



October 25th, 2017

Dear Friend,

When Toronto's first shelter for abused women opened, a news article warned of "The rising wave of runaway wives." This was in 1973, when there seemed to be lack of understanding of women's vulnerability and need for safety. Throughout the '70s, women's shelters and support services for women began to appear across the country, and despite a few dismissive headlines, community members recognized the need for these spaces.

The thought of services to support abused women as being controversial reminds me how much things have changed. And yet it is 2017 and women are still seeking help for poverty, isolation and abuse. And these past few weeks stories of women being harassed and abused are dominating the headlines and social media channels. That's why it's so important that our resource centre for women continues to provide supports to women and their families.

I joined Scarborough Women's Centre in 1986 as Executive Director and, while I am proud to see the Centre's ability to respond to a rapidly changing environment and a cultural shift in women's independence, Scarborough is still home to hundreds women needing a compassionate place to turn to in times of crisis.

The Centre's history is tightly woven into the history of its surrounding community. It was founded in 1982 around the same time Scarborough became incorporated as a city, and in many ways, we have grown up together.

As neighborhoods became more diverse the Centre expanded its services to meet the needs of newcomers facing cultural and language barriers. In the late '80s we established the Women of Many Cultures Planning group, to explore newcomer women's issues, and we initiated the English conversation volunteer tutoring program. A few years later we became trustee for a Somaliland Women's Organization project and designed volunteer training for 11 ethno-specific agencies.

Moving beyond domestic violence, in 1991 we looked for ways to improve women's safety in general, by conducting a safety audit of the TTC surface route system, resulting in redesigned bus shelters and instituting the Request Stop program.

When many of the women using our services as adults said "I wish I had known the Centre when I was 15 – I would be in a much different place now", we developed the Building Strong Futures for young women, 15-19 years of age.


Recognizing the unique needs of women with disabilities, we launched Expanding the Reach in 2009, providing outreach to women who experience physical barriers to accessing services.

These are only a handful of examples in our 35-year history that we evolved to help all women, regardless of race, ethnicity, immigration status, faith, dis/ability, age and sexual orientation.

One constant throughout the Centre's history is the essential support of our community members. While we are fortunate to receive government funding, about 50 per cent of our expenses are covered by generous donors like you. Your contribution allows us to provide information and referral services, workshops, counseling, mentoring and more. Thanks to your support we're able to ensure no woman in need is turned away.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation and thanks to you for standing up for women and supporting the Centre. I think you will agree that while we have made a lot of progress, we still have much to do. I would like to once again ask for your support so that we can continue to help create a brighter future for women and girls in our community.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lynda Kosowan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Lynda Kosowan, MSW, RSW
Executive Director

Yes, I would like to contribute to Scarborough Women's Centre and their 35 year legacy of supporting women by donating:

\$ 1000 \$ 500 \$ 250 \$ 100 \$50

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Monthly donation of: \$ _____ (*Visit www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/scarborough-womens-centre to set up.*)

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Address: _____ Suite #: _____

City: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Telephone #: _____ Fax #: _____

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Please select a payment method:

Secure online donations: (<https://www.canadahelps.org/CharityProfilePage.aspx?CharityID=9804>)

I have enclosed a cheque for \$ _____ payable to Scarborough Women's Centre.

Charge the following credit card:

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You may acknowledge my donation in your newsletter, program flyer and website.

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*By providing us with your email address, you consent to receive email communication from Scarborough Women's Centre (SWC). This includes but is not limited to SWC's program flyer, Newsletter, AGM invitation and information on current events. You can unsubscribe at any time by selecting the unsubscribe link available within every email communication that you will receive.

Please mail your completed donation form and cheque to: **Scarborough Women's Centre,
2100 Ellesmere Road, Suite 245,
Scarborough, ON
M1H 3B7**

Or, fax your completed form and credit card information to: **416-439- 6999**

Or, use the above link for secure on-line donations

**Scarborough Women's Centre is a non-profit charitable organization # 10795 9660 RR0001.
Your donation is tax creditable. Thank you so much!**

All information is treated with privacy and confidentiality. Scarborough Women's Centre does not share or sell its donor information.

October 2017