

2016

Annual General Meeting

2016 - 2017

"A New Beginning"



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CNWRC STAFF

Julie Crouse, Executive Director

Michaela MacLachlan, Administrative Coordinator/Bookkeeper

Mary Jane Jeffery, Women's Support Worker

Valerie Brown, Clinical Therapist

Suzette Cameron, Events Coordinator

Beth Tucker, Project Coordinator

CNWRC BOARD

Michelle McCann, Co-Chairperson

Samantha Madore, Co-Chairperson

Joanne MacRae, Treasurer

Hema Chopra, Director

Michelle Wallace, Director

Jeanette Himmelman, Director

Cheryl Paris, Director

Stephanie Millbury, Director

Lindsay Benoit, Director

*CNWRC Staff and
Board Members at the
Dean Brody Meet and
Greet, September
2016.*



HOW WE OPERATE

Vision:

We envision a world where girls, women and families reach their fullest potential.

Mission:

The CNWRC is committed to providing services that are responsive to community and client needs; using a collaborative approach with our partners, we promote positive social change for the advancement of all girls and women.

Core Values:

The success of CNWRC is due to the work of dedicated staff, volunteers, and partners. The CNWRC and their partners work cooperatively, learning from one another, and growing together. The following cooperative values are the foundation for all interactions and the success of the organization:

Trust

CNWRC honours and values one another's talents and abilities and finds common ground in dedication to the program and its clients.

Empowerment

CNWRC believes that giving skills, resources, opportunity and motivation to clients so they can take initiative and make decisions to solve their own problems and improve their lives.

Courage

CNWRC has adopted the stance of facing and dealing with anything recognized as difficult, or painful, instead of withdrawing from it.

Respect

CNWRC values all its clients and aims to ensure they are treated with dignity and a sense of worth.

Passion

CNWRC has a strong enthusiasm and desire to see all women and their families become self-sufficient and successful.

Kindness

CNWRC understands the challenges facing their clients and is committed to treating them with thoughtfulness and consideration as they move towards reaching their full potential.

Equality

CNWRC is committed to ensuring all clients are treated fairly and equally and no less favorably, specific to their needs, including areas of race, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age and others.

Inclusivity

CNWRC's intention is to work with all who come through the door. This means all people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized, due to age, race, color, religion, creed; sex, gender identity; physical or mental disability; ethnic, national or Aboriginal status; family status; marital status; source of income; political belief, affiliation or activity.

Service Standards:

At CNWRC, our commitment to our clients is central to our service. Our organization aims to provide the highest level of assistance and best support possible. We are:

Client-focused

CNWRC provides services in the best interest of clients by communicating, collaborating and consulting with them, other members of the CNWRC community and staff about client care.

Collaborative

CNWRC is committed to working together with other agencies, partners and stakeholders, to pool common interests, assets, and professional skills, in order to achieve common goals and outcomes that benefit our community. We work to ensure we have an equal voice at the table to address the needs of Colchester County.

Responsive to community needs

CNWRC working with its partners, designs new programs as needs are identified and funding obtained.

Team based

CNWRC's staff takes a team approach meaning everyone on the team is a leader and a manager, each person is equally responsible for the success of the Centre. Members cannot operate in isolation. Each team member must know and appreciate each other's strengths and skills. Each member is responsible for their part, and the quality of work that is done. Joint ownership for results and the environment is demonstrated. Respect, appreciation and validation are shared by the team.

Pro-Choice

The CNWRC is a pro-choice organization. We accept the political and ethical view that a woman has total control over her fertility and pregnancy. This includes access to accurate sexual education, access to safe and legal abortion, support and resources for continuing pregnancies, contraceptive and fertility treatments; and legal protection from forced abortion.

Feminist based

The CNWRC operates from a feminist perspective that is, by definition, rooted in women's experience. We seek to achieve political, economic, personal, and social rights for women that are equal to those of men. Feminism is a political, social, and cultural movement dedicated to promoting equal rights for women in all aspects of life. Feminism is not a single ideology, but rather is characterized by a diverse set of perspectives and movements dedicated to promoting women's rights.

OUR HISTORY

Established in 1999 as a charitable non-profit agency, the Central Nova Women's Resource Centre (CNWRC) is committed to strengthening and empowering all women in the Colchester communities regardless of socio-economic status, age, race, religion, ability and sexual orientation. Support to women and their families is provided at no cost to them through programming, services and resources. Funding relies on government, community and private sector sources.

"The women's resource centre helped me put things in perspective. My confidence and creativity came back."

Over the years, CNWRC has become a highly utilized part of the community involving the efforts of countless volunteers, staff and partners, all committed to providing services and programming to empower women and strengthen their families in a safe, supportive non-judgemental environment.



STRATEGIC PLANNING 2016

In early 2016, CNWRC staff and Board provided an opportunity to bring stakeholders together to discuss key strategies and questions regarding the future. During the strategic planning process, staff, the Board and stakeholders examined the following questions: What are the opportunities ahead? What are the strengths and successes to build on? What strategies will ensure future success? How will key stakeholders work together to make this success happen? How will success be measured to ensure the right strategies are being implemented?

The main purpose of the strategic planning exercise was to engage the Board members, staff, and other stakeholders in a two-day Appreciative Inquiry (AI) process to co-create a desired future based on past and current successes and then to design strategies for living that future.

The AI method of change management embraces organizational change and brings the whole organization together to energize the process so change takes place positively, collaboratively and relatively quickly. It takes what is working right – things that are most successful and effective as identified by staff, stakeholders and communities – and connects them in ways to fuel an invigorated vision for the future of organizations like CNWRC.

Successful change relies on human elements to bring its vision and purpose to life. The outcome of an AI initiative is a long-term positive change in the organization. It brings the organization together to build upon its positive core and encourages people to work together to promote a better understanding of how and why the organization exists and paves the way for new growth and opportunities.

Our Strategic Plan is a three year plan to improve the services of the CNWRC, improve foundations by developing progressive policies and procedures, and improving the health and well-being of the staff. It will strengthen the consistency of operations and support the six Strategic Goals set through hard work and steadfast commitment. CNWRC will make this organization the best it can be for users, communities and business

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our partners including Maggie's Place, Mental Health and Addictions and Nancy Flam Consulting for working with us on this project and creating a living document that guides the work we do at the Centre and in the community.

CHAIRPERSONS REPORT

The past year at the Central Nova Women's Resource Centre (CNWRC) has been full of new opportunities; a new vision, new partnerships and new beginnings.

We were very lucky to receive funding from Labour and Advanced Education through the Job Creation Partnership Program for two community positions, one of which was a year-long event coordinator position, which helped us to enhance our fundraising events and awareness initiatives. In September, we hosted a new event, "A Night of Celebration", which was a wonderful celebration of all of the incredible women and girls in our community. We were also able to successfully promote and raise funds for our Girl Power camps in a room full of women who truly "get" the vision CNWRC is setting out to accomplish: a world where girls, women and families reach their fullest potential.

We are grateful to have a core group of individuals and organizations (including Keltie Jones from Dalhousie Agricultural Campus, Bev Walker from the Mi'kmaq Family Healing Centre, the Third Place Transition House and Colchester Sexual Assault Centre) who continue to help us coordinate our annual Take Back the Night walk in October. Ours is one of hundreds of events held in over thirty countries annually, with a mission of ending sexual, relationship and domestic violence in all forms. As in previous years, this event successfully brought out men, women and children from all areas to walk with us in solidarity.

The partnerships we have made in the community over the years have been and continue to be essential to our success. We were pleased to partner with the Third Place Transition House on the new 16 Days of Activism and purple ribbon campaign, which helped to raise awareness about gender-based violence. In addition to enhancing our relationship with this important partner organization, we were able to also strengthen - and, in some cases, develop - relationships with some of the businesses in downtown Truro, who generously offered to help raise funds for this initiative in their stores.

We were very proud of the success of our International Women's Day "Head Over Heels High Tea" at the Holiday Inn Truro, which raised over \$2,500 for our Girl Power camps. This event, which was a celebration of women and girls not only in our community, but beyond, is one we will continue to grow in the coming years. Having a guest speaker like Governor General award recipient Dee Dooley, who was recognized for making an outstanding contribution to the goal of equality for women and girls in Canada, was an inspirational example of empowering women and set the precedent for the kind of speaker we want to continue to secure for this event in the future.

As a board, we continue to be amazed and inspired by all that the staff at CNWRC manage to accomplish within a calendar year. Under the leadership of Executive Director Julie Crouse, we now have a home of our own and we are beyond excited at the new potential for serving the women and girls in our community. This accomplishment started as a dream Julie had when she began with us in 2015 and, through hard work, dedication, and a lot of drive, the dream has become a reality. Though not without its challenges, we are looking forward to seeing where this new opportunity takes us from here ... the best is yet to come for CNWRC!

Samantha Madore and Michelle McCann

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

On behalf of the staff of the Central Nova Women's Resource Centre it has been my pleasure to spend a full year with the Women's Centre and take this time to reflect on our many successes. 2016-2017 has been a very active year for the Central Nova Women's Resource Centre, we have taken on a number of large scale projects designed to bring the issues impacting women to the fore.

We began our year with a formal strategic planning session, which not only engaged the board and staff, but also regarded input from our partnering agencies in Colchester County. We felt strongly that as a community agency that regularly collaborates, we believe the voice of our partners were imperative in helping us determine how to grow into the future. This document now guides our work for the next three years. We completed our board bylaws and personnel policy review and have created a strong foundation on which we as an agency can build. It is important to us that we not only support our board and employees, but that our agency is highly recognized as a notable place to work and volunteer.

This year the CNWRC has led a number of initiatives focusing on the reduction of violence against women, including the Take Back the Night March, the 16 Days of Activism, National Day of Remembrance, 1 Billion Rising and of course International Women's Day, all of which were designed to encourage conversations on the importance of gender based services for all vulnerable peoples, not just women. We also raised the profile of our girls programming this year, recognizing the importance of prevention work. We had over 60 girls participate in Girl Power camp in 2016, and we are expanding camp into 2017 to allow for greater participation for girls ages 12-15. We also offered Girls Circle programs for girls ages 10-11 throughout the year. Our fundraising activities all focused on Girl Power, and at the end of the fiscal year we had raised over \$5000 to subsidize camp for vulnerable young girls.

We have been active participants in various community committees, in particular on the Chronic Disease Innovation Committee, in partnership with CMHA Colchester, Self-Help Connection, Schizophrenia Society of NS, and Mental Health and Addictions and we were successful in obtaining funding through the Chronic Disease Innovation Fund and the United Way of Colchester for hiring a Peer Support Coordinator, who will be working with individuals throughout Colchester and East Hants in developing formal and informal support groups to help those living with chronic illness. This will help our community build capacity to support each other. Through our partnerships, we are continuously exploring opportunities for expansion in services based on the needs of women. I would like to acknowledge the support of the **United Way of Colchester County**, as a funder for many projects during the past number of years, and for helping our agency succeed and meet our community needs.

We added a new and important service to our agency this year, and Valerie Brown RCT, has been providing therapy to clients who require clinical support. This has been an excellent partnership and we are excited about formalizing and increasing her role at the Centre into 2017.

I would like to take a moment to acknowledge two staff people who completed their terms in 2016, Darl Wood, Women's Support Worker, and Raechelle Lindsay, Youth Outreach Coordinator. Both of these women brought a wonderful perspective and a significant amount of experience to their roles, and we would like to thank them for their hard work and wish them the best in their new endeavours.

Our most exciting initiative has of course been the search for funding and purchase of a new Women's Centre. In collaboration with the Community Credit Union of Colchester/Cumberland, we were able to negotiate a mortgage for the purchase of forever home for the Women's Centre at 67 Dominion St. This has been the culmination of hundreds of hours of volunteer and staff time, and we are pleased to say

that we will be taking possession of our new space in May 2017. The future is bright as we explore our many opportunities as owners.

I would like to acknowledge the work of the Board of the CNWRC, as well as the staff. It has been a very demanding and a very exciting year for the Women's Centre and as a team we have been able to jump at the opportunities that have arisen because of the excellent communication and dedication to our agency. 2017 will see a significant focus on volunteerism, and we are looking forward to new and exciting initiatives. I would like to take this time to thank the co-chairs, Samantha Madore and Michelle McCann for their support and encouragement; both ladies have invested many hours of unpaid time, and their guidance and direction has been crucial in making this centre thrive. In conclusion, we are pleased to be able to provide a diverse service to women, girls and families in Colchester County and are looking forward to exploring how we can help shape the face of a strong and vibrant community for all.

Julie Crouse

We are very PROUD of our continuing partnerships. We would like to acknowledge the following COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS:

- United Way of Colchester County
- Maggie's Place Family Resource Centre
- Schools Plus
- Colchester Sexual Assault Centre
- CMHA-Colchester
- Boys and Girls Club
- Truro RECC
- Colchester Food Bank
- Town of Truro
- Community Sector Council
- County of Colchester
- Community Credit Union of Cumberland/Colchester
- Big Brothers Big Sisters
- First United Church
- Mental Health and Addictions (NSHA)
- Public Health
- Community Sector Council
- Colchester Community Workshop
- Zonta Club of Truro
- NSCC –Truro Campus
- Dalhousie AC
- Colchester East Hants Hospice Society
- Colchester East Hants Public Library

And thank you to the many wonderful individuals and agencies who have worked with us over the past 17 years!

ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR REPORT

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you do, but people will never forget how you made them feel". This is my favorite quote from Maya Angelou and it so closely reflects my goal of ensuring that each and every person through our doors feels safe, secure, respected and welcome. I take great pride in my role at the Central Nova Women's Resource Centre and I work from a personal belief that everyone is worthy of respect, dignity and opportunity.

For the past 8 years I have had the pleasure of supporting women to obtain services, resources and skills to assist them in achieving their goals, whatever those may be. We have a very diverse group of women that seek our services and supports each and every day. CNWRC provides one-on-one support, peer support, as well as basic resources such as assistance with paperwork, support and advocacy with community services or the legal system.

Women are referred to us from various community agencies, as well as family doctors, friends and other women who have utilized our centre. We can also refer women to other organizations as need be, serving as a hub or reference point for so many seeking direction on where to turn.

CNWRC continues to receive fabulous support from our community at large, which is a tremendous help in allowing us to better care for women in our community. Our efforts are guided by the changing needs of our community and we are consistently striving to fill any gaps and attempt to alleviate barriers that women in today's society face.

We have had many successes this past year, such as Take Back the Night, Night of Celebration, and our International Women's Day High Tea to name a few. Much of our fundraising efforts have been to support our very popular Girl Power Day Camps for girls ages 8-11 which are designed to empower and encourage girls to boost self-esteem and develop healthy relationships.

All of these efforts to provide services and resources for women would not be possible without our partnerships with other community agencies and the support of so many in our community. We truly appreciate all the dedicated volunteers who are passionate about our work, as well as our volunteer board of directors and of course our amazing staff.

We all have a deep desire to do our part to ensure that women in our community have access to services, supports and resources to assist them in all areas of their lives. I look forward to a new year, in our new location with the promise of fresh starts and even greater success.

Michaela MacLachlan

PROJECT COORDINATOR REPORT

This past year has been very interesting and I have been pleased to have been a part of the Central Nova Women's Resource Centre through funding from the Job Creation Partnership program through Labour and Advanced Education. My program was focused on positive mental health for the community, and my main focus has been on supporting youth and women.

The youth empowerment and positive mental health programming the Women's Centre has been facilitating is provided by The One Circle Foundation. Through funding from the Sexual Violence Strategy, the Women's Centre purchased the Boys Council and Girls Circle programs, which consist of gender-respected programs for youth ages 9 to 18. The goal of these programs is to the self-resiliency

What did you like about Girls Circle:
-"I learned that I wasn't the only weirdo."

skills young people need to be better equipped to navigate through life's challenges. Throughout the last year I facilitated three of these programs for girls and some examples of topics include: "Being Included", "Role Models", "Accepting and Nurturing our Bodies", "Stereotype Busting", "What is Love?", and "Standing for What I Want". As these programs can be facilitated by many different groups, we have created a promotional package for other agencies who may be interested in teaching these evidence based programs and they will be utilized as a resource for the community. We are searching for possible male facilitators for the Boys Council program.

The past year saw the beginning of **Cooking Healthy Economical Food to Share (CHEFS)** community kitchen program. In partnership with Maggie's Place, we helped facilitate an 8-week program utilizing their kitchen. We had 8 women participate. Through this activity, a new group has formed tackling access to healthy food, and we have initiated small environmental scan of kitchen facilities in the area. In the fall and the in the New Year, I was able to facilitate a Self-esteem program and a Healthy Relationship program at Maggie's Place. Our relationship with Maggie's Place is very important to the Women's Centre and we are pleased to continue to offer programs to their participants.

What did you like about Girls Circle?

"we can do crafts and learn how to be better friends"

I developed a new program for CNWRC based on the Step Up program. I was able to facilitate this program at the CNWRC and the women who attended commented on how much they enjoyed the content and the group discussion. We also tried a few different venues for women on a drop in basis and will continue to explore this model of engagement in the next fiscal year.

In November I assisted in the coordination and planning of a **Financial Literacy** day. This was a cooperative effort which included a financial planner, representatives of two banks and a representative from Service Canada, CRA. There were two sessions which were held at Maggie's Place. The focus of these sessions was on budgeting and how to be better organized in keeping track of where money is spent. Handouts were given to all participants and included a budget box, a budget book and other information on financial planning.

Overall the position has given me the chance to work in partnership with a number of different agencies in Truro and Colchester County and I would like to thank the Women's Centre for offering me this opportunity. It has been a pleasure working with the team.

Beth Tucker

EVENT COORDINATOR REPORT

All I can say is WOW! This past year has been the best experience of my life. I was able to work with a wonderful group of women, meet many other great women and help plan meaningful and exciting events for Central Nova Women's Resource Centre (CNWRC). The staff not only talk about envisioning a world where men, women and children can reach their fullest potential, they provide such an environment to work and receive help when needed. Thank you, ladies, for helping me see that we can accomplish anything when we work together in mutual respect.

Our first fundraising event of the season was the first annual **Night of Celebration** on September 23rd at the Glengarry Hotel and approximately 100 women joined us for an evening of fun, food, fashion and friendship. Many women modelled an outfit they donated and shared a brief note about their involvement in the local community. Many businesses helped support the event by displaying our posters, and the support from Moments Boutique was exceptional. They showed their support for the women of our community by donating boxes of clothes valued at approximately \$10,000.

October was our **Take Back The Night Walk** at the Riverside Gazebo, attended by over 100 individuals. We followed up this event as one of the **10 Points of Light** campaign on October 27th.

November and December were very busy as we launched the CNWRC / Third Place Transition House **16 Days of Activism Purple Ribbon Campaign**. We started the campaign on November 25th with a tea break supported by Fraser's Bakery. We also hosted a soup luncheon for the **Day of Remembrance** on December 6th where Jackie Waugh shared her story of empowerment by displaying her original artwork around the lobby of the Marigold Centre. The Nook & Cranny supplied the lunch and over 50 people dropped by to hear Darl Wood talk about working on the Helpline the night of December 6, 1989. We also took our display of purple ribbons to the Farmer's Market, held a screening of *Audrie & Daisy* at the Centre, and a **Night of Pampering** as part of the Giving Tuesday initiative.

In partnership with Neil Prokop and Deborah Mitton at Showcase Dance Studio we offered free dance lessons to members of the community interested in helping CNWRC conduct a flash mob for **One Billion Rising** on February 14. The dancers were so passionate about the cause they performed again Stanfield International Airport in March. There is a plan to conduct a flash mob in the summer, and at the MicMac Mall next February 14th.

Our season wrapped up with our **International Women's Day Head Over Heels High Tea** on Friday, March 10th in partnership with the Holiday Inn. More than 150 women enjoyed an evening of inspiring stories, and a lot of fun. Governor General Award winner, Dee Dooley shared her moving account of working with young girls at the YWCA, Colette Robicheau explained the importance of proper etiquette in the workplace, and Terry Francis intrigued everyone with her tea brewing insights. The event raised more than \$2,500, increased community awareness and celebrated the success of women by promoting local business women at booths throughout the room. Merna Ryan was also available to record the event with lovely photos of the evening.



I have enjoyed the many successes of this past year, and I would like to thank everyone who made each event possible. We could not have done it without the help of the other staff members, volunteers, our Board of Directors and our community. Thank you everyone for your support and participation.

Suzette Cameron

WOMEN'S SUPPORT WORKER REPORT

2016-17 has been a busy year. We have again seen an increase in referrals from family physicians, psychologists, pharmacists, mental health and addictions and Department of Community Services. We have seen new referrals this year from Pictou Detox and we are working towards a new relationship with Nova Institute. Along with word of mouth for self-referral, there has been significant support from the Justice Department for advocacy and accompaniment. We have spent more time in court than in previous years. Our key partnerships with Community Services, Nova Institute, Futureworx and the Colchester Community Workshop have kept us very busy.

Our one on one support remains our most utilized service. With approximately 150 women on my current case load, there is always a need and desire to put my focus on this service we offer. Giving women the opportunity to talk one on one in a non-judgemental setting is always a positive experience. For most, they work on different programs but are uncomfortable doing so in a group so I am pleased to be able to see so many women utilize this service to work on themselves in a genuinely positive manner.

Through our partnership with the Colchester Community Workshop I have offered two different groups the opportunity to complete the Healthy Relationships program. This was a wonderful experience and a resounding success and we look forward to continuing this positive partnership in future years. The staff at the Workshop were extremely impressed with how much their participants shared and gained from completing the group.

I was fortunate to give community presentations this year to the staff of Colchester Community Workshop, Mental Health and Addictions, Nova Institute, Futureworx and the Bass River TOPS Program. Through that presentation I was asked to help facilitate the Women In Leisure Program for Mental Health and Addictions. The program, along with the Exercise Is Medicine, in partnership with RECC was a great success, and we are still involved in the program as a resource.

We had some great events this year, the Dean Brody Meet and Greet was probably my favorite. A lot of people attended and so many were pleased to be given the opportunity to meet him. We hosted a very successful Break the Silence Tea and had some great events during the 16 Days of Activism. We also had a lot of fun participating in the Inglis Place Street Fair.

I continue with the Cards of Kindness Campaign in memory of Catherine Campbell. I attended a number of events with her family this year, and will continue to do so. We participated in the first annual Catherine Campbell Memorial Walk and had a great piece on CTV News.

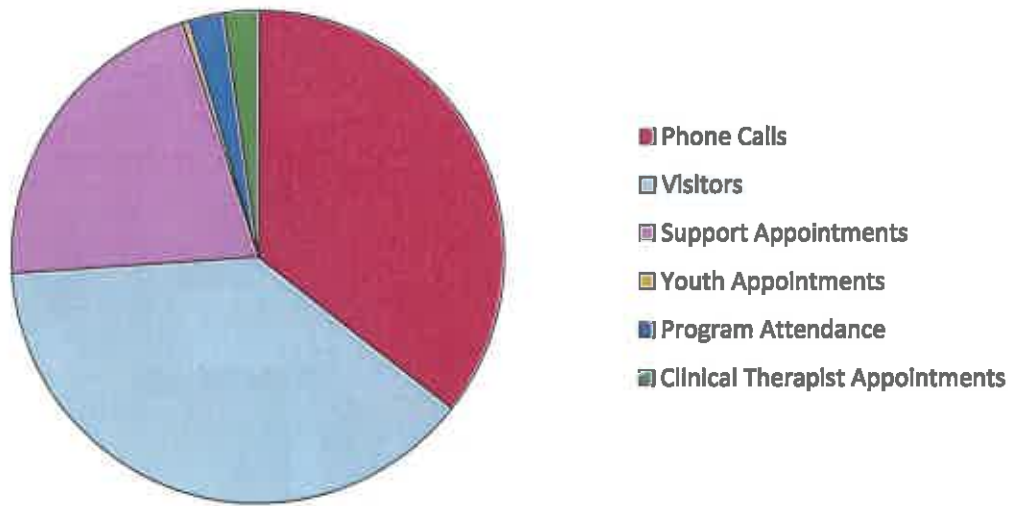


This year has been particularly vital to our growth and respect within the community as a whole. We have been in the spotlight again this year with word of mouth growing yet again. Our community is starting to learn what we do, and more importantly why our service is vital. I am now, and always will be proud to be a Women's Support Worker at the Central Nova Women's Resource Centre.

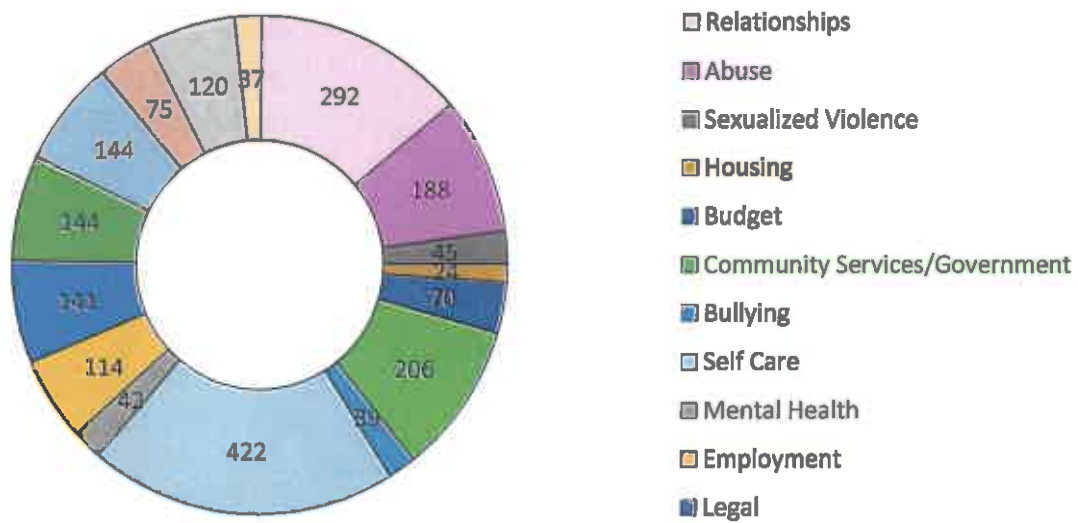
Mary Jane Jeffery

OUR STORIES

Breakdown of Service Use



Concerns by Women Seeking Support





International Women's Day



16 Days of Activism



Night of Celebration

What changes, if any, have you noticed in yourself since you have joined Girls Circle?

"I am happier"

