

Annual Report
2018/2019



WOMEN'S RURAL
RESOURCE CENTRE



W R R C

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FROM THE LEADERSHIP TEAM (COREY & JANE)

From the inside out. This is how we work at WRRRC. Whether we're talking about the healing journey of a woman or our broader organizational development; we focus first on the domain of the heart, and from there we move outward. The heart journey can sometimes be painful and ridden with stumbles, but it offers learning, stretching, growing and sometimes, transformation. For a woman in crisis, the tyranny of everyday survival for long stretches, sometimes years at a time, has left her heart unattended to endure wounding criticism, blame and shame. The emotional cost is steep, often leaving women with very little sense of self and esteem. Our immediate priority when a woman arrives at our doorstep has always been safety and security, but as the need to live in fear falls away, she has more energy, time and attention to refocus on herself and begin to design the life she wants and deserves. This journey takes time; and while recovery is a unique process for each woman, we know that her potential for healing and growth multiplies if she is connected to other women in healthy relationships. The container of community is also a currency of safety. Over the last few years, WRRRC has been doing its own heart work too.

We revised our vision to point in the direction of the world we wanted to create; we explored our feminism, standing firm in anti-oppressive, anti-racism, intersectional and trauma-informed; and we recognized the aspect of our approach that is uniquely ours, the stake in everything we do: relationships matter, they are a powerful currency of love, and at the heart of transformation itself.

Coming into 2018 with a clear sense of who we are, we were ready to create an image that would convey our heart to the world. We launched our new brand including a logo, website and new mediums such as a blog and story-sharing platform to the world in November. We now have endless possibilities to connect with women who need to know how to find us, volunteers and donors, and the broader community. The launch of our new brand was symbolic of a much deeper journey. An organization claiming its identity and planting a stake in what it cares about most. For WRRRC, we care about women and we offer them relationship. That's our stake. In many varieties and forms...from informal conversation in the driveway to 10-week soul bearing groups with others who have lived experience...women who come here can count on an authentic experience of relationship, often an invitation into her own healing journey. And we believe that's the greatest gift we can offer her in the face of violence and abuse.

Corey Atkinson & Jane McFegoe
Executive Director & Board Chair

**AT WRRRC, WE ENVISION A
VIBRANT COMMUNITY WHERE
WOMEN AND FAMILIES CAN
THRIVE IN HEALTHY
RELATIONSHIPS.**

But we can't do it alone. If there's one thing we know for sure, it's that the entire community needs to come together to end gender-based violence. Without the generous support of Strathroy-Middlesex, it would be impossible to do the work that we do. So thank you to all of you. From our staff, to our volunteers, to our donors. You ensure our doors are open when women need us the most.



IMPACT

69

women served in shelter

95

children served

19%

Percentage increase in number of women referred out due to capacity issues over 2018

141

women served in transition

1,300

calls for support to our crisis line

"There isn't a day that goes by that we don't get a phone call for shelter space."

- Kelli Russel, Program Manager

MOVING FORWARD

This year, WRRC has put a focus on our agency. Who we are, what we believe and our philosophy around the work that we do. This led to the creation of a new brand, new logo and a new website.

We have felt for some time now that the image we were presenting to the world didn't match how we felt inside the organization. Our outside didn't match our insides, so to speak. We know we're a progressive, feminist agency, yet we weren't speaking to an entire segment of activists who read, socialize, and advocate in a digital world.

These new features allow us to communicate with our stakeholders and our community in new and inventive ways. So far we have a monthly blog, email newsletter, and inbox from the website alone. Navigating the site is much more intuitive, so those who need support have an easier time finding it.

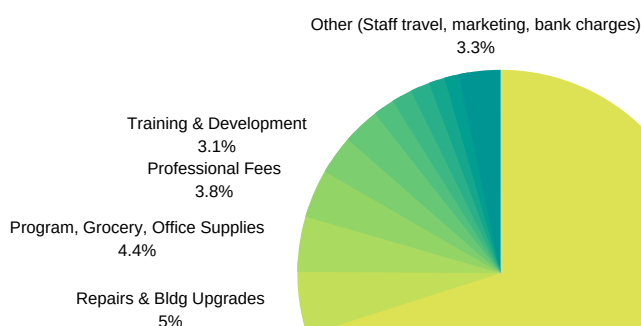
Of course, at the core of everything we do is the women and children we serve in Middlesex County. Women can contact us through our website for service, or find learning and community resources on our pages. One of the new features we are most excited about is the "You Are Not Alone" page. This is where we feature the stories of women who have used our services, in the hopes that others may recognize some of their story and feel less isolated.

www.wrrcsa.org

We look forward to seeing you there.

\$212,000

AMOUNT RAISED IN FUND DEVELOPMENT IN 2018-2019

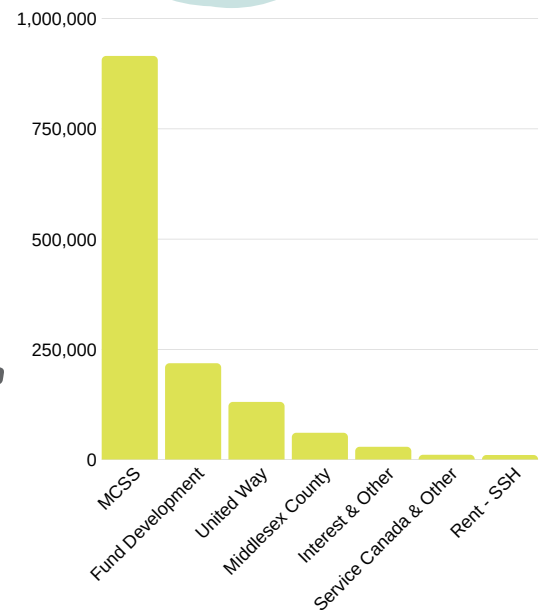


FINANCES

FROM WOMEN WE SERVE:

Without WRRC I am not sure I would be sharing this story today. From day one I was able to access help when I needed it. Someone is always available. That first night I sat with a counsellor who listened while I shared my story and she let me cry. She said 'stop saying you used to be, because you still are'. I will never forget that.

- Rosemary



PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: TRANSITION

No day looks the same for Support Worker Klaire Gain. The lives of women who are experiencing abuse and violence are complex, dynamic, and constantly changing. That means her role is constantly changing too. "Advocacy at WRRC is not a black and white role," says Klaire. "It is about supporting women and families whether they are in, leaving or have left situations of domestic violence." Our first priority is risk assessment and safety planning for a woman and her children. Her risk is impacted by many different factors and issues, however the systems she must navigate are complex. Quite quickly a woman may be overwhelmed and lost in the system. In the midst of crisis, having someone by your side whom you can trust to provide you with information, to help you create a plan and take one day at a time, is critical to survival. At WRRC, to the woman who is living in fear for her life in her own home, we are that someone.



PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: COUNSELLING



There's no limit on the number of times a woman can come and talk to our Community Counsellor Julia Moulin. It's one of the things Julia loves about the WRRC program. "It allows women to be supported throughout their processes as they see fit, and to build themselves back up with a trusting support." This past year, Julia completed 577 hours of counselling with women in our community. "I believe that we have a resource that allows women to feel validated, heard and believed in their experiences of violence"

"I believe that we have a resource that allows women to feel validated and heard in their experiences of violence, to learn about their experiences, to feel validated and to be believed in what they are feeling isn't just 'in their head'".