



Scarborough Women's Centre



**Annual Report
2007-2008**

President's Message

This year, Scarborough Women's Centre celebrates 25 years of service to women wanting to leave abusive situations and institute long term positive changes in their lives. This is indeed a milestone and an occasion for celebration. As we reflect on the achievements of the past year, we have had more successes than just maintaining our core services. On the completion of the Building Agency Capacity Project, funded by United Way Toronto, we received an Ontario Trillium Foundation grant for the Business Development Project, which will help the Centre increase sustainability, build partnerships and raise awareness about its activities. We expanded our services through the Young Women's Outreach program, which will better prepare young women to make positive choices in their lives. We also partnered with the Birchmount Bluffs Neighbourhood Centre to provide a program for women with disabilities, where they can explore issues such as self-esteem, assertiveness and building healthy relationships. We even took our annual event to a new level. The fashion show and auction, at the downtown Manyata Café, sponsored by The Indulgent Foodie was a great success and a step in the direction of raising the level of our events. The Centre must be commended for touching the lives of over 150,000 women and their children in the last 25 years. Thank you to the staff and volunteers who have worked so hard to deliver the programs and to make a difference in the lives of many women, who are now able to celebrate their lives and move forward with confidence. Congratulations!

Yvette Bailey, President



Executive Director's Message

1983 was a year of possibility. Scarborough was finding a new identity as a place that people were drawn to. After being a "bedroom community," which sent office workers to downtown Toronto for several decades, it was now a destination of choice to newcomers and those who were trying to get on their feet. A wonderful mix of newcomers, long-timers, elders, and youth began to define our issues and our face. At this eventful time, Scarborough Women's Centre was incorporated as an agency determined to support women to move forward in their lives. Over the past 25 years, we have had many opportunities to impact the community. Providing information about available resources; identifying gaps and needs for service; improving women's safety on transit; working in partnership with key players; raising awareness about women's issues and concerns; and providing individual women with the opportunity to obtain support and education to address their own issues. I am so proud of our Board, volunteers and staff for the way they have helped to make Scarborough a better place for women, and helped women make better lives for themselves and their children. I am so grateful to our funders, donors and friends who have made the resources available to do this work. And I am especially proud of the women who have used our services. They are courageous, determined and hopeful. 2008 is still a time of possibility!

Lynda Kosowan, MSW, RSW
Executive Director



SWC Honour Roll

Staff

Lynda Kosowan, Executive Director

Jacynth Fennell

Lambrini Soulos

Vivienne Kendry

Sophia Santos

Dolly Carlos

Summer Program

Workers

Janelle Barrow

Fatima Fazalullasha

Student Placements

Karen Leung

Sarah Robbins

Facilitators

Victoria Arshad

Niroma De Zoysa

Prabha Bassoo

Kerri Harris

Antonia Benton

Jin Huh

Vivienne Kendry

Marilyn B.

Novelette Burke

Angela Boucher

Susan Ludwig

Stella Celucci

Darlene Montgomery

Anne Crasto

Priyadarshini Senroy

Nancy Shepherd

Alka Chopra

Lambrini Soulos

Our Mission

Scarborough Women's Centre facilitates the empowerment of any woman wanting to leave an abusive or isolating situation, so she can implement long term positive changes with confidence.

Who We Serve

Women using the Centre are from all walks of life, economic situations, ethno-racial backgrounds and ages. They come from every continent of the world. Many are dealing with violence, poverty, isolation and other health issues. Women benefit greatly from the connection developed with other women, the assurance that they are not alone and enrichment from the experiences of others.

Programs and Services

Our programs and services are designed to provide information, education, and support to women as they make the transition to economic and emotional independence.

Information and Assessment Service

Callers to this confidential phone line get information about resources in the community or at the Centre to meet their needs. This year, 2399 people phoned, walked in or e-mailed us. They were served by trained volunteers, placement students, and staff. A wide range of issues were raised, covering the continuum of a woman's life as mother, partner, employee, individual, or community member.

Major issues addressed were:

- Education/training or volunteer work 46%
- Emotional health 12%
- Woman abuse 10%
- Housing and practical supports 9%

Thank you to the City of Toronto (Community Service Partnerships) for their support of the Information and Assessment service.

“I now know I have a voice and should be heard.”

Educational Programs

Courses and workshops are offered in small groups, in a self-help model with a trained facilitator. Core subjects include self-esteem, assertiveness, and dealing with anger. Other workshops deal with communication, self-discovery, healing from abuse, healthy relationships, and promotion of physical and emotional health. This year some of our workshops were specially tailored for young women, and for women with disabilities. Partners include the West Hill Community Health Centre Health Promotion Staff; and Birchmount Bluffs Neighbourhood Centre Active and Able Program.

- 514 women registered for the Educational Programs
- 68% of women completing the programs indicated that they had achieved their goals for participation
- 237 women were subsidized to participate in the programs
- 5641 units of service were provided

Some of the outcomes reported by women:

- 15% developed life skills to move forward
- 12.5% solved personal problems and made positive changes
- 9.5% improved communication skills
- 5% registered for further training
- 5% obtained employment
- 4% left abusive situations

Thank you to the City of Toronto (Community Service Partnerships), and Ontario Women's Directorate (Investing in Women's Futures) for their support of the Education Program.

The Outreach to Women with Disabilities provided service to 51 women with disabilities and was made possible by donations from Green Shield Canada, and the McLean Foundation.

The Young Women's Outreach provided service to 75 young women and was made possible by a donation from Junior League of Toronto.

Volunteers

Jennifer Mohan
Loretta Fines
Arulsakthy Vamadeva
Bharati Guha
Sonia Prashad
Kathy Christie
Tiffany Ng
Denise Wall
Eliza Abrera
Salma Ali
Anika Baranyai
Sheela Barot
Mohini Bindra
Rebecca Chon
Diana Chung
Caprie Clarke
Angela Clarke
Sonal Dandavate
Julie Dundas
Suzanne Feeley
Wendy Foster
Claudia Fuller
Francine Hickman
Christina Holt
Heather Jamieson

Board of Directors

Yvette Bailey, President
Lyn McDonell, Vice-President
Christine Miranda, Treasurer
Irene Rey, Corporate Secretary
Arianna Bhagwansingh
Christina Friend
Rahwa Haile*
Jessica Shields*
Roslyn Shields
Nadine Spencer
*Resigned during the year

“Please continue to do what you are doing. You are changing lives.”

Committee Members

Sarah Ahmed
Koliah Bourne
Elaine Dandy
Julie Sagara
Saba Schwartz
Samantha Singh
Olga Zavgordnya
Jennifer Carpenter
Anjum Chutai
Linda Cowan
Mary Heinmaa
Ellen Bear
Bonnie Bickel
Catherine Molyneux

Funders

City Of Toronto
Service Canada
Ministry of the Attorney
General (Ontario Victim
Services Support)
Ontario Trillium
Foundation
Ontario Women's
Directorate

Individual Donors

Sarah Ahmed
Joyce Archer
Yvette Bailey
Marie Belanger
Carol Bolton
Karen Boniface
Marie Campbell
Carolina Cameron
Gloria Costello
Bert Dandy
Elaine Dandy
Maureen Edgar

Rebuilding Our Lives Program

The Rebuilding Our Lives Program is an intensive 22 session group for women who have left abusive situations, but are at risk for returning because they need to build economic and emotional independence skills. In partnership with Centennial College, women had the opportunity to heal from abuse, develop life skills for independence, and explore and plan for future directions. Following the intensive group, participants had access to counseling and support. Agincourt Community Services Association provided an ongoing Community Kitchen for graduates and current participants. Junior League Toronto held a very special Healthy Nutrition evening where women were treated to demonstrations by a professional chef. On leaving the Rebuilding Our Lives program, women obtained employment, started their own business, completed their GED, or registered for further training. Twenty women participated in the program this year.

The two groups and various special activities were made possible by a grant from the Ministry of the Attorney General (Ontario Victim Support Services), and donations from the George Lunan Foundation, Caring Foundation, Chum Charitable Foundation, and the Catherine and Maxwell Meighen Foundation.



“Now that I feel better, I can help others.”

Support Services

The Case Manager/Counsellor helps women to identify their goals for change in their lives, develop a plan to achieve those goals, and provides support through the process. She may also match a woman in transition with a trained mentor or tutor. The tutor will work with a newcomer woman on improving her conversational English after she has already learned English in a formal setting.

This year:

- 94 women used the service for issues related to woman abuse and violence prevention
- 167 women used the service for issues related to economic independence
- Emotional health was a component for all women.
- There were 34 volunteer mentor matches with women using our services.

Outcomes reported by women included:

- 173 addressed physical/emotional health concerns
- 44 recognized unhealthy relationships and situations
- 38 built support networks
- 35 built connections with community resources
- 32 recognized and built on personal strengths
- 27 developed self-care strategies
- 22 registered for further training
- 21 improved communication skills
- 19 initiated a job search
- 9 improved job performance
- 18 improved English conversation and literacy skills
- 15 left an abusive relationship
- 12 obtained employment
- 8 obtained safe, affordable housing
- 2 started their own business

These results were made possible through funding from Ontario Women's Directorate (Investing in Women's Futures); City of Toronto (Community Service Partnerships); and RBC Royal Bank Foundation.

Heather Freed
Lynn Fournier-Ruggles
Karen Grimshaw
Ronald Hack
Mark Hardy
Kerri Harris
Debbie Herridge
Francine Hickman
Evelyn Hill
Shizuka Ito
Larry Kosowan
Lynda Kosowan
Nan Kosowan
Neva Kotsopoulos
Marcela Kupfer
Lyn McDonell
Catherine McLean
Molyneux
Lorraine Mackie
Christine Miranda
Jennifer Mohan
Kalia Musha
David Pauli
Joan Phillips
Jeff Proc
Irene Rey
Roslyn Shields
Nadine Spencer
Penni Stuart
Jeanette Thompson
Dharshika Watson

Corporate and Group Sponsors

Aldgate Construction Ltd
Bank of Nova Scotia
Business Connection
Exchange

“A place where we as women feel welcomed.”

Canadian Federation of University Women
(Scarborough Chapter)
CIBC
Eli Lilly Canada Inc
IBM Employees Charitable Fund
Ipsco Saskatchewan Inc
L'Amoureux C.I.
Malvern Christian Assembly
Malvern Cricket and Social Club
Mastermind Educational Toys
OPG Employees Trust
RBC Foundation
Royal Bank Canada
Scarborough Full Gospel Church
SKF Canada (Employee Charity Fund)
St. Mark's United Church
TD Financial Group Telus
The Junior League of Toronto

Foundation Donors

Chum Charitable Foundation
George Lunan Foundation
Green Shield Canada
J.P.Bickell Foundation
Lee Tak Wei Foundation
Toskan Casale Foundation
The Caring Foundation
The Catherine and Maxwell Meighen Foundation
The Geoffrey Wood Foundation
The McLean Foundation

Governance

The Board of Directors is responsible for the overall direction of the agency, in partnership with the Executive Director. The Board has a number of committees charged with responsibility for various aspects of the agency. Each committee has at least one Board representative, and some committees will also include members of the Centre who are not on the Board.

Here are some highlights from the Board committees this past year:

Executive Committee:

The President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Corporate Secretary worked together to support the activities and aims of the Centre with Board members and staff.

Finance Committee:

This group worked with the Executive Director and Bookkeeper to ensure careful accountability and stewardship of the grants and donations entrusted to the agency. Monthly review of financial statements and management reports resulted in the accumulation of a small unrestricted reserve to be set aside for contingencies.



“I am so happy I found this place.”

Governance Committee:

This committee is responsible for supporting the Board to do its work. The Governance Committee recruited, screened and oriented five new members for the Board; consulted with stakeholders for regular review of agency policies, and supported ongoing Board learning.

Strategic Planning Committee:

This committee continued to monitor ongoing issues in the community by reviewing relevant research, analyzing census data and statistics, and consulting with stakeholders. They also supported committees to ensure that the agency's strategic directions were being honoured in all business planning.

Business Development Committee:

A new committee which worked to develop connections with women of influence who could assist the agency in building its profile. This committee is responsible worked with the Executive Director to develop a Business Development project focused on improving sustainability; building partnerships; and connecting with the high priority neighbourhood initiatives in Scarborough.

25th Anniversary Committee:

This group developed plans for celebrating our 25th anniversary of incorporation in 08-09, including the program for our 25th AGM.



Special Donations

Royal Bank Canada
(Employee Volunteer Grant for 2007 in recognition of the volunteer contribution of Rahwa Haile)

TD Financial Group
volunteer recognition contribution made by TD for Marcela Kupfer)

Third-party Events

Canadian Federation of University Women
Comark Inc
Mastermind Educational Toys
Malvern Cricket and Social Club
Samantha Singh and Taje Mohabir

In-kind Donations

Alberto Culver Canada Inc
Scott Bear
Bulova Watch Company
Canadian Tire (Warden & Eglinton)
Cineplex Entertainment
Elaine Dandy
Druxy's Inc
Estheticare
Fairmont Royal York HBC Foundation
Mary Heinmaa
House and Home Media
Tim Howe
Il Fornello
Kalyvia

“Thanks for the timely and caring help from the Centre.”

Shirley Kandappu
 Chililime
 Kelsey's Restaurant
 Lee Tak Wei Foundation
 Lorraine Kimsa Theatre
 Linda Lundstrom
 Taje Mohabir
 Erin O'Reilly
 Gaetane Ouellette
 PJ's Pets
 David Russell
 Jessica Rust, RMT
 Mary Sargent
 Shoppers Drug Mart
 Sinfonia Toronto
 Soulpepper Theatre
 Sun Valley Grocery Store
 Textile Museum Canada
 The Elgin Theatre and
 Winter Gardens
 The Keg
 Toronto Argonauts
 Football Club
 Toronto Maple Leaf
 Hockey Club
 Toronto Symphony
 Orchestra
 Trapeeze
 Umbra Ltd.
 Walmart
 K.Welly
 Wild Water Kingdom
 Winner's Merchants Inc
 Michael Yablonsky
 Yamaha Canada Music Ltd

Fundraising Committee:

Two successful events were initiated by the committee: the Spring Tea, and the Silent Auction. As well, committee members worked on a very successful event in May 2008, the *What If...* fashion show, which was fully sponsored by The Indulgent Foodie. The second *What If...* event will be held April 26, 2009.

The committee also encouraged the development of third-party events by friends of the Centre, including the Malvern Cricket and Social Club; the Canadian Federation of University Women, Scarborough Chapter; and the Singh-Mohabir Family.



“I presently use my voice to help others in the community, thanks to the Scarborough Women’s Centre.”

Scarborough Women's Centre

2100 Ellesmere Road, Suite 245 Scarborough Ontario. M1H 3B7 Canada

Phone: 416-439-7111 Fax: 416-439-6999

www.scarboroughwomenscentre.ca