



From a Grateful Shelter Client

To the wonderful women at Transition House,

Thank you. Thank you for being my port in the storm.

Thank you for walking with me through my emotional uncertainty over the phone as I left (unsuccessfully the first time), as I prepared to leave again and during those intensely confusing and turbulent first weeks after getting out.

Thank you for giving me a safe space to breathe, to feel, to process and to plan. For validating each chaotic thought and emotion I had and for helping talk me out of some dark corners. Thank you for your honesty, your education and sharing your wisdom.

Thank you for making me feel safe, secure, validated, confident in my decision and wrapped in warmth and love. Thanks for caring about (my children), making (them) feel welcome.

I honestly think I would have gone back if it wasn't for the support I have received, and it's forever changed the path my life is headed now from one of fear and pain to one of joy, light and freedom to live life on my own terms.

There is no greater gift than that.

Thank you xoxox

Name withheld for privacy



"People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." ~ Maya Angelou



Women's Ceramics Circle – Creativity for Healing

This past year, VWTH offered a ceramics program for older women in collaboration with the Arts Centre at Cedar Hill. Led by artist Mary Loria and facilitated by a VWTH older women's counsellor, this program challenged the women's skills and creativity, teaching the basic principles of constructing ceramics — step-by-step from developing the initial concept to the final firing and glazing. Participants focused their developing artistic skills on themes of self-care and developed a sense of camaraderie, while enjoying the relaxing and meditative nature of working with clay. Sessions allowing for casual discussions that often developed into deeper conversations and lots of laughter.

Thank you to our funders – the BC Arts Council, the CRD Arts Commission through the CRD Arts Development Service, and individual donors through VWTH "Healing Through the Arts" funding.

Our Mission

Victoria Women's Transition House Society collaborates, advocates and educates to address and prevent intimate partner violence and abuse of women and children through supportive shelter, housing, counselling and other community-based services.



Children and Intimate Partner Violence and Abuse

Children who witness domestic violence and abuse between parents may be at greater risk of perpetuating the cycle of abuse – either as an abuser or as a victim.

Children in homes where one parent is abused may feel fearful and anxious. This can cause them to react in different ways, depending on their age.

Children in preschool.

Young children who witness intimate partner violence may regress to behaviours from their early childhood, such as bed-wetting, thumb-sucking, increased crying, and whining. They may also develop difficulty falling or staying asleep; show signs of terror, such as stuttering or hiding; and demonstrate signs of severe separation anxiety.



School-aged children. Children in this age range may feel guilty about the abuse and blame themselves for it. Domestic violence and abuse hurts children’s self-esteem. They may not participate in school activities or get good grades, have fewer friends than others, and get into trouble more often. They also may have a lot of headaches and stomachaches.

Teens. Teens who witness abuse may act out in negative ways, such as fighting with family members or skipping school. They may also engage in risky behaviors, such as having unprotected sex and using drugs or alcohol. They may have low self-esteem and have trouble making friends, start fights or bully others and are more likely to get in trouble with the law. This type of behavior is more common in teen boys who are also abused in childhood than in teen girls. Girls are more likely than boys to withdraw and to experience depression or to self harm.

In the longer term, children who witness abuse are at greater risk for repeating the cycle as adults by entering into abusive relationships or becoming abusers themselves.

Each child responds differently to abuse and trauma. Some children are more resilient, and some are more sensitive. How successful a child is at recovering from abuse or trauma depends on several factors - a good support system or good relationships with trusted adults, high self esteem and healthy friendships.

Although there is no doubt that the abuse children witnessed may be traumatic, they can learn healthy ways to deal with their emotions and memories as they mature. The sooner a child gets help, the better his or her chances for becoming a mentally and physically healthy adult.

Help is Here

The VWTH Children Who Witness Abuse/PEACE program, provides individual and group counselling for children who have witnessed intimate partner violence and abuse. This helps children recognize abusive behaviour, look at alternatives to violence and break the cycle of abuse. It gives them the tools to deal with their feelings and experiences. The program also offers support for caregivers.

For more information on children’s counselling, **girls’ group, boys’ group**, specialized **Spring Break** and **Summer Camp** and in-school **Violence is Preventable (VIP) interactive workshops**, please contact our Community Office, 250-592-2927.



Why I Give

At 31, after two marriages and three years of CUSO volunteering in Jamaica, I returned to Victoria, clear that being a white, educated woman in Canada conferred both privilege and a responsibility to help women in need. As a teacher-counsellor, I worked with families who had first-hand experience with our organization. Although financial help was an obvious contribution, I have treasured memories from over the years when I took my mother to the VWTH office with toiletries and toys as



Christmas gifts for Transition House clients. Now, there are a multitude of VWTH programs available for those touched by abuse, from Camps for children who witness abuse, to services for older women courageously seeking support. Inspired by the resilience, energy, humour and compassion that women show for each other, I’m proud to be part of such a vibrant community.

Beverly Brookman is a VWTH Sustaining (monthly) Donor



Volunteer Spotlight

Bev: Victoria Soroptimists' Culinary Commitment at the VWTH Shelter

Bev Lowsley is the President of Soroptimist International Club of Greater Victoria

Please tell us a little bit about the Soroptimists and their work in the community.

Soroptimist is an international organization of women working to improve the lives of women and girls locally and around the world. Our two major programs are Live Your Dream, which helps women access education and training to broaden employment options, and Dream It Be It, which assists high school girls to overcome obstacles and explore career opportunities.



How did the Soroptimists first get involved in helping Transition House?

In 2012, we first starting cooking regularly at the Emergency Shelter. Early in the year, we used some of our funds to purchase a much-needed new stove for the Shelter kitchen. Ever since then, we have been preparing dinners each month with additional meals on holidays.

How do you gather and prepare a meal for our Shelter?

A pair of our volunteers contact VWTH each month to determine the number of women and children in residence as well as any specific food needs. They decide on a menu, shop for items, complete any necessary prep work at home, and then cook and serve an evening meal onsite. On months with major holidays, we love providing seasonal treats, especially for the children.

What do you and the group enjoy most about volunteering for Transition House?

Over the years, I have volunteered on days when residents are joyous, like the day that they learn of receiving a housing placement. Other days you can feel the heavy difficulties that they are experiencing.

However, it is always wonderful to see the residents' faces when a full dinner is laid out before them. It is especially rewarding to see the children's excitement over the delicious treats.

Sometimes we sit with the women and their children and enjoy some social time – we always love holding the babies while mom gets her meal. Overall, we are just really happy to know that we are making a difference in their lives.

On behalf of all of us at Transition House, thank you so much for helping our clients feel cared for and supported by their community. Thank you!!

It is with much respect to the Lkwungen and SENĆOŦEN speaking peoples of the WSÁNEĆ, Esquimalt, and Songhees Nations, on whose traditional territories the Victoria Women's Transition House Society is located, that we make this acknowledgement with the expressed shared hope to live in communities free of intimate partner violence.



What's in a Word?

Using gender-inclusive language is important, appropriate and respectful towards all citizens in our community including women, men and non-binary individuals who identify as neither male nor female.

There are ways to practice gender-inclusive language. For instance, replacing "ladies and gentlemen" with "everybody" or "folks".

Here are some suggestions on replacements for gendered language:

- **Folks** or **everybody** instead of guys or ladies/gentleman
- **Humankind** instead of mankind
- **People** instead of man/men
- **Councilperson** instead of councilman/councilwoman
- **Machine-made, synthetic, or artificial** instead of man-made
- **Parent** instead of mother/father
- **Child** instead of son/daughter
- **Sibling** instead of sister/brother
- **Partner** or **spouse** instead of girlfriend/boyfriend or wife/husband
- **Flight attendant** instead of steward/stewardess
- **Salesperson** or **sales representative** instead of salesman/saleswoman
- **Server** instead of waiter/waitress
- **Firefighter** instead of fireman
- **Letter carrier** instead of mailman

Thank You

Each year, VWTH has to raise almost 40% of our operating budget from the community. Your support helps us to continue to offer compassionate counselling, support and emergency shelter to women and their children impacted by intimate partner violence and abuse. Thank you to all for your donations and for your support.



Clockwise from top: Attendees at the **Victoria Women's Expo** responded with generosity and cash donations for donuts (The Donut Wall!) coordinated by Expo organizers, Brittnee & Virginia. VWTH was the selected beneficiary of \$21,631 from the recent **2018 World Airline Road Race (WARR)**. **Royal LePage Coast Capital Realty** agents presented a cheque for \$84,589 to distribute to the four women's shelters in our region, including VWTH. The **Oak Bay Branch of RBC** gave a \$10,000 donation to mark the Branch's 50th Anniversary in Oak Bay.



Upcoming



Cherish - a fabulous evening of fashion and philanthropy to benefit Victoria Women's Transition House and Dance Victoria.

Thursday, October 26, 2019
at Crystal Garden

Tickets on sale Monday, May 15
(last year SOLD OUT)

\$85 (plus service fees) from the
Royal & McPherson Box Office

rmts.bc.ca/tickets-and-events/calendar
OR 250-386-6121

Community Champion and Community Partnership support opportunities available. Contact Susan 250-592-2927.

Presented by **Willow Wealth Management of Raymond James.**

YES! I wish to support Victoria Women's Transition House

I would like to give a gift of:

\$1000 \$500 \$100 \$50 Other \$ _____ A tax receipt will be issued for all donations over \$10

Mail: 100 - 3060 Cedar Hill Road Victoria, BC V8T 3J5

Online: Visit transitionhouse.net and click on Donate

Phone: Call 250-592-2927 to make a credit card donation

Enclosed is my cheque payable to Victoria Women's Transition House

I prefer to use my Visa Mastercard AmEx

Card No: _____ Expiry: ____/____

Cardholder Name: _____

Signature: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

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I have already included VWTH in my will

VICTORIA WOMEN'S
Transition House
SOCIETY

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