

# Feb / March 2025

VICTORIA WOMEN'S  
Transition  
House SOCIETY 50 YEARS



## Message from Parm and Makenna

A new year presents a wonderful opportunity to reignite our enthusiasm for pursuing our goals. At Victoria Women's Transition House (VWTH), we remain committed to achieving our vision of communities free from violence and abuse. As we move forward, we will continue to work passionately towards creating safe and supportive environments for those in need, reinforcing our dedication to this vital mission. Together, we can make a difference in the lives of many.

As we embrace the new year, it is also a time to reflect on the past. 2024 was a milestone at VWTH, as we celebrated our 50th anniversary of supporting and advocating for women, individuals who identify as women, non-binary people, and their children, who are affected by intimate partner violence. We honour the courageous individuals who have sought our help, showcasing immense strength and resilience. Their journeys inspire us and reinforce our commitment to providing vital support and resources for those in need.

Another significant milestone for us was the building of 50 units of safe space - apartments complete with on-site supports for women and families fleeing abusive situations. After several years of hard work, our West Second Stage transitional housing program became a reality in 2024, as the building began to take shape. In January 2025, we proudly welcomed our first clients. The program and facility are quickly filling with individuals and families who now have a place to find stability and solace as they continue their healing journeys.



The building, located in a confidential location, features studio, one-bedroom, two-bedroom and three-bedroom apartments, including some accessible units and pet-friendly units. It will provide women and their children with much-needed transitional homes for up to 24 months, with rent adjusted to their income. This facility marks a vital step forward in our mission to support those in need, providing safe environments for healing.

Through action, advocacy, conversations, and education, Victoria Women's Transition House fuels the momentum needed for real and lasting change. Gender-based violence is not solely about protecting women and children; it's about building a society where everyone, regardless of gender, can live free from fear. It's about honouring our shared humanity.

Thank you for joining us on this collective journey to raise awareness, provide support, and create change. Together, we can make a difference in the lives of many and foster a safer, more inclusive community for all.

**Parm Kroad**  
Deputy Director

**Makenna Rielly**  
Executive Director

### Territory Acknowledgement

It is with much respect to the Lekwungen 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 acknowledgment with the expressed shared hope to live in communities free of intimate partner violence.

### Our Mission

Victoria Women's Transition House Society (VWTH) 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.



# Program Spotlight

## VOLUNTEERING AT THE CRISIS AND INFORMATION LINE

Available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, our Crisis and Information Line received 2,029 calls in 2023/24. On the other end of that Line is a group of highly dedicated, trained volunteers who give their time and assistance guiding callers through what could be very traumatic situations. Alongside staff, these volunteers respond to calls from people requesting emergency shelter, some needing support and information, as well as people concerned about family and friends living in a violent intimate partner relationship. Phone calls can last anywhere from 10 minutes to one hour or more.

Crisis Line volunteers need to be active VWTH volunteers, with 50 previous hours of volunteering before they embark on the comprehensive

five-week Crisis Line training program. The training covers topics like trauma-informed practice, compassionate listening, non-judgmental approach, crisis response and safety planning.

The weekly three-hour-long training sessions include numerous role-plays, so volunteers are prepared to deal with a wide range of calls that come into the Crisis Line. Training also involves take-home assignments, a community resource presentation, and guest speakers from programs throughout VWTH. Volunteers also complete three "listening shifts" where they shadow call-takers before they begin to answer calls themselves.

As the first point of contact for many who reach out to VWTH, this unique volunteer role can be emotionally



challenging but is profoundly impactful. We are so grateful to our volunteers for giving their time and energy to answer that line and make a true difference to those people who aren't sure where to turn, and who choose to take the courageous step of making that call.

*"I was inspired to volunteer for the crisis line because we can respond immediately to anyone in the community who needs support. By training in trauma-informed practice, we listen with compassion, discuss safety-plans and connect them to any other appropriate supports. This is challenging, but essential and rewarding work."* – A Crisis Line Volunteer



# Mark Your Calendars! The Glow Gala Returns

It's back! **Glow Gala 2025** is confirmed for **Saturday, May 10** at the **Delta Victoria Ocean Pointe Resort**.

Step into an evening of elegance, creativity and connection at Glow, a glamorous Gala fundraiser for Victoria Women's Transition House. Celebrate the courage and resilience of women and children impacted by intimate partner violence while raising funds for an important community organization. Guests will enjoy a stunning three-course plated dinner alongside entertainment, food, art, and crafts in a setting as inspiring as the cause is uplifting. The evening includes a welcome beverage and Cocktail Reception, three-course plated dinner, entertainment, silent and live auctions, and fund-a need – an

opportunity for guests to support an identified program or project at Victoria Women's Transition House. This year we are raising funds for VWTH programs supporting children and families.

Please visit our website for updates on the Glow Gala, including ticket sales and silent auction details, coming soon. Scan the QR code or visit [transitionhouse.net/glow-gala](https://transitionhouse.net/glow-gala)



Pictured: Charlene and Eric Kerr and their guests from Glow Gala 2024 ▶







# Victoria Goddess Run

## INTRODUCING VWTH'S 2025 CHARITY CHAMPION

Victoria Women's Transition House is proud to be one of the charity partners of the 14th annual Victoria **Goddess Run** taking place on **Sunday, March 2** at **Beaver Lake**. If you're looking to set a fitness goal this year, the 5K or 10K walk or run along this lake-side trail route may be a perfect fit for you.

It's an accessible goal for anyone – including this year's **VWTH Charity Champion**, **VWTH's Executive Director, Makenna Rielly**, and the members of her team, the "Koipanions". Makenna is proving that Goddesses of all ages and experience levels can participate in this walk/run, making a difference not only in personal health and wellness, but also with our community as a whole.

"In celebration of our 50th anniversary this year, I hope to make the set goal of raising \$5,000," says Makenna. "We have our new second stage transitional housing program, and the funds will go towards children's programming. I am honestly not an athlete in any way, but I do care about my health as an aging person, so walking 8,000 steps a day is a good goal, and being the Charity

Champion has motivated me to walk every day, even in the rain. The Goddess Run is about compassion with a goal to help raise funds, combined with a not-too-strenuous of a venue and an emphasis on fun. The Koipanions will proudly wear our Koi fish hats to help keep us motivated, to laugh, to live life, to work on fitness goals, and to raise funds for and awareness about gender-based violence along the way."

Goddess Run registration and fundraising is now underway. Please lace up those runners today and join us at this fun, inspiring event. Please visit [goddessrun.ca](http://goddessrun.ca) to register now.



You can also support Makenna's VWTH fundraising efforts by scanning the QR code here. All donations over \$10 to VWTH through the Goddess Run will receive a tax receipt.



## Fashion Splash | Saturday, February 15

Nomad Market Events is once again hosting Victoria's premier local designer fashion event, **Fashion Splash**, at the **Victoria Scottish Community Centre**, on **Saturday, February 15**. The event features a runway-style fashion show showcasing the talented local fashion industry here on Vancouver Island.

Victoria Women's Transition House is excited and honoured to be the beneficiary of the Fashion Splash silent auction proceeds.



For more information and to buy tickets, please visit their website at [nomadmarketevents.com/fashion-splash.html](http://nomadmarketevents.com/fashion-splash.html) or scan the QR code here.

# Thank You!

Back in November, we faced a significant challenge when the Canada Post strike began to take a toll on the donations we would have typically received during the season. We reached out to the community for help. So many of you answered our call by making donations in other ways – through our website donation form, social media, by phone, and through the support of our friends at **Maximum Express Couriers**, who kindly offered to pick up donations. Because of you, we are thrilled to announce we exceeded the goal for our **Winter Fundraising Campaign** and are at just over \$300,000 in donations.

The **Holiday Hamper Program** once again made a huge difference to our clients during this time of year. Thanks to **148 Hamper donors**, we were able to provide **214 women and 240**

**children** with Gift Card Hampers so they could experience the joy of the season. Thank you for warming many hearts through your caring generosity.

Thank you to our friends at our local **Shoppers Drug Mart** locations, and their generous customers and staff, during last fall's annual Shoppers Drug Mart Giving Shelter Campaign, in support of Victoria Women's Transition House. We are so grateful to receive \$20,520 (pictured right), supporting women and children who are impacted by intimate partner violence.

Victoria Women's Transition House extends our sincere thanks to the **Tony & Mignon Fenton Trust** for \$25,000 for our 50+ *Turning the Tide* program, and \$8,000 for *PhotoVoice* program. Heartfelt thanks to **CFAX Santa's Anonymous, Harbourside**



**Rotary, Peninsula Co-op** and the **Norgaard Foundation** for their incredible support of the PEACE Children's Spring and Summer camps.

These are only highlights of the many thoughtful monetary and gifts in-kind received over the last few months. Thank you to everyone for your support.



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

### I would like to give a gift of:

\$50    \$100    \$500    \$1000    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](http://transitionhouse.net) and click support us/donate now

**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

Card No: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Cardholder Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_  Sign up for monthly E-News

Please send me information about donating stocks or securities

Please contact me about monthly giving

Please send me information about making a gift in my will to VWTH

I have already included VWTH in my will



**Crisis and Information Line**  
250.385.6611

### Community Office

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