



Mrs. Sample  
123 Any Street  
Anytown, Province,  
Y0Y 1Y0

She's just like a woman you know,  
**and she is living on the edge of poverty.**



**Good Shepherd Development Office**  
400 King Street West, PO Box 1003  
Hamilton ON L8N 3R1  
**goodshepherdcentres.ca**

113630E



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FINISHED SIZE: 9.5" x 4.125"

FLAT SIZE: 0.0" x 0.0"

BLEED: 0.125"

SAFETY: 0.0"

INK: 4/4

PACKAGE(S):

FILE NAME: 11363-GS-WomensPoverty-OE-c2

NOTES:

DIECUT/SCORE ——— FOLD ——— PERFORATION ——— FOLD/PERF ——— KISSCUT ——— UGLUE ——— LASERING ——— OUTSTANDING COPY

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You can help women in our community **empower themselves and break the cycle of poverty.**

Date XX, 2021

Mrs. Sample Donor  
123 Any St,  
Anywhere, ON  
Z1Z 1Z1

Dear Salutation,

Thank you so kindly for your support and generosity through these difficult times for all of us, especially the vulnerable people we serve.

Poverty is crippling. It damages individuals, families and ultimately everyone in society.

Even though we live in a prosperous country, poverty remains a major issue. What's even more devastating is that in neighbourhoods across Canada poverty affects women more than men – and our community is no exception.

**It may surprise you to hear that in Hamilton 1 in 5 women are living in poverty. And that children and women make up almost two thirds of our city's low-income population.**

I'm deeply concerned when I read these statistics, <FirstName>. The unfortunate reality is that women in our neighbourhoods are more likely than men to be living on a low income, especially young, single mothers and senior citizens.

Over the past year, we have seen the pandemic and economic upheaval make life even more difficult for women who are living on the edge of poverty. As a result, there has been an increase in the number of women experiencing domestic violence. While for most of us staying at home meant staying safe, for those women who experience abuse at the hands of their partners, home is a dangerous place.

Firstname, with your support, we can help women like Paula\* get back on their feet, build confidence and regain faith in themselves.

When Paula first turned to Good Shepherd for help, she was scared and embarrassed. She wasn't used to asking for help. She lived a good life as she put it. "I married my high school sweetheart. We had a beautiful daughter, well-paying jobs and a nice, big house."

But over the years, all of that changed. Paula's husband became controlling and abusive. After years of living in fear for her and her daughter's safety, Paula made the brave decision to leave her husband, even without knowing how they would survive.

With nowhere to go, no job as she had taken time off to look after her family, and no means to support herself and her 15-year-old daughter, Paula found herself in a desperate situation.



"I struggled to afford food, clothing and basic necessities and was constantly worried about my daughter and how all of this would affect her," recalls Paula.

“I knew I needed help but didn’t know where to start. When I reached out to Good Shepherd, I was a complete mess. The staff were kind, caring and full of patience. They welcomed me without judgment and helped me with every aspect of my life – housing, food, finances and mental health. They helped me find a place to live and apply for government assistance. They even helped me get certified as a Life Coach so I can start building a stable career for myself.”

It brings me so much joy to be able to share Paula’s story with you. It’s a beautiful example of the incredible impact we can make when we come together as a community and show our neighbours who are going through tough times that we believe in them and that life can get better.

That is where you come in.

Can you imagine what daily life is like for women who are in this situation? It hurts me when I see so many women in our community struggling just to make ends meet. Especially, those who have children depending on them.

Thanks to your past support, <FirstName>, women experiencing poverty can count on Good Shepherd to provide them with the support and resources they need to rise above difficult times and build a stable and healthy life.

**But it’s been a while since we’ve heard from you, which is why I’m writing to you today. The only way we can continue to serve women who are experiencing poverty and homelessness is with your renewed support. That’s why I’m humbly asking you to reach out with a special gift today, to ensure Good Shepherd can continue to offer essential services to women and children in need.**

Every day, I see the life-changing difference your support makes for people in our community. Thanks to your compassion and generosity, Good Shepherd is able to provide women in Hamilton who are experiencing poverty, with essential services, including emergency shelter, food and clothing, housing support, crisis intervention, mental health services and so much more.

Your gift ensures that Good Shepherd can be there for women experiencing abuse at home, offering them a safe and supportive place to flee to, and a whole range of services to help them gain confidence and discover new possibilities.

As Paula shares, “I lived through some really dark days. But thanks to Good Shepherd, I am a different person today. I wouldn’t be here without their support.”

Thanks to your caring generosity, we are able to help women like Paula empower themselves, find their courage and build a better future for themselves and their families.

I hope you’ll help us do the same for other women in our community who are facing extremely difficult circumstances. By working together we will strengthen our community.

Please, give today.

Sincerely,



Brother Richard MacPhee, OH  
Chief Executive Officer  
Good Shepherd

P.S. The only way we can help women in our community move out of poverty and into a stable, dignified life is with your support. Please give today, as generously as you can.  
Thank you.

*\*Paula’s name has been changed to protect her identity.*



## BY THE NUMBERS Women's Poverty in Hamilton

Single women in Hamilton have the **HIGHEST POVERTY RATES** among Ontario's cities.

**1 IN 3** single mothers are raising their children in poverty. **But less than half** of all shelters in the Greater Hamilton Area are for women.

Children and women represent **almost two thirds** of Hamilton's total low-income population. Yet, **ONLY 1 IN 4** shelters take in single mothers and their children.

**DID YOU KNOW?** *Good Shepherd operates more than half of all shelter space for women in the Greater Hamilton Area.*

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**Together, we can help women move out of poverty and build healthy and stable futures for themselves!**

To help Good Shepherd continue to run these essential services for women and children in Hamilton, please donate now.

## DID YOU KNOW? Women face a much greater risk of poverty than men.



**Here's why:** Women are found more often than men, working minimum-wage jobs and without social protection and often have to choose between working or taking care of their children or elderly family members. As primary care givers, many women have limited independent income, which makes them vulnerable to falling into poverty if a relationship breaks down.

**WHEN PARENTS ARE NOT LIVING TOGETHER,** women are more likely to take on the financial cost of raising children.

**WOMEN ARE PAID LESS THAN MEN,** even when they work in the same positions and the same hours. On average, women earn just **87 cents for every dollar** earned by men.



# Our Response

Good Shepherd is supporting women on their journey out of poverty.

We offer a range of innovative services to women and their children experiencing poverty, homelessness, domestic violence and mental illness. Our doors are open **365 DAYS A YEAR** to women seeking safety, support and services to help them move out of poverty and rebuild their lives.



Here's How:

## Martha House

Martha House offers short-term accommodation for women and their children who are homeless and fleeing violence and abuse. Last year, we provided beds and essential services to **MORE THAN 700 WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN.**

## Mary's Place

Last year, Mary's Place provided safety, support and emergency accommodations to **OVER 200 WOMEN** dealing with homelessness, poverty, abuse and mental health issues.



## Community Support Services

We run a range of services to help women and children experiencing various issues, including domestic violence, childhood abuse, mental health issues and difficulties navigating the legal system.

## Second Stage Housing & Transitional Housing and Support

This service provides affordable housing and women-centred programs to help women and their children who have experienced violence gain greater physical, emotional and financial stability.

This program helps women and their children in accessing services required to move out of violent and abusive situations and establish a safe and stable environment. We do this through counselling, safety planning, support with education, affordable housing, health and wellness and other services.



Thank you for helping us care for our most vulnerable residents.  
**You are changing lives every single day!**

