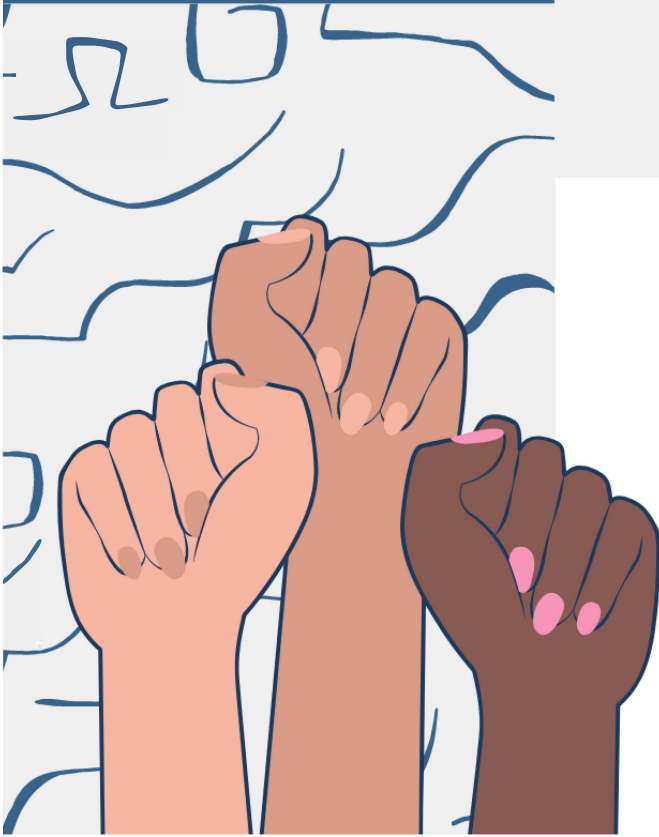


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# Strategic Plan



KAMLOOPS AND DISTRICT

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# Table of Contents

<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>1</b>
Territorial Acknowledgment	2
<b>Vision</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Areas of Work</b>	<b>3</b>
Collaboration and Systems Change	4
Priorities for 2022-2025	4
Legal advocacy and support	4
Priorities for 2022-2025	4
Housing Across the Continuum	5
Priorities for 2022-2025	5
Youth Programs	5
Priorities for 2022-2025	6
Core Business Functions	6

## **Territorial Acknowledgment**

We would like to acknowledge that our learning and research takes place on the traditional territory of the Secwépemc Peoples, within the unceded lands of Secwepemcul'ecw. Secwépemc Peoples have cared for and nourished this land since time immemorial. As guests on this land, we commit to learning from and walking alongside those who have always called this land home.

## Vision

Kamloops and District Elizabeth Fry Society (KDEFS) is building a just and equitable community where women, gender diverse people, and families are supported and empowered to thrive.



## Purpose

We support women, gender diverse people, and families harmed by barriers to justice and equity, including criminalization, housing insecurity, and colonization. We dismantle the systems and attitudes that marginalize and oppress members of our community. We take a feminist-informed approach that:

- Values and inspires collaboration
- Promotes the message that equity benefits everyone
- Respects and includes lived experience
- Pays attention to complex and diverse needs

## Areas of Work

This section shares goals and priorities for different areas of work that KDEFS engages in. This includes:

- Collaboration and Systems Change
- Legal Advocacy and Support
- Housing Across the Continuum
- Youth Programs
- Core Business Functions

KDEFS holds ambitious visions for our community, many of which cannot be achieved by our organization on its own. For each area of work, a narrative goal statement has been identified that shares system-level ambitions for each area, and describes how KDEFS takes a lead or works with others to contribute to or work toward that ambition. The priorities identified are targeted statements that will help guide the work of KDEFS staff to work towards the narrative goal statements over the next few years.

## Collaboration and Systems Change

KDEFS acts as a convener and thought leader, inspiring people to work together toward a common vision of equity and justice in our community. Through public education, networking and advocacy, we help increase awareness and reduce stigma among other service providers, decision makers and the general public. We listen deeply and learn from those with complex and diverse needs and lived experience, and are a go-to resource for women and gender-diverse families. Our organization takes a lead role in nurturing collaboration and mutual support in our community, increasing collective action to address root causes of criminalization, housing insecurity, colonization and other barriers to justice and equity.

### ***Priorities for 2022-2025***

- Increase awareness of equity among decision makers, service providers and the general public.
  - Develop education materials and communication plans on key topics. Start with communication strategies and key messages identified in the Gender Equity Project Strategic Plan and build from there.
- Increase collaboration with service providers and organizations in the region focusing on shared understanding of how to address systemic barriers to equity and justice.
  - Continue to facilitate the Gender Equity Roundtable and support gender equity working groups.
  - Consider facilitating and/or supporting other equity related work (e.g. racial equity project).
- Support equity and decolonization work in the community.
  - Learn from and support the work of Indigenous and equity-seeking organizations (e.g. strengthen relationships built during Gender Equity Needs Assessment).
- Develop a shared partnership agreement for a women's resource hub and secure the space/infrastructure needed to support the hub.

## Legal advocacy and support

We envision a community in which those navigating the legal and carceral systems are able to express their rights and use their voice to stand up for themselves, increasing their self esteem and increasing positive outcomes. We are building a community where individuals have access to resources to help them navigate and mitigate the traumas of past events and interactions with the legal and carceral systems. Our goal is for KDEFS legal advocacy to be well known in the community and able to facilitate ease of access for all those in need of legal support services.

### ***Priorities for 2022-2025***

- Develop a communication and engagement plan to increase awareness of legal services in the community, particularly among those most in need of services.

- Increase capacity of services to meet community need, including investigating whether and how to increase the number of lawyers and law students/articling students and the areas of law covered (i.e. immigration and more family law).
- Continue to work with CAEFS to participate in their regional advocacy work to help women within the federal prison system to self-represent, and integrate regional advocacy with local work.

## Housing Across the Continuum

KDEFS helps to ensure that safe, supportive, affordable housing is accessible for all women and gender diverse people in TNRD, and that this housing is high quality and operates based on best practices. Housing and shelter options are sufficient to meet a variety of needs, including shelters, housing for those coming out of provincial institutions and second stage housing. KDEFS operates housing for women and gender diverse people in Kamloops that meet identified gaps in the housing continuum. KDEFS also collaborates with others and engages in advocacy to reduce gender-related barriers and ensure housing meets complex needs, to identify assets and gaps in relation to housing, and to address root causes of housing insecurity and gender inequity in housing.

### **Priorities for 2022-2025**

- Build the capacity of the rent bank program and financial literacy offerings, including additional fundraising to increase available loan capital, and increase awareness of the program corresponding to its increased capacity.
- Increase permanent housing stock for women and gender diverse people.
  - **Elm Street Townhouses:** Construction completed and operational plan in place for 14 permanent, affordable, subsidized, partially supported townhouses for women who have completed second stage housing program.
- Increase stock of second stage housing for women and gender diverse people.
  - **Additional Second Stage Housing Units:** Work with BC Housing to develop a new second stage housing site with approximately 26 units. This site will be owned by BC Housing and operated by KDEFS.
  - **Complete 3 - Clarke House.**
  - **Westminster Redevelopment:** Work with CMHC and BC Housing towards redevelopment of Family Stepping Stones second stage housing to increase up to 28 units.
- Expand second stage housing services to communities throughout the TNRD.
  - Complete the regional Women and Gender Diverse People Housing Needs Assessment, and prioritize partnership opportunities identified by the research.
- Increase awareness and sector-level response to gender-based barriers in housing.

## Youth Programs

We envision a world in which youth in our community feel secure and supported. KDEFS works in collaboration with service providers in the community to ensure that youth have access to

safe environments and education on healthy risk-taking, sufficient resources to address mental health and substance abuse needs, and opportunities for self-determination and empowerment. KDEFS also contributes to a community that proactively addresses and prevents barriers to justice and equity for youth at the earliest stages of their lives. KDEFS manages youth programs that focus on the complex and diverse needs of individual youth, and are facilitated by staff and caregivers who are consistent and respectful. Youth participants are enabled to avoid incarceration, increase their engagement with their culture, and are connected to education and pro-social opportunities. Youth participants successfully transition out of the program, and their families are supported and satisfied with the transition to their home communities.

### ***Priorities for 2022-2025***

- Deepen collaboration with organizations who specialize in support programs for youth to ensure an equity and justice lens is incorporated in this work and that gaps in the community are identified.
- Complete an ecocycle planning process with the SKY Program to guide next steps and develop a proposal to present to MCFD. Work closely with MCFD to adjust the program to meet the needs of the community and youth.

### **Core Business Functions**

At KDEFS, we aim to walk the walk, and embody our feminist-informed approach at all levels in our organization. We value listening deeply to those with lived experience, and we allow our work to be changed by engaging their diverse perspectives: from how meetings are facilitated to how we support staff with family responsibilities to the mindsets and worldview we hold. We strive to ensure that our organization is resourced sufficiently so we can support our staff and grow our programs. Our staff are central to achieving our vision, and we will prioritize attracting and retaining highly skilled, trauma-informed people to our team, while also recognizing the value of their work through competitive compensation, accessibility and work/life balance. We seek to incorporate staff input into the organization's budgeting and planning processes, and ensure staff have sufficient knowledge of our policies and procedures.

### ***Priorities for 2022-2025***

- Decrease barriers to service and increase awareness of Society and services by implementing priority actions identified in the Accessibility Plan
- Increase Diversity, Equity and Inclusion practices at the Board, staff and programming levels and decolonize the organization by implementing priority actions identified in the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan.
- Improve financial planning and reporting processes to support making more timely decisions
- Develop and implement a recruitment and retention plan for the organization, including support for highly skilled exempt staff.
- Determine geographical scope of services for the Society, considering gaps in services and competition.