



BIG HILL HAVEN

A SAFE TOMORROW STARTS TODAY.



Annual Report

2022-2023



TERRITORY ACKNOWLEDGMENT



*Big Hill Haven Acknowledges the Traditional
Territory upon which we live, work and play*

Big Hill Haven is located on Treaty 7 territory, traditional lands of the Iyahe Nakoda of the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley bands, the Tsuut'ina Nation, the Niisitapi (Blackfoot) Peoples of Siksika, Piikani and Kainai Band. We also respectfully acknowledge that we are on the homelands of the Metis Nation within Region 3.

We recognize the resiliency, successes and teachings of Indigenous Peoples and honour the courage and strength of Indigenous women. We honour them as life givers and caregivers. We honour and learn from their consistent strength and remarkable endurance. We are grateful for the traditional Knowledge Keepers and Elders who are still with us today and all those who have gone before us.

We recognize this land as an act of truth and reconciliation and express our deepest gratitude to those whose territory we reside on or are visiting.

MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR



It has been an honour to have served another year as Board Chair for Big Hill Haven and to have been connected to the incredible work of an organization that puts so much heart into every facet of its commitment to our community and those in need.

Under the steadfast and phenomenal leadership of our Executive Director, Wanda McGinnis, we have witnessed continued strengthening of community partnerships with a client-centric approach to need. As mental health challenges, limited supply of affordable housing and other economic and societal issues impact our community and the larger area we serve, Big Hill Haven has continued to leverage an innovative model, coordinated services, and the compassion of our staff and volunteers to ensure that those in need have resources and supports to turn to when and how they need them.

While Big Hill Haven has achieved a great deal since its inception, sustainable and responsible growth will be necessary to meet ongoing needs as we consider an expanding population, an ever evolving economic and social landscape and the essential focus required to bridge the challenges and opportunities between where Big Hill Haven has been and where it needs to go. I am excited to share that over this past year, the Board, in conjunction with Big Hill Haven leadership went through a robust strategic planning process, the outcome of which is a new strategic plan that will serve as a north star to guide our organization in its continued commitment to sustainable, responsible and ethical community services.

A safer tomorrow starts today and on behalf of the Board of Directors of Big Hill Haven, I wish to extend heartfelt gratitude to every one of our partners, donors, supporters, staff and brave clients; you are the threads that weave together the story of our journey then, now and into the future.

Yours Truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "J. Blanchet". The signature is stylized and includes a long horizontal line extending to the left.

Jenessa Blanchet

MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



2022/2023 has been an exciting yet humbling year for Big Hill Haven. We are excited as we reflect on all we have been doing to explore opportunities for growth, seek sustainable funding sources, develop clear strategic priorities, build strong community partnerships, and engage vital stakeholders to ensure the programs and services offered by Big Hill Haven truly support Cochrane and area families in meaningful ways that honor diversity and support individual paths to healing. We are committed to ending family violence in our community.

We are proud to be innovators in family violence programming. We are inspired to continue to create opportunities for families to be safe **and** remain in this community. We do not believe families should have to choose between being safe, and remaining in the community they love. We believe the key to success in supporting families is to listen when they tell us what they need, leverage relationships with civil society organizations who can help, lean on partner agencies to avoid duplicating services, and develop programs that offer service without over- serving.

We are committed to increasing awareness and reducing tolerance of family violence in our community. We are invested in public education and community awareness partnerships, maintaining cross sector collaborations, and improving awareness and access to Big Hill Haven services.

While we are proud of all we have accomplished this year to help the community and vulnerable families understand the ways Big Hill Haven can support them, we remain humbled by the increasing number of calls received from families needing safety. In the past year, we have provided over 1000 nights of shelter to at-risk families. We have completed over 100 risk assessments and safety plans. We have celebrated birthdays, holidays and new beginnings with the bravest members of this community. We are honored that our programs have supported diverse cultures, welcomed all ages from infants to seniors, ensuring even vulnerable pets have a safe haven to escape violence. None of this would be possible without the support of each member of this community. We thank everyone who has connected with us to volunteer time, share basic need items, provide cash donations, organize fundraisers, and support our vision of a community where family violence has ended.

I also express my heartfelt gratitude to the remarkable Board of Directors who tirelessly guide Big Hill Haven, and to the team who work each day to encourage strength, invite hope, and nurture dreams.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Wanda McGinnis'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Wanda McGinnis

OUR IMPACT

FOUNDING PRINCIPLES:

Values: Big Hill Haven employees and volunteers are committed to the following ethical values to carry out our mission: respect, integrity, inclusiveness, honesty, confidentiality, support, empathy, best practices, and safety.

Mission: Big Hill Haven provides a safe place for adults with or without children leaving domestic violence and empowers them to rebuild their lives by providing support services and advocacy. We lead our community in understanding the issues related to family violence in our community.

Vision: Our community has ended family violence through supporting and empowering families

Since Big Hill Haven's beginning as a grass roots organization in 2016, we continue to support individuals and families affected by family violence in Cochrane and area, including the communities of Bragg Creek, Redwood Meadows, Bearspaw, Springbank and West Rockyview County. We are committed to reconciliation and rely on partnerships with Eagle's Nest in Mini Thni to increase our understanding of better ways to support all families, embracing collaboration and unlearning colonial approaches to family violence intervention. We are committed to creating safe, inviting, person centered spaces where those seeking safety can heal, connect, and be empowered.

Big Hill Haven' programs are trauma informed, client centered, and strengths based. We recognize the need for transformational change in family violence prevention and intervention programs. The unique needs of individuals and families must be the key consideration in the development, implementation, and evaluation of all programs. Learnings have encouraged us to pursue non-traditional program frameworks, resulting in a fundamental shift in our local delivery model for family violence responses, providing a blend of:

1. Outreach programming supports people who have recently left an abusive relationship, are contemplating leaving an abusive relationship or choosing to remain in an abusive relationship. The program honors the complexity of leaving an abusive relationship, while providing education, information, and support aimed at increasing safety. Risk assessments and safety plans are completed with each client and referrals and resources responsive to a client's unique needs are provided. Linking families to formal support networks that assist them is vital in decreasing the isolation and risk associated with unhealthy and abusive relationships. Connection with informal supports is critical to becoming and remaining a vital part of the community. Outreach support increases opportunities for families to pursue lives free from abuse.

2. Residential programming assists families at imminent risk for serious incidents of violence and abuse. Families are supported in self-contained apartments, living independent from their abuser. This innovative practice offers individuals an opportunity to be empowered

and heal in a confidential and empowering environment. Big Hill Haven's emergency shelter model is an innovative sheltering practice, incorporating post pandemic learnings, survivor feedback, and principles of trauma informed care to create a model vastly different from a traditional congregate living model. Our innovative model limits communal spaces, which were strained under traditional sheltering practices during the pandemic.

In an ongoing effort to ensure all Big Hill Haven programs are client centered, trauma-informed and strengths-based we are committed to programs that are accessible and responsive. We believe our clients are best positioned to identify and set goals, contribute to meaningful safety plans, identify and understand risk, recognize and remedy the impact of family violence on themselves and their children. We work with families in a collaborative way that supports while not over-serving and directing the healing process. Each person who seeks support from Big Hill Haven has everything they need inside of them; we help them find it. Big Hill Haven works in collaboration with local and provincial partners to support those needing support after-hours. This reflects our ongoing commitment to meaningful collaborations with existing services to ensure responses prioritize safety while reflecting financial accountability and long-term sustainability.

IN MY EXPERIENCE, A TRADITIONAL (COMMUNAL) SHELTER CAN BE A DIFFICULT ENVIRONMENT FOR WOMEN TO OBJECTIVELY MAKE DECISIONS. THE SHELTER SPACES ARE A CONSTANT REMINDER OF WHY THEY ARE THERE

– CASE MANGER

3. Aftercare programming encourages connection and building of formal and informal supports in community. The program encourages self-care, wellness, empowers independence and explores healthy relationships.
4. Education and prevention programming invites conversation, explores values and ideas about family violence and challenges behaviours that contribute to gender-based violence.

During their stay families receive intensive support, including:

- risk assessment
- safety planning
- crisis support
- abuse education
- emotional support
- connection to community referrals and resources
- court support
- basic needs support
- system navigation
- community network support
- child-minding

Before BHH, many victims had to go to shelter in Calgary for help. They did not want to pull their kids out of school and were reluctant to move into a communal living setting. Because of BHH's residential and outreach services and collaboration with stakeholders, more victims of family violence come forward for help and are glad to not lose the natural supports of family and friends.

*Lauren Delahunt -
Cochrane and Area Victim's*

BY THE NUMBERS



This year Big Hill Haven supported **101 adults** and **77 children**. 52 people were turned away due to lack of capacity.



39 people stayed for 1277 nights in in the safe suites while receiving 2178 hours of supportive counselling



62 outreach clients, including two men, received 2,262 hours of supportive counselling



24 emergency food hampers



53 hours of child minding



\$3,150 in emergency gift cards



More than 1,600 attended family violence prevention and education opportunities

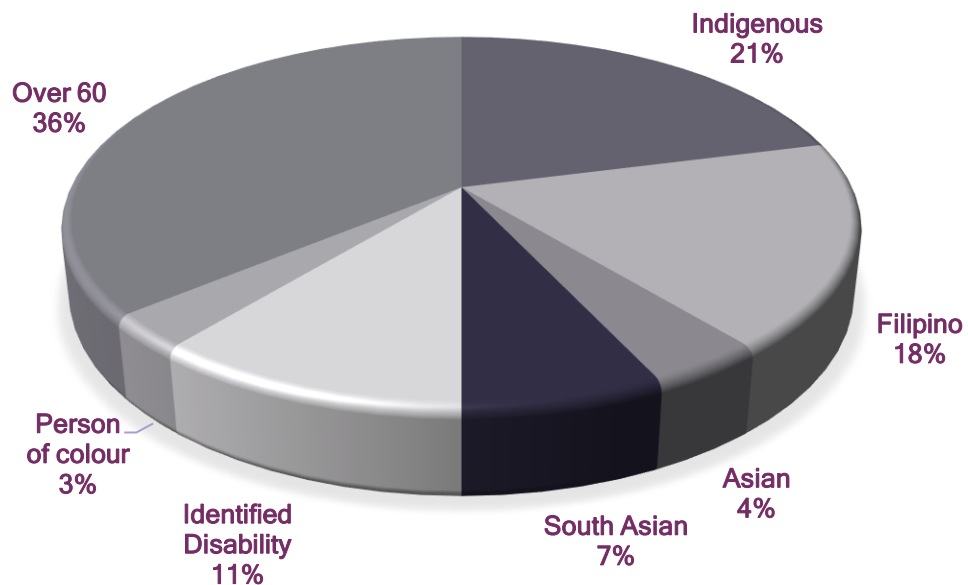


675 hours of group work, including art therapy and therapeutic counselling



The per diem cost/bed/night is \$34.25, with a staffing model that provides support during the day and on call services in evenings and weekends. This cost-effective program model stands in comparison to traditional models with per diem cost/bed/night of \$145 and more.

SUPPORTING DIVERSITY

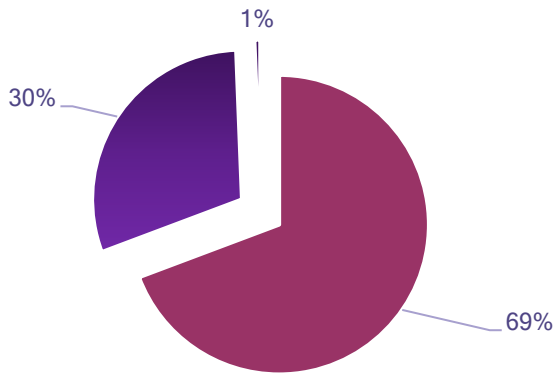


FINANCIAL SUMMARY

For the fiscal year April 1, 2022, to March 31, 2023

Revenues were 278K and expenditures were 341K, resulting in a 63K deficit predominantly the result of a reduction in general donations and biennial grants available to the organization.

Sources of Funding



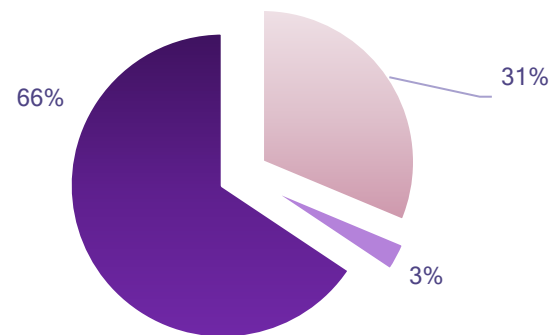
■ General donations ■ Recognized grant revenue ■ Interest

FUNDING SOURCES

• General donations	\$192,659
• Recognized grant revenue	\$83,690
• Interest and other	<u>\$1,726</u>
TOTAL	\$278,075

Expenditures in the fiscal year totaled \$341,393 related to funding outreach activities, staffing, shelter operations and operationalizing surplus funding from prior fiscal year.

Expenditures



■ General & admin ■ Fundraising activities ■ Operations & programming

FUNDING USES

• General & admin	\$106,860
• Fundraising activities	\$10,460
• Operations & programming	<u>\$224,073</u>
TOTAL	\$341,393

Big Hill Haven maintains a focus on sustainability and in the absence of contractual funding, aims to hold reserves to cover operating costs for future periods to ensure continuity of service for our clients and the community. Revenues are recorded using the deferral method and all restricted revenues are recognized as disbursed. At the close of the fiscal year, Big Hill Haven had approximately \$115K in deferred revenues to support future period disbursements.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Big Hill Haven is committed to increasing community awareness and expanding the capacity of partners to respond to family violence. We believe we are better able to serve our community when we are collaborative. In an effort to increase the capacity of the community, Big Hill Haven was proud to partner in the following events:



As part of the Alberta Community Crime Prevention Association conference, Big Hill Haven was able to partner to bring Rachel Snyder, journalist, author and advocate to lead a meaningful discussion about the deadly impact of family violence. This conversation laid the foundation for a collaborative discussion on the need for a rural family violence response framework that reflects the unique experiences of families living in rural communities. We were honoured to have representatives from Alberta Health Services, Alberta Justice, FCSS, Victim Services, Shelters, and Homefront contributing to the conversation.



In partnership with Cochrane and area Victim Services, and in recognition of Victim's of Crime week, Big Hill Haven hosted Debra deWaal as she highlighted the importance of Mental Toughness for those in community response roles. Funding for this event was made possible through the Department of Justice's Victim's of crime funding. This event contributed to an opportunity to improve our understanding of the importance of resiliency and wellness for those responding to and supporting the Cochrane and area's collaborative response for victim's of crime. Events like offer an opportunity for service providers to connect, develop and implement strategies that support an improved comprehensive response for those at risk.

Initiatives like these, that increase the community understanding of violence, while reducing tolerance and increasing the collaborative community capacity to respond to those at risk, ensures that Cochrane is positioned to reduce incidents of family violence and abuse, making the community safer for all.

THE PATH FORWARD

Strategic Plan Preview

Big Hill Haven's 2023-2027 Strategic plan was developed through the gathering and assessment of both internal and external information sources. The Board and senior staff of Big Hill Haven have reflected on the organization's current state, while envisioning the future of the organization.



The focus of this Strategic Plan will guide Big Hill Haven over the next three years and balance the current strong positioning of the organization with targeted program expansion and refinement

MEMBERS OF OUR ORGANIZATION



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

JENESSA BLANCHET	BOARD CHAIR
JOY STEPPACHER	VICE CHAIR
RAINER GLIMPEL	TREASURER
SANDRA GATEMAN	RECORDING SECRETARY
JACQUIE MATECHUK	DIRECTOR
DEBBIE LEAH	DIRECTOR
TRACEY RADLOFF	DIRECTOR
JEFF BRUNER	DIRECTOR
WANDA MCGINNIS	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – EX OFFICIO
MARGARET VAN TICHEM	HONORARY DIRECTOR – EX OFFICIO

** The Board also wishes to acknowledge outgoing Director Taylor Kawaguchi*

PROGRAM TEAM

PATTI FISHER	PROGRAM MANAGER
ELENA WOODWARD	CASE MANAGER

**Big Hill Haven also relies on dedicated volunteers who support various programs and services*

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

Each family that seeks the support of Big Hill Haven benefits from the generosity of our donors. We could not offer the supports and services that keep families safe without the commitment of the following partners.



United Way
Calgary and Area



FOXY BOX
LASER + WAX BAR

Rotary
Club of Cochrane



MR
MIKES
SteakhouseCasual™



Cochrane
Lions Club

Alberta



CANADIAN
WOMEN'S
FOUNDATION



KEN MORRIS
TEAM

Leah REAL ESTATE
GROUP
ROYAL LEPAGE BENCHMARK



Knights of
Columbus®

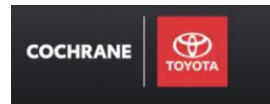
OpenDoor
MARKETING

ADVANCED
MORTGAGE



COCHRANE
FLOORS & MORE

Bluebird Self Storage



Rohit
COMMUNITIES



Department of Justice
Canada

Ministère de la Justice
Canada

PEARL Foundation



BIG HILL HAVEN

A SAFE TOMORROW STARTS TODAY.

bighillhaven.com

Cochrane Women's Emergency Shelter Society

Charitable Registration #709526099 RR0001

Box 1544, Cochrane, AB, T4C 1B5