



**OUR STORIES OF**  
*Resilience*  
**ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021**



## Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we are on stolen land of the Anishnabek, Huad-neh-show-nay, Mississaugas peoples bound by the Dish with One Spoon treaty. This treaty was originally between the Anishnabek, Huad-neh-show-nay, and Mississaugas, and bound communities to share the territory and protect the land. The land is also treaty 16 territory, a treaty signed in 1815. We and all non-Indigenous were invited into the treaty in the spirit of peace, friendship and respect.

We recognize the deep, systemic and ongoing violence faced by Indigenous peoples across Simcoe County and our country and are committed to the indigenization of spaces.

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## Message From a Mother

“Thank you so much for being so supportive and for your warmth. Thank you for always being there for us and listening and helping when we ask. Your help and encouragement will make a difference in our lives.”

## Who We Are and What We Do

My Friend’s House is at the forefront of addressing violence against women in the Southern Georgian Bay community. In 1991, three decades ago, My Friend’s House opened the first shelter in the area and expanded services over the years to become a specialist provider of domestic abuse services in the area.

Violence against women takes multiple forms. Every day, we see the myriad of ways men seek to control and exploit women through: physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, economic and technological abuse. Listening to the needs and experiences of survivors is at the heart of what we do. Over the years, the more we have listened, the more we have understood that women are impacted by the abuse from their partners and ex-partners in many differing ways. As we have listened, we have created and adapted programs to make sure My Friend’s House services are always responsive to the needs of abused women and their children. We are an organization where our team can support women no matter what their story is.

Our team work tirelessly to provide tailored support to survivors who access: our residential shelter, children’s program, transitional housing/legal advocacy program and therapeutic counselling program.



Not one day has passed without a woman reaching out for help and the Pandemic has only increased the demand.

Every day our team at My Friend’s House rises to this never-ending challenge. It is a testament to their commitment to abused women, their passion for the work and their resilience that we have not only survived this challenging period but provided more support than ever.

## My Friend's House at a Glance

**All of our services are trauma-informed and we support women with complex needs:**

- 25% of survivors disclosed needs related to drugs and alcohol
- 40% had mental health difficulties
- 10% of women said they were feeling suicidal by the time they reached out to us

**While the scale of our challenge is daunting, our services this year were able to achieve the following results:**

- 80% of survivors said they felt safer when they left our services
- 85% were supported to find a safe new home
- 91% said their quality of life had improved
- 98% felt confident that they knew how to access help in the future

**In 2020-21, My Friend's House provided life changing services to 1,525 survivors and their children.**

- 38\* women and children accessed our shelter services
- 212 survivors and their children were supported in our community-based services
- 39 children and youth accessed our child and youth program.
- 1236 women accessed the crisis and support line

**Of the women who accessed My Friends' House services last year**

- 33% were injured when they arrived
- More than 40% had their lives threatened by their abuser
- 67% had experienced physical abuse
- 31% sexual violence
- 86% psychological violence
- 38% economic abuse

\* Due to public health and Provincial Guidelines, My Friend's House was forced to reduce shelter capacity to ensure safe distancing and comply with guidelines. This had a significant impact on the number of women and children we could serve within the shelter setting.



## Being In an Abusive Relationship Is Hard

Being in an abusive relationship is one of the hardest things to have to live through. It means constantly managing your safety, on tender hooks not knowing when the next hit will come. It is an emotional roller-coaster, feeling like you have failed as a person.

It means constantly over thinking every decision you make to try to stay safe and that worrying wears on you. Then, when you realize you must leave and the only option is a shelter, you are afraid to stay and you are afraid to leave but you do. You make the call and the next thing you know you are being greeted by a counsellor.

**You are courageous.**

**You are brave.**

**You are resilient.**

There is a part of you that knows you will regain your footing. There is a level of self-worth hidden inside you, just waiting to be rediscovered.

Being in an abusive relationship is hard but you will find your way.

My Friend's House will be alongside you, until you do.



## What Makes My Friend's House Unique

Keeping survivors at the centre of all we do, My Friend's House is the only provider of specialist support to the greatest number of survivors across the Southern Georgian Bay community. We tailor our support to ensure every woman is safe and is given options to enable her to overcome trauma and regain control of her life, free from abuse, violence and fear. We listen to women and we give them the space to describe their experiences. We empower them to rediscover their own needs, gradually overcoming the trauma they have suffered.

### OUR STAFF

We are a small but mighty team. Our team of 25 passionate experts work tirelessly to provide essential support to traumatized women and children. My Friend's House recognizes that its staff are its most precious asset; it is this team that allows us to achieve our Mission, "To be a trusted partner in a supportive community, providing our expertise to create a safe haven for women today and empowering them to reclaim and rebuild their lives tomorrow."



### OUR VALUES

Our values run through the core of everything we do. We integrate our values internally and externally and continually seek to build and develop them. At the same time, My Friend's House expects the highest standard of behaviour and conduct from its employees and volunteers. As such, our values are underpinned by a behaviour framework to demonstrate this commitment.

**F****earlessness:** We are courageous and do not give fear the power to silence or stop us.

**R****espect:** We acknowledge the dignity, significance and humanity of each other.

**I****ntegrity:** We conduct ourselves ethically and with a high level of accountability and transparency.

**E****xcellence:** We commit to a high standard of service, with women and children's safety at the forefront.

**N****on-judgment:** We value, support and respect the individual choices made by informed and empowered women.

**D****iversity:** We see and celebrate the value in ourselves and others.

**S****ervice:** We have empathy and compassion for those we serve, coupled with the desire to meet their needs.



## Message from Chair, Zahra Saigar

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am delighted to welcome you to our AGM for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021. The AGM is a time to pause and reflect on the year in order to celebrate successes, acknowledge challenges and look towards the future.

The Pandemic brought unimagined challenges to our team. Alison, the management team and staff pivoted in what seemed like a moment's notice to meet the new circumstances. Alison shepherded all the moving pieces to ensure that every woman was carefully taken care of when each lockdown hit, that our Management and Staff were safe in doing so and that our services continued without interruption. I want to acknowledge our entire team for the tremendous job they do in bringing the cornerstones of our organization to life every single day. Through their daily

efforts and resilience in the face of seemingly endless obstacles, each day we are one step closer to the vision we share of "Empowered Women. Transformed Communities".

The Board, Management and Staff teams came together multiple times over the course of the year to develop the Strategic Plan. These moments allowed us to share experiences, exchange stories and bond as a single organization. It was incredible to find ourselves dreaming big with the upheaval of the Pandemic around us all. In fact, knowing that violence against women had risen sharply due to the lockdowns, fueled us to imagine an evolved future for My Friend's House.

Ongoing Board Member turnover and renewal helps us ensure effective oversight and stewardship for MFH. My gratitude to Board Members who

contributed to our year and aren't with us today: Jesse Dees, Karen Redpath, Susan Brindisi, Sheila Smith and Michaelene O'Malley.

This year we had larger shifts in our Board Membership and invited previous Directors back (on an interim basis) to ensure we had the expertise we needed to develop the new Strategic Plan. This is the final meeting for three of our interim board members: Kristen Douglas, Kimberly Pineau and Eric Sutton. They all served their tenure previously and stepped back in without hesitation when the need arose. We are humbled to have loyal champions of My Friend's House throughout our communities.

When we turned our efforts towards rebuilding the Board to meet the goals of the new Strategic Plan, we were grateful for the significant interest garnered in our call for new members.

Today, we are thrilled to welcome 6 new Directors who are joining us. Each underwent the vetting process with an application, screening, interview, reference check and background check. These 6 nominations represent a breadth and depth of experience across many sectors and functions and will be instrumental in seeing our new Strategic Plan to fruition.

An old axiom states: "If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together." As my first term serving as Chair comes to a close, I marvel at what we can achieve in unity, and I am full of hope for what we can create together, for My Friend's House.

Submitted with gratitude,  
Zahra Saigar





## Message from Executive Director, Alison FitzGerald

This year is certainly not one I could ever have predicted. We have faced some enormous and unexpected challenges, in particular, COVID-19. By the time our reporting year ended we were in yet another lockdown which meant women were in lockdown with perpetrators of domestic violence.

I am grateful to our frontline and Management team. From the very first lockdown to every subsequent restriction, their resilience allowed them to adapt to each change making sure services remained operational. They knew with every lockdown, women and children were in their homes with domestic abuse perpetrators not knowing if there was a way out.

I am grateful to our local media for making sure that the message that

shelters were still open got out and the message did get out. My Friend's House saw a 20% increase in calls this past year.

I am grateful to both the Federal and Provincial Governments. They quickly recognized that women's shelters (that run on a shoestring budget) could not absorb the cost of changing our infrastructure and operations to ensure our staff and clients were safe. From redesigning the shelter space to purchasing masks, shields, disinfectant, gowns and gloves to renting temporary space to maintain shelter services while the shelter went through renovations, they made sure that funds were available to cover some of the costs.

I am grateful to our donors and foundations who helped with investing

in new technology so that we could maintain counselling and support services at a distance. This past year has been a whirlwind and while our resilient team did troubleshooting to find solutions, it is the communities we serve who lifted us up.

I am grateful to our fundraising team who had the impossible challenge of raising well over \$400,000 last year. With the loss of fundraising events and having to adapt our usual approach to fundraising I thought there would be no way we could meet our goal. Our fundraising team didn't let that stop them. Their resilience and optimism allowed them to adapt, tell our story and inspire our community to make sure My Friend's House services would not be threatened because of COVID-19.

I am grateful to our Board of Directors who were there to lean on and while this crisis was being dealt with, kept My Friend's House moving forward. It is hard to believe that we managed to complete a strategic planning process in the midst of a Pandemic, but we did. Looking to the future is helping everyone get through.

This year has been one of the most outstanding and it has shown us that My Friend's House, like the women and children we are honoured to serve, is resilient and ready to take on the next 30 years.

Submitted with gratitude,  
Alison FitzGerald



## Our Services

### Shelter

The shelter is an essential element in a community response to violence against women. Shelters provide a lifeline to women who need to flee their abuser and find safety and support. My Friend's House shelter is where lives are changed and where new lives begin. Our work with women not only keeps them safe but also helps them overcome the trauma they have experienced and rebuild their lives.

Jennifer who fled to My Friend's House shelter in fear of her life, said this:

*"I'm living with my two children in one room, but I feel fulfilled. I've faced the worst challenges, but I can sleep without worrying for myself and my children. I didn't realize help was available. If you feel unsafe, you must find support. When you're safe and supported, you can achieve. My children keep me going and when I see them smile, I can hope again."*

### Therapeutic Counselling

The impact of abuse can be deep and often that impact isn't experienced until after women leave. My Friend's



House provides therapeutic support to help women maximize and strengthen their personal resources for healing as they resolve to face the challenges they experience as they move forward in their lives. Counselling can help women develop psychological skills and insights needed to overcome the pain and trauma resulting from domestic violence.

*"I didn't know that other women also experienced anxiety. I thought I was the only one. Thank you for helping me to understand what I was experiencing is normal."*

- Survivor The Blue Mountains

### Transitional Housing and Legal Advocacy Program

Our team provides support to survivors who navigate the family and criminal law systems, income support and housing systems; experiences that can often leave women feeling marginalized and disempowered. Our Program ensures survivors understand what is happening and gives them the power to decide what they want to do, each step of the way.

*"I wanted to write to you, to let you know how much of a difference you made for me. There is no way I could have done it alone."*

- Survivor from Stayner

### Child and Youth Program

Our Child Support Worker provides support to children and youth in residence and in the community. The program is designed to help them overcome the trauma they have experienced.

Here is just one account of a day in the world of this program:

*"Mothers are often overwhelmed when they come into shelter; even more so during a Pandemic. My job as a Child and Youth Worker is about giving mom and kids the assurance that they will be safe here. Survivors of domestic abuse have had so much taken away from them. So, they need to feel that their lives are as regular as can be. This morning I had a one-to-one session with a six-year-old boy. He felt lost without his friends and was directing his anger toward his mom. I also met with mom to help her understand that he was directing his anger toward her because he feels safe with her. I talk with them together about helping him express his anger in a healthy way, which is the first step in ensuring he does not repeat the behaviour of his Father."*

*In the afternoon I greeted a family who was brought to the shelter by police. The mother was in tears and they had only been able to bring a handful of belongings. I asked what the little girl's favourite toys were and I put a stuffed horse on her bed. Mom cried and apologized over and over again. She thought that there were women worse off than her and she didn't want to take up space."*





## First Impressions Make the Difference

Jane is a 33-year-old woman who is hard of hearing and was referred to My Friend's House. In the early days of COVID-19 when masks first started to be required. Jane could read lips so for our Counsellors to help her, they could not wear masks. Masks with a clear surface to see lips were not yet available so a plan was quickly hatched. Jane and the Counsellors wore face shields and stood 6 feet apart. Jane needed help and our team was not going to let the Pandemic stand in the way.

With this barrier addressed, Counsellors were able to work on a plan to help Jane build a future that was free from violence and coercion. Throughout this process, our team provided consistent support. They used technology to make sure that they could be present to support Jane at housing and legal appointments.

From the very beginning when Counsellors jumped into action to make sure that she could communicate with them, Jane said she knew she was going to be okay. Jane said she may have never left, if it wasn't for that first experience.

## The Year of Fundraising Resilience

### My Friend's House Fundraising Program Met Goal, Welcomed New Donors and Strengthened our Capacity for the Future

Building Resilience is critical to building a new life for the women and children we work with. We know now, it is also critical to build resilience for My Friend's House Fundraising Program in order to meet the needs of a growing population, now and in the future.

For 29 years we have been keeping our shelter and programs moving ahead by developing a solid Annual Fundraising Plan for My Friend's House. The plan is based on years of donor giving patterns to requests, holding events that focus on raising money and awareness and meeting potential donors face to face.

When the Pandemic hit, at the very start of My Friend's House new fiscal year, April 2020, the world shut down and so did our best laid fundraising plans. The fallout was swift. The economy took a hit. We worried that donors would not be able to continue giving, no events could be held and no donor face to face meet ups could happen. Without knowing how long we would be shut down, we had to quickly pivot to online events and a world where messaging digitally and Zoom meetings were now critical to establishing contact and support for

My Friend's House.

While our fundraising and event team regrouped and hoped for the best, community isolation and stress brought many new challenges with accelerating abuse and violence – our crisis lines were buzzing. By the summer of 2020, we knew that we not only had to meet our goal, we had to raise even more funds to keep up with the client demand. We had to become creative to keep the funding flowing and we had to find a way to build resilience into our revised Fundraising Plan for 2020/21.

Amazingly when the spring shut down happened, My Friend's House incredible donors (both long term and new) came to our aid and gave generously. Donations came with notes saying we know you need extra help now. We started to build revenue traction earlier which was critical but wondered would that change our fall donations which traditionally bring in 60% of our revenue.

We began to post more on social media, sent out updates to our donors and planned digital events. The digital world was a new one for us to be basing our goals on, but without a timeline of when we would be able

to meet up again, we held a few and amazingly again, donors stepped up to hold their own as well.

We kept reaching out digitally, zooming with donors, calling and writing and developed a Courage Campaign with our mask branded to send to donors and sell as a fundraiser. We kept finding new ways to promote our message, we needed to help the women who had the courage to call and find us and to flee violence and abuse. It was well received, and we continued to promote Courage in our holiday Campaign. The community response was amazing and we were blown away.

Inspired by our community, our Resilience to keep going stepped up. My Friend's House would like to mention three amazing funding gifts that we are still celebrating, ones that we never anticipated.

**The Trillium Foundation launched a Resilience Fund and we were successful in our proposal request. We now have \$120,000** to build digital excellence for future fundraising and awareness. My Friend's House is using the new funds to hire an agency to work with us to refresh and rebuild all of our digital fundraising portals and work with us to create a marketing plan that will bring critical awareness and inspire support for years to come.

**Peter Seligman, a committed supporter, gave us a Cornerstone gift of \$50,000 earmarked for Capital**

**use – to meet our need for expansion.**

First step, a portion of his gift will launch the work to determine how we will do this and who it will serve. With increased numbers of women and their families in need, we are now able to carry out a feasibility and needs assessment study. A study that will inform the best way (potential new facility build) to increase our space and program capacity for the future.

**The Southern Georgian Bay community ensured we reached and surpassed our goal of \$420,000** by the end of our fiscal year, March 2021. With the incredible support of our community through: individual gifts, launching third party events, corporate giving, grants from foundations, organizations and groups, businesses helping to sell Courage masks, sharing social media posts and word of mouth, we made our goal and then some.

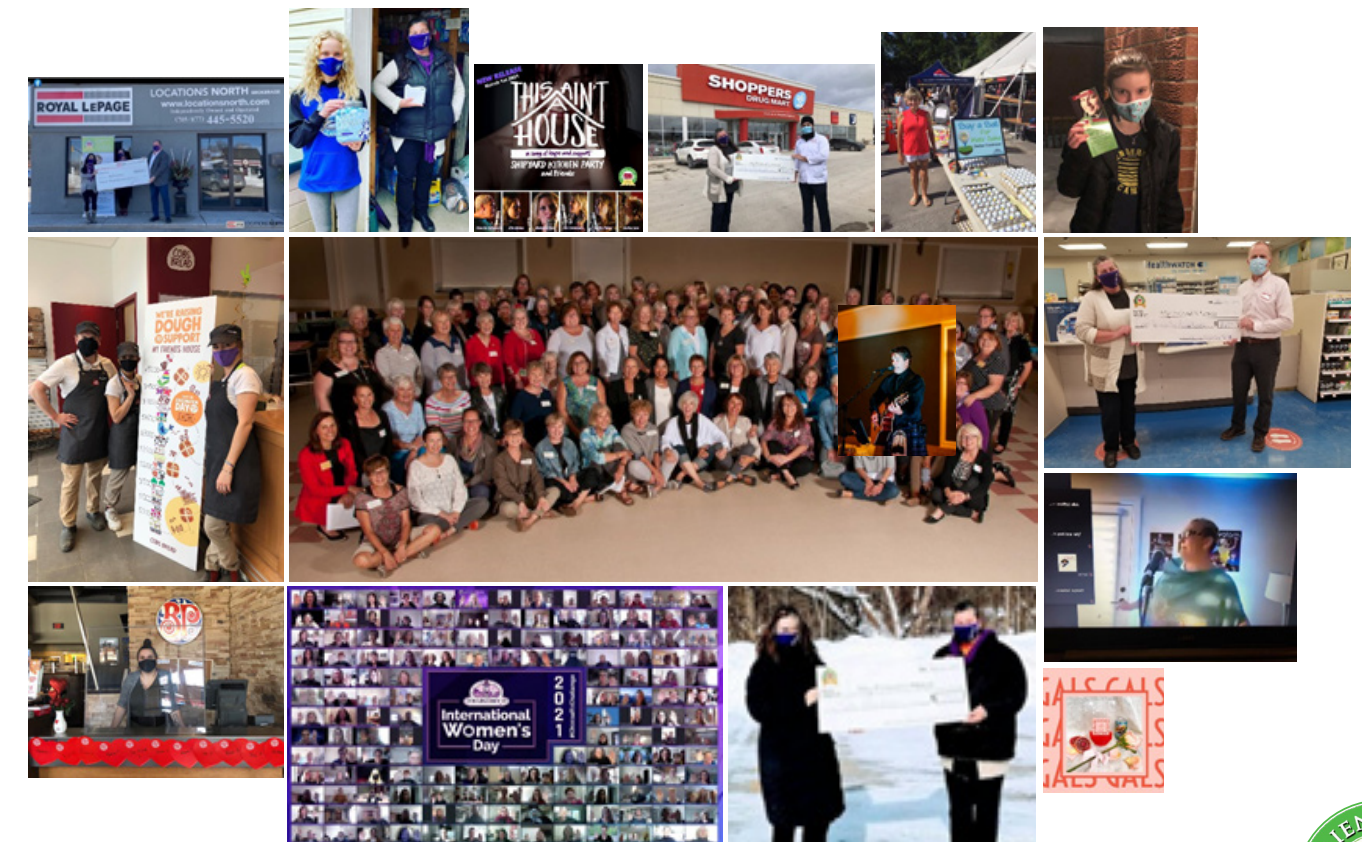
It truly is our supporters who help us provide the solid foundation and donate the money we need to raise every year. Your support will help abused women end the violence and abuse in their lives. In a year that we feared would see us fall short, we not only exceeded fundraising expectations we built hope and resilience for the future. To all of you who have given to My Friend's House this year, **we give you a virtual hug and a huge THANK YOU!**

## Fundraising and Events

As we made our way through a year of Pandemic restrictions, My Friend's House has been given the support of community donors in spades! As we assessed our ability to raise funds for programs during lockdowns and social isolation, we continuously celebrated the number of donors stepping up to ensure our services were available to the women and children of Southern Georgian Bay.

At the beginning of the year, we launched a social media, newspaper and radio campaign to let women know that My Friend's House remained open. We needed the support of the community to keep our doors open. Demand for our services increased and support came to us not only in the form of donations, but through people getting creative and holding events on our behalf.

Here are just a few examples of how people showed up for My Friend's House and the women and children we serve.



# Courage Campaign: Woman Abuse Prevention Month

Every November, My Friend's House launches Wrapped in Courage which is a campaign to raise awareness about gender-based violence. We know that the courage of a woman alone is not enough. Abused women need the support of their community to find the courage to leave.

This year we shifted from the sale of scarves to the sale of Courage masks. Community members were asked to

show their support for abused women and they did. We want to thank 95.1 The Peak FM and Collingwood Merch Co for helping to make this campaign the most successful ever. Through their support many celebrities like Monika Schnarre, Kim Mitchell, Alan Doyle, Elvira Kurt, Memphis Jones and Loverboy helped out.

Here are just a few pictures:



## Board Highlights

Over the past year, the Board of Directors and its committees focused on helping My Friend's House (MFH) adapt to the challenges that arose because of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Despite the unexpected pressures this created for the organization, the Board successfully completed a new five-year Strategic Plan and revamped Governance practices to ensure a solid foundation for our future.

The framework of the Strategic Plan was to address short-term challenges and create a long-term vision for the organization that factors in the changing social/ economic and political context within the communities we serve. The process included workshops, surveys, interviews, document review and research.

Initially My Friend's House brought the Board and staff together to revisit our Vision, Mission and Values as well as our Philosophical Framework which includes an intersectional analysis of racism and oppression. It is important to My Friend's House that principles of diversity and inclusion are centred within all aspects of this organization. To ensure these principles were embedded within the strategic planning process, a workshop that focused on racism and oppression was held.

Throughout this process, staff and Board were asked to participate in storytelling exercises. They were asked a series of questions that, toward the end, helped us identify who we are through our own experiences and what we value. We envision ourselves being alongside women and children through their transitions, supporting them when needed and being part of their story until the don't need us anymore.

This was an unusual approach to strategic planning, but it truly did help acknowledge that there is a great deal we are doing right. All too often a strategic planning process can focus too much on changing and fixing which can deflate us. This process helped energize all involved to be excited about building on what is already great.

The next phase brought research, surveys, interviews and analysis. Information was gathered from: supporters, current and former clients, government and service providers as well as members of diverse communities to name just a few. With this information, we were able to identify strengths and weaknesses, as well as opportunities and threats.

A major strength of ours is that the community trusts us. We have a good reputation and strong presence. Additionally we have a strong

knowledgeable team that is balanced with both longevity and new fresh ideas. with both longevity and new fresh ideas.

Our facility was identified as a major weakness. Our research confirmed what we already knew and that is, our facility no longer fully meets the needs of our clients or our community. We also noted that as our community changes, My Friend's House systems also need to change to ensure that we truly are inclusive and reflect the community we serve, not only today but well into the future.

In building a new facility, we have an opportunity to become more than just a shelter. We do not yet know what that will look like, but we know there is potential to create space that truly serves our community and meets some of the unmet needs of the women and children we serve; needs such as second stage and permanent housing. With growth comes risk. We still need ongoing funding to maintain our existing services and any growth will have to be self sustaining. Annual Government funding to support any kind of expansion is unlikely.

**With all the research and analysis done, My Friend's house formed 6 Strategic Goals:**

**LISTEN** 

**Understand the changing priorities and needs of the communities My Friend's House serves.**

My Friend's House has been embedded in the Southern Georgian Bay communities we serve for 30 years. The more our facilities and programs reflect the priorities and needs of our community, the more we will be able to meet every woman where she is at. Our communities are changing and we want to change along with them. Carrying out the Community Needs, Strengths and Feasibility Assessment is the first step.

**EXPAND** 

**Expand programs and services to more effectively empower women to reclaim and rebuild their lives.**

As our community evolves so does their needs from My Friend's House. We will identify gaps in service for women and their children and inform the growth of My Friend's House programs and services, including through partnerships.



## Board Highlights *continued*

### BUILD

**Grow My Friend's House facilities to create a safe haven for more women and their children.**

My Friend's House has outgrown the current space as the needs of the community have changed. Our work will inform the planning and design of expanded My Friend's House facilities that will shelter and house more women and their children and meet the needs of the diverse communities we serve.

### ADVOCATE

**Be a voice for equality. In an ideal world, there would be an end to gender inequality and gender-based violence and My Friend's House would no longer be needed.**

The reality is that inequality and violence have increased during the pandemic. My Friend's House will work with communities and organizations across Southern Georgian Bay to raise awareness about, prevent and end gender inequality and gender-based violence.

### INTEGRATE

**Build inclusive practices that respect diversity into all aspects of My Friend's House.**

We are committed to ensuring that our decisions, actions, Programs, and services are Feminist, anti-racist and anti-oppressive. Our commitment will guide transformation inside My Friend's House to reflect diversity every day in our practices.

### INVEST

**Create a financial foundation to sustain for the present and build for the future.**

We will create a sustainable fundraising plan that will enable us to continue to serve women in crisis. In addition, My Friend's House will determine the new growth in capacity and program needs and we will launch a Capital Plan. We will raise the investment required to build an expanded facility to support the women and children in our community for many years to come.

This was an uplifting process and in the midst of this, the Board also focused on good governance. Through the Governance Committee a Bylaw revision working group was struck to rewrite My Friend's House bylaws that ensured transparency, compliance with legislation, process clarity and improve readability. In addition to this work, the Committee focused on the Board Member recruitment process including consideration of the necessary skills, geographic mix, and diversity of representation on the Board. This year, the Committee delayed recruitment of new Board members until the Strategic Plan had been completed, to ensure that the new Board could deliver on the newly identified priorities.

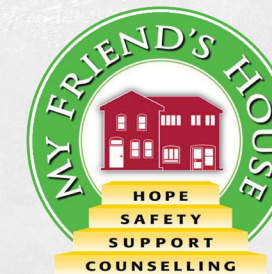
The Committee also conducted a review of the process to recruit, interview, screen, nominate, and orient new Board Members. A call for nominations was distributed through social media, word of mouth and other means to the Southern Georgian Bay community. Multiple expressions of interest were received and the Board is looking forward to welcoming a new slate of candidates at the Annual General Meeting.

There is much work to be done in the coming months and years and it is because of the great work accomplished in the 2020-21 fiscal year, that we are on solid ground.



## Strategic Plan 2021-2026

Meeting Every Woman Where She Stands:  
Transforming Ourselves, Reflecting Our Communities



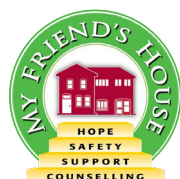
My Friend's House is committed to providing safe refuge, crisis support, practical assistance, and therapeutic intervention to abused women, women who are at risk of violence and their children.

My Friend's House is committed to continuing an intersectional approach to our work through an inclusion and diversity lens.

We support and incorporate anti-racism/anti-oppression and trauma-informed principles across our programs and with all our stakeholder groups.

It is these guiding principles that have informed My Friend's House Strategic Plan which is grounded in the realities and wisdom of the communities of the Georgian Triangle.

It is these guiding principles which will help us to achieve our strategic goals and promising practices for our vision and mission to be fully realized.



# Finance

For a complete analysis and explanation of the numbers on the balance sheet and statement of operations, it is very important to read the financial statements and the accompanying notes to the financial statements. The audited financial statements can be found on My Friend’s House website and are made available upon request.

A summary of the financial results is as follows:

	2021	2020
<b>Statement of Operations:</b>		
Total Revenue	\$1,490,957	\$1,105,945
Total Expenses	\$1,176,601	\$1,065,855
Operating Surplus (Deficit)	\$314,356	\$40,090
<b>Balance Sheet:</b>		
Cash	\$661,167	\$387,193
Net Assets	\$2,419,067	\$1,818,917

## HIGHLIGHTS

Every year, the Finance Committee prepares an operating budget and attempts to accurately predict the fundraising revenue for the following year. In this fiscal year, the amount of funds raised exceeded expectations, and this can be attributed to the increased profile of domestic abuse and the success of the Fundraising team during the Pandemic.

The Finance Committee members for the fiscal year included Susan Brindisi, Sheila Smith and Michaelene O’Malley. As Business Manager, Nicole Frankcom, provided timely, accurate and detailed financial data that supported the work of the Finance Committee.

The Finance Committee and the Board of Directors fully understand fully the obligation to uphold a relationship of both trust and confidence as we continue to proudly serve as stewards of the resources of My Friend’s House. We understand the important fiduciary responsibility to the shelter’s financial health and the importance of safeguarding the resources as we continue to address the issue of domestic violence in our community. We are actively preserving these resources to support accomplishing our mission of “Empowered Women, Transformed Communities” both in the short and long term.





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