



GRATITUDE REPORT

yellow**brick**house

2023-2024



***Thank you for saving the lives of women
and children in your community!***

Core Programs & Services

Two Emergency Shelters

Women and children escaping abuse and violence have a safe home in our shelters. Yellow Brick House has two shelter locations: Aurora and Markham.

24/7 Crisis & Support Line

Counsellors are available 24/7 to help individuals assess their situation and take appropriate action.

Virtual Public Education

- Healthy Homes: abuse prevention workshops for newcomers and immigrants to Canada.
- Schools for Change Program: abuse prevention workshops for grades 6-12.
- Stepping Up: a peer-facilitated program that supports college students to develop tool kits to support peers experiencing violence.
- **Online** facilitator training: to assist youth and adults in having discussions about healthy relationships.
- Staff training: recognizing and responding to abuse, Bill 168.
- Older adult abuse: education about the types of abuse, and how to recognize signs of older adult abuse

Counselling & Support Services

For Women

- Individual counselling
- Group support: *When Love Hurts* teaches about the cycle of abuse and how to make healthy, safe choices in future relationships
- Parenting support groups: *Mothers in Mind*® enhance parenting skills
- Family court support: a specialized service that helps individuals dealing with family law and other legal matters
- Immigration consultant: provides women who are newcomers to Canada consultation and education on immigration matters

- Transitional and housing support: Provides short-term assistance to women who are in the process of leaving an abusive situation by providing community referrals, and assistance with accessing affordable housing

For Children

- Individual counselling
- Group support: 10-week *Let's Talk* Child Witness to Violence Program: helping mothers and their children who have experienced or witnessed violence learn emotional regulation and awareness strategies within a community setting



A Letter from Our CEO & Board President

Yellow Brick House is grateful for your unwavering commitment to our cause.

In the last year, Yellow Brick House and the community have been making waves to Break the Silence against gender-based violence.

Over 100 municipalities in Ontario have declared intimate partner violence an epidemic. These declarations are not only symbolic of our fight, but they also provide a loud and clear message to those silently suffering at the hands of gender-based violence that they are heard, and that our community is collectively working to improve the resources and laws that can help them rebuild their lives.

Additionally, Keira's Law was passed in the Senate, expanding the training for judges to include domestic violence and coercive control, which can include emotional abuse, psychological abuse, gaslighting, and financial abuse.

With 67 lives lost in Ontario last year due to femicide, these are important steps towards eradicating violence against women and children. But our work is far from finished.

We know that many times, when a woman experiences violence in her home, the onus is on them to leave the home to escape the violence, creating housing insecurity at an extremely vulnerable time. It is up to organizations such as Yellow Brick House to provide this temporary, safe haven until they can find appropriate and safe affordable housing.

Last year, Yellow Brick House provided emergency shelter and services to 139 women and children, with an average stay in our shelters of two months.

Only 25 of our 41 beds and 10 cribs are funded by the provincial government. We heavily rely on the generosity of our community to keep our shelter beds open and provide safety to those in dire situations. Your support ensures our doors remain open to offer refuge and support, particularly while we struggle against the strain of the current affordable housing crisis.

We are truly grateful for your past support and hope you continue standing with us in providing safety, support, and hope to women and children in need. Together, we can create a world free from fear, where everyone can live safely in their homes.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to our cause.

With the deepest gratitude,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lorris Herenda'.

Lorris Herenda,
Chief Executive Officer



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Stephanie Kremer'.

Stephanie Kremer
President of the Board

2023-2026 Strategic Plan

“Today, I am finally living a life free from abuse, and for that, I owe immense gratitude to Yellow Brick House. They saw the light in me when all I could see was darkness. Their unwavering support and compassionate guidance have not only transformed my life but also brought hope and healing to my daughter’s live.”
- Neeha (Survivor)



Sustainable Growth to Meet Community Needs

- Undertake an internal needs assessment to identify service expansion and enhancement opportunities.
- Develop an organizational resource plan (human, capital, technological, and financial) that aligns with current and projected service needs.
- Develop a sustainable funding model that ensures the continuation of existing service levels while planning for projected growth.



Leadership, Team, and Operational Excellence

- Conduct a comprehensive baseline assessment of organizational culture to inform opportunities for leadership, team, and process improvements.
- Develop a culture statement, rooted in core organizational values, that guides leadership, team, and stakeholder engagement approaches.
- Develop Human Resource engagement and retention strategies that reflect organizational values and desired internal culture.



Optimizing Program and Service Outcomes and Impacts

- Increasing Board engagement in meetings with MPs and MPPs to advocate for sustainable funding for core services.
- Based on the Needs Assessment, develop a Program and Service Priority Framework.
- Identify partnership opportunities that will increase and enhance current and projected service delivery goals.



Expanding and Enhancing Community Engagement

- Develop a comprehensive corporate engagement strategy.
- Continue to build government relations, with a focus on municipal governments.
- Optimize Board member participation in building effective stakeholder relationships.



Photo Credits: All images sourced from Canva.

Amina's Path to Freedom

The last thing I wanted to do was bring my daughters to a shelter. After 10 years of increasingly violent abuse, I still couldn't understand that what I was experiencing was out of the norm. I thought I could fix my marriage and that my husband would finally end his tyranny of fear over our family – that we would all have a happy ending. I couldn't think about packing up our lives, changing schools for my kids, and leaving my life behind. It seemed like such a fall from grace.

That was until one night, during one of my partner's regular fits of rage, I caught myself prepping my children for the worst after locking them in the bathroom for their safety. I suffered a blackened eye and shoulder sprain. When my husband sped off after his outburst, I called the police. I had to protect my girls.

We left our home with the encouragement of a kind York Region police officer, who told us that Yellow Brick House would be the safest place to go.

It didn't take long for me to realize there was no shame in seeking emergency shelter. We were finally safe, and the relief and happiness that came with that made my girls blossom. Yellow Brick House's staff provided us with everything we could possibly need and even provided counselling to help us learn about abuse and how to cope with what we experienced.

It took us three months to finally move out of the shelter. Affordable housing is so difficult to come by, especially for a single mother of two children who is just starting out on her own, but the staff at Yellow Brick House worked so hard to help us secure our new home.

It has been a long and tiring journey, and it isn't over yet, but I am so thankful to Yellow Brick House for saving our lives and giving my girls and I a chance at a better version of a happy ever after.



Each year in Canada, an estimated 360,000 children witness or experience family violence.

Awards & Nominations

2024

- Finalist – Vaughan Chamber of Commerce – Non-Profit Charity
- Finalist - Central York Region Chamber - Non-Profit Charity

2023

- Winner - Richmond Hill Board of Trade – Non-Profit of the Year
- Finalist – Vaughan Chamber of Commerce – Non-Profit Charity
- Nominated – Newmarket Chamber of Commerce – Non-Profit of the Year

Thank you to our Board of Directors! These leaders from our community give their time and talents to Yellow Brick House. We are deeply grateful for their commitment to ending violence against women and children.

Board of Directors



Top row: Stephanie Kremer (President), Carolyn Skinner (Vice President), Dharmesh Morjaria (Treasurer), KC Shendelman (Secretary). Middle row: Nancy Pavao, Zdenka Pantaleo, Mary Elias, Darren Gopeesingh. Bottom row: Meeta Gandhi, Randa Ghabil, Nicole Dekort, Franca De Sciscio



Thank You!

When a woman in crisis reaches out to our crisis and support line, your support guarantees that her call is received. Your donations enable us to offer vital emergency shelters, one-on-one counselling, group support, family court assistance, mental health services, transitional and housing support, immigration assistance, and various other supportive services. We also dedicate resources to prevention programs that educate youth and the community about dating violence and healthy relationships. Thank you for helping women and children start their journeys towards lives free from violence!

Vision

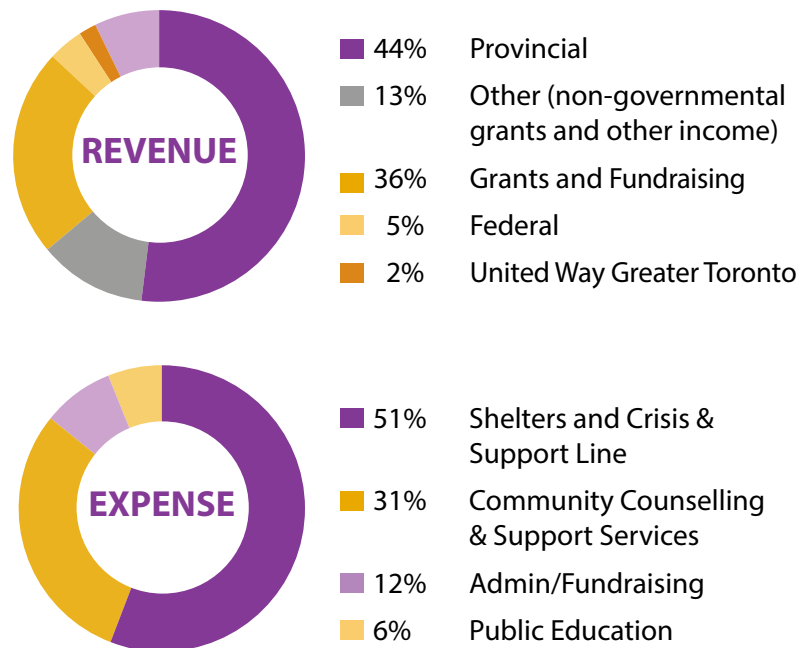
Freedom from violence. Equality for all.

Mission

Yellow Brick House provides life-saving services and prevention programs to meet the diverse needs of individuals, families, and communities impacted by violence.

Your Gifts in Action

Thank you for entrusting us with your generous gifts. This is an overview of where our funding is generated and how it serves the women and children of Yellow Brick House. Our audited financial statement is available to share, and we are more than happy to answer any questions you have.



"Attending therapy sessions helped me and my children recover from our past trauma and regain our confidence. The support we received allowed us to envision a brighter future. Thank you, Yellow Brick House." - Mei (Survivor)

New programs and projects were completed this year!

With deep gratitude, we sincerely thank you all for your steadfast support throughout the fiscal year 2023-2024. Your generous contributions and dedication to our mission have been crucial in changing the lives of women in crisis and their children, empowering them to begin journeys free from violence.



New Programs

New Programs:

- Mental Health Program
- Housing Workers in the shelters

Special Thanks to:

- Foundation J Armand Bombardier (3 year commitment for Nights of Safety)
- The Citrine Foundation (2023 November Matching Campaign)
- Enabling Accessibility Fund (Accessible playground for Markham shelter)
- Shoppers Drug Mart Foundation (Shelter Giving Campaign)

Your continued support has allowed us to invest in new programs and projects that support the women and children we serve. Your commitment has made a profound difference in countless lives and set the foundation for a brighter, safer future for future generations.

We are deeply grateful for the financial support of our services. As a result, Yellow Brick House has been able to develop new programs to help women and children rebuild their lives. Our heartfelt thanks go out to all those involved.



Corporate Volunteer Projects



With utmost gratitude, we extend our heartfelt appreciation to all of our corporate volunteers for their unwavering support during the fiscal year 2023-2024. Your generous contributions and commitment to our cause have played a pivotal role in transforming the lives of women and children in crisis, empowering them to embark on journeys free from violence.

We are incredibly grateful for the generous support of our corporate partners, whose contributions have significantly impacted our shelters and programs. Listed, are the opportunities they have been involved in, along with our heartfelt thanks:

Markham Shelter Upgrades:

- Bimbo Canada
- Upfield Canada
- Scotiabank Spark Community Engagement
- David West Community Volunteers
- CGI Inc.

Aurora Shelter Gardening:

- Women in Securities Finance Group

Richmond Hill upgrades:

- Crown Property Management Inc.
- Starbucks

International Women's Day EmpowerHER Fundraising Event:

- Opentext
- Ontario Professional Hairstylist Association

Join Us in Saving Lives

BREAK THE SILENCE — Step in My Shoes Walk:

Join us to raise awareness and funds for our Nights of Safety program.

(November 3, 2024)

St Andrew's College

Time: 10am- Noon



EMPOWER HER:

In support of
International Women's Day.

(March 2025)



CELEBRATION OF RESILIENCE:

Fundraising Reception, Raising
funds and awareness for survivors
of domestic violence.

(May 7, 2025)

Angus Glen Golf and Country Club



Scan to View Upcoming Events
or visit www.yellowbrickhouse.org/events

Your Impact By the Numbers

5,394

women and children served

5,092

volunteer hours

16,973

*counselling hours provided
to women and children*

139

*women and children
stayed in the safety of our
emergency shelters*

2,959

crisis calls

2,333

*youth reached through
public education Programs*

Your donation to Yellow Brick House provides life-saving services and prevention programs to thousands of individuals impacted by violence every year.

yellowbrickhouse.org • Crisis & Support Line: 1-800-263-3247
Office: 905-709-0900 • Charitable Reg: 11910 5187 RR0001
52 West Beaver Creek Rd, Unit 4, Richmond Hill, ON L4B 1L9

