



# Transitions

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## Holidays are fast approaching...

With the help of the community, Women's Habitat has been able to make the holidays a little bit brighter for women and their children fleeing violence. For many years, we have run the Holiday Hamper program, providing gifts, toys, gift cards and food to hundreds of women and their children rebuilding their lives.

This year, thanks to **The Old Mill Inn and Spa**, women will celebrate the holidays in style. Our Holiday Hamper program will be organized and run at the Inn, and the women will enjoy special holiday tea and treats, compliments of The Old Mill Inn and Spa.

For more information about this program, please contact Ursula Krubnik at 416-252-7949 x 230 or e-mail [ukrubnik@womens-habitat.ca](mailto:ukrubnik@womens-habitat.ca)

### Women's Habitat's Guidelines for Holiday Giving:

**We appreciate the support of our community, year-round. If you are interested in donating to Women's Habitat, we ask that you consider the following options.**

**Grocery and department store gift cards:** These gift cards are provided to women who are moving out of the shelter or women who live in the community and are in crisis. They are also provided during the holiday season to past shelter residents and to outreach clients. We recommend No Frills and Wal-Mart gift cards, as these cards can be stretched further for a woman on a limited budget.

**TTC Tickets:** The women who use our shelter and our outreach centre live in poverty. They do not own cars. Their means of transportation is the TTC. When you're living on a small income, TTC tickets are expensive luxuries, and yet necessities at the same time.

**Non-perishable food** (tuna, beans, rice, flour, vegetables, peanut butter, soup): Being on a limited income means that the majority of your monthly income goes to pay your rent. These staples help to keep our costs as low as possible at the shelter. At our outreach centre, we have a "mini" food bank, where women can get a few additional items to make it through the month.

**Diapers; Formula; Baby Bottles:** One in six abused women reports that her partner first abused her during pregnancy Source: Centers for Disease Control. It is no wonder that we end up with so many babies in our shelter. Pregnancy is a time when many women choose to leave to protect their children.

**Cash donations:** We use donations to purchase TTC tickets for women to go to court appointments, job interviews, or to take their kids to the doctor. We also purchase grocery and department store gift cards to help set women up in a new home.

*Become a monthly donor!*

**Women's Habitat continues to exist after 33 years because women and children continue to need our services. Your contribution can provide the following immediate needs for our shelter:**

**\$25** Five days of TTC tokens for one woman (not including her children)

**\$50** One case of diapers and can of formula for one baby

**\$100** Food to fill a fridge for a woman and one child when she leaves the shelter

**\$250** Will purchase two weeks' worth of meat for shelter

**Last year, more than 225 families participated in our Holiday Hamper program.**

**Please give generously this holiday season. Women's Habitat will send whoever you are honouring a note acknowledging your donation. You can donate on-line at [www.womens-habitat.ca](http://www.womens-habitat.ca)**

# spotlight on:

## OUR OUTREACH CENTRE

The dream began a number of years ago: to provide extensive, preventative services to women and children living in the community, before they need to use a shelter. Here's a history of how it all began.

### Why do we provide programming from a centre in the community?

#### In 2002 we found that:

- We were only serving half of the women and children we served in 1992 due to an affordable housing shortage.
- We were turning away more than 100 women and children every month.
- Women were paying too much for rent and could face possible eviction.

### What could we do?

#### We asked the women what they needed from us. And here's what they said:

- Eviction prevention
- Transition without shelter stay
- Legal support
- Food, clothes, transportation
- Social inclusion
- More support for kids and parenting

### Because of our findings...

In 2006, we opened our new outreach centre at Lake Shore Blvd. West and Islington Avenue. This allowed us to provide a more holistic, preventative approach to programming and services.

#### Programs and services include:

##### Individual Counselling:

One-on-one counselling (English and Spanish): Direct counselling for women who are escaping, or have already escaped violence.

##### Young women's counselling:

Individual counselling for young women (ages 12 to 24).



#### Transitional Support:

- **Housing Support:** Work with women to access affordable housing and market rate rents.
- **Transitional Support:** Help with developing safety plans, advocacy with workers from other agencies, eviction advocacy and more.

#### Parent Support:

- **Parent Support Worker:** Works with parents and children to provide supportive parenting education, children's counselling, advocacy for child care subsidy.
- **Parent Relief:** Women can leave their children for up to four hours with a qualified childminder while they do errands; go to an appointment; or take a much-needed break.
- **Respite Care:** Our Respite Care Program is for mothers in transition. Free overnight care is provided for children in a safe and supervised home environment for up to five days.

### From a Girlz Space Mom

Today, my daughter Zuzanna is 16 years old and she is too old for the "Girlz Space" program but thanks to Women's Habitat staff she was allowed to volunteer and gain experience as well as learn new set of skills in a safe environment. She became so passionate about what Women's Habitat does and had been greatly influenced by example of the staff, that she is planning a career as a social worker.



## Group Programs for Women

- **Abused Women's Groups in English/Spanish:** Program topics include self-esteem; why women stay in abusive relationships; definition of abuse, healthy relationships, and boundaries.
- **Women's Drop-In:** This drop-in program is a casual atmosphere, where women enjoy arts and crafts; guest speakers; facilitated discussions; games and lots of laughs.
- **Friday Morning Flicks:** Breakfast and a documentary.

## For Women and Children:

- **Parent/Child Drop-In:** This program provides an opportunity for Moms to socialize and trade information with other Moms. Sometimes the group runs special programs, such as Nobody's Perfect. Nobody's Perfect is a parenting and support program for mothers of children ages 0 to 6. It focuses on positive discipline and parenting skills.
- **Girlz Space After-School Program:** For girls ages 10 to 13. Girlz Space runs from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. during the school year; full days on PD days, during March Break and for one month, full days in the summer. Each day has a different theme, including Girl Talk; Social; Drama; Homework Help; and Recreation.

## For the Community:

- **Good Food Market:** A weekly fruit and vegetable stand that sells healthy, fresh produce at an affordable price. The market is done in co-operation with FoodShare.
- **Community Garden:** Our clients are in charge of the garden, which is located at the Daily Bread Food Bank, around the corner from our outreach centre.

## Our Expanded Outreach Program

We are now open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Tuesday to Thursday (Monday to Friday remains 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.). The following new programs were launched in October and are already at capacity.

## New Programs

### "Girlfriends" Teen Drop-In:

A drop in for girls' age 14 - 18 to come and have fun, hang out with friends and learn new things.

**Art Therapy:** A 10-week session is run in conjunction with St Joseph Women Health Centre, held in Spanish.

### Housing/Transitional

**Drop In:** To help low-income women with Housing Search Support; Subsidized Housing Applications; Rent Bank Information and Referrals; and Information on Tenant Rights and Responsibilities.

### Micro Finance Workshops:

Development of workshops specifically for low-income women, teaching financial literacy; how to manage money and leverage resources.

**More than 600 women have come through our doors this year.**

# A big thank-you to our community

Without the help of our community, we couldn't provide the same level of support to the women and children that we work with every day. From toothpaste to movie tickets, every item is appreciated.

**Storage Mart** – Once again, Storage Mart has donated the use of a storage unit for us to keep donated items that we need throughout the year, but don't have any room for. We have been lucky to receive large donations of diapers from **Seventh Generation** for the past two years. Without the use of this space, we wouldn't have been able to accept this donation.

**Waste 2 Wonder** – When renovating our office space, we're always looking for ways to save money. With the help of the company Waste 2 Wonder, we were able to save thousands of dollars by reclaiming used office furniture, in very good condition. We received desks, filing cabinets, chairs, bookshelves, whiteboards and more. Thanks to Lenny Wang for all of your work and co-ordination.

Thank you to the Finance Team from **Diageo and Atripco** delivery service, we received some much-needed office furniture for our new space at 140 Islington Avenue.

Diageo is always there to lend us a hand, whether it's gardening, pulling together donations, or painting. We appreciate their continued support.

Atripco has helped us with many deliveries in the past, free of charge. Thank you to both companies.



Women's Habitat would like to thank Rob Duncan, Nick Chow and Gital Shah from Diageo Finance Team; and Naveed Khan from The Atripco Group of Companies for donating their time, resources and energy to help us move. We couldn't have done it without you!

## Getting on board with Social Media

**We're on Facebook! We now have a direct link on our website to our Facebook page. Check us out at [facebook.com/WomensHabitat](http://facebook.com/WomensHabitat) And now, on to Twitter...**

Here is my tax-deductible donation to Women's Habitat

Amount:  \$25  \$50  \$100  \_\_\_\_\_other

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To donate or contact us:

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