



GILLIAN'S PLACE

support for women and children who have experienced abuse

2018 ANNUAL REPORT

Message from the President & Executive Director

OUR MISSION

To empower women and their children fleeing abuse by providing safety, support, and a range of services and to raise awareness about root causes to end the cycle of violence and abuse.

EACH YEAR Gillian's Place sees opportunities and challenges. This is more relevant now than ever as we witness activism around gender-based violence and sexual assault making waves, shifts in political leadership, and the challenges faced by Gillian's Place clients becoming more complex than ever before.

It is remarkable – and overdue – the impact that the Me Too movement has had in giving a voice to women who have experienced abuse. We're seeing women feeling more empowered to call out their abusers and make positive change in their lives by seeking help, including accessing the services of Gillian's Place. This positive change for women brings with it challenges for Gillian's Place, as we are often at or exceeding capacity, and, coupled with a shortage in affordable housing in Niagara, see women and their children staying 2 or more months at Gillian's Place before transitional housing can be secured.

The leadership at Gillian's Place has recognized this housing challenge, and responded by joining with West Niagara Second Stage Housing & Counselling in Beamsville to work toward an expanded transitional housing program in rural Niagara, and to begin work with the community and government to expand all services for what is now Gillian's Place West Niagara.

Our organization identified the need to strengthen our core services as a priority in our Strategic Plan developed in 2017. The expansion of services to rural parts of our catchment area is only one part of that objective. Our emergency shelter and counselling services are seeing clients with more complex issues – mental health and addiction as examples. Our talented team works hard every day to help our clients, but there is additional education and resources needed for our team to properly and positively help all clients that come through our door in a manner that reduces harm to clients and staff. This growing challenge is an area of top concern for the leadership team, and steps are being taken to implement change.

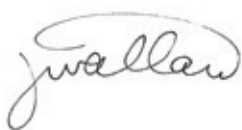


SHELTER & OUTREACH SERVICE NUMBERS 2017-18

Securing consistency in financial resources so that we're able to fulfill our mandate safely and provide expanded services to meet demand is currently our primary concern. With the change in provincial government this year, there lies uncertainty in basic funding for core shelter services, just as more and more women are seeking out assistance. We can only hope that the new government continues the incredible work initiated by the previous Liberal government with the Gender Based Violence Strategy. Their commitment to our sector, along with our long-time St. Catharines Member of Provincial Parliament Jim Bradley, was substantial, for which we give our thanks.

Much of Niagara is now served by MPPs not within the majority party, which heightens our uncertainty around funding and support from the new Ontario Progressive Conservative government. To address this in the region, we're teaming up with Women's Place South Niagara in joint advocacy efforts moving forward. Our priority is not just to secure an increase in funding for services, but to impress upon supporters the need for preventative programs – an area that resources have not been available. The climate for this education and awareness is favourable and without a doubt, the time is now.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Wallace
Board President



Tanja Loeb
Executive Director

 **2275**
CRISIS CALLS
were answered

 **356**
lived in the shelter
198 WOMEN
158 CHILDREN
a 25% increase from last year

1593 **TOTAL SERVED**
through outreach
services

201 WOMEN
received
transitional
support

575 WOMEN
obtained
legal advice
and advocacy

303 WOMEN
received
crisis outreach
counselling

69 CHILDREN
received
crisis outreach
counselling for
exposure to
domestic abuse

445 WOMEN
received help from
our Domestic Violence
Consultants, located
at Family & Children's
Services Niagara.
677 CHILDREN
were impacted



Looking Forward

As of April, Gillian's Place has a new normal – and it did not take long to see immediate benefits! The decision to join forces with the former West Niagara Second Stage Housing & Counselling (WNSS) on April 1, 2018 made sense – both organizations had a long shared mutual respect, overlapping catchment areas, complementary programming, shared funders and a desire to serve our clients in the most accessible and efficient way possible. We knew that operating as one organization fully integrated in North/West Niagara would help to create a sense of security and trust for women as they moved across multiple services offered by what is now one organization. We knew that this would also help facilitate access to potentially life-saving services for rural women without having to leave their community and support system. And we were confident that this change would improve our ability to offer a fuller array of trauma informed support and service to all women and children in our service areas. What we didn't anticipate, however, was the feeling we would have when our first shelter clients moved into one of our new (formerly WNSS) transitional homes. We could not have fully understood what this seamless movement between services would mean to a woman and child until we experienced it first-hand. It is not a feeling we can fully articulate, but what we can tell you is that if there had been any assurances needed about our new reality, that was no longer the case. It was that culminating moment where one just knows that this is good – really good.

Having seen, in only a few short months, how the newly expanded Gillian's Place has paved the way for more women and children to escape abuse and move on to a life of safety, filled with hope, has only fueled our desire to continue down this path. We are, more than ever, inspired to increase our capacity to respond with safe shelter, transitional housing, and vital services to women in rural areas and urban centres across our entire catchment area.

Despite the ever present challenges we face as a sector, we confidently pursue new opportunities and partnerships with the unwavering support of our incredible community. Tackling the complex and nuanced nature of abuse requires innovative thinking and strengthened core services, which is already being implemented via our Strategic Plan (read more about this on page 9). Your support today means that fewer women and children will suffer the devastating effects of abuse tomorrow. We look forward to continuing this journey with you.

#Me Too

Over a decade ago, activist Tarana Burke started the Me Too movement to help women and girls who have been victims of sexual assault and harassment. This year, following the exposure of Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein as a sexual predator, the movement went viral after a tweet from actress Alyssa Milano sparked a global conversation. Taking over every social media platform, women across the world shared their personal stories of sexual assault to expose the global epidemic—finally holding predatory men accountable for their unacceptable treatment of women. Gillian's Place stands with the courageous women who have risked their own re-traumatization by adding their voices to the Me Too movement. We also stand with all of the women who have suffered harassment and violence, but who could not come forward.



Women Rebuilding their Lives with Gillian's Place

We are often told that a resident's first night at the shelter is the best sleep she's gotten in years. While our shelter provides an environment that is as comfortable and home-like as possible, it's more likely the utter relief of leaving an abusive situation that brings a peaceful slumber. We are honoured to serve as a safe refuge to the 198 women who enjoyed a good night's sleep at Gillian's Place last year. Recently we received this note from a resident preparing to move out:

5 Equality Milestones around the Globe

At Gillian's Place, we firmly believe that feminism benefits everyone, just as injustice for women around the world is a threat to equality everywhere. Here are 5 milestones for women around the world in 2017–2018, accomplished by the unwavering activism of women and their allies:

- 1 Saudi Arabia lifts the ban on female drivers – something activists have been fighting for since the 90s.
- 2 Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and the Dominican Republic ban child-marriage in 2017.
- 3 Scotland launches an initiative to provide free sanitary products for women and girls in low-income families to tackle period poverty.
- 4 Brenda Hale is sworn in as the first female president of UK's Supreme Court.
- 5 Viola Desmond is named a National Historic Person and featured on Canada's \$10 bill – the first black person and non-royal woman to be featured.



Dear Gillian's Place Staff,

Thank you for all your support, you have done so much for me in such a short time, and repaired so much heartache that accumulated after so much time.

You have given me a home, love, support and care and I feel like I have another family, which makes this leave [sic] so bittersweet.

I love you for everything that you are and all that you have done.



Our Community

Every year, part of what motivates us to keep going is the support we find in our community. People like Lisa Martin, a local mortgage broker who has a passion for seeing women at their best. Knowing that 98% of all domestic abuse includes financial abuse, Lisa organized a vendor fair and information session to empower women: mind, body and wallet. After raising over \$3000 in one day, it's safe to say that the message was received!



Meaningful donations do not always come in the form of a cheque, something we were reminded of this last October. After struggling to get enough pumpkins for each of our young residents to make a jack-o-lantern for Hallowe'en, we turned to our community for support. Within 30 minutes of posting our request to Facebook, we got a call from Fredo's Dining Lounge. Their only question was whether they could come deliver enough pumpkins for each child within the hour.



Some of our favourite third party events are ones that celebrate healthy relationships. In February we got a front row seat to the beautiful way that people come together at the Valentine's 5k Road Race. A record number of couples signed up to race in the freezing cold, all in support of Gillian's Place. Together, under the leadership of Karan Gardiner, the St. Catharines Road Runners and Walkers raised \$4000 (with an additional \$1000 donated by the St. Catharines Professional Firefighters Association Local 485) to help support the women and children we serve.



Seventeen people died in the February 14, 2018 shooting at Parkland's Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. This horrific attack inspired a number of Parkland students to mobilize and take action to call attention to ineffective gun safety laws in the United States. The ripple effect of their brave student leadership in the face of injustice has reached Niagara, where we saw increasing numbers of students take action in honour of a cause they believe in. One of many such groups were 4 students from Eden High School. After sitting down with a staff member and learning more about the issue of domestic abuse and the work we do at Gillian's Place, the young women organized to help support our work. Between their initiatives, they managed to raise more than \$5250.



FEMICIDE

Ten women and five family members; all killed within the first 11 weeks of 2018. The killers were husbands, boyfriends, ex-boyfriends and stalkers. In two cases, the killer also took his own life.

The victims range in age from 13 to 88. Some lived in urban centres, some lived in rural communities. Some were Canadian-born, some were born elsewhere. Most had children. Their economic status ranged widely.

They all had at least two things in common: they did nothing to warrant being killed and their deaths were all acts of femicide.

So far in 2018, one woman has been killed every other day.

Every time there is a domestic homicide, our phone lines are flooded with women who fear they are next. Abusers can also watch the news, and use it as a tool to control and threaten their partners. 2018's jump in domestic homicide suggest that going forward, we can expect increased demand for our services.

To learn more about factors that increase the risk of domestic homicide, please visit www.gilliansplace.com or call or text our 24/7 support line to speak with an experienced counsellor.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Janet Allan	Samah Marei
Darryl Andree	Robert McGray
Judith Atwood	Karen Tribble
Maria Bau-Coote	Jennifer Wallace
Cindy Bourassa	Angela Zangari
Tim Empringham	Tanja Loeb <i>Executive Director</i>

EXECUTIVE STAFF

Tanja Loeb <i>Executive Director</i>
Shirley Vandenberg <i>Director of Finance and Administration</i>
Marion Wright <i>Manager of Legal Services</i>
Nicole Regehr <i>Community Development Manager</i>
Erin Griver <i>Manager of Counselling Services</i>
Kristi Lawrence <i>Manager of Shelter Services</i>

Strategic Plan 2017-2020

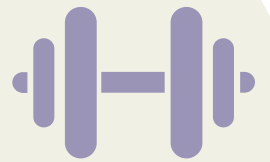
Strengthening our Core, Deepening our Impact

In the summer of 2017, our Board of Directors completed a strategic planning process, with a vision to establish a clear and informed direction for the organization— one that would build on our strengths and resonate with our staff and leadership. The planning process has also provided us with the opportunity to refresh our foundational statements, and renew our commitment to realize them. The successful implementation of our new plan Strengthening Our Core, Deepening Our Impact, hinges on our ability to nurture and maintain our current collaborations and partnerships, while reaching out to secure new opportunities to strengthen our work. We look forward to working with our community partners to achieve this.

1 STRENGTHEN OUR CORE

Enhance our capacity to deliver exceptional services

How we will achieve: Increased training for staff, including gaining trauma-informed certification, training in anti-oppression, anti-racism and trans-inclusion, mental health and addictions, a review of internal policies and implementing an operational planning process.



2 DEMONSTRATE EXCELLENCE

Assess need and deepen our impact

How we will achieve: By creating a Program Planning and Evaluation Framework, we will be able to better measure success and areas for improvement. This data will be used to continually improve services and build a case for public support in areas of education, awareness, fund development and engagement.



3 EXPAND OUR COLLABORATION

Initiate partnerships and engage community

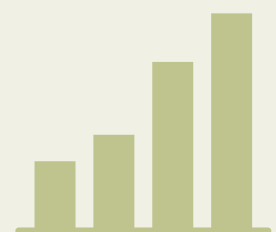
How we will achieve: Seek to strengthen existing service agreements and establish new community partnerships designed to strengthen access to and/or increase integration of services to better meet the needs of our clients. We will also join with community partners to have a more active and visible role in support of women's rights.



4 SUSTAIN

Ensure a strong sustainable financial future

How we will achieve: By using data, and building on relationships in public and private sectors, we will develop a three year fund development plan to identify current and potential funding partners.

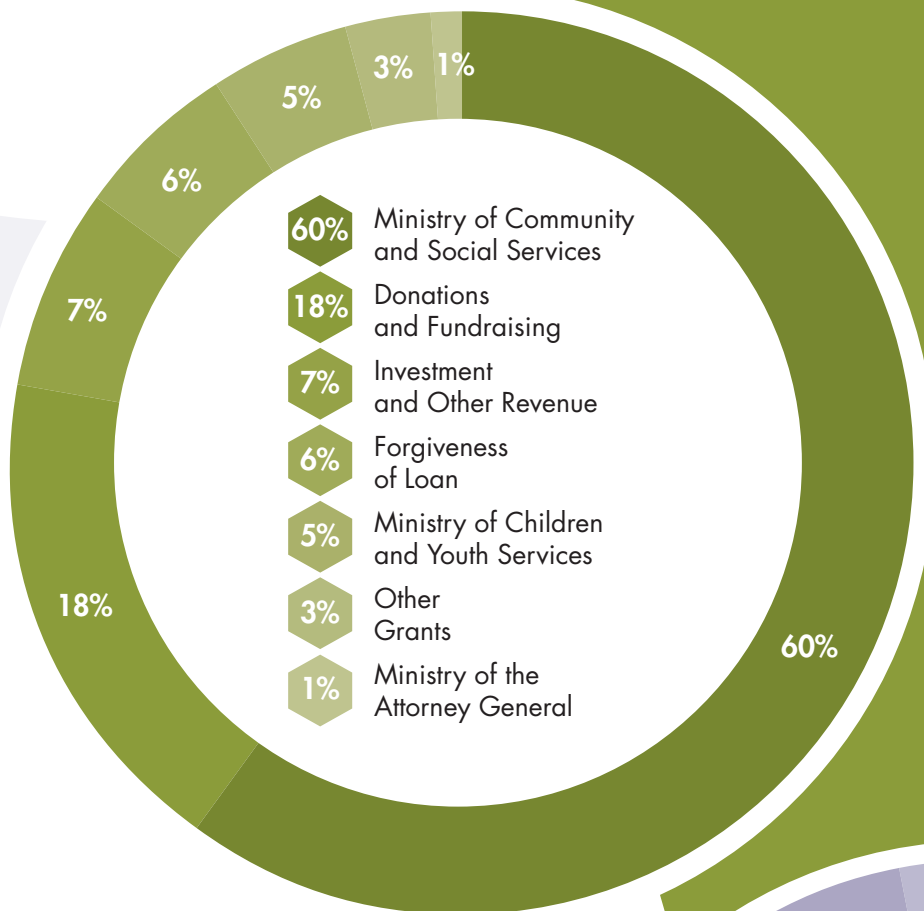


Gillian's Place Statement of Revenue and Expenses

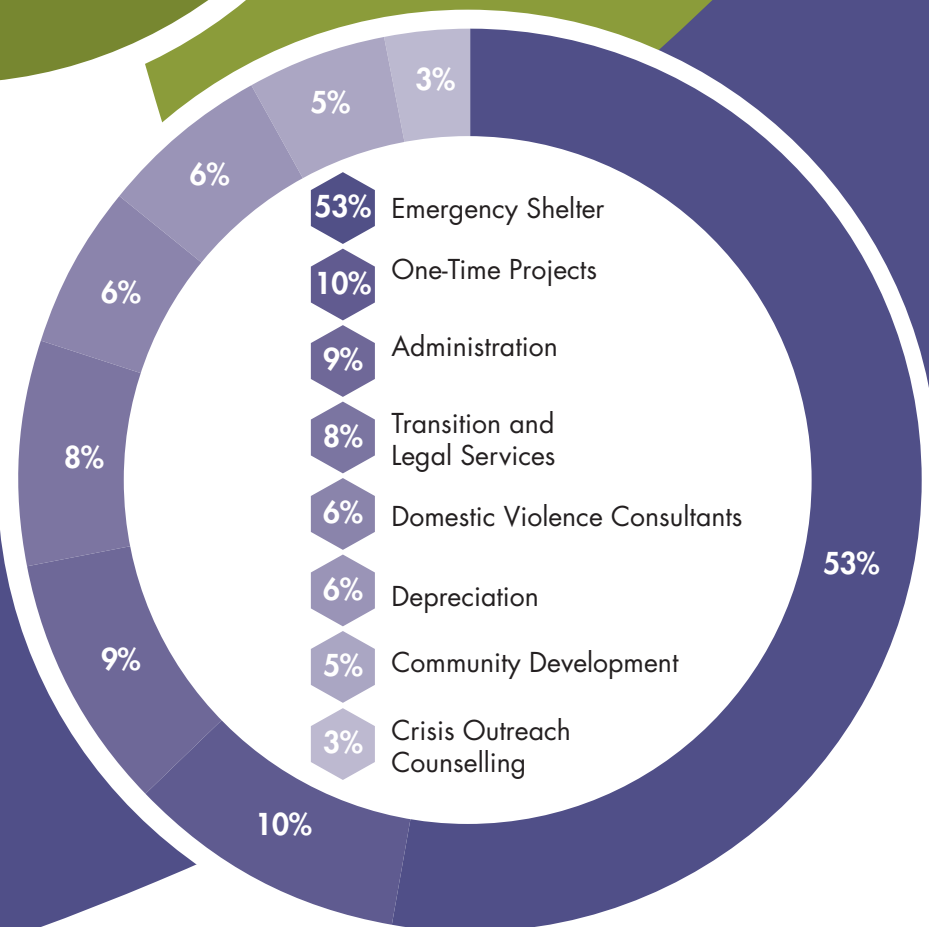
For the year ending March 31, 2018

	2018	2017	2016
REVENUE			
Ministry of Community and Social Services	\$1,439,486	\$1,344,729	\$1,319,016
Donations and Fundraising	430,995	502,344	378,637
Ministry of Children and Youth Services	126,009	126,009	126,009
Ministry of the Attorney General	32,500	32,500	32,500
Other Grants	77,100		
Investment and Other Income	156,712	149,678	69,134
Forgiveness of Loan	138,162	138,162	138,163
	2,400,964	2,293,422	2,063,459
EXPENSES			
Crisis Outreach Counselling	73,971	73,128	67,591
Emergency Shelter	1,272,689	1,260,335	1,227,578
Transition and Legal Services	171,612	159,356	152,165
One-Time Projects	239,624	31,291	17,670
Domestic Violence Consultants	144,682	144,949	144,877
Family Court Support	32,930	32,556	33,283
Community Development	103,089	110,896	138,405
Transition/Restructure Costs		7,062	172,389
Administration	223,137	198,979	180,899
Depreciation	137,231	137,231	131,767
	2,398,965	2,155,783	2,266,624
Surplus (Deficit)	\$1,999	\$137,639	\$(203,165)
as per p.5 of Audited Statements			

REVENUE



EXPENSES



A copy of the Audited Financial Statements are available upon request



GILLIAN'S PLACE WEST
NIAGARA
support for women and children who have experienced abuse

24-hr Support Line: 905.684.8331

Business Line: 905.684.4000

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gilliansplace.com

