



# GILLIAN'S PLACE

Working to end gender-based violence in Niagara

## INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AN EPIDEMIC IN NIAGARA

APRIL 30, 2024

Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake



# GILLIAN'S PLACE

Gillian's Place is an agency that serves individuals and families experiencing gender-based violence.

Our mission is to work with and empower people experiencing gender-based violence by providing safety and support through a variety of services and raising awareness about root causes to end the cycle of violence and abuse.



# OUR SERVICES

- Ⓞ Emergency shelter (34 beds)
- Ⓞ 24/7 support line (phone/text)
- Ⓞ Compassionate counselling
- Ⓞ Child and youth programs
- Ⓞ Legal advice and support
- Ⓞ Second-stage housing
- Ⓞ Mental Health & Addictions Support
- Ⓞ Transitional support
- Ⓞ Community education
- Ⓞ Violence prevention programs
- Ⓞ Employee Wellness



# WHAT IS GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE?

Gender-based violence, commonly referred to by its acronym GBV, is violence that is committed against someone based on their gender identity, gender expression or perceived gender.

“It is the types of abuse that women, girls, Two Spirit, trans, and non-binary people are at highest risk of experiencing” (Canadian Women’s Foundation).



# EXAMPLES OF GBV

- Ⓒ Domestic Violence (DV) / Family Violence
- Ⓒ Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)
- Ⓒ Sexual Violence
- Ⓒ Trafficking
- Ⓒ Elder Abuse
- Ⓒ Anti-Transgender Violence
- Ⓒ Honour Killings
- Ⓒ Forced Marriage
- Ⓒ Femicide
- Ⓒ Violence Against Women in Media & Journalism
- Ⓒ Teen Dating Violence



# TYPES OF ABUSE

- Ⓞ Physical
- Ⓞ Sexual
- Ⓞ Psychological/Emotional
- Ⓞ Financial/Economic
- Ⓞ Spiritual
- Ⓞ Verbal
- Ⓞ Technological/Cyber
- Ⓞ Stalking
- Ⓞ Gaslighting



Abuse involves patterns of behaviour intended to establish and maintain control over partners, family, individuals, or groups. No matter the age, gender, socio-economic status, or ethnicity, anyone can experience abuse. All abuse is rooted in **COERCIVE CONTROL**. Coercive control occurs when a pattern of threats, assault, intimidation, or humiliation is used as a tool to scare, punish, or instill fear.

# FEMICIDE

Femicide is defined by the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses as the intentional murder of women and girls because of their gender.

Femicide includes women (and at times their children) or girls that were killed by a man and/or men who are either a former or current intimate partner, a family member, someone known to them, or in some cases unknown but still targeted.

The rate of gender-related homicide of women and girls in Canada was more than 2.5 times greater in rural areas compared to urban areas.

In the past five years,  
there have been over

**850 DEATHS**

of women and girls in Canada.

This equates to

**1 EVERY 48 HOURS**

These deaths are preventable tragedies that have devastating effects on entire communities.



# SAFETY PLANNING

Due to the known safety risks for our clients living in our shelter, second-stage homes, or the community, every client receives a safety plan.

A safety plan is a set of actions to help lower the risk of being hurt by a current or former abusive partner.

At GP, we utilize the Jackie Campbell Danger Risk Assessment, which assess the risk of lethality by a client's abuser. Each safety plan is created individually with the client, accounting for their unique situation, and helping ensure their safety.

If you or someone you care about is worried for their safety,  
call/text our 24/7 support line at:

 905.684.8331



# GBV: RURAL REALITIES

Survivors in rural communities experience disproportionately high rates of violence and abuse, along with facing complex challenges and barriers when accessing vital safety supports.

There are unique social and geographical contexts of rural communities that help fuel gender-based violence:

- Ⓞ Traditional values and strong community connections
- Ⓞ Geographical coverage as a barrier to accessing services
- Ⓞ Different economic and environment factors than those of urban centers

Service providers in rural areas, like Gillian's Place, are challenged to effectively respond to the needs of rural communities.



**GILLIAN'S PLACE**  
**WEST NIAGARA**

# RURAL REALITIES: LACK OF OPTIONS

Rates of police reported IPV experienced by rural women in Canada are:

- ④ 3.5 times higher than for rural men,
- ④ And 75% higher than those for urban women

In Niagara, there is a:

- ④ Lack of emergency shelter and supported transitional housing
- ④ Lack of affordable, accessible, and safe housing
- ④ Lack of practical transportation
- ④ Inconsistent connectivity (cell coverage and wifi)



# GP: SERVICE NUMBERS

## EMERGENCY SHELTER



**166**  
ADULTS



**127**  
CHILDREN



**293**  
LIVED IN OUR  
SHELTER



**10,383**

CRISIS CALLS AND  
TEXTS ANSWERED

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH SERVICES



**386**  
attended counselling  
appointments



**681**  
obtained legal advice  
and support



**260**  
received transitional  
housing support

**630**

received help from our  
Domestic Violence  
Consultants at FACS  
Niagara

**107**

CHILDREN  
were seen by  
our Child & Youth  
Counsellors for  
exposure to abuse

**2,017**

TOTAL SERVED  
through our community  
outreach services

**12,740**

LIFE-CHANGING  
SUPPORTS  
through Gillian's Place



# GP: SERVICE INCREASES



The years since the pandemic have become deadlier for women, girls, and gender-and-sexually-diverse folks.



Gillian's Place and our Sister Shelters are not only responding to an increase in the prevalence of abuse, but also increases in the severity and complexity of client cases.

Today, we are experiencing demand and pressures like we never thought possible.



## Since January 2022...

We have been forced to redirect over 50% of the survivors who turned to us for safer shelter due to capacity limitations. In these scenarios, we do everything to support them as best as possible, though we know their best chance of breaking the cycle is with us at GP.

We have responded to an over 90% increase across all areas of programming since the start of the pandemic.

# OUR RESPONSE

Renovate and expand our St. Catharines facility to better serve survivors in North and West Niagara.

Our **Build a Safer Future Capital Campaign** will bring an additional five private bedrooms with ten beds to our Shelter. As well, this \$10 million project will see a three-story nine-thousand square foot addition to our St. Catharines facility. This new Centre will be home to expanded outreach services and violence prevention programs.

Our vision is to better serve survivors for decades to come.



**BUILD A SAFER FUTURE**

**+5**  
Bedrooms

**+10**

Shelter Beds

=

**44**



**MAROTTA FAMILY CENTRE  
FOR VIOLENCE PREVENTION &  
OUTREACH SUPPORT**

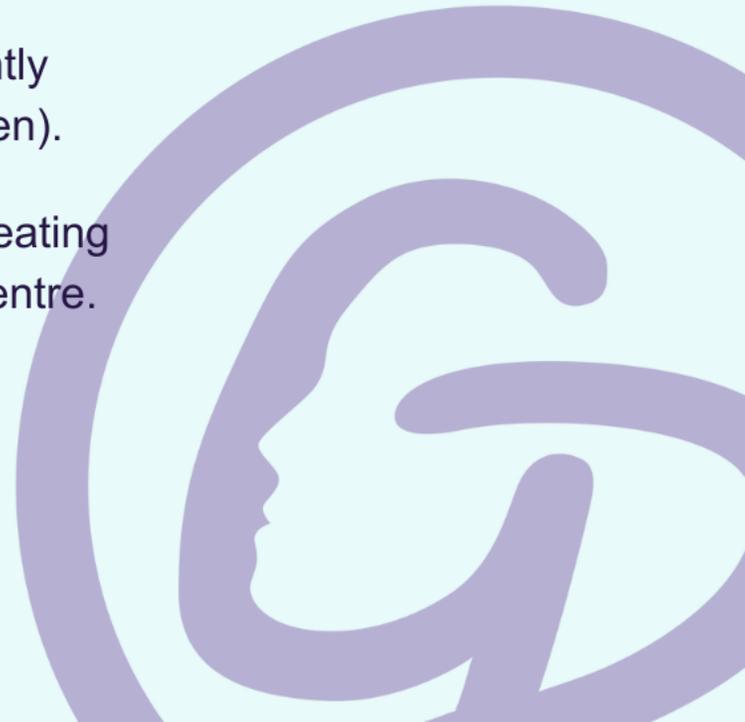
# OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

We fully support the seven recommendation put forward today. In addition, other areas of support include:

-  A call to have municipal employees and elected officials complete the Gillian's Place Allied Agency Program.
-  Urge the provincial government to financially invest in our Build a Safer Future Capital Campaign, as the federal government has committed \$2.1 million to the project.
-  Advocate for funding for community education and prevention for work (currently VAW services receive no funding for this, so all work in this area is donor driven).
-  Call all on men and male-identifying allies to raise funds and awareness by creating a team for Walk a Mile in HER Shoes on Saturday October 19th at the Pen Centre.

## Additional Resources:

-  [gilliansplace.com/commed](https://gilliansplace.com/commed)
-  [gilliansplace.com/saferfutures](https://gilliansplace.com/saferfutures)
-  [walkamileinhersshoes.ca](https://walkamileinhersshoes.ca)





**GILLIAN'S  
PLACE**

**Thank you.**

**Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake**

**Together, we are working to  
end gender-based violence  
in Niagara.**

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**[gilliansplace.com](http://gilliansplace.com)**

