



**anova**

a future without violence.



# ANNUAL REPORT

**2023-2024**

[www.anovafuture.org](http://www.anovafuture.org)





# A Future Without Violence.

Too many people are living with the fear or risk of gender-based violence, or are experiencing the physical and mental harms caused by violence. This cannot stand. That is why Anova exists; to ensure A Future Without Violence. Anova is the largest high security shelter and sexual assault centre in Ontario. We believe survivors. We work to break down structural inequities. And we always open the door.

Our programming provides victims of gender-based violence with emergency shelter and safety planning programs, court support, advocacy and counselling. Our programming also educates the broader community about prevention and awareness, which works to reduce, and hopefully one day eliminate, violence. These core areas maximize our chances for success and it's our commitment to strive for excellence in all of these areas. In 2017, Women's Community House and Sexual Assault Centre London came together to bring the local community a new safe space for survivors of sexual violence and abuse. All of the services available through Women's Community House and Sexual Assault Centre London are still available including; improved accessibility, streamlined service, more options at our four sites, improved programs for children, enhanced sexual violence and prevention work for youth, and an integrated 24-hour Crisis & Support Line.



Together, we are  
not just changing  
lives—we are  
building a  
stronger, safer  
community for all.



**357**

Women & dependents who received services in shelter

**1,566**

Number of times Anova turned women away from shelter due to lack of beds

**51**

Days in the average length of stay in shelter

**241**

Women who received sexual assault counselling

**42**

Women who are on the waitlist for sexual assault counselling services

**66**

Tenants at Second Stage Housing



## Reality of Gender-Based Violence in London

Every day, we support survivors of gender-based violence through our programs and services. Here is a snapshot of the work we did from April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024.

**7,651**

Calls received through our 24/7 Crisis & Support Line

**874**

Women supported through walk-in services

**49**

Attendees to our youth programming

**327**

Individuals receiving service through Outreach

**738**

Participants in our Public Education presentations, trainings and workshops

**320**

Clients on the Family Court Support Program caseload





# Message from Board Chair



Last year we updated our Mission to reflect our commitment to transparency. And so, with that in mind, I want to be very honest about my reflections from this last year. In short, it was a rough year! It felt like we were continuously faced with the weight of constant trauma, triggers, and downright sadness. Whether it was Hockey Canada on the news, the constant looming of the housing crisis and losing shelter spaces in our community, food price increases causing strain on our budget, and the stories that made us shed tears at the injustice of the many lost lives due to intimate partner violence, it was often heavy.

But what I also know is that amid that heaviness, there was also hope. And that's what we offer to the countless individuals that call us, walk through our doors, and access our spaces. Hope in their journey to healing from their experiences of violence and trauma. Hope that, with the compassionate support of Anova, they are taking steps towards a life of possibility. It's a big mandate and although sometimes daunting, our staff, our volunteers, and our leaders continue to show up to do the necessary and vital work – this year was no exception. Thank you to all of you who give your time, energy, and passion.

We still have work to do, and I hope that you can continue to find the strength needed to progress on our mission and vision and do it with intention and purpose. This work cannot be done without the support and endorsement of our London Community so take this as your call to get involved, to help us raise funds, and to learn more about how you can be an advocate.

As I come up to my final term on the Board, I know that Anova is in great hands with Kendra Tobin stepping in as our new Chair with support from an incredible roster of intelligent and committed Board Members. It has been my greatest privilege to serve on the Board of Anova over the last six years and to be a small part of this inspiring organization that had such a profound impact on my own life.

Thank you,  
Iris Merino





# Our Board of Directors

At Anova, we are fortunate to have a Board of Directors who are deeply committed to our mission. Their guidance and support have been essential in navigating challenges and exploring new opportunities to enhance our impact.

We appreciate their dedication and the time they invest in ensuring Anova remains a place of hope and safety. Their commitment motivates us to continue working towards our vision.

Thank you to our Board of Directors for your valuable contributions and for being an important part of the Anova team. Your leadership helps us move closer to a future without violence.

**IRIS MERINO**  
CHAIR

**ANJU FUJIOKA**  
CO-VICE-CHAIR

**DINA HADDISH**  
CO-VICE-CHAIR

**DUSTIN DELEGARDE**  
TREASURER/SECRETARY

**ANDREA NICHOLSON**

**BRANDI MCILVENNY**

**DANE FERRY**

**KENDRA TOBIN**

**LEENAT JILANI**

**NOKUZOLA NCUBE**

**RACHEL PRINGLE**

**RIKKA BOUSEH**

**ZOHRA BHIMANI**  
NON-VOTING MEMBER



# SHELTER

During the last 12 months, both of Anova's high-security Violence Against Women shelters have continued to deliver care to survivors and their children in a trauma and violence informed manner. Our shelters have remained full, and we continue to see a high volume of children

Our shelters have remained full, and we continue to see a high volume of children through our doors, brought by fierce mamas focused on keeping them safe and cared for. Our team delivered countless emergency counselling sessions, hot meals, new stuffies and warm spaces to sleep. Importantly, our team provided space for these families to be together.

Among these spaces, our staff offer around the clock care, presence and support to answer not only those in shelter, but to the 7,651 calls to our Crisis & Support Line - with the help of our Crisis & Support Line volunteers.



## ADVOCACY

Over the last year, advocacy efforts of the organization have only continued to grow - both to demonstrate the incredible community Anova serves, but to also highlight the gaps in resources to support survivors. The following are some of those efforts;

- Attended Queen's Park to engage in conversation with MPPs and provincial funders about the need for more stabilization in the sector for shelter services and community-based supports.
- Worked with municipal and federal funders and politicians on housing - highlighting the need for more accessible and safe housing for survivors of gender-based and sexual violence. Longer shelter stays due to a lack of affordable housing have been a growing concern - resulting in a lower number of clients served in shelter.
- Supported the City of London on their strategic plan pillar 'A Safer London for Women, Girls and Gender-Diverse and Trans People', including London's declaration of Intimate Partner Violence as an epidemic.

This past year Anova also stepped into the conversation about the genocide in Gaza, putting out a statement to community- a first for our sector in Ontario. The connection to Anova's work and the atrocities in Gaza may seem tenuous at first glance, but after careful consideration it was clear that as an organization we needed to speak up. Anova serves a large Muslim population- Arabic is the most translated language in our organization. Although we do not serve Gazan women and children directly, our large diasporic community here in London has been impacted. Sharing a statement was not just for those in Gaza, but for our community right here in London.

Moving forward the Board is reviewing our investments to ensure we are managing our portfolio ethically. We have more work to do to get aligned with our strategic plan. It won't always be easy, but we recognize that it will always be worthwhile.



# SUPPORT



The Support Team at Anova works in every corner of our organization. Their work of making sure our spaces are safe, clean and healthy is critical to the success of our programs. The care that has gone into preparing meals and bedrooms, stocking our donations, providing administration support at Second Stage Housing and keeping our spaces functioning is immeasurable. In addition to their day-to-day work, our Support Team also completed several renovation projects, including the updating of siding, and retaining of walls, flooring, and lighting. This team can be overlooked at times, so it is especially important to take pause and recognize their incredible dedication to their roles.

Our Community Programs teams also continued their stellar services. Our Family Court Support Program welcomed a much needed second full-time Family Court Support Worker. They have increased our capacity to support clients while they walk through the often confusing and challenging family court system. The Sexual Assault Counselling program continued to deliver high quality services to over 241 clients, despite funding cuts. While some funders struggle to see the value in sexual assault counselling, our community and survivors continue to reach out, knowing they will receive trauma and violence informed care from feminist counsellors - a much needed service in our community.

The Outreach Team also navigated tricky challenges in community while supporting incredibly resilient survivors. Their work connecting survivors to needed services, understanding their complex trauma and advocating for their clients was inspiring to witness as they service over 327 clients in our community.

# EDUCATION



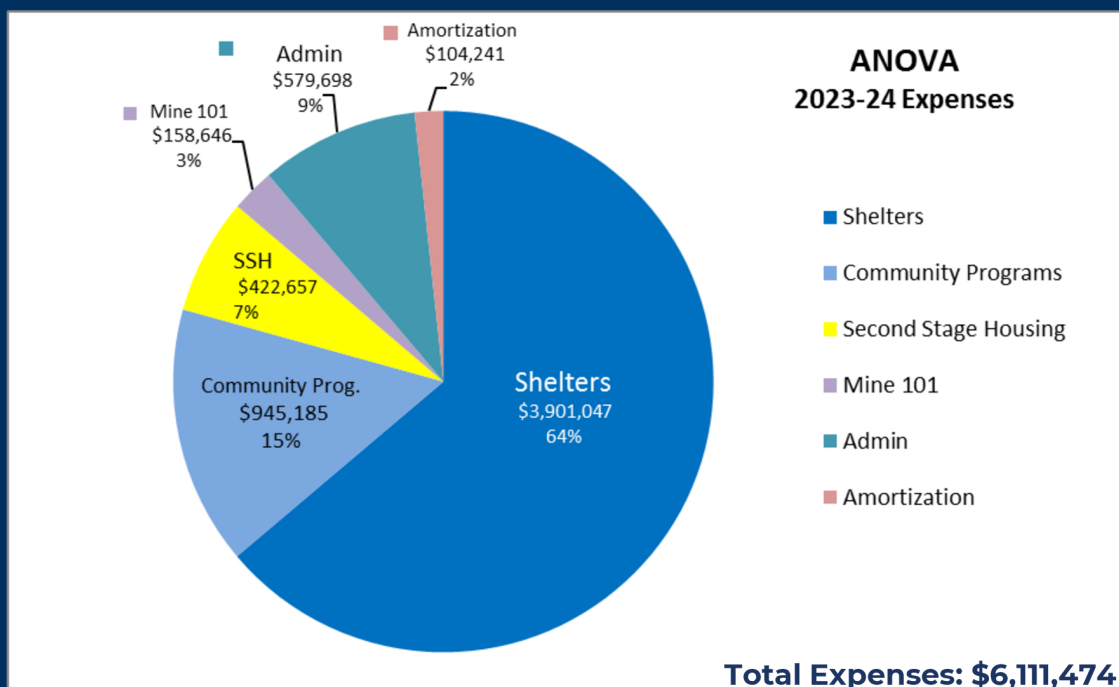
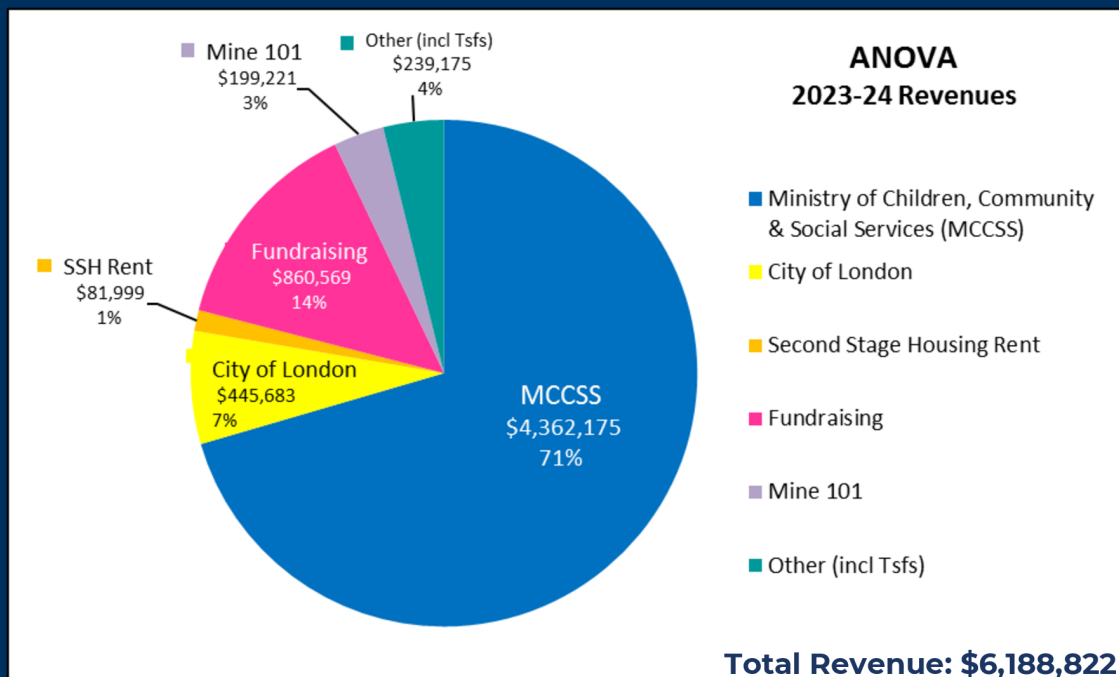
The Education and Prevention Team continued their work with Western, Huron, Brescia and King's universities, delivering high quality education to help first year students start their post-secondary experience with a firm understanding of consent and sexual violence.

We also welcomed a new Manager of Education & a new Prevention Coordinator – welcome, Allison & Nelia!

Along with the work with our post-secondary partners, the team also focused on talking to community to elevate their understanding of gender-based violence - sharing thoughts and posts on how equity intersects with our work, the need to listen to survivors and how everyone, including sex workers, deserves to feel safe.



# Investing in a Future Without Violence



Note: These figures may not correspond to the audited financial statements. This report is available within a reasonable time frame, in accessible formats for all abilities (large print, audio form etc.) and may be ordered by contacting Jessie Rodger at 519.642.3003 or [jessier@anovafuture.org](mailto:jessier@anovafuture.org).



# Strategic Plan Updates

## Building Connections

Our team has concentrated on addressing gaps in our partnerships, with the goal of better serving our community by strengthening our relationships with Changing Ways and the London-Middlesex Health Unit. By fortifying these connections, we aim to more swiftly and seamlessly link survivors with the critical services they need, improving their overall experience and outcomes.

In addition to building new partnerships, our entire team is dedicating significant time, energy, and resources to a deeper exploration of how we can evolve into a more equitable space for both our staff and clients. This ongoing journey involves comprehensive internal training sessions and a commitment to broadening our understanding of equity. Over the past year, we have made it a priority to reflect on our organizational practices and culture, recognizing the importance of inclusivity and fairness in all that we do.

Throughout this last year we have started a new internal committee focused on keep us accountable to our commitments to equity. We also began the process of baseline training on equity, diversity and inclusion for all staff and board members. This training is now embedded in new staff and board orientation. This training allows us to ensure that all staff and board members have a foundation of knowledge when it comes to equity, diversity and inclusion. Along with this training our team is on the first steps of the work to create an organization wide work plan that focuses on actions that will help us embed equity in our policies, procedures and work culture.

## Board of Directors

The Board of Directors, while focusing on their roles and responsibilities when it comes to our equity work, have also been reviewing and addressing risk assessment work through the entire organization. This work has included a full and comprehensive review of risk, and starting the labour intensive task of ensuring that each identified risk has a plan of action to keep our organization healthy and strong.

## Extension

With all this work going on, after thoughtful reflection, the Anova Board of Directors, with the consent and support of our Executive Director, have decided to extend the life of our current Strategic Plan, by one year, ending now on **March 31, 2027**. This extension will allow the organization to ensure that all goals are met.

# Donors & Community

This year, we were thrilled to welcome Nikki as our new Manager of Fund Development and Communications! With her leadership, we're placing an even greater emphasis on donor stewardship and building strong, lasting relationships with those who support our mission.

Our second-hand clothing store, Mine 101, also had another fantastic year, thanks to the dedication of store manager, Madison, and her incredible team. Their hard work not only provides valuable resources for our programs but also strengthens our community connections.

Mine 101 is a thrift store that specializes in second hand women's clothing, accessories and jewelry. Featuring many premium brands, Mine 101 helps you look your best, at a reasonable price!

## VOLUNTEER IMPACT

- Volunteers dedicated over 8,500hrs total
- 3000 hr milestone: 1 volunteer
- 1000 hr milestone: 1 volunteer
- 500 hr milestone: 1 volunteer
- 250 hr milestone: 8 volunteers
- Volunteers answered 25% of calls to our crisis line (a 6% increase)
- New volunteers Trained: 76
- 1 Volunteer received their 10 year Ontario Volunteer Service Award Pin and Certificate
- 1 Youth Volunteer received their Ontario Volunteer Service Award Youth Pin and Certificate

We are **deeply grateful** to our diverse community of donors who continue to step up in remarkable ways. Whether it's filling our fridge to provide clients with fresh, healthy food, supporting summer programs for children, or contributing to our efforts to reduce wait times for essential services, your commitment has been vital.

As we reflect on the past year, your generosity and dedication have been the cornerstone of Anova's ability to deliver life-changing support to those impacted by violence.

Thank you for standing with us and for being a crucial part of our journey towards a future without violence.



# Transforming Spaces, Transforming Lives

We are thrilled to shine a spotlight on Roo & You, whose generosity and creativity have brought new life to the children's playrooms at both of our shelter locations. Understanding the importance of safe and welcoming spaces for the youngest members of our community, Roo & You took on the incredible task of completely renovating these vital areas.

The impact of these newly designed playrooms cannot be overstated. They are now vibrant, engaging, and soothing environments where children can play, learn, and heal from the trauma they have experienced. These spaces offer a sense of normalcy and joy during a time of great uncertainty, providing children with the comfort and security they need to thrive.



Thanks to Roo & You's dedication, the playrooms are now equipped with age-appropriate toys, interactive learning stations, and cozy reading nooks that inspire creativity and exploration. The thoughtful design and attention to detail have truly made these spaces a haven for the children in our shelters.

We are incredibly grateful to Roo & You for their unwavering support and for making such a meaningful difference in the lives of the families we serve. Their commitment to creating a nurturing environment for children is helping to build a brighter future for all.

Thank you, Roo & You, for your remarkable contribution to Anova.



## 24 Hour Crisis & Support Line 519.642.3000 or 1 800.265.1576

### Emergency Shelters:

101 Wellington Rd N6C 4M7  
450 Clarke Rd N52 6H1

### Sexual Assault Counseling Services & Business Office

255 Horton St N6B 1L1  
519.642.3003

### Second Stage Housing

1416 Ernest Ave N6E 3R3

### Mine 101 - Social Enterprise Women's Wear Boutique

900 Oxford St E N5Y 5A1  
519.453.5550

### Online:



@anovafutureldn



@anovafuture

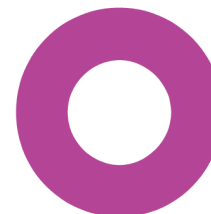
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*Multiple languages available including ASL*



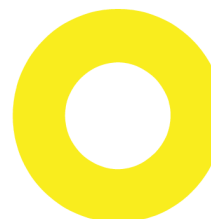
SHELTER



ADVOCACY



SUPPORT



EDUCATION

# THANK YOU

*We extend our deepest gratitude to our community, supporters,  
and partners for standing with us in our mission to create a  
future without violence. Your commitment and generosity  
make our work possible. Together, we are stronger.*

-All of us at Anova

