



## Women's House *Serving Bruce & Grey*

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Municipality of Arran-Elderslie  
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Thursday, November 17, 2022



Dear Members of Council and Friends of Women's House:

On behalf of Women's House Serving Bruce & Grey, I wanted to thank you, as a municipality, for all of the successes you have had over the past year. I also wanted to provide you and your new council with some information regarding Women's House services and programs, and our successes and struggles within the last year.

Women's House Serving Bruce & Grey has a fundraising budget of \$125,000 this year to maintain our quality and delivery of services. In order to provide the vital programs and services we offer to the women and children in need in our community, we rely on fundraising efforts to bridge the gap between government funding and operating costs. In normal times, this includes keeping open extra beds for when the shelter is full, funding programs with waitlists, and funding programs not covered by Ministry funding, such as Second Stage Housing and also our newest support service for our community, the Youth Sexual Assault and Anti-Human Trafficking program. During the pandemic we have seen a significant increase in requests for support. The Child Witness Program always maintains a waitlist due to high demand. This year, both our Outreach Counselling and Sexual Assault Counselling programs have seen waitlists created on the statistics reporting software, yet the Counsellors do not turn away clients. With an increase in awareness about our services and the fallout from the pandemic and lockdown stresses, the need for our services is ever increasing. When you support Women's House, you support the following under-funded programs and services for women and children that have experienced abuse:

- **Shelter:** A safe, secure, and supportive environment which houses up to thirteen (13) women and children. A Crisis Counsellor is on duty 24 hours per day, 365 days a year.
- **Transition and Housing Support:** Transition Workers assist women in developing a transition plan. The worker acts as an advocate on the women's behalf by seeking assistance in the areas of housing, education, job training, income support, legal aid, transportation, and/or childcare.
- **VAW Outreach Counselling:** Individual outreach counselling is available in Chesley, Durham, Hanover, Kincardine, Markdale, Owen Sound, Port Elgin, Walkerton, and Wiarton.
- **Child Witness:** We provide support to mothers and their children who have witnessed or experienced violence. Child Witness workers attend schools within Bruce and Grey Counties to provide support in individual and group settings.
- **Sexual Assault Counselling:** Confidential support for women who have been sexually assaulted recently or in the past.
- **Second Stage Housing:** Protected independent apartments are located in Kincardine, Port Elgin, and Wiarton. These units provide one year of safe and affordable housing for women and their children. On-site individual and group counselling is made available to participants.
- **Youth Sexual Assault & Anti-Human Trafficking Counselling:** with the rise in human trafficking in our area we have identified a need to build support, to work towards stopping the trafficking before it starts and supporting those that have already become victims (includes all youth to age 17)