



"In the past five years, 500,000 Canadian children and adolescents have been witnesses to domestic violence, according to a recent survey Statistics Canada." Toronto Star - December 3, 2000

susie's story

Susie Chu spent 20 years hoping her abusive husband would change his ways. Each day did indeed bring change — an escalating level of violence. Then came the death threats and Susie realized with horrific certainty that if she remained under the same roof with her partner, she would die at his hands.

Having been in Canada for less than a year and speaking virtually no English, she fled with her three children to Interval House.

"I was very, very scared. But there was only one thought in my mind, I had to escape. I had to go to a safe place. Not just for me, but because of the children."

"The minute I stepped into Interval House, I felt very welcome. I felt very safe."

Leaving took courage and picking up the pieces to begin anew would require her to harness an inner strength she didn't even know she possessed.

"In the beginning it was tough. I cried every night." After a three month stay at Interval House, where she received counselling and support to help her through her darkest hours, Chu and her children began a new life.

Long after Chu was no longer physically sheltered by Interval House, the agency continued to offer emotional support. From navigating legal difficulties over the custody of her children to helping her enroll in English as a Second Language classes, Interval House gave Chu the tools to move forward. "Interval House can help get you back on your feet, but then you have to do the walking."

Today, a little more than a decade since her first flight, Chu, 50, works in the field of early childhood education, she has also been a member of the shelter's board of directors since 1998.

"There is life after the abuse. I'd like to tell all the women, don't give up. Tomorrow is a new day."