

Impact Report

2022/23



YEAR ENDING MARCH 31, 2023

Message from the ED & President

Our past year was an exciting one with cheer, challenges and changes! We finally broke ground on the 21-unit affordable housing building which will also serve as the administrative centre for YWCA NWT. Staff and families have been looking forward to being under one roof again. We were pleased to host the Duchess of Cornwall at Lynn's Safe Place for Women, where Her Royal Highness made bannock with the help of Elders and clients shared stories of how the program helped them regain confidence and stability. We also opened the first safe home in Fort Good Hope to provide options closer to home for women experiencing violence.

We recognize we do a lot of great work here at the YWCA NWT and that our services are extensive, diverse, and life changing. Our housing team continued to strengthen relationships with local landlords to secure affordable housing in a very tight rental market, families had a welcoming space at our NWT Family Centre, we offered affordable after-school childcare options at five Yellowknife schools, and we worked with women and their children to provide security, safety and hope for the future in our family violence shelters and housing programs.

Every organization has challenges and YWCA NWT is no exception. There is a huge demand for our programs; however, recruiting and retaining qualified childcare providers and housing support staff is an ongoing challenge. Demand for our services has grown exponentially this past year, but rising costs and lack of secure program funding makes it even more challenging to keep up with this demand. These challenges also meant we made the difficult decision to not renew the contract to operate Sutherland House shelter in Fort Smith when it ended this year.

While the programs and services we provide are at the heart of our efforts, we also ramped up advocacy work to inform better public policy. We highlighted the vital need for non-profit organizations to have multi-year, indexed funding commitments to provide staff and program stability, provided input on proposed amendments to the Northwest Territories' *Child Day Care Act* and the Child Care Fee Reduction Subsidy, shared feedback with Ministers on the implementation of the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence across the territory and advocated with other Canadian YWCA's on Parliament Hill to end gender-based violence.

We continued to grow, adapt, and respond. This year, we launched the Independent Legal Advice & Representation Program that provides free legal advice to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, expanded on-the-land programming in our youth and housing programs and provided a weekly grocery program to families experiencing food insecurity.

We invite you to learn more about YWCA NWT's incredible work and highlights from the past year throughout the pages of our 2022/23 Annual Report. Thank you to our donors, supporters, community partners, hardworking staff, and Board of Directors who have supported YWCA NWT this past year. We couldn't make the positive impact we do, without you.

Hawa Dumbuya-Sesay
Executive Director



Kate Reid
President





**YWCA NWT BOARD OF DIRECTORS
AND SENIOR STAFF 2022**

YWCA NWT is Celebrating Change!

VISION

Equality for women and girls in a safe Northern society.

MISSION

YWCA NWT helps create a safe Northern society for women and families to reach their full potential.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS*

Kate Reid, President

Megan Holsapple

Katherine Barton

Anne Pleydon

Rose Jiang

Kathy Spooner

** Board composition as of March 31, 2023. Thank you to Keelen Simpson and Shelby Brothers, who left the board in September 2022 after serving several terms.*

SENIOR STAFF

Hawa Dumbuya-Sesay, Executive Director

Charlotte Henschel, Finance Director

Kate Wilson, Housing Director

Debby Rybchinski, Manager Alison McAteer House

Noma Khumalo, Manager Organizational Development

Rachael Gray, Manager After school Programming

Alayna Ward, Director Community Relations

Brendan Hancock, Team Lead Family & Youth Programs

YWCA NWT Programs

Housing

YWCA NWT offers supportive transitional and emergency housing options to women and families. Family support workers work with each family to look at issues such as debt, addictions, health issues and/or violence that may have destabilized the family's housing in the past and to get them out of homelessness or prevent them from becoming homeless. When families are stabilized, YWCA NWT works with them to move on to permanent housing in public housing or rentals. However, this has been challenging as housing availability is at an all-time low, leaving few options for families. YWCA NWT has good relationships with local landlords and in the cases of poor credit or lack of tenancy record, puts the lease in YWCA NWT's name until it can be transferred over to the tenant. We also worked with the Government of the Northwest Territories to split the cost of larger arrears to prevent people and families from being evicted and becoming homeless, and continued our successful employment placement program. Food costs continued to grow and so too did demand for the YWCA NWT's food security programs, with at least 50 families weekly using the program on a regular basis. We continued to seek out funding and work with local grocers to continue this important program that many clients depend on to feed their families.

Lynn's Safe Place for Women

At Lynn's Place, women and their children have a safe, supportive place to call home for up to three years if they are leaving a violent relationship or ready to find stability. With 18 suites, rent is affordable as per CMHC guidelines. Family support workers provide support and referrals to on-the-land healing programs, income support, victim services, housing, and physical and mental wellness programs. In-house programming includes sharing and sewing circles, trauma recovery and counseling and opportunities to build life and parenting skills.

IMPACT SNAPSHOT

88

families housed (175 children)

43

families kept from eviction by helping with rental arrears and utilities

68

adults (plus 24 children) took part in Indigenous mental wellness program

253

children had a more joyful Christmas through holiday sponsor program

1800

food hampers distributed

103

people who completed training to improve their job prospects

26

people employed through job placement program

27

women housed (28 children) at Lynn's Place who may have otherwise stayed in unsafe situations



Women's Safety

The Need

The number of incidents of family violence reported to police in the Northwest Territories is 10 times the national average, and 81% of these victims were women. The NWT has the second-highest rate of family violence in the country (2019, Statistics Canada), and this number has unfortunately not improved in decades. Rates of violence have actually increased across the territory, including sexual violence.

In the NWT, there are only five family violence shelters, making it difficult for women to find safe shelter and supports close to home. When there is no room in the family violence shelters or a woman does not want to leave her home, YWCA NWT shelter staff work with her to make a safety plan and connect her with local supports.

Alison McAteer House

Alison McAteer House (AMH) is a secure, anonymous shelter for women and their children who are fleeing violence. The shelter has six bedrooms with a capacity of 12 beds. Staff provide women with guidance and support to help determine their options. Women from across the Northwest Territories and Nunavut can call the 24/7 toll-free crisis line and staff will assess each situation and help women make a safety plan no matter where they live. If needed, staff will help women obtain an Emergency Protection Order: a temporary court order typically granted in urgent situations where family violence has occurred. When granted, the abuser must move out of the family home.

Close to 73% of women admitted to AMH experienced abuse from a current partner. They range in age from under 25 to over 65, and most often are experiencing physical and/or psychological abuse and/or threats, although other reasons women stay at AMH include sexual abuse, financial abuse and harassment.

The YWCA's contract to operate Sutherland House shelter in Fort Smith ended in March 2023.

IMPACT SNAPSHOT

177

women (109 children)
sought shelter at YWCA
NWT family violence
shelters

2826

safe bed nights
provided at shelters

182

referrals made to land-
based programming,
housing and health
services, victim
support, and others

4435

calls made to crisis
support line

106

women kept safe from
their abuser through an
EPO



Safe Homes Project

YWCA NWT first launched its Safe Homes pilot project in 2021, building upon the work and research previously performed to increase women's safety in small northern communities. Many women do not want to leave their community to travel to a family violence shelter as they have important community connections including family, children, support systems and employment.

An important element of the Safe Homes project is community engagement, readiness discussions and sharing with survivors of gender violence as well as community and political leaders. This intense preparatory work must first occur prior to establishing a community safe home. Engagement is done using a trauma-informed approach in a way that works for the women in that community.

In March 2023, the first safe home opened in Fort Good Hope, offering a safe space for women and children to stay during crisis. Work is ongoing to open additional homes in other Northwest Territories' communities.

Independent Legal Advice & Representation Program (ILAR)

The ILAR Program helps survivors of sexualized violence and/or intimate partner violence who want to explore their legal options or are currently in a legal process relating to their experience of violence.

Launched in February 2023, the ILAR Program provides free legal advice to survivors who have concerns with an Emergency Protection Order, family violence or sexual assault. The Program also offers free legal representation in court for survivors. Survivors can access four hours of legal advice and up to 30 hours of independent legal representation.

What is a Safe Home?

Safe homes are often located in small, remote communities where there typically is not a transition house or family violence shelter. Safe homes provide safe, temporary shelter in the individual's home community, to women with or without dependent children. The safe home may be an apartment or townhouse unit, a private residential home, hotel/motel room or other building deemed appropriate for short-term, safe housing. Safe homes typically also provide emotional support, crisis intervention, safety planning, referrals and assistance in accessing local services such as housing, financial, medical and legal assistance.

Children & Youth



After School Care

The YWCA NWT After School Program provides affordable, play-based learning and supervision for children from Junior Kindergarten to 10 years of age. Programming promotes children's physical, emotional and social well-being, where children can grow and thrive to their full potential. Daily routines give children a sense of security, but are flexible to accommodate specific needs. Programming generally runs from school dismissal to 5:30 p.m. with extra programming provided for early dismissal and professional development days. This past year, YWCA NWT worked with the Government of the Northwest Territories to navigate the new Child Care Fee Reduction Subsidy, welcomed student placements from Aurora College and continued to balance ongoing staff shortages.

Family Centre

The Family Centre is open year-round and offers free programming for parents and guardians to play with children aged 0-6. The free toy lending library offers caregivers the opportunity to borrow toys and learning tools to bring variety into their children's life. Operating up to six weekly programs, the Centre is a warm, welcoming environment that creates growth and new learning opportunities, assists parents and caregivers with young children in reducing the isolation often associated with being a new parent, and offers programs to enhance parenting skills. Programs stimulate young minds, encourage resilience, create a positive bond between parents and their children, and help foster healthy family relationships. Offsite programs are open to everyone and included trips to the Yellowknife Fieldhouse, picnics and swimming at Fred Henne Park and playing in local parks. New this year, the infant program provided a dedicated time for infants and caregivers to come explore the Family Centre in a safe space. It has been a great success, with parents noting they enjoy the quieter time at the Centre with their young children and a safe space to discuss everything related to their babies.

IMPACT SNAPSHOT

235

licensed after school
care spaces offered

10

after school programs
offered at 5 Yellowknife
schools

750

families who attended
Family Centre
programs/events

1035

children who attended
Family Centre
programs

62

youth attended
GirlSpace programs

65

youth attended Dudes
Club programs

GirlSpace

GirlSpace is a program for any person who identifies as a girl between the ages of 8 - 17. The program allows girls to build skills such as leadership, teamwork, self-reliance, independence, self-awareness and positive self-esteem. Weekly themes included bullying, mental health and self-care, healthy relationships, outdoor and physical activities, STEAM activities and empowerment. Youth are encouraged to learn, grow and share in a non-judgmental environment supported by the GirlSpace Coordinator, volunteers and other staff. All girls work collaboratively to develop a space where everyone feels welcome and respected. Throughout the year, GirlSpace connects with the community in various volunteer roles. Groups also made field trips to the Snow Castle, horseback riding, movie theatre, local parks and beaches and BDene Adventures. Programming takes place both in school and at the YWCA NWT program space.

Project Child Recovery & Dudes Club

Project Child Recovery is for children and youth who have witnessed or experienced trauma such as family violence, substance abuse, grief and loss and bullying. Programming encourages them to talk about their feelings, explore healthy coping strategies, and enhance self-esteem. Dudes Club is a fun, free empowerment and leadership program for youth who identify as boys, from ages 8 - 14. This program runs both in-school and at the YWCA NWT program space and focuses on creating strong and resilient young leaders by creating a safe place for youth to talk, share, learn, and create. Program topics included gender roles and stereotypes, consent, relaxation techniques, science and robots, safety planning, body image and self-esteem and traditional crafts. Groups went on fun outings to go camping, learn archery with Aboriginal Sports Circle, NWT Judo class, litter cleanup, swimming pool, Aurora Village dogsledding and others. Many parents noted a positive change in their child's behaviour outside of program time.



WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING:

As a stay at home mom, the Family Centre is sometimes the highlight of my whole week, oh and my kids love it too!

My kids love you guys at the Family Centre. You're basically our Yellowknife Family.

It's no secret we are HUGE fans (especially of your lending library and baking bags!) You are an amazing resource for Yellowknife families and we're so lucky to have you!

GirlSpace is awesome. Can we have it every day?

I laugh here and have lots of fun. I like coming here because we get to learn new things and see friends.

GirlSpace is a safe space for me to be.

I cried today because I was so thankful for what this program has done for my daughter. I have seen so much growth in her confidence. Thank you!

My older son is really excited to come back, I'm shocked because he never likes doing anything. Keep doing what you're doing.

Dudes club is the best. It feels fun there.

My son is noticeably happier around home after he started Dudes Club.

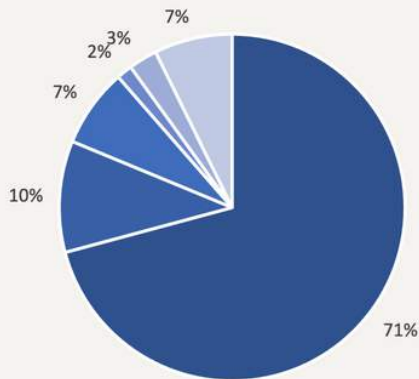
You inspire my son a lot and for that I will be forever grateful. Thank you so much for everything you and your team do for these kids.

Financial Highlights

2022/23 Revenue & Expenses

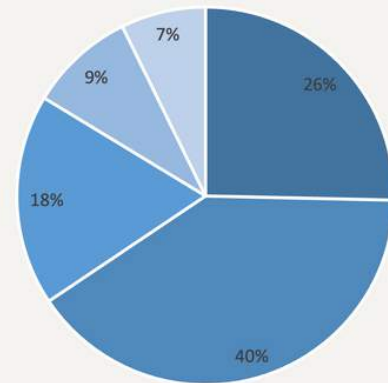
YWCA NWT carefully tracks revenue and expenses and our financials are reviewed and audited annually to ensure transparency and accountability.

Revenue



- Government Grants & Service Contracts
- Rental (Homes & Apartments)
- Program Fees
- Donations
- Other
- Administration

Expenses



- Family Violence Prevention Programs
- Housing Programs
- Child & Youth Services
- Administration
- Other (specific projects)

Revenue		
Government Grants & Service Contracts	\$ 4,941,270	71%
Rental (Homes & Apartments)	\$ 724,662	10%
Program Fees	\$ 511,392	7%
Donations	\$ 101,977	1%
Other	\$ 186,711	3%
Administration (generated f/our programs)	\$ 509,732	7%
Total	\$ 6,975,743	100%

Expenses		
Family Violence Prevention Programs	\$ 1,679,581	25%
Housing Programs	\$ 2,666,331	40%
Child & Youth Services	\$ 1,197,465	18%
Administration	\$ 599,504	9%
Other (specific projects)	\$ 482,116	7%
Total	\$ 6,624,997	100%



We couldn't have done it without your generous *support.*

Thank you

to all our donors, supporters and volunteers.

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