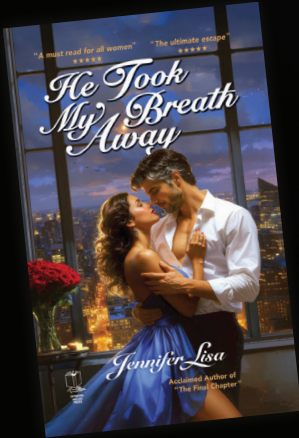


Fall 2026



By her side
since 1973

CANADA'S FIRST
CENTRE FOR
ABUSED WOMEN
AND CHILDREN



A Story That Could Save a Life

A new book is quietly changing the way people understand intimate partner violence (IPV)—and it begins with a love story.

In partnership with DonerNorth, Interval House has published *He Took My Breath Away*—a novel that reads like a romance, but carries a far more urgent truth. It follows Olivia, a woman whose love story slowly becomes something dangerous.

The book ends abruptly when Olivia is killed by her partner. Tragically, this ending is not fiction for far too many women, underscoring the devastating reality of IPV.

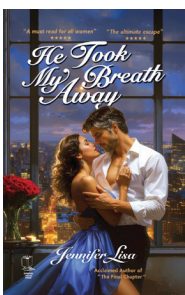
In Canada, a woman or girl is killed every 48 hours. One in three women will experience IPV in her

lifetime. These numbers are staggering, but behind every statistic is a story like Olivia's.

The author, "Jennifer Lisa", honours the most common first names of women killed by IPV in Canada—representing thousands of survivors whose stories are rarely told on their own terms.

Your support makes work like this possible, bringing more attention to an issue that's too easy to overlook. It also funds our crisis line, our emergency shelter, and the safety planning resources that help women find a way out.

Because behind every statistic is a woman who deserves to be heard and seen.



The book is free to download.

It helps readers recognize the warning signs of abuse and before it's too late. Read it. Share it. You could save a life.

hetookmybreathaway.com



intervalhouse.ca/take-action/donate

From Pilot to Pillar: Financial Literacy Takes Root in BESS

For women leaving abuse, physical safety is only the first step. True freedom means financial independence, but leaving with nothing makes starting over a challenge.

Financial control, damaged credit, debt, and years of economic dependence don't disappear when a woman leaves her abuser. **The Financial Literacy Pilot Project (FLPP)** was designed to close that gap.

Over three years, 74 survivors took part in this groundbreaking project through our **Building Economic Self-Sufficiency (BESS)** program. Each cohort received six months of trauma-informed financial education, one-on-one coaching, peer support, and personalized financial planning.

The results were real. Women reported stronger financial knowledge, greater confidence, and lasting changes in their behaviours: budgeting, reducing debt, and planning ahead. They felt hopeful and in control of their financial future.



"Instead of focusing only on getting through the next week or month, they began thinking about savings, long-term goals, education, housing, and opportunities for themselves and their children." – Fazia Mohammed, Senior Manager, Programs Services

One of the most innovative components was our Learning Tool. Participants received funds to apply directly toward a personal financial goal like paying off debt, building savings or investing. Hands-on experience turned knowledge into action.

Now, this work isn't ending—it's growing, thanks to donors like you! The **Financial Literacy Program (FLP)** is now a permanent pillar of BESS, helping even more women take control of their futures.

Financial freedom protects women from abuse. Your support makes that safety possible. Thank you!

"It was very emotional for me that the program invested in me. I did not feel judged and I learned more than I expected. I was able to apply it to my everyday life, which made a huge impact on my family." – Melinda, FLP participant*





She Kept Showing Up. Now, Everything Has Changed

Justica spent her days as a social worker helping others through their hardest moments. But asking for help when she was experiencing her own trauma at the hands of her partner? That was something else entirely.

"I was used to being the person others turned to for support, guidance, and encouragement," Justica shares. "I found it much harder to ask for help when I needed it myself."

Overwhelmed financially and emotionally—and raising her son alone—Justica turned to Interval House's BESS program. She found people who listened and encouraged her. Staff who helped her focus on what was possible, not what felt impossible.

Through the support of our Housing Services and Rent Subsidy Program, she secured an affordable home. *"Having a safe and peaceful space has provided more than housing,"* she said. *"It has provided stability, comfort, and peace of mind."*

That stability gave her room to dream again and renewed belief in herself. This fall, Justica began her Master of Social Work at Toronto Metropolitan University.

"What once seemed impossible slowly became possible—because I kept showing up for myself, even on the difficult days."

Justica's story is made possible by you. Your support funds programs like BESS—giving women and families the resources and hope they need to move forward. Thank you!



*"To anyone who may be facing uncertainty or questioning whether their goals are possible, I want to leave you with this: **Your current circumstances are not your final destination. Keep going.**"*



Healing Together

How Our Children's Program is Rebuilding Families

When a mother and child arrive at Interval House, they carry the same wounds—but they often heal in separate rooms. The Mom & Me program is changing that.

Mom & Me is a therapeutic group program built on a powerful idea: mothers and children heal best when they heal together.

"It's kind of like the elephant in the room. They both know what they went through, but being able to speak to one another, to let each other know how it feels, and to reform that family bond without their abuser around allows them to move forward."

– Paula Del Cid, Manager, Shelter Services and Outreach

Through guided activities, families learn to name their feelings, rebuild trust, and communicate in healthier ways. It takes patience, consistency, and care.

The program also addresses something deeper: the cycle of violence itself. Children exposed to abuse are more likely to repeat harmful patterns later in life.

"We're getting to them sooner. We're stopping the cycle and giving them the words and tools that a lot of the women wish they had when they were younger."

Caring supporters like you help make this holistic work possible and your impact will be felt long after a family leaves our shelter.

I enjoyed seeing my son interact with other children. I also enjoyed being able to communicate and reflect on motherhood and my experiences with other moms. My son and I are forever grateful for all you have done for us."

– Jeanine, Mom & Me participant*



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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

**Names have been changed to protect privacy*