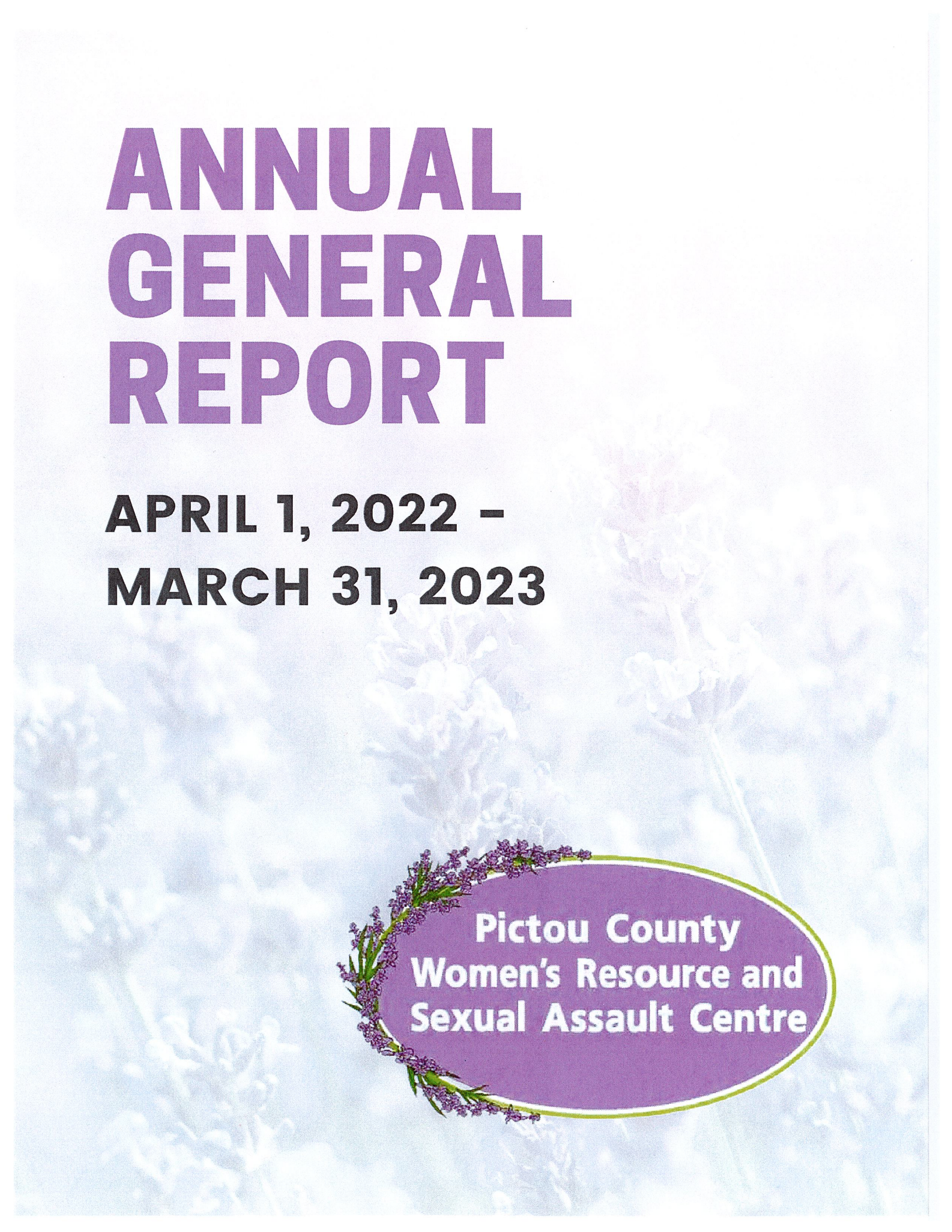
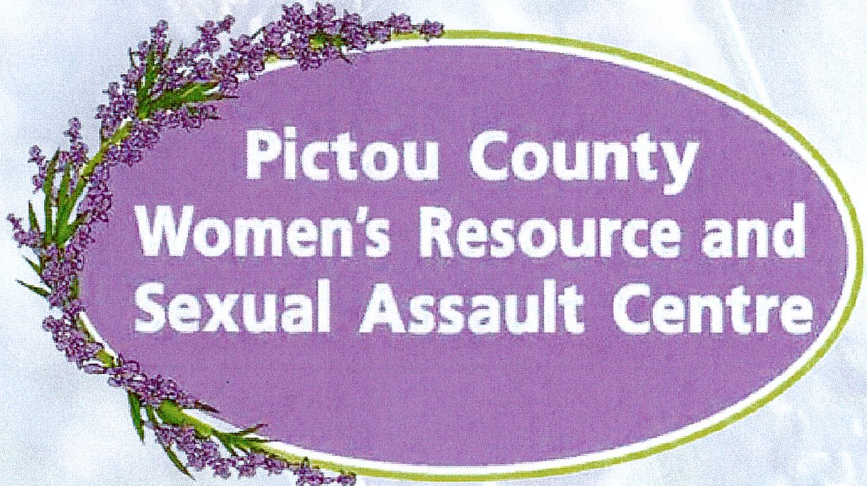


ANNUAL GENERAL REPORT

**APRIL 1, 2022 –
MARCH 31, 2023**

The background of the entire page is a soft-focus image of lavender flowers in shades of purple and white.The logo is an oval with a purple background and a thin green border. It is partially framed by a sprig of lavender flowers on the left side. The text inside the oval is white and reads "Pictou County Women's Resource and Sexual Assault Centre".

**Pictou County
Women's Resource and
Sexual Assault Centre**

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MANDATE & VISION

Pictou County Women's Resource and Sexual Assault Centre (PCWRSAC) offers support and advocacy to individual women, unites women, community, and government to achieve equality. As feminists we commit to justice and equality for all people.

This means freedom from oppression and affirms women's rights to dignity and autonomy. We are here to support all women. We believe in freedom of choice and see women as experts in their own lives.

Our vision is a world of justice, equality, and peace for all people. We see an end to misogyny, racism, poverty, classism, ageism, and all other forms of oppression. We see a society where there is self-determination, both individually and collectively.



A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

It is an honor to serve as the Chair of the Board of Directors for our Women's Centre. Our board consists of ten members, all with skills and experience that support our governance.

Our board works from a policy governance model. Overall, a board governance approach can help ensure our Centre operations focus on our mission and mandate and desired impact in the community.

As part of our commitment to transparency and accountability, we present our annual general meeting report for the Women's Centre. With the leadership of our policy committee, we have updated our board policies focusing on the following areas:

- Clarity about serving women, girls and survivors of sexual violence while working from a trauma informed intersectional feminist lens.
- We acknowledge and understand the harm of colonization, land acknowledgments help us remember the longstanding histories and legacies of colonization and enslavement that directly impact the communities we serve.
- We understand that gender identity refers to each person's deeply felt and internal and individual experience of gender which may or may not correspond with their sex assignment at birth.
- We value diversity and are committed to modeling diversity inclusion, and equity to maintain fair and equal treatment.
- Our board member duty descriptions, evaluations and committees add additional clarity and guidance including respectful organization guidelines.

- We have proposed amending the board terms allowing board members to serve up to two terms.
- We have strengthened our processes for complaint, dispute investigation and resolution including a policy specific to abuse allegations and prevention.
- We have developed a capital reserves policy to help strengthen our financial future.

Our policy work reflects our organization's commitment to providing high-quality services to women while advocating for women's rights addressing emerging issues. We will continue to update our policies and advocate for changes supporting the wellbeing of women in our community. We want to thank our staff, volunteers, members, funders and donors for their support and contributions to our organization's success. Together, we can continue to make a difference in the lives of women in our community.

Warmest Regards,
Maxine Mann



A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I want to express my deepest gratitude to all our members, volunteers, staff, funders, and donors who have supported us along our journey of empowering women and girls, enhancing their well-being. We have remained resilient, adaptable, and committed to our mission to empower women. We are steadfast in our commitment to a gender equal world.

We have faced challenges this year including increasing demands, cost of living increases and staff shortages. We have worked collaboratively and as a strong team to face these challenges and provide professional, quality and women centred services.

Throughout the year, we have sought and received grants and funding to address emergency food insecurity relief in the wake of Hurricane Fiona as women faced increasing challenges. We piloted a lunch and learn focused on food security.

March 8th, 2023, the province of Nova Scotia made a historic investment into women serving organization in the form of project funding and one time investment. We look forward to co-designing projects to address gender-based violence.

Our team provided one thousand two hundred and forty (1240) direct services to seven hundred and sixty one (761) women, girls, and survivors including supportive counselling services, advocacy, system navigation, information and referrals to women facing mental health problems, economic insecurity, and gender-based violence. We implemented a new MORPH group program aimed at addressing the day-to-day healing journey of survivors of sexual violence.

Our work does not end there. We have taken steps to create awareness about the challenges women face and the policies required to address them. In March, we had an opportunity to participate in discussions with Members of Parliament in Ottawa for a National Action Plan to End Gender Based Violence Day of Action following Canadian Women's Foundation Shockproofing Conference.

Along with Women's Centres Connect, nine women's centres across Nova Scotia we engage in various advocacy efforts to bring lawmakers attention towards issues such as the gender pay gap, the need for investments into non-profits as the social safety net of Nova Scotia, sexual health, housing insecurity and other important issues.

We hosted two in person events, Take Back the Night with survivors and allies bringing awareness while working towards an end of the public health emergency of ongoing gender-based violence. Followed by an Embrace Equity World Café International Women's Day Celebration featuring Tonya Francis and Sarah MacKinnon, participant in our Because I am a Girl International Day of the Girl program.

I want to take a moment to acknowledge and thank our staff and volunteers both past and present, whose hard work has made a significant difference in the lives of women in our community. Their dedication and commitment to our mission have been exceptional and the basis we continue to build from.

Looking ahead, we are committed to continuing our work in providing intersectional, trauma informed feminist services collaborating with women to achieve their full potential. We are committed to addressing the system barriers that hinder women's progress towards quality of life and will work towards building a more equitable and inclusive society.

I want to thank our Board of Directors for their leadership and guidance, our community for their continued support, our funders for the resources that keep our doors open and our donors for their generous contributions.



Respectfully submitted,
Shelley Curtis-Thompson, BA, RSW
Executive Director

DIRECT SERVICES

Our open-door policy welcomes women and survivors of sexual violence to receive support and information. We meet people where they are on their journey with a strength-based women centered trauma informed intersectional approach. We served two hundred and twenty one (221) new women this year, offering a full range of direct services.

We are the oldest Women's Centre in Nova Scotia operating for forty seven (47) years. Our direct services include support counselling, information, referrals, advocacy, and programs on a broad range of topics. We provided early intervention opportunity, helping empower and strengthen well-being through all our programs and direct services.

Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women funds our core services which is enhanced by project funding. Project supports from Canadian Women's Foundation, United Way of Pictou County, Department of Community Services, Federal Student Program and Community Links increasing our capacity to meet growing demands for service. March 8, 2023, the Province of Nova Scotia made an announcement offering additional project and one time funding supports to Women Centre's for this coming year. Funding is essential to our capacity to provide services and expand in order to meet the growing needs of our community.

CORE FUNDING IS CRITICAL TO ENSURING LONG-TERM STABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY OF OUR ORGANIZATION.

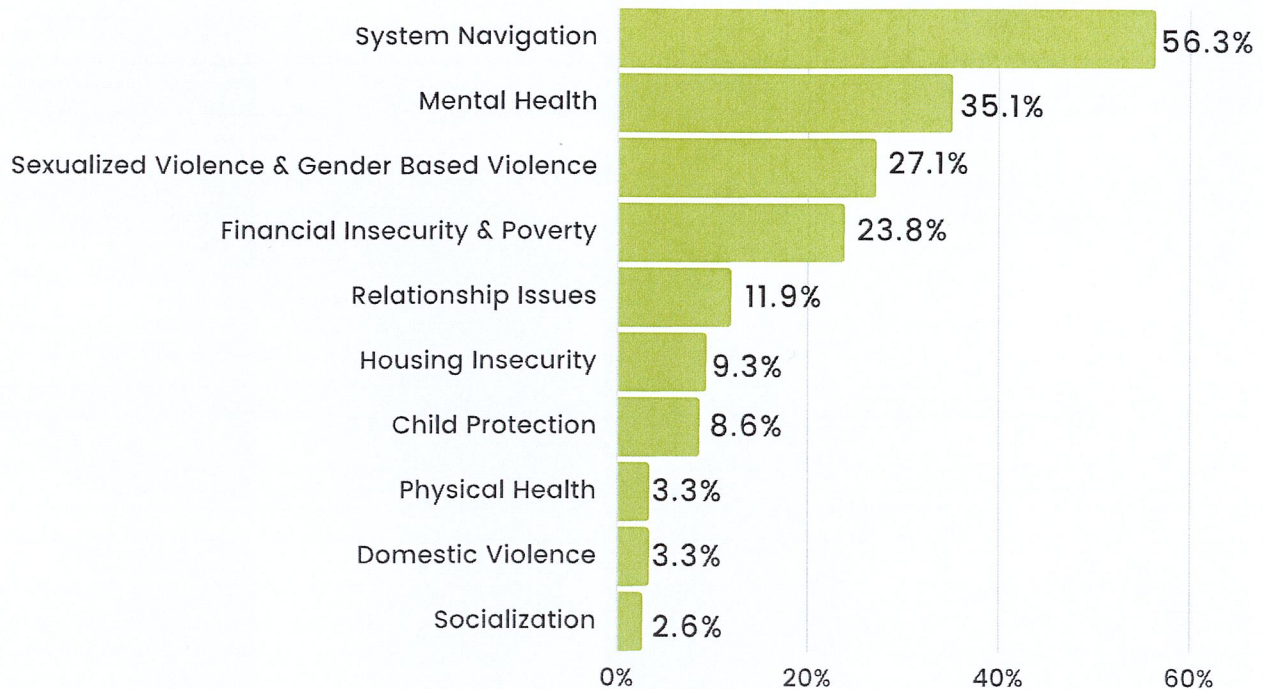
**DEMANDS FOR SYSTEM NAVIGATION
& ADVOCACY HAS INCREASED THIS YEAR BY**



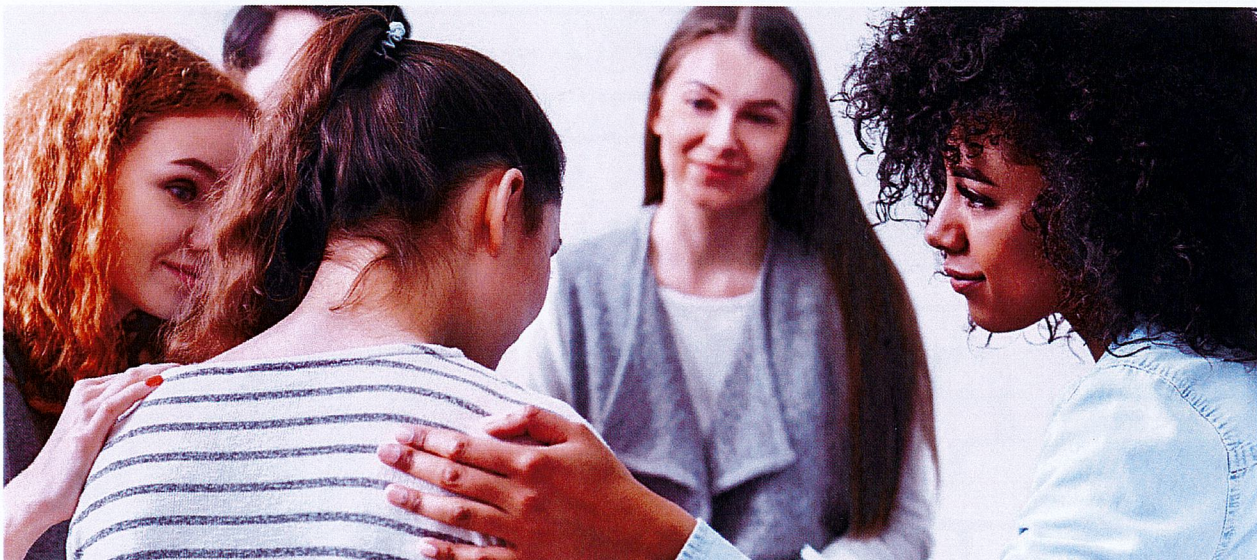
23%

Our statistics help us tell the stories of the seven hundred and sixty one (761) people involved in 2007 services with our Centre this year. We use HIFIS, the homeless individuals and families information system for our statistics.

MULTI-ISSUE REASONS FOR SERVICES



System navigation, having support on their journey is a vital service making a difference in women's lives. Women say they don't know what they would do without our support navigating systems with them. Women are resilient and grateful for the supports offered through our Centre creating a supportive circle of care.



MORPH - MAPPING OUR ROAD TO POWER AND HEALING

MORPH aims to support and empower survivors living in Pictou County. MORPH coordinated and provided services to survivors helping them develop healthy coping tools to manage and reclaim control of their lives. We collaborate with community partners including PSART (Pictou Sexual Assault Response Team) to respond, offer awareness, public education events and work towards a coordinated response to sexual violence.

MORPH services received project funding through both the Canadian Women's Foundation and United Way of Pictou County.

With funds from the Canadian Women's Foundation, we have been able to contract a counsellor offering both group and individual services to survivors. Our services include counselling, safety planning, information, referrals, programs, and public education.

Our MORPH support worker, Melissa Fanning, plays a significant role in this service delivery and coordination.



PROGRAMS	SESSIONS	LOCATIONS	PARTICIPANTS
MORPH Stage 1	5	Pictou County	7
Using Mindfulness to Cope	9	Pictou County	7
Healthy Relationships	7	Pictou County	6
MORPH 2.5	3	Pictou County	3
Sexual Assault Awareness Month	4	Online	10
Take Back the Night (TBTN)	1	Stellarton	66
TBTN Prep	1	NSCC	30

Over the last year, we have completed twenty four (24) sessions in groups involving twenty three (23) participants. Group offers a unique opportunity to gain experience and grow through group experience.

MORPH Counsellors, Janice Fraser, Anna Galvin, and Melissa Fanning co-facilitated these programs.

THERE WAS A 24% INCREASE IN THE DEMAND FOR GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE SERVICES. OVER THE LAST YEAR, GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE WAS THE REASON FOR SERVICES TWO HUNDRED AND SIX (206) TIMES AND A CONTRIBUTING FACTOR FOR ACCESSING SERVICES AN ADDITIONAL TWENTY EIGHT (28) TIMES.

Future opportunities include programs for youth, survivors' families, and all genders. If you are interested in learning more about services and programs offered, email Melissa Fanning.

MORPH@WOMENSCENTRRE.CA

The following is a full list of our MORPH programs and public education opportunities. All programs are adapted to meet the needs of participants. We welcome and continually develop new material as we learn and grow.

PROGRAMS INCLUDE:

- Creative Healing for Youth Survivors of Sexual Trauma
- Mindful Process Recovery Group for Sexual Trauma
- Moving Forward: Reconnecting and Reintegrating
- Skill Building Support Group for Adult Women Survivors of Sexual Trauma
- Using Mindfulness to Cope – Male Survivors
- Healthy Relationships and Boundaries
- 2.5 Yoga Survival Program
- Using Mindfulness to Cope for Survivors of Sexual Abuse

PUBLIC EDUCATION INCLUDING:

- Sexual Exploitation/Human Trafficking
- Skill Building Program for Supporters of Survivors of Sexualized Violence
- Finding Me School Based Program
- Ins and Outs of Consent

Thank you for hosting such a special event.
Much gratitude, moving and poignant.
A room filled with great energy, insights,
and many talents.

- KIMBERLY DICKSON-IWD

PCWRSAC anniversary -Thank you for
being a dependable and compassionate
resource for our community all these
years. Here's to many more.

- DARLENE TAYLOR

So many women supported in our
community over the years!

- ARLENE MACDONALD, FORMER ED

PCWRSAC impact in community is
immeasurable.

- CAMILLA MACDONALD

We live in a world where most women
experience gender-based violence
in their lifetime, this is our epidemic.
Until we reach equality, gender-
based violence will exist. A step
towards equality is a step towards
ending gender-based violence

**- SHELLEY CURTIS-THOMPSON,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PCWRSAC**



GIRLS EMPOWERMENT

We believe empowering girls is essential to creating a brighter future for all. We recognize the unique challenges girls face in their daily lives, and are committed to providing them with tools, and programs they need to thrive.

We recognize empowerment is a process that starts with self-awareness, self-esteem, and confidence. We provide a supportive environment where girls can explore their own values and beliefs while developing skills to express themselves, advocate for themselves and pursue their dreams.

We promote gender equality and challenge harmful stereotypes, biases and discrimination that can limit girls' potential. We aim to provide them with opportunities to develop their full potential and become agents of positive social change.

Our work with girls occurs through programing including girl's empowerment camps, International Day of the Girl Celebrations and Finding Me School Based Program.

This year we were able to hold our Girls Summer Camps in-person serving four (4) communities including Ward One, Downtown New Glasgow, Pictou, and Pictou Landing First Nations. There was a total of thirty six (36) girls participating in the camps. International Day of Girl events distributed eighty (80) Because I am a Girl Books. While working in six schools, with one hundred thirty seven (137) students with our Finding Me Program.

With food security grants we offered healthy snacks and lunches. Thank you, United Way of Pictou County, for your support!



SCHOOL OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Finding Me started in 2018 with grade seven girls. It is an eight-week program providing girls a safe space to learn, grow, and inquire about topics connected to wellness, relationships, and sexual violence prevention. With funding from the United Way of Pictou County, we were able to update this program in March 2023. We extend a special thanks to Schools Plus for their partnership and extra support with co-facilitation in West Pictou and Trenton schools.

**THIS YEAR'S FINDING
ME PROGRAM**

137
PARTICIPANTS

7
PROGRAMS

6
SCHOOLS

The overall goal of this program is to help girls feel more comfortable and confident in themselves.

OUTCOMES:

- Creating a sense of connection and shared experience for female youth.
- Increasing awareness and education on the nature of sexualized violence.
- Promoting positive self-image and self-esteem.
- Developing critical thinking skills in one's everyday life.
- Determining one's own values and opinions on important topics.
- Providing information on resources available in community.

“

**EMPOWERED WOMEN CAN TRANSFORM
THEIR OWN LIVES AND THE LIVES OF
THOSE AROUND THEM.**

”

A YEAR IN A GLIMPSE:

SERVICES	PARTICIPANTS	# OF CONTACTS	ADDITIONAL INFO
Support Counselling & Crisis intervention	273	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 767 services • 79 drop in 	<p>Open door allows for barrier free access to services including in person, by text, by video and phone.</p> <p>Text: 902-921-4647 Call: 902-755-4647 Email: info@womenscentre.ca</p>
Advocacy & Accompaniment	262	809 Services	<p>An increase of 23% more advocacy services in this fiscal year.</p> <p>System navigation is one of the many critical services offered at our Centre.</p>
Information & Referrals	168	334	Ensuring women and survivors have the right information at the time when they need it most.
Income Tax Returns	3	3 Services	We assist low income women complete basic income tax returns.
Programs	71	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 Programs • 45 Sessions 	<p>Our programs help increase awareness, empower, and work towards a gender equal world.</p> <p>Programs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Security • Walking • MORPH
Programs with Girls	253	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13 Programs • 4 Camp Locations • 6 Schools • 42 Sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowerment Day Camps • Finding Me School Based Program • International Day of the Girl

SERVICES	PARTICIPANTS	# OF CONTACTS	ADDITIONAL INFO
----------	--------------	---------------	-----------------

Public Education & Events

305

10

- International Women's Day
- Sexual Assault Awareness Month
- VON Skills Building
- NSCC Expo
- Take Back the Night

Social Media Campaigns

2660 Followers

4 Platforms

- Sexual Assault Awareness Month
- Pride Month
- Women's and Mi'kmaq History Month
- 6 days of Activism
- African Nova Scotia History Month

Social Change

- 7 local Collaborative Networks
- 4 Provincial Networks

- Pictou County Partners
- Aging Well Coalition
- Pictou County Sexual Assault Team
- Pictou County Interagency on Family Violence
- Pictou County Executive Director Round Table
- Pictou County Supportive and Affordable Housing Association
- Pictou County Social Workers
- Nova Scotia Women's Centres Connect
- CSEP
- ESIS Working Group
- TESS

Collaboration and Partnerships are essential to achieving our mission and creating positive social change in our community.

We are committed to building strong relationships sharing our commitment to social justice and gender equality.

We strive to create lasting partnerships grounded in a shared commitment to promote well-being, equity, and equality

SERVICES	TOTAL PARTICIPANTS	PROGRAMS	SOCIAL CHANGE
2007	761 (An increase of 24%)	19	27 Collaboration

SOCIAL CHANGE

Our dual mandate ensures we provide both direct services and work for social change.

As long as we have inequality, we will have gender-based violence, poverty, and a lack of access to the social determinates of health. Equality is the path forward to a gender equal world. To achieve this, we all need to work together towards a secure and resourced community.

We are in a public health crisis, with most women experiencing gender-based violence in their lifetime. It is our hope we can work within the national action plan to end gender-based violence to increase awareness, resources, and strategies to end gender-based violence.

We raise public awareness through five social media campaigns, five public education and events. We continue to work within the community through seven local tables and networks and four provincial groups.

“

CANADA HAS HAD LAWS ABOUT PAY EQUITY SINCE THE 1970'S. IN IT'S 10-YEAR ANALYSIS STATS CANADA (2018) NOTES NEARLY TWO-THIRDS OF THE STUDIED PAY GAP IS UNEXPLAINED. (DUE TO GENDER-RELATED BIASES)

**GENDER PAY GAPS ARE REAL. DESPITE PAY EQUITY LAWS, GENDER PAY GAPS AND UNFAIRNESS IN PAY PERSIST ANT IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT EQUAL WORK FOR EQUAL VALUE
- CANADIAN WOMEN'S FOUNDATION**

”



WOMEN'S CENTRES CONNECT

Connect is our provincial association of Women's Centres. Connect unites nine Women's Centres from across the province to offer a gendered analysis on policy and speak up about women's issues provincially. Connect member Centres serve and respond to the issues of women and girls in our communities. Our activities are rooted in a feminist analysis informed by an intersectional, non-oppressive, and trauma informed approach.

POLICY & ENGAGEMENT & ADVOCACY

Connect and each of the nine women's centres participated in a number of policy engagement and advocacy opportunities over the last year. As Connect acts on consensus, we offer a formidable voice on issues and solutions related to the social determinants of health, equality and equity. We continue to uphold Connect's advocacy through engagement with several organizations with similar missions. The following are some examples of Connect's advocacy during the past year.

- Ongoing lobbying for of Sexual Violence Trauma Therapy Services RFP throughout the province.
- Engaged with Canadian Women's Foundation via a survey on a project to explore a vision and path towards achieving a thriving women's and gender equality sector.
- Contributed to the report "Not Without Us" with the report: Changing the Response for Women with Disabilities Experiencing Domestic Violence.
- We signed onto a letter for the Federal Government to include funding for energy efficiency for lower income households in the 2022 budget.
- We signed the Disability Rights Coalition letter Lobbied Columnist Sheldon MacLeod on: Power poverty in Nova Scotia and calls to action.
- Wrote a letter to the Premier with respect to the Child and Youth Commission and made suggestions on support while children are in care relating to Intimate Partner Violence.
- Opportunity with YWCA who is partnering with Schools Plus to get prevention education around trafficking and exploitation of youth into the schools.

- Continuum of Care Research Project.
- Added to a social media campaign on Abortion rights in NS.
- Engaged with Msit No'kmaq: Indigenizing Nova Scotia's GBV Response.
- Knowledge Synthesis Research Project with Dr. Katherine Salter to explore the relationship with precarious employment and violence against women.
- Have signed a letter to support Efficiency Canada and are looking into Carbon embedding in various industries.
- Participant in the VAW research project with Dr Alexa Yakubovich
- Engagement with Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work, a non-profit organization assisting individuals with disabilities to find and maintain meaningful employment.
- Signed on to support our consensus statement outlining the principles for a basic income guarantee (BIG) we would like to see implemented in Atlantic Canada.

FOLLOW CONNECT ON FACEBOOK, LINKEDIN AND ACCESS THE FULL CONNECT REPORT:
[HTTPS://WOMENCONNECT.CA](https://womenconnect.ca)



PUBLIC EDUCATION

Continual learning during these shifting times offered critical information and connections PCWRSAC offered:

- Human Trafficking Workshop
- MORPH information Session
 - In's and Out's of Consent
 - Sexual Violence and Trauma Informed Care
 - Information Sessions about Women's Centre
 - Change Management
- VON – skill development sharing about system navigation and support services

PCWRSAC participated in training opportunities such as:

- Refugees and Trauma –CTRI
- An Intercultural Approach to Gender-Based Violence with Newcomer Communities
- Trauma-Counselling Strategies for Healing and Resilience
- Danger Assessment Training
- Trauma Informed/Trauma Sensitive Documentation Practices – Zoom session with Dale Gruchy
- Unravelling the Complexities of Domestic Violence and Criminalization in Black women's Lives
- Critical Incident Debriefing CRTI workshop

- Walking with Grief: Helping Others Deal with Loss CTRI Workshop
- Nova Scotia Human Trafficking Case Study Conference
- CTRI De-escalating Potentially Violent Situations
- CTRI Body-Oriented Trauma Counselling Strategies
- Gender Based Violence Against Two Spirited People
- CTRI Narrative Therapy: Tools for Exploring Stories
- Virtual Divorce Workshop – Pictou County Family Court
- Northern Region Domestic Violence Webinar
- CTRI Trauma Informed Care
- CTRI Vicarious Trauma – Strategies for Resilience
- The Road to Safety: Indigenous Survivors Speak Out against Intimate Partner
- Violence during the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Dr. Alan Wade: In Dignity: Addressing Violence and Honouring
- Resistance in the Colonial Context
- Change Management Cohort
- And more



SOCIAL MEDIA

PCWRSAC uses social media as a tool to educate, engage and empower the community. Platforms used include Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. We aim to share posts daily, which may include information regarding topics like mental health, self-care, domestic and sexual violence, community resources, women empowerment, holiday/international day celebrations, and any updates regarding the Centre itself. We also use these platforms to gain interest in events and groups that we are developing or hosting.

Below you will find the numbers from our Facebook page, which will give you an idea of how engagement has increased over the past year.

PAGE LIKES

1,666 which has increased by 11% in the last year.

PAGE FOLLOWERS

1,754 which has increased by 18% in the past year.

POSTS

An average of one post a day on six different sites reaching thousands of people



If you would like to visit our PCWRSAC and MORPH social media pages go to:

Website: www.womenscentre.ca

General email for inquiries: info@womenscentre.ca

Facebook: www.facebook.com/pcwomensre

Twitter: @PCWomensCentre

Instagram: PC Women's Centre

Website: www.morphpictoucounty.ca

General Email Inquiries: morph@womenscentre.ca

Facebook: www.facebook.com/MORPH-Pictou-County-288324954932004

STAFF & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Shelley Curtis-Thompson

SUPPORT WORKERS

Melissa Fanning
Emily Fiander (Former)

BOOKKEEPER

Liz MacIntosh

ACCOUNTANT

Brenda Parker CPA, CGA
(Scotia Accounting)

STUDENT PLACEMENT

Aileen Francis

SUMMER STUDENT & CASUAL SUPPORT WORKER

Felicity McGraw

GRANT

MORPH COUNSELLOR:

Dorothy Cassidy
Janice Fraser (former)
Anna Galvin (former)

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Maxine Mann

VICE-CHAIR

Tonya Francis

TREASURER

Allison Avery

SECRETARY

Makayla Morrell

DIRECTORS:

Kyla Bouwer
Meghan Bragg
Jocelynn Dorrington
Dawn Green
Maira MacDonald

SPECIAL THANKS TO FUNDING & GRANT PARTNERS

Canadian Women's Foundation
United Way of Pictou County
Canadian Summer Student Grants
Department of Community Services
Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women



DONORS

Anonymous
Canada Helps
Dawn Peters
Deborah Haider
Della Curtis & "the Bridge Girls"
Pauline Vacheresse
Pictou County Municipalities Crime Prevention
Pay Pal: Moira MacDonald Fundraiser
Watts Wind II Limited Partnership

IN KIND

Arlene Spears
Berkley and Monique DeCoste
Braden Siliker
Jamie Davidson
Trueline Design Inc
Andy Thompson
Bev and Gordon Sutherland

**SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE SHARED THEIR
TALENTS AND ENERGY WITH US THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.**

**ALL INDIVIDUAL DONORS NO CONTRIBUTION IS TOO SMALL, AND
ALL ARE APPRECIATED AND HELP US DO ALL WE DO!
THANK YOU!**

