



**ANNUAL
REPORT
2019/2020**

LEADERSHIP MESSAGE:

Board President Lieran Docherty and
Executive Director Kelly Potvin



Lieran Docherty
Board President



Kelly Potvin
Executive Director

It is difficult to reflect on the past year because in some ways it has been overshadowed with a global pandemic that has consumed our day to day and makes everything that came before it seems to pale in comparison. Despite the challenges we faced this past year, we did truly have a successful year that saw growth and change.

Our Executive Director was seconded to the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies for a part of the year which drew us closer to the important work being done at the national level. We also undertook an internal structural review that saw many recommendations implemented including the creation of two Director-level positions. In March 2020, we welcomed our new Director of Finance and Administration, Sheila Baroro and Director of Programs, Vibhuti Mehra who joined us just in time to help deal with the challenges that the pandemic presented us with.

We were proud to witness how quickly our staff and program delivery adapted to accommodate the needs of the women we serve, especially when we had to close our office on account of the COVID-19 related health and safety measures. Both our TREM and My Start-Up programs were in the midst of finishing up a cycle of group sessions when COVID-19 became a concern. They were able to transition seamlessly to running their programs entirely online through Zoom. Though participants in both programs were feeling the weight of the pandemic they too adapted to the changes and were able to successfully complete their respective programs.

At Elizabeth Fry Toronto we work with so many partners whose work aligns with our own. This past year we stood with our partner Thunder Woman Healing Lodge Society through their community engagement sessions with the Cliffside community which was part of a larger process to obtain permits to build Ontario's first Healing Lodge for Indigenous women. Much of the community's opposition to the lodge was deeply rooted in racist assumptions about who criminalized Indigenous women are. In the end, our partners were granted permits to build the lodge at 2217 Kingston Road! We look forward to a long partnership with Thunder Woman Healing Lodge which will provide alternatives for Indigenous women in our community.

As Elizabeth Fry Toronto continues to grow with a new office and program location created on Carlaw Avenue, we are moving ahead steadily on our Strategic Plan while remaining aligned to our values: Compassion, Equity and Inclusion, Excellence and Accountability.

We would like to express gratitude to our tireless and dedicated staff and volunteers who work hard to carry out our vision and mission. We also acknowledge the resilience, strength, and courage of the women who have accessed our programs and services over the past year. They have guided our learning and practice as a trauma-informed organization. We also are very thankful for the ongoing confidence and support of our donors, funders, partners and allies in ensuring that we at Elizabeth Fry Toronto are making a difference in the lives of women across Toronto.



ABOUT US

Elizabeth Fry Toronto is a charitable organization dedicated to helping women break free from cycles of victimization and criminalization. For nearly 70 years, our incredible and dedicated team of staff, volunteers and students facilitate this work in a framework that helps women build their capacities and skills to successfully reintegrate women into the community and avoid future conflict with the criminal justice system. Elizabeth Fry Toronto offers counselling, reintegration services, community support services and transitional housing to support the women we serve. While our programs provide early stages of intervention, we also simultaneously advocate for alternatives to the criminal justice system and work to educate the public about the challenging realities of women. We strive to empower women to create meaningful change in their lives for the benefit of themselves, their families and communities.



NEW MISSION, VISION, VALUES

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



COUNSELLING SERVICES

Healing from Abuse and Trauma

The Healing from Abuse Program works with women who have experienced childhood and/or adult physical and emotional abuse resulting in trauma. This program helps clients identify abusive relationships, develop skills to establish personal safety and manage traumatic stress responses.

This year we facilitated 3 group counselling cycles in the community, serving 160 clients.

Testimonial: "Because of you, I believe in myself above all else. I got myself out of charges. I put time and energy into having them withdrawn. Because of you, I booked my ticket to go meet people I never thought I would. You believed I could be somebody when no one, not even my own father believed that I could be somebody and here I am proving the system wrong. I might have made my mistakes but here I am! A job, a somewhat stable relationship? And an adventure to be able to look forward to. Two years ago, I was not the same woman I am today. I have a voice, a purpose and a job."

Mothers Who Care

The Mothers Who Care Parenting Program provides counselling to mothers at risk or in conflict with the law and mothers who hope to reunite with their family after incarceration. This program also provides support and advocacy to women at the Vanier Center for Women in Milton.

This year we facilitated 2 group counselling cycles in the community and 3 group counselling cycles at Vanier, serving 182 clients.

Success story: A woman was released from the prison to Elizabeth Fry Toronto's transitional residence. As a result of her participation in some of the agency programs, she was able to secure housing and permitted to have access visits with her children.

Reintegration

The Reintegration Counselling Program provides counselling to women on provincial probation and parole using a harm reduction framework. This framework helps women manage stressful circumstances and environmental cues that may be triggering.

This year we facilitated 2 group counselling cycles for Substance Abuse and 2 group counselling cycles for Anger management.



COUNSELLING SERVICES CONTINUED

Community General Counselling

The Community General Program provides counselling to women dealing with substance use and addictions, anger management, theft and fraud as well as social and criminal justice issues.

This year we facilitated 2 group counselling cycles in the community and 2 two-day workshops, serving 100 clients.

Trauma Recovery and Empowerment Model (TREM)

The TREM Program is our new 18-week trauma recovery program that provides trauma informed psychoeducational and counselling supports to women who have experienced gender-based violence. The goal of the program is to help women who have complex trauma histories link their trauma to current behaviours and emotional responses.

This year we facilitated 2 group cycles in the community and 4 group cycles at Vanier, serving 32 clients.

Success story: *The reports from these first groups have shown that those who participated had significantly improved in their trauma symptoms as well as felt more equipped to manage through the COVID-19 pandemic as a result of the skills they developed from TREM. The TREM facilitators were honored to witness participants developing a deeper feeling of empowerment, stronger boundaries, and more positive emotional wellbeing. Overall, the first groups of TREM were a success!*

Newcomer Liaison Services

The Newcomer Liaison Program provides psychoeducational workshops that focus on education and prevention to newcomer women. This program addresses the needs of newcomer women who are at risk of becoming in conflict with the law due to their lack of knowledge and/or orientation to the Canadian Justice System.

This year we served 50 clients.



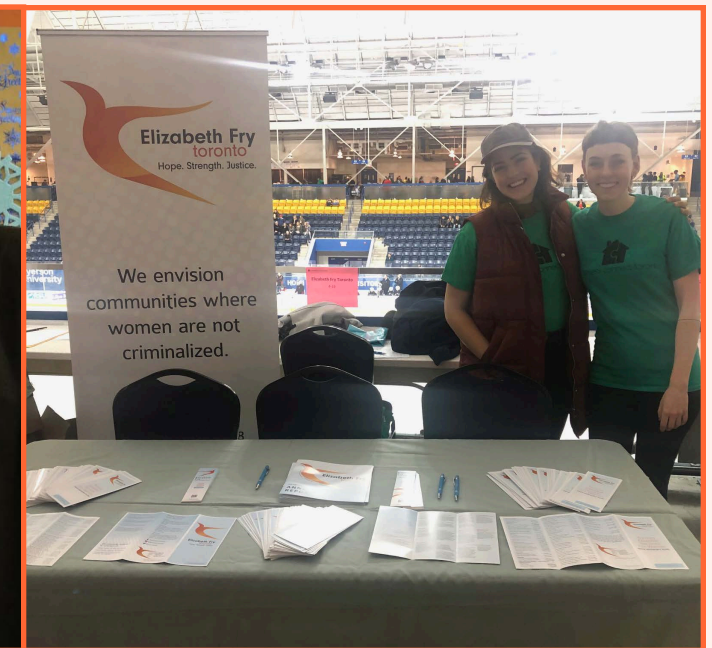
SEX WORK TRANSITION PROGRAM

Exit Doors Here

The Exit Doors Here Program provides personalized wrap around services and interventions for women wishing to exit the sex work industry. The program uses an evidence-based case management model called Critical Time Intervention (CTI) which helps transition people from precarious and sensitive situations to stability.

This year the program team facilitated over 50 workshops and completed 150 outreach visits, serving 40 new clients and 25 returning clients.

Success story: *"During this time, I was working with a client who was chronically homeless, struggling with severe mental health and addiction issues and was actually living out of her car for a long time before entering into treatment. I had met her while she was undergoing treatment. During the 9-month program, I was able to get her connected to a psychiatrist who provided an updated assessment and new medications. This client has not had good experiences with the medical system in the past and was hesitant to attending the first appointment. The Exit Doors Here program was able to connect her with psychiatric supports, affordable permanent housing, social support from peers and on-going long term case management."*



HOUSING PROGRAMS

Phyllis Haslam Residence

Phyllis Haslam Residence is a transitional residence for women paroled from federal and provincial correctional institutions. Women work towards community reintegration in a supportive and structured environment. Continuing our commitment to providing trauma-informed care to women in the residence, 6 full-time team members were trained in trauma informed care, CTI case management and motivational interviewing.

This year during in-reach at Grand Valley Institute we visited 251 women and 42 women were housed at our transitional residence.

Home for Good

Home for Good is a partnership between Elizabeth Fry Toronto and the City of Toronto aimed at providing safe, stable housing for women transitioning out of institutions. Through this project, we are able to assist high needs clients in navigating the private rental market and support them through the process of reintegration. Despite difficulties in securing private market units, our Critical Time Reintegration Worker supported women to improve their quality of life and increase personal as well as community resiliency.

This year we worked with 11 women to improve housing security and increase their social and community connectedness.



EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Building Employment Strategies Together (BEST)

The BEST Program provides one-on-one and group support to women to develop a job seeking plan. Women work on communication skills, resume content, financial literacy, identifying career training programs and job placement. This program brings a holistic approach to addressing individual challenges and systemic barriers facing women in, or at risk of being in conflict with the law.

This year we facilitated 23 workshops, serving 140 clients.

My Start-Up

My Start Up is a comprehensive training program for women to develop their small business ideas and gain the knowledge, skills and networks they need to succeed. This program is in partnership with Rise Asset Development at University of Toronto. Women get access to idea generator sessions, employment skills workshops, support developing their business idea and a low-interest loan.

We are proud to share that:

- 70 women applied
- 45 women participated
- 22 women graduated
- 13 women started a business

This year we facilitated 25 workshops, gave 5 community presentations, hosted 2 informational tables and held 10 business training sessions.



Success story: Rita is the proud sole proprietor and operator of Riri's Blissful Bites Catering 2U. In late 2018, Rita took on the challenge of enrolling in the My Start-Up program and it changed everything about the way she viewed and worked at her business. Rita was inspired to grow her business to another level, and learned so many valuable business skills and practices that upon graduation from the program, she launched Riri's Blissful Bites. In 2019, Rita adapted her business from not only doing cakes and desserts, but now catering food as well as homemade drinks for different events. Despite the lull in business after the pandemic began in early 2020, Rita is happy to report that in the last month or two her business has been picking up again slowly.

COURT DIVERSION SERVICES

Direct Accountability

Direct Accountability is a diversion program that provides alternatives to prosecution for people charged with minor criminal offences. With this program they can have their charge withdrawn without a criminal conviction if they accept responsibility for their actions and make amends to the community.

This year we served 183 women and 363 men.



Partner Abuse Response (PAR)

PAR is a court-mandated counselling program for women charged with domestic violence. This program assists women through educational group counselling to better understand the impact of abuse in their lives, to establish and maintain their safety, and to develop constructive coping strategies needed to achieve goals and remain free of conflict with the law.

Success story: *We are happy to share that the majority of these women have had their charges dismissed and gained the tools to move on from the criminal justice system.*

This year we facilitated 12 group counselling sessions, serving 185 clients.



ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS

The Market Place

The Market Place is a free clothing and personal care 'store' located at our main office, open to marginalized women and non-binary individuals. Many of them have recently been released from custody or are experiencing a time of transition in their lives.

Talk & Listen

Talk & Listen is a toll-free support, resource, and information line for incarcerated people in Ontario. It provides opportunities for those experiencing isolation to connect with a caring and supportive volunteer to chat with.

Court Support

Our Court Support service provides assistance to individuals at College Park Court House with contacting a loved one, finding information, referrals, and personal care items.

Vanier Volunteer Visits

Twice a month, volunteers organize engaging and community-building activities for women in Vanier.

Testimonial: *Because we do not make visits every weekend, whenever we deliver the program, you can see the women's joy on their faces. From a practical standpoint, volunteers are able to answer questions and bring awareness to the resources available to the women during and after incarceration. But in addition to that, the women have an opportunity to socialize with each other in a setting that is relaxed and supportive.*

We would like to extend a big thank you to our knowledgeable and committed volunteers who continue to show up and make a difference in lives of many of the women we serve.



We want to thank our Board of Directors, staff, students, and peer leaders for their hard work, passion and commitment to Elizabeth Fry Toronto. Without their tireless effort and dedication to our mission and vision Elizabeth Fry Toronto's programs and services would not be what it is today!

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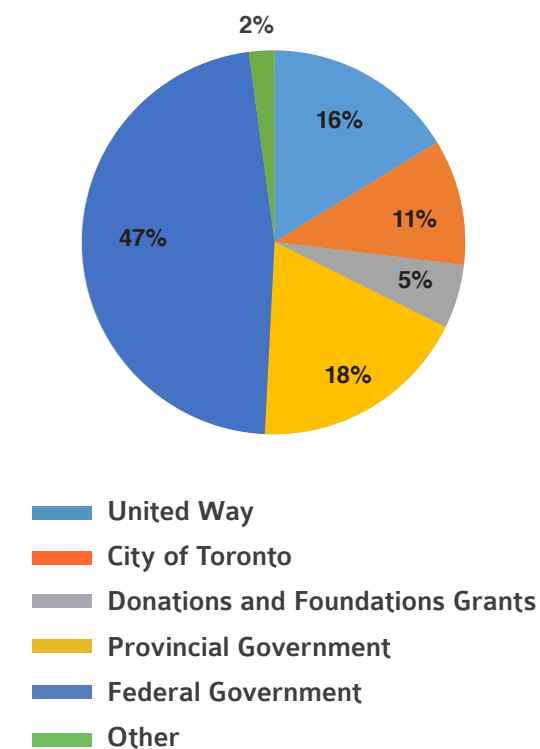
Ariel Filler, Amanda Sellers, Dee Sherwood, Geri Angelova



FINANCIAL REPORT 2019-2020

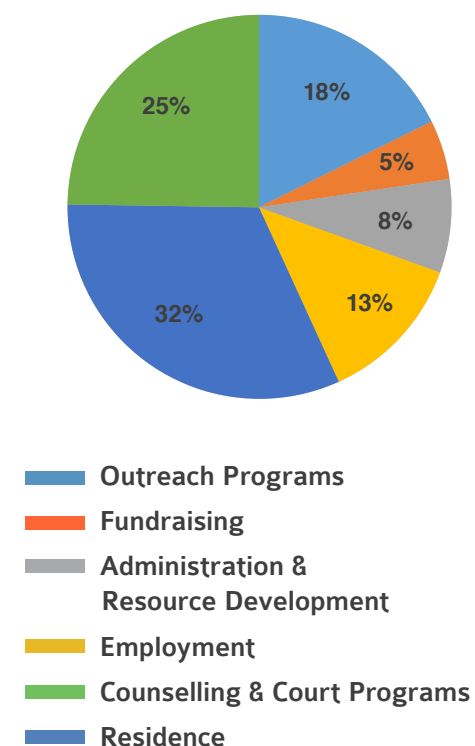
April 1, 2019-March 31, 2020

Revenues



Total Revenues: \$3,333,293

Expenses



Total Expenses: \$3,315,465

On behalf of Elizabeth Fry Toronto and our clients, we would like to extend a 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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Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario
Women and Gender Equality Canada
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