community-based sanctions intended to hold themselves accountable and make amends for their actions. Individuals are also provided with community resources and counselling supports as a means of intervention and a positive response to reducing crime.

Post-Charge Diversion is an alternative to formal prosecution for individuals who have been charged with specific minor criminal offences. This court-referred program is available as a post-charge alternative for accused individuals to be held accountable through community-based sanctions.

Some of the sanctions for the Direct Accountability Program are community volunteer hours, monetary restitution to victims, prevention and education workshops, letter of accountability and in-kind donation to an approved list of charities/not-for-profit organizations. The program provides resources and alternative ways of handling stressful situations as an effort to reduce crime and also utilizes Counselling Support Intervention (CSI) aiming to provide clients space to unpack causes for their action and examine their accountability.



"The organization and APD Program were amazing. It was all so meaningful. Staff were fantastic, impressive and helped me a lot. I will keep everything I learned in mind and share my learnings with other community members."

Ending the Cycle

Ending the Cycle (ETC) is a 10-week, cost-free early intervention program for young adults between the ages of 15 and 24 who witnessed emotional and/or physical abuse, neglect, aggression, or high-risk behavior within their familial unit. The Program which is funded through Women and Gender Equality Program of Government of Canada, aims to change behavior, identify barriers, create and learn about boundaries, and examine belief systems about domestic violence within young persons. Through delivering weekly modules, we examine a series of topics such as understanding gender-based violence, healthy relationships and consent, stereotypes and building awareness, beliefs, behaviours and boundaries, communication and identifying emotions, mental health and building resiliency, personal safety and planning for the future.

During the reporting period we

- offered one, 10-week group session and assisted a total of 14 youth.
- of formed new partnerships with York Region Centre for Community Safety, Blue Door Shelter, Abuse Hurts, Barbara Schleifer Clinic, Interval House, York Region District School Board and York Regional Police.
- were accepted into the Collaborative Relationships for External Services (CRES) Agreement Partnerships providing mental health care and support to YRDSB students

Fair Chances

The Family and Adult Intervention and Reunification (FAIR) Chances initiative is funded by the Regional Municipality of York to provide an evidence-based, trauma-informed program that brings justice-involved and/or individual at risk of involvement with criminal justice and their families together to promote healing, reducing stigma and reunification.

After a loved one's justice involvement, through group and individual counselling, mentoring, peer support and system navigation, families receive comprehensive wraparound support to increase positive outcomes and prevent future family involvement with the criminal justice system.

To further increase our community's capacity to promote community safety and wellbeing, FAIR Chances provides newcomers with information/education and support pertaining to Canadian law promoting awareness on how to remain out of the justice system. Using a lens of prevention, topics across such as employment, housing rights, bylaw information, social awareness and parenting are explored and discussed. Newcomers are also provided with information related to system navigation to find relevant support if ever needed.

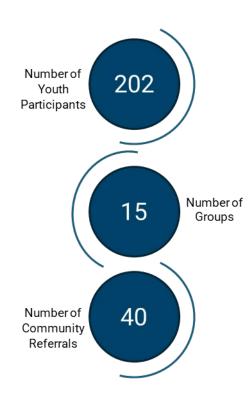


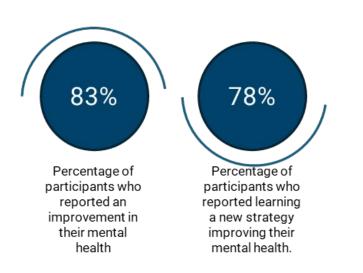
Total number of community referrals provided

"This has been the best counselling experience in my life. I want to thank JHSYR staff for supporting me in rebuilding my connection with my brother. I have been able to accomplish a very positive goal for me and my brother thus far."



The Healthy Youth Preventative Education (HYPE) Program is another evidence-based program that targets the prevention of violence through the promotion of positive, healthy relationships. With small group sessions that focus on healthy relationships and cover a wide range of risk behaviours, and addictions among adolescents, youth are enabled to engage in healthier relationships and build social and emotional strengths. With funding support from Ontario Trillium Foundation, the Program is offered through York Region schools in partnership with York District School Board.





"Discussing boundaries was helpful to my understanding of relationships. This is the first place I've talked about them in depth. It really puts my familial relationships into perspective."



Also funded through Ontario Trillium Foundation, Healthy Youth Preventative Education Plus (HYPE+) helps build resiliency and promote well-being for 2SLGBTQ+ youth ages 13-18. HYPE+ offers small group sessions that support positive mental health. In a safe space, youth engage in activities and discussions about what contributes to stress, well-being, and healthy relationships at school, home, and their community.

Over the last fiscal year, we were able to offer the program to three schools in York Region, serving 16 youth in total. We also offered one-on-one counselling for one of the participants.

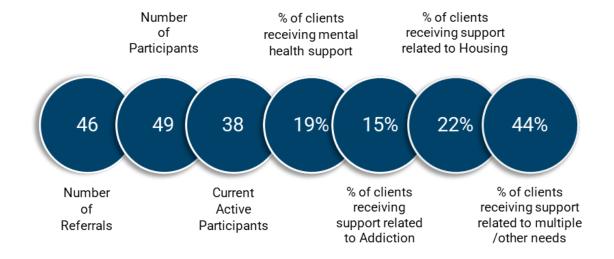


Mental Health & Addictions Peer Support

Funded by the Ministry of Solicitor General, Mental Health and Addictions Peer Support (MHAPS/MAPS) utilizes expertise of Peer support Workers who are individuals with lived experience. These professional peers work with clients on an individual basis exploring recovery goals and connecting them with community supports and services. Peer Support Workers use innovative and sector relevant strategies to support clients in developing and maintaining daily harm reduction plans. They are also able to support clients who are attending probation, court, and counselling appointments.

MAPS provides connections to mental health services, addiction services, housing supports, cultural resources, accessing Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program. Through this program we have been able to support our most vulnerable clients with food gift cards and access to other basic needs such as clothing, toiletries and harm reduction supplies.

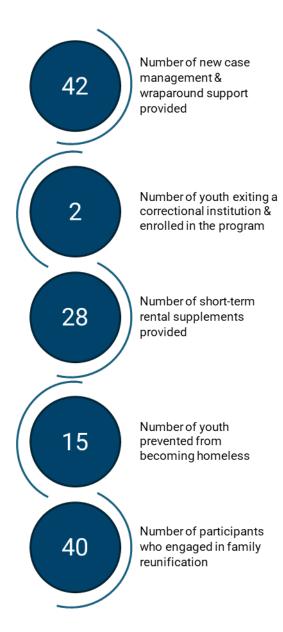
"Just being able to have somebody that really cares about your well-being and, you know you can talk to them instead of having to try to talk to your old friends. it's just good to have somebody there to talk to."



Ho<mark>me Again</mark>

With funding support from the United Way of Greater Toronto, this Program provides wrap-around case management support to young people who are 15 to 29 years old. The Program provides support on self-directed goal planning, housing, access to basic needs, and referrals to community resources as needed. Home Again supported the participants in

- Acquiring stable housing and employment support
- Community connections
- Social and emotional learning
- Financial literacy
- Family reunification
- Access to basic needs including food and rental assistance
- Life skills

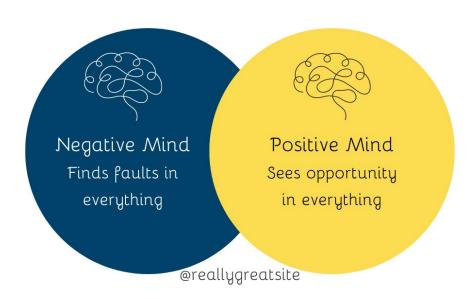


"The John Howard Home Again Program has been very remarkable, extremely helpful and on time with the amazing support that staff were able to provide me with. I look forward to continuing to work with my caseworker as I transition in my life."



This anger management program for those 18 years of age and older utilizes Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) techniques to help increase our clients' capacity to better understand and manage their anger and emotional responses in a more constructive and positive manner. This feefor-service program aims to develop self-regulation and self-management skills in clients so they can reduce the intensity, frequency and duration of their emotions such as anger and subsequently, help support the end of any patterns of aggression.

During the reporting period we were able to assist 33 adults with their emotional regulation issues.

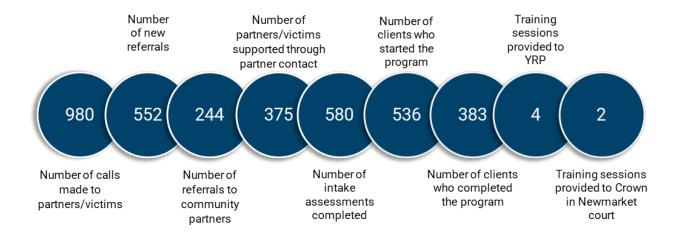


Partner Assault Response Program

Funded by the Ministry of Attorney General, the Partner Assault Response (PAR) Program is a 12-session domestic violence court initiative that delivers a specialized community-based group intervention program. It gives clients the opportunity to examine their beliefs and attitudes towards intimate partner violence and helps them learn non-abusive ways of resolving conflict.

Partner Assault Response

"Thank you very much for your help and high-quality PAR course guidance. I really learned a lot and it was very helpful to me. Although I am very old, there are still many legal misunderstandings and some misunderstandings about family relationships. I learned them in the class. It made me understand how to get along with my family."



Partner Contact

"Everything was so confusing. I'm so grateful that I can just come to one person to sort out what I need to do or who I need to go to."

Reintegration Support Services for Adults

With support and funding from the United Way of Greater Toronto and Newmarket Charitable Gaming Association, Reintegration Program supports adults involved with, or at risk of involvement with the criminal justice system at no cost. The program works with clients on an individual basis, to reintegrate them back into their home communities in York Region. Support is provided through case management counselling; immediate temporary housing options such as emergency hotel/shelter, continued support to secure stable housing; and help with immediate basic needs and housing start-up support.

In 2023-2024, we were able to support 65 clients. We also extended our assistance to 280 individuals from the previous reporting periods who continued to need support and assistance provided through this program.

"I want to thank you for bringing the foreign concept of "emotional self-care" to my attention, as no one in my entire life has ever uttered that phrase. Thanks so much for being a kind and nonjudgemental and understanding human being."





Supporting those who have already completed one of the programs offered by the John Howard Society of York Region, RESET is a peer-led, after-care program for individuals who would benefit from ongoing support. The Program is led by those with lived experience who are able and willing to provide support for their peers. With the goal of continuous peer-facilitation through group members who qualify, the Program is offered at no cost to participants.

Reset, which is funded by Ontario Trillium Foundation, covers a range of topics such as stress and coping mechanisms, dealing w/grief and loss, effective communication, gender roles, navigating relationships, unpacking anger styles, parenting support, addiction support and self-care techniques.

In 2023-2024, 30 clients completed the Program. Additionally, we attended a number of community initiatives led by community partners such as Aaniin Community Center, Community Action tables, Children and Youth Situation Table, Krasman Center housing events and presented and introduced the RESET program to different agencies.

"At Reset, I was able to talk freely about my thoughts and have a better understanding of my own personality. I am going to use the materials and skills I learned, to have a better and healthier relationship with my wife. I found the program very helpful, and it gave me a lot of positive energy which stood out for me from the sessions."

Service Navigator Program

This Service Navigator Program serves priority groups of youth between ages 6 and 26, who are at risk of involvement with gangs, victimization related to crime or involvement in crime. Funded through Regional Municipality of York, the program helps clients navigate individual barriers to accessing services, provides emotional support to clients and families, explains and clarifies terminology, provides referral to additional services, coordinates with providers, and responds to unique client needs.

The program is offered in partnership with Routes Connecting Communities which has 12 Ambassadors who provide additional client support and increase community engagement.



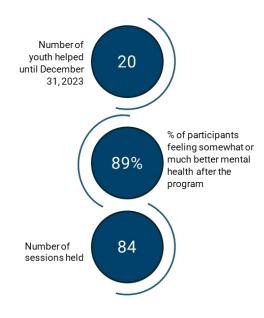
"The financial hardships were suffocating. Without the support, kindness and understanding of the John Howard Society of York Region staff we would have faced days/weeks without food. Staff helped us to remove a large portion of our food insecurity taking away some of my fears and stress about how we are going to make it through these difficult times."

Yo<mark>uth Counselling Program</mark>

With funding support provided by the Regional Municipality of York, we were able to help our youth build strength, resilience and coping skills through our Youth Counselling Program. Using individualized one-on-one support, the program provides free weekly sessions for youth to discuss issues affecting their lives. Our counsellors work collaboratively with the youth to enhance their understanding of their issues, overcome their challenges and meet their goals.

The negative mental health impacts of the pandemic exacerbated existing mental health concerns in youth. This program allowed youth to learn new coping skills and encouraged mental health resiliency through emotional regulation. Upon completion, the program also connected youth with other community resources to encourage self-sufficiency and help issues such as housing, employment and substance use.

In 2023-2024, we accepted referrals for youth between the ages of 11 and 29 who were experiencing mental health, substance use, relationship conflict, bullying, stress as well as those who experienced involvement with criminal justice.



"It was a very good experience because of two main reasons. First, my counselor was extremely comfortable to talk to and was able to calmly discuss personal matters within an environment which allowed me to open up beyond the conversations I was having with my family and friends. Secondly, my sessions helped me get along with the people I have surrounded myself with and, my acceptance of the person I am became a much easier transition than solely trying to find answers on my own."

Yo<mark>uth Reintegration Program</mark>

Similar to the program offered to adults, the Youth Reintegration Program is another no cost, wrap-around case management program which is funded by the Department of Justice (Youth Justice Fund). The Program supports those between the ages of 12 and 17 who are involved in the justice system, are currently incarcerated and/or are being released and aims to enhance and extend support to those affected connecting them with other support programs to increase their chances of reintegrating into the community. Through this program we provide one-on-one specialized counselling, advocacy and collaboration, individual goal planning and referrals to a variety of community resources. We can help the youth with acquiring stable housing and employment, social and emotional learning as well as access to basic needs including food and rental assistance.

"I remember when we first met the John Howard Society of York Region staff at court I didn't even know where to go. Staff were there every step of the way literally guiding us and supporting both myself and my son through the entire process. The counselling part of the program was excellent. I actually didn't want it to end because I saw that my son had somebody amazing and caring outside of the family that he could trust and talk to, and I think it helped him a lot to get stuff off of his chest."

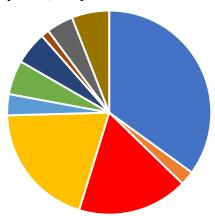


FINANCIAL REPORT

Revenue for the year end March 31, 2024

Revenue has increased by 35.9% compared to the previous fiscal year as a result of new funding and increased funding from existing

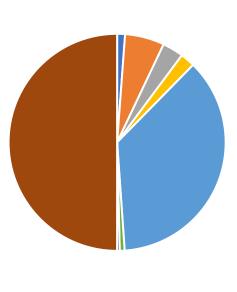
The agency achieved a surplus of \$171,868 for the 2023-2024



- Ministry of the Attorney General \$854,808 | 35.0%
- Ontario Trillium Foundation \$55,340 | 2.3%
- United Way Greater Toronto \$427,853 | 17.5%
- The Regional Municipality of York \$483,795 | 19.8%

Expenses for the year ended March 31, 2021

Overall expenses have increased by 28.7%. This is primarily due to the expenses related to the new funding received and increased funding from existing funders.



- Office and general \$53,524 | 2.4%
- Program expenses \$266,653 | 11.7%
- Purchased services \$142,432 | 6.3%
- Rent and occupancy \$98,224 | 4.3%
- Salaries and benefits \$1,660,041 | 73.1%
- Staff development, training and travel \$32,769 | 1.4%
- \$32,769 | 1.4% Telephone and internet \$17,594 | 0.8%

OUR FUNDERS

We would like to thank our partners for their generous support of our programs and their belief in our mission. Their generous support is vital to our work.



Women and Gender Equality Canada

Femmes et Égalité des genres Canada



Department of Justice Canada

Ministère de la Justice Canada



Ministry of the Attorney General



Ontario Trillium Foundation



An agency of the Government of Ontario Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario



Ministry of the Solicitor General



hope



