

ELIZABETH FRY

ANNUAL REPORT
2021/2022



Elizabeth Fry
toronto
Hope. Strength. Justice.

Board President Shabnum Durrani
and Executive Director Kelly Potvin

As an essential service, Elizabeth Fry Toronto has remained open during the entire global pandemic — we have been nimble and have continued to adapt to both our client and staff needs over the past two years. Throughout, we have been committed to delivering high quality services and supporting the women we serve every day.

We have chosen to look at the pandemic as an opportunity for us to showcase our organization’s values of compassion, equity and inclusion, excellence and accountability. Last year, the Board of Directors took the exciting step to reconstitute its composition to include spaces for women with lived experience in the criminal justice system. We are in the process of recruiting to ensure that half of the Board of Directors will be women with this lived experience. We see this as vital to ensure that we are taking into account our client’s needs at all levels of the organization.

This year, Elizabeth Fry Toronto is moving forward in other ways. We are proud to announce that our building at 215 Wellesley Street will be redeveloped to include 48 supportive housing units. This project is being funded by the Federal Government, and we are working closely with the City of Toronto, and our builders from R-Hauz, to ensure we create a building that will feel like home to so many of the women we serve! For decades now, we know that accessing affordable housing in Toronto has been a barrier for the women we serve at Elizabeth Fry Toronto – this announcement is one more way we are removing obstacles to help women lead successful independent lives.

Through all the changes and challenges, the past two years have brought, the successes we’ve shared were made possible by our dedicated staff and volunteers who worked tirelessly to carry out our vision and mission. We are thankful for the resilience and perseverance they’ve shown to ensure Elizabeth Fry Toronto continues to make a difference in the lives of women across Toronto. We celebrate and find inspiration from the women who access our programs and services, and are grateful for the commitment and support of our partner organizations, funders, donors, and allies.



Shabnum Durrani
Board President



Kelly Potvin
Executive Director

Elizabeth Fry Toronto is a charitable organization with 70 years of experience meeting the needs of women in conflict with the law. Our programs assist women from court, prison, and within the community, helping to keep families together and increase the chance for marginalized women to break free from or avoid the cycle of incarceration, poverty and homelessness. Many of the women we serve struggle with trauma, mental health and substance use challenges, unemployment, racial discrimination, single motherhood, and lack of family support. Our incredible and dedicated team of staff, volunteers and students provide supportive services, community-based programming, and transitional housing and supports for clients, helping to equip them with the skills, supports, and resources they need to create meaningful change in their lives. We also simultaneously advocate for alternatives to the criminal justice system and work to educate the public about the challenging realities of criminalized women.



MISSION:

Elizabeth Fry Toronto delivers gender based, trauma informed services and advocates for justice and equity for women and non-binary people who are criminalized and their families

VISION:

We envision communities where women are not criminalized

VALUES:

- **Compassion:** We honour women’s voices, experiences and resilience and prioritize women’s mental, spiritual, physical and emotional health
- **Equity and Inclusion:** We are a feminist organization and we challenge oppression in all its forms
- **Excellence:** We foster a collaborative culture based on self-reflection, continuous learning, effective partnerships, quality improvement and evidence based practice
- **Accountability:** We are responsible to ourselves and to our stakeholders for using resources appropriately, communicating honestly and acting with integrity



Due to the pandemic most programs were delivered virtually without any interruption in services.

PROGRAMS

Counselling Services

General Counselling Services

General Counselling provides individuals and group counselling supports and workshops to women in the community dealing with a broad range of social, economic and justice disadvantages. Some of the counselling programs include:

- ▶ Healing from abuse & trauma
- ▶ Parenting
- ▶ Immigrant family law
- ▶ Anger management
- ▶ Theft and fraud
- ▶ Domestic/gender-based violence
- ▶ Substance use
- ▶ Gambling support



As a result of the pandemic the General Counselling team has assisted clients with getting familiar with technology and virtual communication enabling them to engage in programs and continue towards healing and positive change in their lives.

The General Counselling program provided support and counselling to 227 clients and responded to over 2000 service inquiries and one time crisis calls. This program has also offered over 15 group counselling cycles.

Testimonial:

"I really appreciate my counsellors ability to listen deeply without judgement, without accusations and to help me control the whirlwind that has been going through my mind throughout this trying time in my life. It is truly a lifeline.

For the first time ever, I feel I'm growing as a person, and although it's sometimes overwhelming and scary, I feel a sense of confidence and anticipation that makes it all worth it."

Trauma Recovery and Empowerment Model (TREM)

TREM is an evidence-based intervention that helps women who have complex trauma histories link their trauma to current behaviors and emotional responses. TREM involves psychoeducation, and skill training to address both short-term and long-term consequences of trauma. The TREM program is comprised of 18 sessions focusing on empowerment, trauma experiences/impact and skill building.

Clients of TREM also receive individual counselling and resource support as needed during their enrolment in the program

The TREM program provided support and counselling to 77 active and waitlist clients. TREM also engaged with 28 organizations for community outreach and program promotion.

Testimonials:

"TREM has allowed them to develop insight and self-compassion and to 'put it all together' like no other program."

"TREM helped them to heal trauma by 'chipping away at the iceberg'."

"I have been able to calm the inner turmoil of past traumas and find strength to keep moving forward in a very difficult time in my life."

Partner Assault Response (PAR)

The PAR Program delivers specialized, court-mandated psycho-educational intervention for women who have been charged with domestic violence situations. Over 12 weeks, clients are given the opportunity to examine their beliefs and attitudes regarding domestic violence and gain a better understanding of various topics ranging from healthy parenting and effective communication to financial abuse. Clients are encouraged to contribute to the discussion and reflect on the circumstances which brought them to the program. We also offer clients information and resources, including safety planning, counselling, and workshops.

Highlights:

During this year, we continued to support our clients virtually and service them via phone, zoom, and written assignments to reduce their barriers to engaging with the program. Our staff mainly worked on a one-to-one basis to accommodate our clients' needs (related to safety concerns, technology accessibility, literacy and language barriers) and ran multiple, smaller virtual PAR groups. We also continued to provide additional support outside of weekly sessions, as well as an increase in partner contact. In addition, this year, we worked in collaboration with community agencies to improve our referral process and expand the list of available services for our clients.

Our clients provided valuable feedback, which we highly value, sharing that receiving services virtually and with flexibility in scheduling helped them receive appropriate service. We thank the participants of the PAR program for sharing their journeys with us and wish them all the best moving forward.

The PAR program provided support to 96 clients.

Testimonial:

"Many of our clients share that completing the program provides them with many valuable skills, which help them cope with stress and low self-esteem and help maintain healthy relationships. One of our clients talked about how learning more about identifying and communicating their feelings in a healthy manner helped her feel empowered and less stuck. Not only did she feel better physically, but her relationships with the close people in her life and her employer have also improved."



Direct Accountability Program (DAP)

DAP is an alternative to prosecution for eligible individuals who have been charged with minor criminal offences. The program allows for the efficient resolution of minor court matters, and recognizes that community-based sanctions are an effective way to hold individuals accountable for minor offences without criminal conviction. It results in the charge(s) being withdrawn – with no criminal conviction. DAP is the only Elizabeth Fry Toronto program that provides services to men through College Park court.

This year our DAP provided services to 197 men and 68 women.

**This program will be moving to the new Toronto court house location in 2023.*

Phyllis Haslam Community Residential Facility

The Phyllis Haslam Community Residential Facility works with women as they transition back into the community from either Grand Valley Institution for Women or Vanier Centre for Women. Operating under a trauma informed care lens, staff were able to provide support as women navigated the challenges they faced on a daily basis. Staff were able to provide one-on-one counselling, crisis intervention, and act as sounding boards for the women as they navigated returning to the community. Some areas that the women require support include anything from securing necessary identifications, getting their taxes done, finding housing, or tips to cope with the stress of daily life. Once women leave our residential program, they know they still have a team behind them rooting for their success. Many return to ask for advice on how to address any new challenges they might face, or to share their success stories.

Despite the pandemic our residential program was still able to support 17 women as they successfully transitioned from an institution into our residential facility.

Home for Good

Home for Good is a partnership between the City of Toronto and Elizabeth Fry Toronto. The partnership aims to help women transitioning out of institutions to navigate the private rental market with a focus on reintegrating and case management supports.

This year our Home for Good program housed 3 new clients successfully and assisted 19 clients with their housing search.

Testimonial:

"This was my identity for far too long.... I am not this 'number', I am not this 'offender', not anymore and never again.

I am better than this # and the past it connects me to. I will not allow my past mistakes to define, who I am today...

We always have a choice in life. I clearly have not always made the right ones, but I now choose to do better.

If you want something enough in life you will do anything to get it. It won't be easy.... nothing good ever comes easy...I have learnt that the hard way.

I never had goals, direction or ambition in my life before this horrible, painful yet, beautiful experience.

I had to go through this, in order to be where I am today....And where I am today....is still so unbelievable to me. I have such a strong support system that I couldn't have imagined having before. I live a drug free and crime free life, I have positive people in my life, I have a job that I love, I start school next month, I have money saved in the bank, I was able to pay my own tuition and furnish my beautiful home with my own hard earned money.

Finally I have somewhere I can call home.

Finally I have something that is mine.

Thank you for your continued, genuine support. I am forever grateful."



Exit Doors Here (EDH)

This was the last year of our Exit Doors Here program.

The goal of the EDH program was to support women who wanted to exit sex work or who were thinking about transitioning out of sex work by addressing their needs and helping them progress towards reaching the goals they set for themselves. In recent years, Elizabeth Fry Toronto witnessed a dramatic increase in the number of sex workers accessing agency supports and, in response, decided to develop and implement Exit Doors Here. The program adopted the broader Elizabeth Fry vision of helping women in vulnerable positions to build a sustainable livelihood. The Exit Doors Here program was based on the Critical Time Intervention (CTI) model. CTI was delivered by trained CTI Specialists over a 9-month transitional period and was comprised of three phases, each of a 3-month duration with decreased intensity over time.

This year EDH supported 30 new clients & 59 clients graduated from the program last year.

30 outreach events were delivered and over 90 information sessions were provided.

Success Story:

Over the course of five years, Exit Doors Here project provided the full scope of the CTI intervention to 155 clients, not only exceeding the targets but providing meaningful support to a very vulnerable population that constantly faces stigma and barriers in accessing the services.

During outreach activities EDH staff reached out to 1307 community participants and made them aware about the Exit Doors Here program through information sessions, educational workshops, street outreach and drop-in services. Female sex workers were informed of support services and programs offered if they wanted to leave the sex industry.

The EDH program worked hard towards helping this underserved population by making a contribution to serving women and the community. On an individual level, the EDH program did increase knowledge and capacity of female-identified sex workers and helped women transition out of, and eventually exit, sex work. At a community level, the EDH program worked towards supporting Toronto's harm reduction objectives among sex workers and increased opportunities for collaboration and information sharing among social justice, public health, education, housing, and legal agencies in the city in order to collectively address women's needs.

The clients that have participated in the EDH have expressed gratitude about the help and wrap-around services they received. This was a unique program to support those who were ready to exit the sex industry and provided them with a holistic approach to make the transition sustainable and their goals attainable.

**Building Employment Strategies Together (BEST)**

The BEST program gives participants the opportunity to develop skills and strategic ways to reintegrate in their community through employment and educational initiatives.

This year the BEST program supported 117 clients, presented 41 workshops and delivered 2 outreach events.

Testimonial:

"I hope this email finds you well. My name is Brie and I have been getting support from Cynthia Richards and the BEST Program.

The BEST program worker has really gone above and beyond when it comes to helping me. She has taken the time to walk me step by step through the pardon process, which is such a complicated process, so having her guidance has made such a difference. She also provided me with support regarding my resume which has given me more confidence on my job search.

I'm so grateful that these services are available to me and I'm thankful for all the hard work the BEST program worker and E. Fry does."

**My Start Up**

My Start Up is a trauma-informed entrepreneurship program designed for women and non-binary people to develop their business ideas, gain self-confidence, increase their employment and life skills, create meaningful connections and, for some, launch a successful small business.

This year MSU facilitated two cohorts of women. Cohort 5 had 18 women sign up and 12 successfully graduated. Cohort 6 had 24 women sign up and 19 successfully graduated.

The MSU program delivered 40 outreach events and 24 post- program support workshops.

Highlights:

Due to Covid-19 pandemic MSU program was successfully delivered online. Participants were offered loaner laptops and RocketHub internet sticks in order to reduce barriers to access classes.

Success Stories:

Natasha's current and biggest project thus far within the frame of S'Healed is a very tangible manifestation of a metaphorical 'coming full circle'. Through her partnership with Dr. Roz's Healing Place, where her healing journey began, she is donating custom, hand-made copper jewellery packages for women who are presently living at the centre. Natasha is anticipating to donate approximately 20 packages, although the numbers of residents varies.

Due to the limitations posed by COVID-19, discussions concerning the details of the project's implementation are still underway. Natasha is also foreseeing the need for an education session that provides information about the properties of copper and crystal jewellery, as well as its role in supporting the body's natural healing properties.

As a former client of Dr. Roz's Healing Place, Natasha is acutely aware of the important role that their community plays in achieving recovery and growth. As a channel for expressing her gratitude, she wants to give back and contribute to the positive change within the organization. This goal extends beyond Dr. Roz's Healing Place, as Natasha's vision includes future contributions to a greater community of social services supporting victims of interpersonal partner violence.

Women’s Equality Leadership & Employment Access Response Network (WE LEARN)

WE LEARN aims to help create systemic changes to barriers to employment experienced by BIPOC women in conflict with the criminal justice system. The project has a two-pronged approach, first it aims to employ and support the professional development of BIPOC women with lived experience. The second is to create a network of partnerships with equity-seeking and multidisciplinary agencies, employment and training institutions and entrepreneurial and social enterprises..

WE LEARN hired three Employment Advocacy Workers in June 2022. They have begun professional development trainings, which cover various topics, to become more efficient Employment Advocacy Workers. WE LEARN is also finalizing its network partnerships and is aiming to begin meetings in September 2022.

Community Support Programs

Community Outreach Van

With support from United Way Greater Toronto and community donations, Elizabeth Fry Toronto was able to continue operating its street outreach van over the past fiscal year. Using harm reduction and peer-led service approaches, we worked to reduce the social isolation faced by members of Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) communities who have been or are at increased risk of being in conflict with the law. With the support of our Harm Reduction Outreach Workers, we were able to build trusting relationships, raise awareness on reducing risk and harm while distributing brochures, harm reduction supplies, grocery cards, clothing and personal care items to BIPOC community members.

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The clients that have participated in the EDH have expressed gratitude about the help and wrap around services they received. This was a unique program to support those who were ready to exit the sex industry and provided them with a holistic approach to make the transition sustainable and their goals attainable.

- ▶ **125 grocery store gift cards and 350 food hampers/baskets distributed**

▶ **900 information and navigation resources shared**
- ▶ **300 referrals made to social service and other support agencies**

▶ **300 health and hygiene products distributed**
- ▶ **700 miscellaneous harm reduction supplies**

▶ **300 peer-to-peer wellness check-ins**

This year the outreach van served 500 individuals.

Talk and Listen

Talk and Listen is a peer and community run initiative provided for folks in conflict with the law, including those who are incarcerated. Volunteers are trained to act as a listening ear and help to link callers with information to services and resources in the community.

- ▶ **17 Talk and Listen Volunteers**
- ▶ **Number of calls received: 1300**

Court Support

Court Support volunteers offer practical and emotional support to folks both in and out of custody who are going through the court process at College Park Court. This may include those recently released on bail, family members supporting a loved one, or a witness. Volunteers will work closely with court personnel, duty counsel, and other agencies within the courts. This program was running online for a short period of time and will resume in person in the fall.

- ▶ **5 Court Support Volunteers**

Bingo Volunteers

Bingo volunteers regularly represent Elizabeth Fry Toronto at the Delta Bingo Hall, informing customers of the agency's programs and services. In exchange, the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation gives a portion of their revenue to Elizabeth Fry Toronto. Minimum 1 year commitment. 2SLGBTQ+ Drop-in: This virtual drop-in is a community space for 2SLGBTQ+ Youth and young adults to gather for meaningful discussions and genuine connections. This drop- in is mostly managed by the volunteer coordinator and a volunteer.

- ▶ **8 Bingo Volunteers**
- ▶ **10 General Volunteers**
- ▶ **1 LGBTQ+ Drop-In Volunteer**



Highlights:

We have been able to onboard new volunteers for each program. We provided training for each group of volunteers. We have been able to bring volunteers to in-person events to learn, connect and strengthen their relationships with the community we work with.

Success Story:

With the support of Talk and Listen volunteers we were able to help with the process of client's release and integration into their communities. We were also able to provide suggestions in situations where client needed more information.

Testimonials from a volunteer(s):

Being a ‘Talk & Listen’ volunteer has given me a glimpse into the reality of incarceration and being stuck within the legal system. Callers need anything from bail program information to housing support, half-way house resources, mental health assistance to just being present with them as they talk. My most recent caller wanted bus fare information for their road trip, planned for after their release. We talked about different bus routes, travel options and budgeting. For a short time the caller was able to think beyond their current situation. As a volunteer it was a privilege to walk with them in those moments.



Thank you to The Elizabeth Fry Toronto Board of Directors and staff – comprised of inspiring women with rich and diverse skills and experiences.

Board List April 1 2021 – March 31, 2022

Shabnum Durrani - President
Lauriana Mandody - Vice President
Lauren Winkler
Bhavandeep Kaur Sodhi
Nia Bailey
Michelle Smith
Cara-Marie O'Hagan
Lieran Docherty
Aileen Thompson
Tanisha Evans

Outgoing members who also served during this time:

Flora Matheson
Devika Prashad
Katherine Ward
Venus Sayed

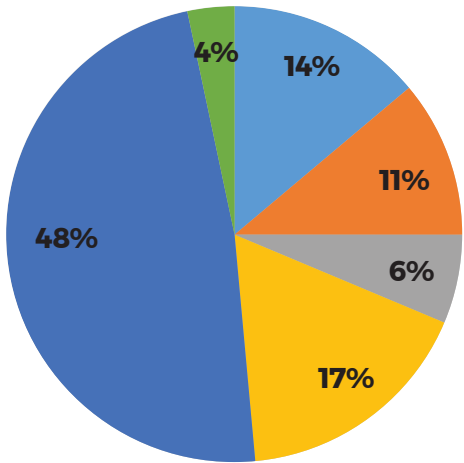


Full/Part-time Staff:

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FINANCIAL REPORT

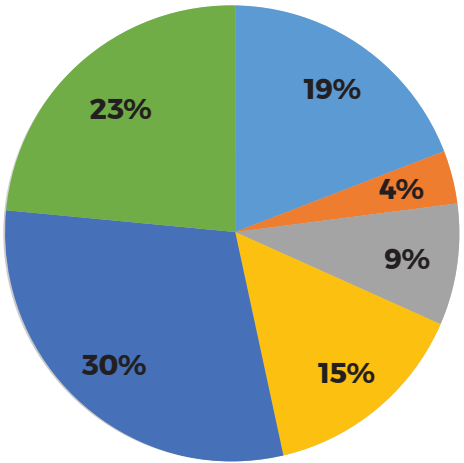
REVENUES



- United Way
- City of Toronto
- Donations and Foundations Grants
- Provincial Government
- Federal Government
- Other

Total Revenues: \$3,562,742

EXPENSES



- Outreach Programs
- Fundraising
- Administration & Resource Development
- Employment
- Counselling & Court Programs
- Residence

Total Expenses: \$3,738,587

On behalf of Elizabeth Fry Toronto and our clients, we would like to extend a big **thank you** to our generous individual donors and members who have supported us over the year. We appreciate the financial support, time and resources our funders and supporters have provided to ensure we can continue to serve women in conflict with the law. Without this support we would be unable to carry out our work in the community and at large.

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Women and Gender Equality Canada
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