

OCTOBER 2023



By her side
for 50 years

CANADA'S FIRST
CENTRE FOR
ABUSED WOMEN
AND CHILDREN

SHINING A LIGHT ON INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

In recent news, Toronto and more than 45 other municipalities across Ontario have declared intimate partner violence as an epidemic within their jurisdictions. This alarming declaration sheds light on the pressing issue of intimate partner violence that continues to plague our society.

Intimate partner violence in Canada is a deeply entrenched problem, with statistics revealing that, on average, one woman or girl loses her life every 48 hours.*

Amidst these dark statistics, thanks to the incredible generosity of our community of donors, Interval House has remained a beacon of hope that has been shining bright for the past 50 years.

In the last five decades, Interval House has evolved from a place of safety into a provider of diverse and innovative services, aimed at breaking down barriers and ending the cycle of intimate partner violence for good. Thanks to you, we are able to provide emergency shelter, counselling, affordable housing, and employment services, all focused on empowering survivors to rebuild their lives. These vital services often become the stepping stones towards a life free from violence, giving women the support and confidence they need to move forward.



As we confront the harsh realities of intimate partner violence, our resolve to be there as a source of safety and hope for women and children fleeing abuse remains stronger than ever. Because of your generosity, Interval House has the resilience not only to overcome any challenges that come our way, but to adapt and thrive as we continue to meet the needs of survivors now and into the future.

Thank you for your dedication and heartfelt support. Together, we are working towards a future free from gender-based violence and changing the lives of women and children in our community.

*Canadian Femicide Observatory for Justice and Accountability, 2022.

intervalhouse.ca/take-action/donate

Your Support in Action

Helping Survivors Through Their Journey of Healing and Independence

Interval House is developing new innovative programs that go even further to support women fleeing violence. Take a look at how your generous support is removing even more barriers and changing lives:



Virtual Counselling Services

With donor support, Interval House is rolling out a province-wide **Virtual Counselling Services Pilot** to help women beyond the Greater Toronto Area. Counselling plays a vital role in helping women who have experienced intimate partner violence to understand the dynamics of abuse, address their trauma, and break free from the cycle of violence.

The pandemic emphasized the need to reduce barriers, and ensure more women have access to our services. The pilot will provide free online counselling to women who have experienced or are currently experiencing intimate partner violence, tailored to each woman's unique challenges and needs.

Thank you for providing women with free access to counselling and helping them rebuild their lives!



Financial Literacy Pilot Project

Financial abuse often traps women in abusive relationships. The **Financial Literacy Pilot Project** expands on our Building Economic Self-Sufficiency (BESS) program, empowering survivors with essential financial management skills and knowledge.

Your generosity is at the heart of this innovative initiative! Here's just some of what your support will make possible:

- **Monthly financial workshops** that teach survivors budgeting, debt management, and savings strategies.
- **One-on-one support**, including financial coaching and personalized work plans.
- **A \$1000 Participant Learning Tool** for each survivor to help them accomplish their financial goals.

Thank you for helping to create brighter financial futures for the courageous women we serve!



Rent Subsidy Program

Finding safe and affordable housing is a key concern for survivors of intimate partner violence, and your support is making a real difference. The **Rent Subsidy Program (RSP)**, removes the barrier of housing insecurity, allowing survivors to focus on gaining meaningful employment opportunities.

With donor support, we have successfully piloted this program and are thrilled to expand its reach to even more Building Economic Self-Sufficiency (BESS) clients. This program offers a holistic approach, including a monthly rent subsidy of up to \$1,000, recognizing the critical need for housing support, as well as services when survivors are ready to take that courageous step toward independence.

Your support bridges the gap and enables women and their children to move toward a brighter future.

Partner Spotlight

Uniting for Safety: Toronto Police Service and Interval House

In a bustling city where stories intertwine, one partnership shines as a beacon of support and safety. Toronto Police's 55 Division and Interval House have forged a remarkable alliance that stands as a testament to the power of empathy and unwavering commitment to survivors of abuse.

Inspector Lisbet Benoit, a 37-year Toronto Police veteran, played a pivotal role in fostering this partnership. Even after she moved to another position at the Wellness Unit, she remains committed to her support of Interval House. Her dedication is both professional and deeply personal. A decade ago, she tragically lost a dear friend to intimate partner violence.

"The partnership is an opportunity for people to see us not just as police officers, but as neighbours, friends, and fellow community members," says Benoit.

"Interval House is the only shelter offering intimate partner violence training to officers, ensuring a deep understanding of the issues survivors face. Beyond training, our officers engage in donation drives to support the brave women and children seeking refuge."

The relationship is about both immediate support and nurturing enduring bonds. It's about believing that, together, we can light the path to a brighter, violence-free future for survivors in our community.



Donor Spotlight

Passing Down a Legacy of Giving

Growing up in India, Mahen Thacker learned a profound lesson from his mother – a legacy of selflessness and the importance of giving to others.

Mahen's mother entrusted a portion of the household finances to young Mahen. Her words, etched in his memory, echoed with wisdom, "Go do some charity work."

Today, Mahen's journey of compassion and philanthropy continues unabated. He has become a dedicated supporter of Interval House, helping women and children escaping the horrors of intimate partner violence find a safe haven.

As Mahen shares: "Interval House gives women confidence and helps them get an apartment and a job. It's important to support women and give them these opportunities."

Mahen has even left a gift for Interval House in his will, and has passed his mother's lesson about giving generously down to his own children. He is living proof you don't need a personal connection to a cause to help those in need. What truly matters is empathy – the deep, abiding desire to make a lasting impact for good.



From Darkness to Hope: Kaya's Story

Your Support Gives Survivors a Chance at a Life Free From Violence

When Kaya* arrived at Interval House, she was a broken shell of a woman. Scared and emotionally battered, Kaya had endured a relentless storm of abuse at the hands of her partner that had shattered her self-esteem and left her in a state of constant anxiety.

The abuse escalated to terrifying heights: "He would hit me so hard that I'd black out," shares Kaya. "Every time he flew into a rage, my entire body would tremble with fear."

A turning point in Kaya's life came when she discovered she was pregnant. She had dreams of becoming a mother, but her joy quickly turned to sorrow. Kaya began experiencing abdominal pain and bleeding, prompting her to seek medical help. Tragically, she suffered a miscarriage within the first trimester.

Intimate partner violence during pregnancy is a grim reality. Often, when a woman is pregnant, abuse escalates for a variety of reasons including stress and the abuser's loss of power and control.

Despite the profound sadness of losing her pregnancy, Kaya's survival instinct kicked in, giving her the strength to break free from her abuser. She recalls, "I knew I had to leave for my own sake and for the sake of any future children I might have."



Now, with support from Interval House and caring donors like you, Kaya is on the path to rebuilding her life, free from the fear that once consumed her. She's determined to heal and regain her sense of self-worth. "I want to live a life where I can be truly happy and safe," Kaya says with determination in her voice.

Thank you for helping to empower women like Kaya! With your support, we can continue to provide a safe place and life-changing services for women fleeing abuse.

**Name has been changed to protect the survivor's identity.*



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If you'd like more information about how you can support the women and children of Interval House, visit our website www.intervalhouse.ca or call 416-924-1411 ext. 238