



Elizabeth Fry Society of Simcoe County

Annual Report 2015/2016

Board Chair Report



The Board of Directors of the Elizabeth Fry Society of Simcoe County experienced tremendous growth and development during the 2015/2016 fiscal year. The board recognized a need to recruit both skilled professionals and strong community representatives in order to fulfill the board's mandate for strategic leadership and strong governance. As a result, four new members were nominated and elected to the board during this term.

The board recognizes the value of a strong connection between the board and the agency, and as a result, board members attended and participated in several agency events over the course of the year. This included all staff meetings, the women's holiday lunch, and the tour and reception celebrating the "Self -Reflections" exhibit at the MacLaren Art Centre. In addition, the Board CAEFS representative, Christina Garisto, attended the CAEFS AGM in Ottawa in May to represent the Society. We remain committed to establishing a unified voice for the Elizabeth Fry Society of Simcoe County in order to realize the mission, vision and values of the organization.

Fundraising and policy committee work dominated the board agenda during this term. The board actively participated on the fundraising committee with agency staff, and supported fundraising activities including the Hudson's Bay Company Giving Day event, Give a D.A.M. campaign, and the holiday blitz/gift basket appeal. The policy committee made tremendous strides towards the creation of a strong board governance structure, and continues to work diligently on the selection of a Governance Model and the creation of board job descriptions and board level policies.

It has been my pleasure to serve as Chair of the Board during this very busy and successful year. Special recognition and thanks are owed to Joy Thompson, Executive Director, for her expert and influential leadership of the organization, and support and guidance to the board. I would like to thank the entire board for their tireless commitment to achieving the goals of the organization.

The values of EFRY: compassion, respect, dedication, inclusion, and advocacy are embodied in each volunteer board member, and I look forward to working closely with each of them as we continue to build and strengthen the board in the years to come.

Jennifer Bouwmeester

Executive Director Report



Our mission is to support, advocate for, and empower individuals at risk to enrich their lives and to inspire positive change in our community. This mission is driven by a vision. This vision describes what our world would be like if we fulfill our mission. This world would be one where healthy, hopeful and empowered individuals, supported by a community that understands the systemic barriers and stigmas and that challenge people and put them at risk. Our values express a belief system and include: compassion, respect, dedication and inclusion for all.

One of our principle values is advocacy. To our dedicated staff who work for and with clients, advocacy means upholding the cause of clients through support and interceding on their behalf. As a member organization of the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies (CAEFS) and the Canadian Elizabeth Fry Societies of Ontario (CEFSO) advocacy is also the actions taken to change the systemic and institutional structures that disproportionately, negatively impact all women, in particular aboriginal and racialized women, people living in poverty and those with mental health issues and addictions. Our advocacy work takes us into Ontario prisons to inspect the conditions of confinement of women prisoners so that we can act as a voice, facilitate discussion, resolve issues and flag systemic concerns when conditions do not meet the human rights standards enshrined in law. and established as the test of a humane and civil society such as those standards adopted by the *United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders* (the Bangkok Rules).

We were also active participants in the Simcoe County Alliance to End Homelessness, the Ontario Halfway House Association, the Regional Human Services Justice Coordination Committee, member of the Simcoe County, Child and Family Coalition and corporate board members of the Ontario Community Justice Association.

The Social Advocacy and Social Media Committees, the Joint Health and Safety Committee and the joint staff/board Fundraising Committee were also busy this year. These committees worked hard on such initiatives as the *2015 Prisoners' Justice Day Picnic*, participation in *Take Back the Night* and *International Women's Day* and increasing our social media presence through frequent posting to the agency's Facebook and Twitter pages, the launch of a newly designed website and the publication of two newsletters.

All of this work really does produce results - concrete and positive change for the clients we serve. 12 programs are delivered by a dedicated team of staff and volunteers who can feel a great sense of achievement in the positive impact they have on the lives of the individuals they serve.

Executive Director Report



This reporting year we expanded our Youth Trustee Program to service all of South Simcoe County and we were successful in our application to United Way Greater Simcoe County to expand the program across North Simcoe. We are waiting to receive the approved funding to implement this desperately need program in North Simcoe. This year we were also better able to service women at Joyce Kope House who are, in the vast majority, trauma survivors and staff participated in considerable professional development in trauma informed care.

We were also delighted to receive a three-year funding commitment to continue offering rural and remote community programs in Muskoka, an area that is both underserved and faces enormous challenges due to isolation and remoteness.

It was also a good year for infrastructure improvements with the purchase of a new server and the engagement of a professional computer network support company. We were able, through the generosity of the Ontario Trillium Foundation, to install a new elevator that, along with the adoption of a comprehensive Accessibility Policy, concretely demonstrate our commitment to inclusion, respect and equity by reducing barriers of access to our serves for people with disabilities.

I would like to express our appreciation for the ongoing support of our government and foundation funders and the generosity of our donors. I would also like to express our respect and gratitude to the Youth Justice Committee volunteers who dedicated over 14,000 hours providing youth in our community with the opportunity to learn from their experience, see the impact of their behaviour and repair harm caused by their actions by facilitating youth's diversion from the Criminal Justice system. .

An AGM is also a venue for recognizing the contribution of time and commitment of the women and men who serve as board members, without whom we would not operate. Together they contributed 100s of hours of their time and expertise. We thank you for your leadership.

My last comment is directed to the women, youth and men we serve. It is with the deepest respect for your determination and resiliency that we do this work.

Joy Thompson

Community Justice Programs



Direct Accountability Program – Simcoe County

Clients Served – 675

The Direct Accountability Program provides an alternative to prosecution for adults charged with minor criminal offense. Who are willing to take responsibility for their actions. When clients successfully complete the ordered sanctions their charges are withdrawn. Elizabeth Fry Society of Simcoe County, Community Justice Workers attend all court dates in Simcoe County. The program has one of the highest crown council referral rates in Ontario, in part due to the excellent rapport staff have developed with Crown Attorneys. We have seen a small increase in the referral of class II offences this year.

Youth Justice Programs - Areas served: Barrie, Collingwood, Midland, Orillia

Clients: 370

Community Youth Workers have built excellent effective working relationships with Youth Crown Attorneys who refer to the program. Crown Attorneys will often reconsider a youth they have denied diversion after Youth Worker advocate for their clients. Youth workers attend all youth court dates in Simcoe County.

This year we received an increase in funding from the Ministry of the Attorney General due to the high number of referrals and number of youth served.

The proportion of police referrals compared to court/crown referrals increased this year. The program now receives equal referrals from both police services across the County as Crown Council referrals.. This increase in police referrals is a direct result of Youth Workers successful outreach to police services and their promotion of the benefits of youth diversion for youth who have committed minor offenses.

There is an increase in the complexity of needs of the youth we service and they require more intensive interventions than has been the experience in previous years. More class II offences are being referred for diversion.

Residential Programs



Joyce Kope House

Clients Served - 494

Bednight - 5,674

This 25 bed shelter and halfway house for women over the age of 18 is located at the Society's main office. Acknowledging the unique needs of women who are experiencing homelessness and involvement in the criminal justice system, Joyce Kope House provides services to empower residents in a safe environment. Extended services included the facilitation of 104 life-skills based psycho-educational workshops to residents during this reporting period.

The Mental Health Worker provides women requesting additional support with managing situational and diagnosed mental health symptoms. **262 residents** of Joyce Kope House were provided mental health supports during the reporting period.

Joyce Kope House continues to develop community partnerships to enhance services and networks available to women in our community. This year a Housing Worker from Simcoe Community Services began meeting women at Joyce Kope House to address barriers of access to housing support services for women.

The utilization of on-site students has been crucial in the enhancement of information available to residents of Joyce Kope House. Nursing students developed educational material and workshops on health promotion topics including; harm reduction, safe sex and healthy eating.

Community Programs



Rural and Remote Programs - Muskoka **Clients Served - 101**

The Rural and Remote Program is delivered to adults in Huntsville, Bracebridge, and Gravenhurst.

Services include psychoeducational programs including: Anger Management, Health Relationships, Addictions and Stop-Theft to assist individuals to increase their life skills and develop resilience and health coping strategies.

The program also connects rural and isolated individuals to their community by working collaboratively with a network of service providers across Muskoka.

Youth Trusteeship Program – South Simcoe **Clients Served - 35**

The Youth Trustee Program is provided to youth ages 16 and 17 who do not live with parents guardians and are precariously housed or homeless. The program is available for youth in South Simcoe who require a trustee to be eligible to receive basic needs benefits from Ontario Works .

Youth Workers attend Ontario Works appointments with youth and connect them to community resources. Youth are also provided support to remain in school, secure housing and meet their eligibility requirements for receipt of benefits.

The Elizabeth Fry Society of Simcoe County have been approved for funding from United Way of Greater Simcoe County to provide the youth trusteeship program for North Simcoe.

Correctional Programs



Jail Visitation

GVI – 155 Women

Vanier Centre for Women– 41 Women

Central North Correctional Centre – 215 Women

An Elizabeth Fry Society of Simcoe County representative visits women incarcerated at Vanier Centre for Women in Milton and Grand Valley Institute for Women (GVIW) in Kitchener to provide advocacy, parole application assistance, parole hearing support, and intakes for Joyce Kope House. Referrals for visitations have increased this year, resulting in higher utilization of provincial beds at Joyce Kope House. We also delivered numerous psychoeducational sessions two days a week to women incarcerated at Central North Correctional Centre (CNCC).

Community Maintenance Program – 19 Men

Reporting Centre – 238 Contacts

The Community Maintenance Program (CMP) is an intensive 12 week program for men under Federal parole supervision that teaches self-management tools and reintegration strategies. The program has been available since July 2015 and 19 men have successfully completed the 12 week course.

The Reporting Centre provides one-on-one services and supervision, tailored to the individual needs of men and women released on parole who require enhanced services for successful integration. The program provided employment supports, crisis intervention, emotion management, life-skills building and referrals to community services.

Funders and Major Donors



Thank you for your generous support

Major Donors

North West Barrie United Church
Central United Church
Women's Fellowship-Trinity Church
Michele McGowan Memorial Foundation
Transcom
Hydro One Charity Trust
Tonglen Foundation
Lions Club of Barrie
Grace United Church
Collier Street United Church
The Business and Professional Women of Barrie
ReMax Chay Realty Inc.
Tim Piesley
Kelly Doran
Barb Crawford

Funders

Government of Canada, Correctional Services of Canada (CSC)
Government of Canada, Homeless Partnering Strategy (HPS)
Government of Ontario, Ministry of the Attorney General (MAG)
Government of Ontario, Ministry of Child & Youth Services (MCYS)
Government of Ontario, Ministry of Community Safety & Correctional Services (MCSCS)
County of Simcoe
United Way Greater Simcoe County
Ontario Trillium Foundation