

Women's Crisis Services
OF WATERLOO REGION



Home is Not Safe for Everyone.

2020–2021 Annual Report



#SHE IS YOUR NEIGHBOUR
podcast



"When you're not believed or heard for so long, you just stop trying."

Nicole Brown Faulknor
Registered Psychotherapist

Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region
www.sheisyournighbour.com

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#SHE IS YOUR NEIGHBOUR
podcast



"Even as a firefighter, I've never gone through a situation that's as stressful as it was growing up in a home with domestic violence."

Chris Linklater
Firefighter, City of Kitchener

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"I have three daughters so this is something very close to me because we know that one in three women will experience domestic violence in their life, so that could be one of my own daughters."

Jill Dunlop, MPP
Associate Minister of Children and Women's Issues

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"People hunt us, people prey on us knowing that we are less likely to be believed, knowing that we are less likely to report."

Lori Campbell
Director, Indigenous Student Centre

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Home is not safe for everyone. This was highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic, as rates of domestic violence increased around the world.

That's why this year, it was so important to emphasize that **she is your neighbour** and we all have a role to play in ending domestic violence.

#SHE IS YOUR NEIGHBOUR
podcast



"At the height of the abuse there was nowhere to go."

Loren Padelford
Vice President, Shopify

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A message from our CEO and Board Chair

Another fiscal year has come and gone – one that we won't soon forget. What a challenging year it has been! It has also been a year of strength, resiliency, and growth for our organization.

This past year, domestic violence was labelled the shadow pandemic as COVID-19 highlighted the unfortunate reality that home is not safe for everyone. Despite the reported increases in domestic violence in Canada and around the world, we saw our service levels drop significantly at the beginning of the pandemic. This worried us greatly as it indicated that it was not safe for women to reach out for support when isolating at home with an abusive partner.

In response to this concern, we quickly added an online chat feature to our website, in addition to our standard support phone lines. This provided a safer and more discrete alternative to picking up the phone and making a verbal call. Following the first wave of the pandemic, we started to see more families reach out for support and our service levels got closer to what they were pre-pandemic. We predict that we will see a surge in women accessing our services once Ontario opens up further.

Despite the many challenges of the pandemic, we have received unprecedented support from our community. We are so incredibly grateful. Thanks to this support we have been able to add additional services and supports including a Residential Supervisor position, a Child & Family Therapist and an Addictions Support Specialist as we head into our new fiscal year. The need for these added roles was highlighted as the pandemic challenged us in a number of ways. For example, at one time during a lockdown period we had 26 young children at our Anselma House shelter throughout the day, many doing remote learning.

To support clients during these trying times, we offered trauma sensitive yoga to residents, as well as an expanded version of our Music Therapy Program, and additional outreach support including an expanded partnership working jointly with regional police services within the Family Violence Project. Further, we have grown our Youth Education Program, created a survivor support group, and launched the second year of the She Is Your Neighbour awareness project, incorporating a podcast series. Although it was a challenging year, it has also been a time of growth for us as an organization.

As we look ahead, we are pleased to announce that we have a new, three-year strategic plan. Our key pillars include: program excellence to address the full spectrum of domestic violence, community leadership, broader public awareness, and a focus on organizational health.

Thanks to our dedicated staff, volunteers, and third party contractors who have gone above and beyond this past year. They are our essential heroes and truly make a difference in the lives of women and children in the community. A special thank you to Ilda Gizas, Program Supervisor with the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services for her consistent and ongoing support. And finally, we are extremely grateful to our funders and donors who make this work possible.



Jennifer Hutton
CEO



Vickie Murray
Board Chair

Our Mission

In partnership with our community, Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region empowers and supports women and children to move beyond violence and abuse through the provision of safe shelter, education and outreach services.

Our Vision

A community free from violence and abuse in any of its forms.



Board Members and Senior Leadership wearing purple at the November Board meeting during Woman Abuse Prevention Month.

Board of Directors

- Vickie Murray, *Chair*
- Terry Wilson, *Vice - Chair*
- Angela Wilson, *Treasurer*
- Roxanne Foreman, *Secretary*
- Christina Pawliszyn, *Director*
- Jennifer Eby, *Director*
- Sarah Robertson, *Director*
- Jane Adams, *Director*
- Stuart McAlister, *Director*
- Heather Cote, *Director*
- Brenda Halloran, *Director*
- Sharanjit Widsten, *Director*

Leadership Team

- Chief Executive Officer**
Jennifer Hutton
- Senior Director of Operations**
Carolyn Albrecht
- Residential Manager, Haven House**
Merle Fast, Leigh Savage
- Residential Manager, Anselma House**
Natascha Hergott
- Outreach Manager**
Leigh Savage, Trish Sabourin
- Communications and Fund Development Manager**
Jenna Mayne
- Human Resources Manager**
Joyce Birnstihl

Our Impact



We provided safe shelter to 412 people.

Anselma House

-  117 clients
-  90 children

Haven House

-  127 clients
-  78 children



We provided outreach services to 1,168 people.



We spoke with 3,020 people who called our support lines or reached out via online chat.

-  2,677 phone calls
-  343 online chats

Programs

-  Child & Youth Program
-  Food & Nutrition Program
-  Nurse Practitioners
-  Music Therapy Program
-  Moving Beyond Group
-  Individual Counselling
-  Clinical Psychologist
-  Integrated Service with Family and Children's Services
-  Trusting Loving Connections Group
-  Safe Steps Group
-  Youth Education Program
-  Rural Connections
-  Addictions Support

in the SHELTER...

and BEYOND!

Impact of COVID-19

During the pandemic, staff have been balancing two different safety concerns: the safety of a resident as it relates to domestic violence as well as their safety in regards to COVID-19. One concern that was identified early in the COVID-19 pandemic was a person's ability to safely reach out for support while isolating at home with an abusive partner. In response to this concern, we quickly developed an online chat feature on our website that women can use to reach out for support. This provided an alternative to picking up the phone and making a verbal call, which was not always safe or possible given the circumstances.



Art created by a child who attended the Music Therapy Program.

In shelter, we have adapted to meet new health and safety requirements, finding creative ways to provide support to clients. We've moved programming online, enhanced cleaning throughout the shelters, encouraged distancing and mask-wearing, increased support for our Food and Nutrition Program, and increased music therapy support. Our Music Therapist, Kathy Lepp, met with 18-20 women and children per week through family music therapy, individual sessions, and our new, COVID-friendly outdoor group, "Songs in a Safe Space."



Bowl painted by a shelter resident and donated to our silent auction.

Trauma Sensitive Yoga for Residents

This past year, residents had the opportunity work with Registered Psychotherapist and Trauma Sensitive Yoga Instructor, Nicole Brown-Faulknor of Wounds 2 Wings, to practice trauma sensitive yoga. Alongside therapy dog, Soljah, Nicole worked with residents in an open group format, applying a trauma-informed and body-centered approach to help residents heal from complex trauma. She worked with clients to identify the relationship between their physical body and their psychological well-being while reinforcing the importance of practicing kindness, care, warmth, and understanding towards themselves.

A Focus on Quality and Efficiency

This year, we added a new, Quality Lead position to monitor data and develop new systems to improve our operations. There have been several key projects, one of which included implementing an inventory system for essential items available to shelter residents. Another project involved creating an Asset Management System to track the equipment that is vital to our day-to-day operations. In addition, the Quality Lead has worked with staff and program providers to update surveys and methods to obtain valuable insight from our clients so that we can better address their needs.

Outreach Pilot Project with Police

This year, we began a one-year pilot project with the Waterloo Regional Police Service (WRPS) focused on earlier intervention and providing compassionate, seamless services to survivors of domestic violence. This new project builds on our pre-existing partnership with WRPS.

Two outreach assignments have been created to support this partnership. Through these assignments, outreach workers collaborate with the WRPS Domestic Violence Unit to offer victims of domestic violence greater wraparound support after an incident and to help reduce the cycle of violence. After an incident occurs and charges have been laid, officers interview women alongside our outreach workers. Outreach workers participate in the interview process to help assess risk, safety plan, and provide support throughout the interview and beyond.



Community programming looked different this year with teenagers learning about healthy relationships in online groups.

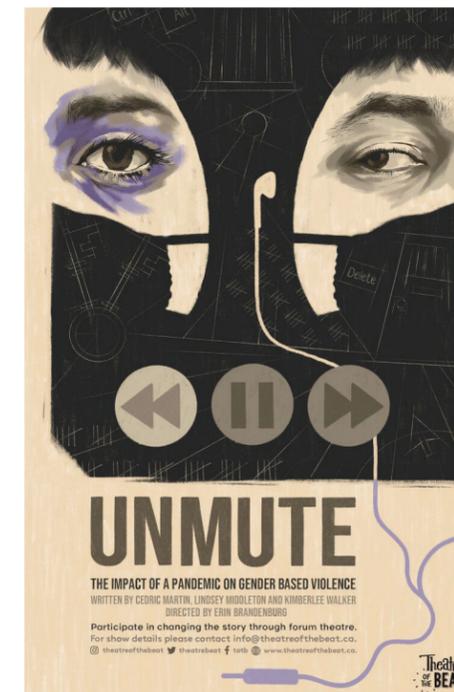
Offering Virtual Outreach Support

In response to increased isolation caused by the pandemic, the outreach team has introduced an online support group for women in the community. This is an opportunity to socially connect with other survivors, share stories, encourage each other, laugh, and learn from mutual experiences of domestic violence.

Our Youth Education Program has been adapted to a virtual program, as we work with youth to build healthy relationships with friends, family, and classmates by building self-esteem and self-worth. Through fun, engaging, and interactive activities, these school-based programs examine the importance of having healthy relationships and a positive personal image. We explore topics that impact an individual's self-esteem and explore how that can affect daily decisions and relationships in an age of strong media influences.

Raising Awareness through Theatre

This year we began a new and exciting partnership with Theatre of the Beat, a theatre group focused on social justice. Together we developed an all-virtual performance entitled Unmute: The Impact of a Pandemic on Gender-Based Violence. This forum theatre-inspired show highlights a family experiencing violence in the home and gives the audience an opportunity to intervene in a safe, unique way in an effort to raise awareness of domestic violence as well as to help build the skills of audience members.



We worked with Theatre of the Beat to create Unmute: The Impact of a Pandemic on Gender-Based Violence, a forum theatre piece about safely intervening domestic violence incidents.

SHE IS YOUR NEIGHBOUR

**Please see the inside covers of this report to meet our podcast guests and to learn more about their episodes!*

In 2020, Women's Crisis Services launched season 1 of the She Is Your Neighbour podcast. Through thought-provoking discussions, we addressed hard topics like domestic violence and the drug trade, violence against Indigenous women and girls, challenges for transgender youth seeking support, and much more. Weekly episodes were released from September to November.

Within the first three weeks of the launch, the podcast had over 1,000 listens! The podcast was covered by various newspapers and radio stations including Global News Radio 640, the Mike Farwell Show, the Angie Hill Show, Faith FM, the Waterloo Region Record, the Waterloo Chronicle, Cambridge Times, New Hamburg Independent, and Kitchener Today.

The podcast also caught the attention of Ontario's Associate Minister of Children and Women's Issues, Jill Dunlop, who was interested in being a guest on the podcast. Minister Dunlop's episode discussed the impact of domestic violence on Ontario women and children. It was released during Woman Abuse Prevention Month in November as the finale episode of season 1.

Through the She Is Your Neighbour podcast, Women's Crisis Services built new relationships with local businesses including Marble Slab Creamery. Together, we created a limited-edition ice cream flavour called "She Is Your NeighBRRR" with proceeds supporting Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region.



Twitter engagement increased **150%**
Facebook engagement increased **109%**
Instagram engagement increased **265%**

Thank you

Our funders and donors are integral to our success and sustainability. In collaboration with our funders, donors, and community partners, we empower women and children to move beyond violence. Thank you to the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services for their essential support and for being our main funding source.

We are also grateful to our local funders. Thank you to the United Way Waterloo Region Communities for their financial support of our residential and outreach programs. Thank you to the city of Cambridge for your financial support of our Haven House residential program.

We are proud to be a partner member of the Resilience Project, generously funded by the Lyle S. Hallman Foundation.

We are grateful for program funds received from:

- Cambridge & North Dumfries Community Foundation
- Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation
- Charities Aid Foundation Canada
- Cotton Family Charitable Foundation
- Elmira Maple Syrup Festival
- Flavelle Family Foundation
- Guelph Community Foundation
- Jalynn H. Bennett Foundation
- Mary Kay Ash Charitable Foundation
- Strategic Charitable Giving Foundation
- Royal LePage Shelter Foundation
- The Fairmount Foundation



Third Party Fundraisers

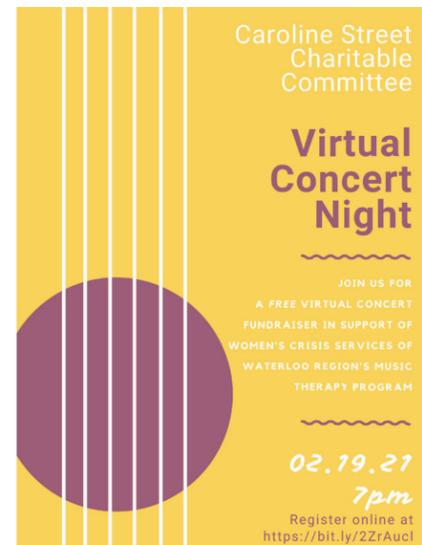
We are so grateful for all of the individuals and groups who hosted fundraisers for Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region this year. Although events looked different this year because many of these fundraisers were done virtually, there were so many creative ideas from our community and we are so grateful!



Shoppers Drug Mart stores throughout the region ran their annual "Growing Women's Health" campaign to support Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region.



Members of Alpha Omega Sorority at Wilfrid Laurier University shared why Anselma House was important to them through their virtual fundraiser.



Gary Connell and the Caroline Street Charitable Committee raised funds for our Music Therapy program through a virtual concert, raising enough to provide over 120 hours of programming!



Jennifer Hutton and Jenna Mayne joined Mike Farwell for a portion of his walk during Farwell4Hire 51 - a 51 km walk that Mike did around the region in June as part of the Farwell4Hire campaign.



Payton Karn, a high school student who crowdfunded for Voices Empower, asked 100 women to give her \$10 and surpassed her \$1,000 fundraising goal.

Signature Events

Hats Off to Mom!

This year, we were getting so excited to host our third annual Mother's Day fundraiser, "Hats Off to Mom!" We had our venue booked, sponsors confirmed, and had started selling tickets when the pandemic hit. We quickly pivoted to a smaller, online event with a virtual silent auction and a musical performance by Juneyt over Facebook Live. Although it wasn't what we had originally planned, our community still came together to support women and children and the event was a success!



We are so grateful for our supportive community, including sponsors who donated the value of their sponsorship, donors who donated the value of their ticket, as well as those who supported the virtual auction and helped spread the word about this event focused on treating your mom, while helping moms in the community who need it most.

Voices Empower

Every November, Women's Crisis Services hosts an event to raise awareness and funds throughout Woman Abuse Prevention Month. Due to the pandemic, an in-person event was not possible this year, so we got creative! We kept the same event name, "Voices Empower," but instead of hosting an in-person event one evening, we ran a month-long, virtual campaign.

Each week, we asked supporters to mask up, step up, speak up, and listen up in various ways to help women and children move beyond violence. We also sold purple masks, using the slogan: "wear a mask but don't mask your voice because #VoicesEmpower." Our wonderful supporters got on board and with their help, we sold out of masks by the end of the month! We saw lots of great "maskies" on social media which helped us raise even more awareness during Woman Abuse Prevention Month.

To wrap up the month, we held a virtual event called: "Listen Up with Elizabeth Renzetti and Molly Hayes, Globe and Mail Journalists Discuss Domestic Violence in the Media."



Jennifer Grey and Ruth Gilmour greeting supporters at a drive-thru mask pick up at Anselma House.



Wear a mask but don't mask your voice because #VoicesEmpower



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Treasurer's Report



Angela Wilson
Board Treasurer

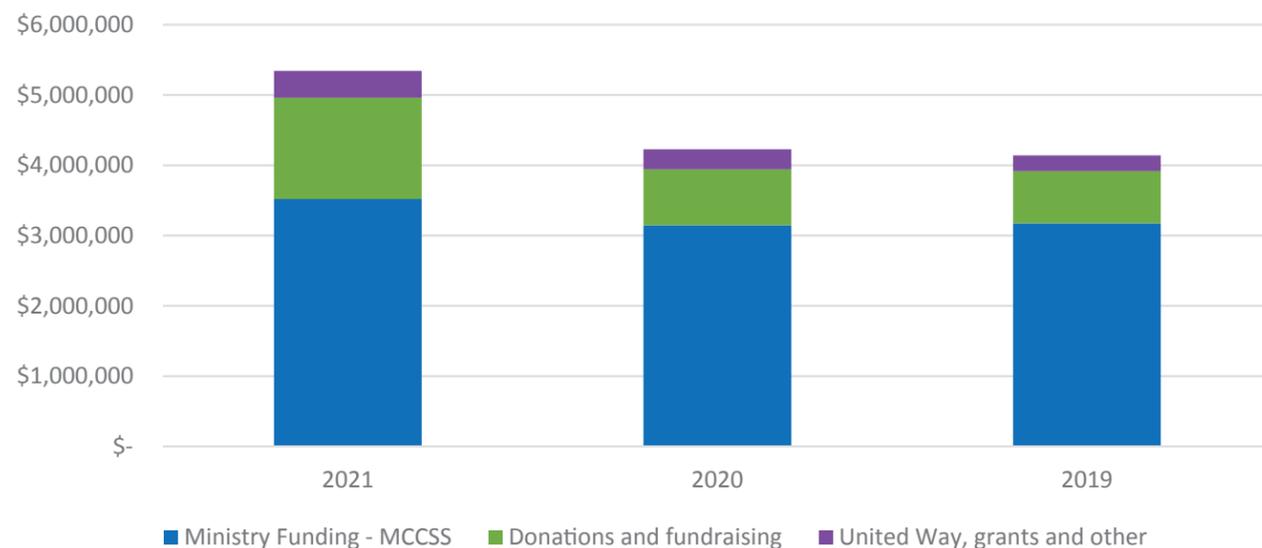
Women's Crisis Services ended their 2020-2021 fiscal year in a strong financial position. The team started this year in a place of uncertainty due to the COVID-19 operating environment. This environment led to many challenges for management and staff, and they handled it all brilliantly.

The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services funding continued to flow as in prior years with additional funds being received to meet increased costs related to COVID-19.

The community, again this year, was generous with donations and participating in our fundraising campaigns. As we entered into this fiscal year, we were uncertain how this area of funding would be impacted by the pandemic. The WCSWR team did an amazing job of coming up with inventive ways to accomplish their fundraising goals in these unprecedented times.

This annual report shares some of the highlights and summary information taken from the audited financial statements for the year ending March 31, 2021. Complete financial statements are available upon request.

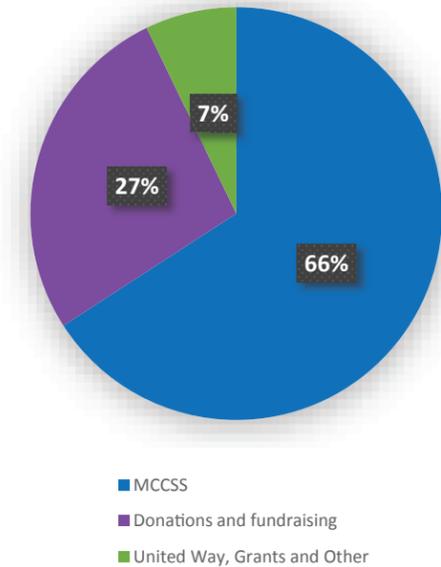
Revenue



Revenue and Expenses

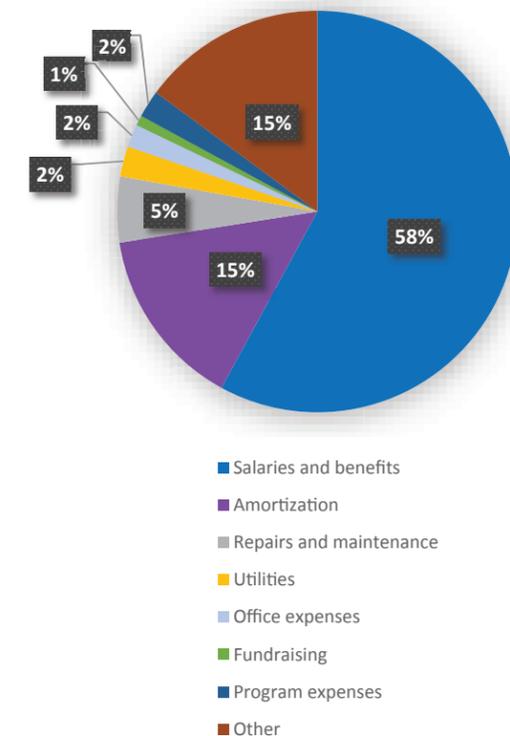
Revenue 2020/2021

Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services (MCCSS)	\$3,519,145
Donations and fundraising	\$1,440,610
United Way, grants and other	\$383,153
Total Revenue	\$5,342,908



Expenses 2020/2021

Salaries and Benefits	\$2,949,397
Amortization	\$741,709
Repairs and maintenance	\$269,729
Utilities	\$123,961
Office expenses	\$93,209
Fundraising	\$41,665
Program expenses	\$112,159
Other	\$758,257
Total Expenses	\$5,090,086



#CountryForCampbell

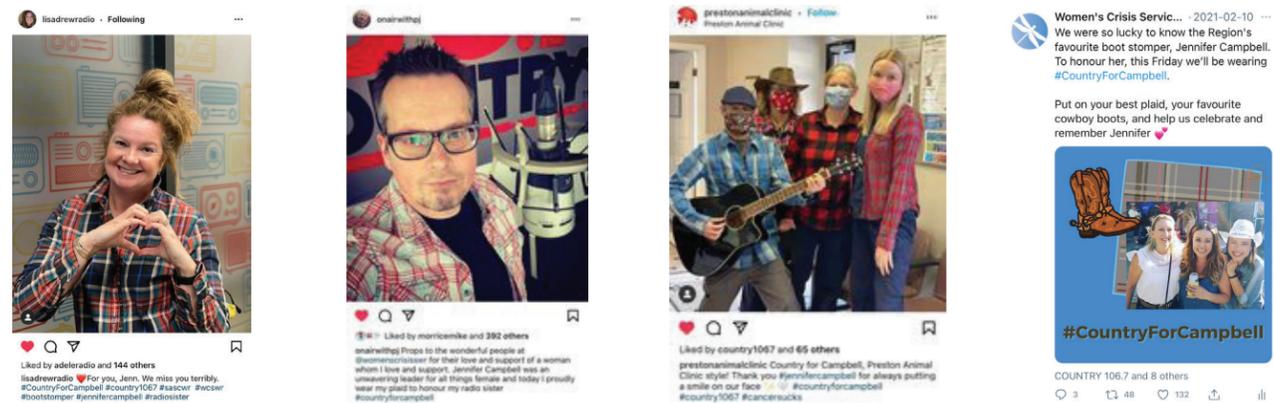
We were so lucky to know long-time Country 106.7 Morning Show Host and the Region's favourite boot stomper, Jennifer Campbell. Jennifer was a wonderful supporter of Women's Crisis Services and a fierce feminist, passionate about empowering women in the community and beyond.

On February 6, 2021, Jennifer passed away peacefully in her 43rd year after a courageous battle with cancer. To honour her, we wore #CountryForCampbell on Friday, February, 12. As a community we put on our best plaid, favourite cowboy boots, and celebrated and remembered Jennifer.

Remembering Jennifer at Women's Crisis Services



Remembering Jennifer on Social Media



Sew Rustic Candle Co. sold candles in honour of Jennifer Campbell with proceeds going to Jennifer's family and Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region.



Jennifer Campbell
February 25, 1977 - February 6, 2021

#SHE IS YOUR NEIGHBOUR
podcast

"All of the positions we've deemed essential to keep going and help our community function during this crisis - overwhelmingly that's where women work."

Ashleigh Weeden
Rural Innovator

#SHE IS YOUR NEIGHBOUR
podcast

"We changed the locks immediately and all of a sudden I was in control of my life."

Brenda Halloran
Mayor of Waterloo, 2006-2014

#SHE IS YOUR NEIGHBOUR
podcast

"We have to be more careful. We have to ask more questions. We have to listen more."

David Morneau
Executive Director, Child Witness Centre

#SHE IS YOUR NEIGHBOUR
podcast

"I got fitted with 2 kilograms of cocaine and put on the plane."

Emily O'Brien
Founder of Comeback Snacks

#SHE IS YOUR NEIGHBOUR
podcast

#SHE IS YOUR NEIGHBOUR
podcast

"If you don't see anyone representing you, you create your own myth of who you think you are."

Kieran Duby
Children's Services Worker

SUPPORT

24/7 Support
via phone and online chat

 519.742.5894
519.653.2422

 www.wcswr.org

LOCATIONS

ANSELMA HOUSE *(head office)*

700 Heritage Drive,
Kitchener, ON N2A 3N9
Office Phone: 519.741.9184

HAVEN HOUSE

10 Acorn Way,
Cambridge, ON N1R 8M5
Office Phone: 519.653.2289

SOCIAL MEDIA

Connect with Us

@WomensCrisisSWR



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