

Page 1 – Story: Providing Hope

Shining a Light on Intimate Partner Violence

In recent news, Toronto and 30 other municipalities across Canada have declared intimate partner violence an epidemic within their jurisdictions. This alarming declaration sheds light on the pressing issue of intimate partner violence that continues to plague our society.

Intimate partner violence in Canada is a deeply entrenched problem, with statistics revealing that, on average, one woman or girl loses her life every 48 hours due to intimate partner violence.*

Amidst these dark statistics, thanks to the incredible generosity of our community of donors, Interval House has remained a beacon of hope that has been shining bright for half a century.

For 50 years, Interval House has been a place of solace, offering shelter, protection, and a sense of security to countless women and children who have faced the relentless cycle of intimate partner violence. With your unwavering support, we have stood firmly beside survivors, empowering them to reclaim their lives and move forward with strength and resilience.

In the last five decades, Interval House has evolved from a place of safety into a provider of diverse and innovative services aimed at breaking the cycle of gender-based violence. Thanks to donor support, we are able to provide counselling, financial planning, affordable housing and educational programs, all focused on empowering women survivors to rebuild their lives. These vital services often become the stepping stones towards a life free from violence, giving women the support and tools they need to move forward.

As we confront the harsh reality of intimate partner violence being declared an epidemic, our resolve to continue to be a steadfast source of safety and hope for women and children in our community remains stronger than ever. Because of our generous community of supporters, Interval House has the resilience not only to overcome any challenges that come our way, but to adapt and thrive to ensure we continue to meet the needs of the survivors now and into the future.

Thank you for your dedication and heartfelt support. Together, we are working towards a future free from gender-based violence and changing the lives of women and children in our community.

*[Canadian Femicide Observatory for Justice and Accountability, 2022.](#)

Page 2 – Client Story

From Darkness to Hope: Kaya's Story

Your support gives survivors a chance at a life free from violence

When Kaya* arrived at Interval House, she was a broken shell of a woman. Scared and emotionally battered, Kaya had endured a relentless storm of abuse at the hands of her partner that had shattered her self-esteem and left her in constant anxiety.

The abuse escalated to terrifying heights, with her partner hitting her on the head and pushing her to the ground on numerous occasions. "He would hit me so hard that I'd black out," shares Kaya. "Every time he flew into a rage, my entire body would tremble with fear."

A turning point in Kaya's life came when she discovered she was pregnant. She had dreams of becoming a mother, but her joy quickly turned to sorrow. Kaya began experiencing abdominal pain and bleeding, prompting her to seek medical help. Tragically, she suffered a miscarriage within the first trimester.

Intimate partner violence during pregnancy is a grim reality. Often, when a woman is pregnant, abuse increases because women can't fight back the way they might otherwise be able to do.

Despite the profound sadness of losing her pregnancy, Kaya's survival instinct kicked in, giving her the strength to break free from her abuser. She recalls, "I knew I had to leave for my own sake and for the sake of any future children I might have."

Now, with the support from Interval House, a network of caring professionals and donors like you, Kaya is on the path to rebuilding her life, free from the fear and unhappiness that once consumed her. She's determined to heal and regain her sense of self-worth. "I want to live a life where I can be truly happy and safe," Kaya says with determination in her voice.

Thank you for helping to empower women like Kaya! With your support, we can continue to provide a safe place and innovative services for women fleeing abuse.

*Name has been changed to protect the survivor's identity.

Page 3 – Partner highlight: Lisbet Benoit of the Toronto Police

Partner Spotlight

Uniting for Safety: Toronto Police and Interval House

In a city bustling with life, where stories intertwine, and communities thrive, one partnership shines as a beacon of support and safety. Toronto Police 55 Division and Interval House have forged a remarkable alliance that stands as a testament to the power of empathy, dedication, and unwavering commitment to women and children fleeing abuse.

Inspector Lisbet Benoit, a 37-year Toronto Police veteran, has played a pivotal role in fostering this partnership. Her dedication is both professional and deeply personal. A decade ago, she tragically lost a dear friend to intimate partner violence, a haunting reminder of the urgency of their mission.

“The partnership is an opportunity for people to see us not just as police officers, but as neighbours, friends, and fellow community members, and for my officers to see the great work that's being done at Interval House,” says Benoit.

“Interval House is the only shelter offering intimate partner violence training to officers, ensuring a deep understanding of the issues survivors face. Beyond training, our officers engage in donation drives to support the brave women and children seeking refuge.”

The relationship is not merely about immediate support but also about nurturing enduring bonds. It's about believing that, together, we can light up the path to a brighter, violence-free future for survivors in our community.

We are deeply grateful to our community partners. Your partnership and support are helping to change the lives of women at Interval House.

Page 3 – Legacy Story: Mahen Thacker

Donor Spotlight

Passing Down a Legacy of Giving

Growing up in India, a young boy named Mahen Thacker learned a profound lesson from his mother—a timeless legacy of selflessness and the importance of giving to others.

Mahen's father entrusted his mother with the household finances. She, in turn, entrusted a portion of that to young Mahen. Her words, etched in his memory, echoed with wisdom, "*Go do some charity work.*"

Today, Mahen resides in Toronto as a retired engineer, but his journey of compassion and philanthropy continues unabated. He has become a dedicated supporter of Interval House, helping women and children escaping the horrors of intimate partner violence find a safe haven.

As Mahen shares: "Interval House gives women confidence and helps them get an apartment and a job. It's important to support women and give them these opportunities. And they will pass their strength and courage on to their children."

Mahen has even left a gift for Interval House in his Will, and has passed his mother's lesson about giving generously down to his own children. He is living proof you don't need a personal connection to a cause to help those in need. What truly matters is empathy—the deep, abiding desire to make a lasting impact for good.

Page 4 – Program Highlights

Your Support in Action

Helping Women Survivors Through Their Journey of Healing and Independence

With your generous support, Interval House is developing and enhancing these critical programs:

➤ **Virtual Self-Study Counselling Services**

Counselling plays a vital role in helping women experiencing intimate partner violence understand the dynamics of abuse, identify healthy relationships and acquire the skills to break free from the cycle of violence.

With donor support, Interval House is rolling out a province-wide **Virtual Counselling Pilot Project** to help women beyond the Greater Toronto Area. The project will provide free online counselling to survivors of intimate partner violence, tailored to each woman's unique needs.

Our counselling program is designed to help women leaving abusive relationships:

- Better cope with life's challenges
- Stay emotionally present in their lives
- Understand and accept themselves "as they are"
- Develop essential life skills
- Understand common stressors associated with abuse/separation and develop coping strategies

Thank you for being a lifeline for women experiencing violence at the hands of their partners.

➤ **Financial Literacy Pilot Project**

Financial abuse often traps women in abusive relationships, and poor financial literacy compounds their struggles. The **Financial Literacy Pilot Project** expands on our Building Economic Self-Sufficiency (BESS) program, empowering survivors with essential financial management skills and knowledge.

Your generosity is at the heart of this innovative initiative, making it possible for Interval House to address the unique financial challenges intimate partner violence survivors face.

Here's what your support will make possible:

- **Monthly financial workshops** that teach participants budgeting, credit counseling, tax clinics and savings strategies.
- **Weekly peer support circles** that provide a safe space for connecting with other survivors.
- **One-on-one support**, including financial coaching and personalized work plans, guided by a Financial Empowerment Specialist, catered to each woman's unique financial needs.
- **A \$1,000 Participant Learning Tool** to help participants immediately apply their financial learnings, addressing a crucial barrier.

Thank you for helping to create brighter financial futures for the courageous women we serve!

➤ **Rent Subsidy Project**

Safe and affordable housing is a paramount concern for survivors of intimate partner violence, and your support is making a tangible difference. The **Rent Subsidy Project**

(RSP), an extension of our BESS program, removes the barrier of housing insecurity, allowing survivors to focus on meaningful employment opportunities.

With donor support, we have successfully piloted the RSP and are thrilled to expand its reach. This program offers a holistic approach, including a monthly rent subsidy of up to \$1,000, recognizing the critical need for housing support when survivors are ready to take that courageous step toward independence.

Your support bridges the gap and enables women survivors to move towards a brighter future.