



KAMLOOPS AND DISTRICT

Elizabeth Fry Society



2019

ANNUAL REPORT



Message from the President & Executive Director

It has been an exciting year of change and growth for the Society. We welcomed Cassandra Schwarz as our Executive Director in April. Cassandra had previously worked for the Society and we were pleased to have her return to the team.

In November the Board underwent the strategic planning process and were energized to renew our vision of supporting women and families in our community. We are committed to our goal of being one of the leading women's organizations in Kamloops.

We were thrilled to be able to announce that we will be working with BC Housing to bring 40 units of women's second stage housing to Kamloops. This will be a great addition to the 5 units we currently operate at Family Stepping Stones. We have known the overwhelming need for a safe place for women and children for years now and are so thankful to have BC Housing work with us to help meet this need in our community.

This year we were also able to add a Family Law Advocate to our team. There is a great need for support for individuals on low incomes in accessing family law services. Our new Family Law Advocate will help in meeting this need.

This past year of change and growth has been exciting and we look forward to the years ahead as we work to improve services for women and families in Kamloops.



Jennifer Murphy, *Board President*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Murphy".



Cassandra Schwarz, *Executive Director*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "C. Schwarz".

Introducing our new Executive Director

I took over as Executive Director in April 2018 and was thrilled to rejoin the EFry team. I had previously worked for the Society in 2014, raising funds to make our Family Stepping Stones program a reality. With no more funds for my position, I left to work in fundraising for several organizations. Most notably I was the Executive Director of the East Kootenay Foundation for Health, running a successful campaign to bring an MRI machine to the region. I also had the chance to work for CMHA in Vernon, working on raising awareness and funds for the important work they do for mental health in the community.

I have always been passionate about community development and human rights. I hold a Masters in Human Rights and International Politics from the University of Glasgow and had the chance to complete an internship at the University of Western Cape in South Africa. The international experience I gained during these years has been instrumental in my non profit career.

On a personal note, I have two very loving and affectionate Pomeranians, Axl and Bear. They come to office and perform very important cuddle therapy from time to time. I look forward to the years to come as the entire EFry team pursues our mission to improve the lives of women and families in our community.



Bursary



The Kamloops Elizabeth Fry Women's Educational Bursary provides financial assistance to women, 18 years and older, who are working to enhance their economic independence and self-sufficiency. Our program provided two bursaries in 2019 to Tia Stanley and Kelly Thierren who were granted \$1000.00 each for school tuition.

Board of Directors 2018-19

President: Jennifer Murphy

Vice President: Penny Douglass

Treasurer: Robbie Tallon

Director: Heather Lloyd

Director: Rachel Lammers

Director: Grayden Flanagan

Director: Cassidy Morgan

Director: Angela Tenisci

Housing

Number of Clients Served ...

5

Women and their children living in **Family Stepping Stones** supportive second stage housing to rebuild their lives.

3265

Individuals received **Housing Resources Services** to find housing and supports.

242

Women were assisted in maintaining and acquiring housing through our **Lizzy's Closet Program**.

234

People helped through the **Rent Bank** program, allowing them to stay in their homes.

567

Women were assisted in maintaining and acquiring housing through our **Women's Housing Support Program**.



Legal Advocacy & Support

Poverty Law

2113

Clients Served

Legal Aid

5172

Clients Served

Courtwork

5488

Total Assists

Thank You Volunteers



Thank you to all our volunteers (Lizzy's Closet, Courtwork, Housing, and Administration) you have dedicated over 400 hours of time and commitment to our Society. Our clients and the community sure benefit from the care and compassion you put into your time. Volunteers are an asset to our organization. From the bottom of our hearts THANK YOU for all that you do!

FSS Update

Family Stepping Stones was established in 2015 and is the first Women's Second Stage Housing Program in Kamloops. Our participants are women in recovery who have experienced intimate partner violence, and have expressed a need for support in rebuilding their lives.

Family Stepping Stones second stage housing offers women two years of safe affordable housing and an opportunity to work towards goals identified upon entry into the program. Goals are assessed each week through our weekly check-ins and goal tracking where we support women with issues such as remaining free of substance misuse, regaining custody of their children, financial management, retraining, and strengthening parent-child attachment through parenting supports.

During 2018-2019 the Family Stepping Stone program witnessed 4 families graduate and transition into

subsidized housing. We also want to thank Flaman Fitness for the donation of this wonderful play area for the participants at Family Stepping Stones.

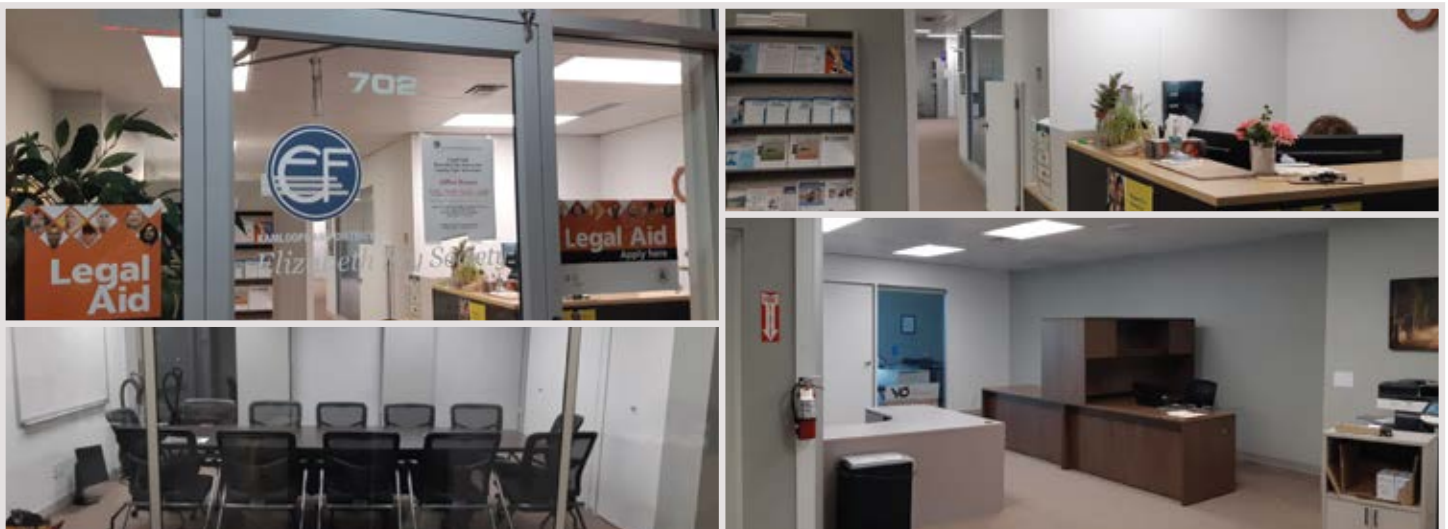
"Stepping Stones has taught me how to be a better adult, a better mom and show me how to give myself and my son a better life" – anonymous



New Office Space

We are growing and opened a new legal services office.

Legal Aid and the Advocates (Poverty Law and Family Law) are now located at:
#702-235 1st Avenue, in the beautiful Downtown Centre.



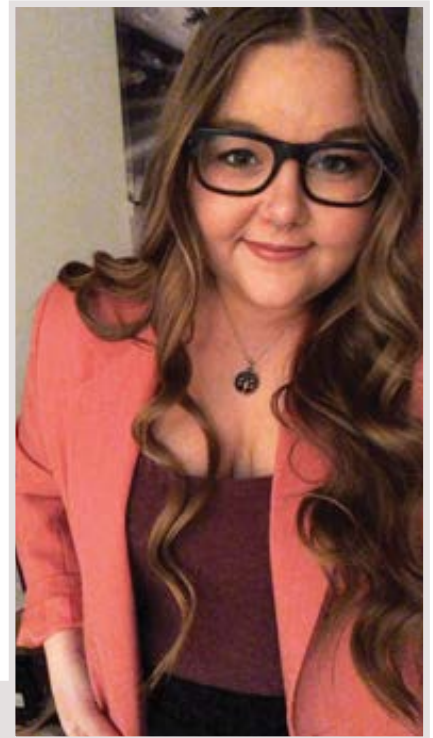
Family Law Advocacy Program

WE HAVE A NEW PROGRAM!

The Family Law Advocacy Program provides free legal information and advocacy in a variety of areas, including Guardianship and Parenting time, Parental Responsibilities, Child Support, Spousal Support, Divorce, Protection Orders and Child protection. The advocate aids in the preparation of certain court documents and can help clients represent themselves in court proceedings. The Legal Advocate works under the supervision of a Lawyer and can provide referrals to other community resources when necessary. The Family Law Program is open to anyone with a low income living in Kamloops, Ashcroft, Barriere, Cache Creek, Chase, Clearwater, and the Secwepemc First Nations' communities.

Testimonial: *"Going to court is intimidating and being supported and guided throughout the Family Court process has made a huge difference for me."* – Anonymous client

Meet **Tatiana** – Family Law Advocate



Rent Bank Update

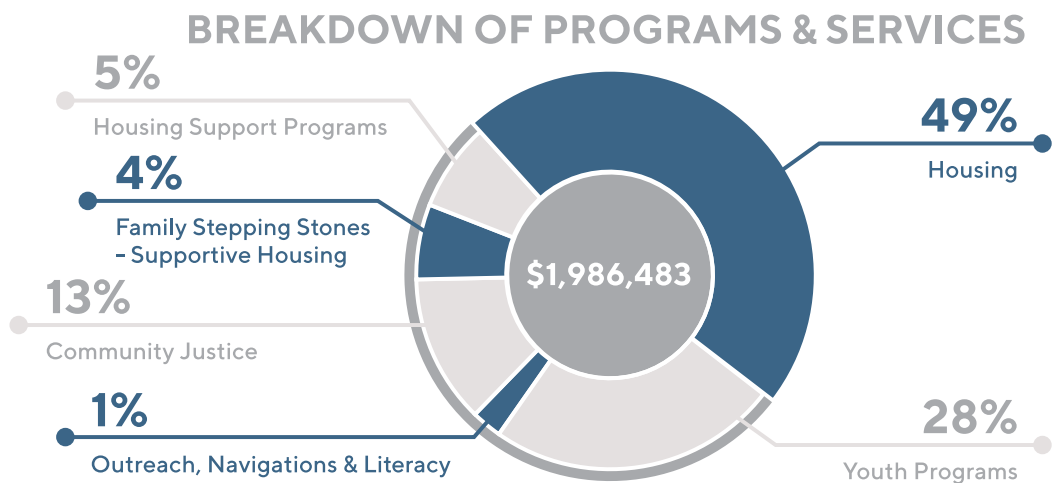
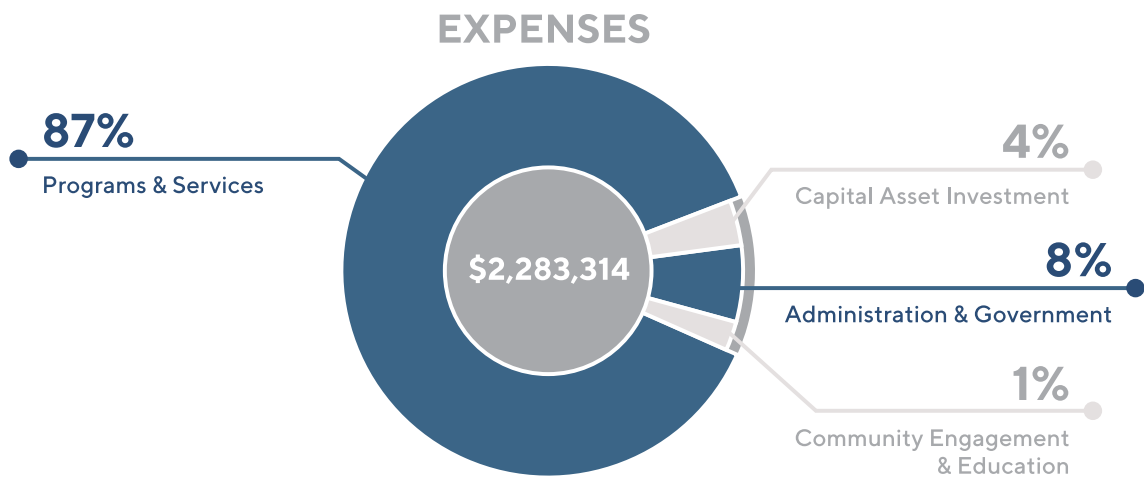
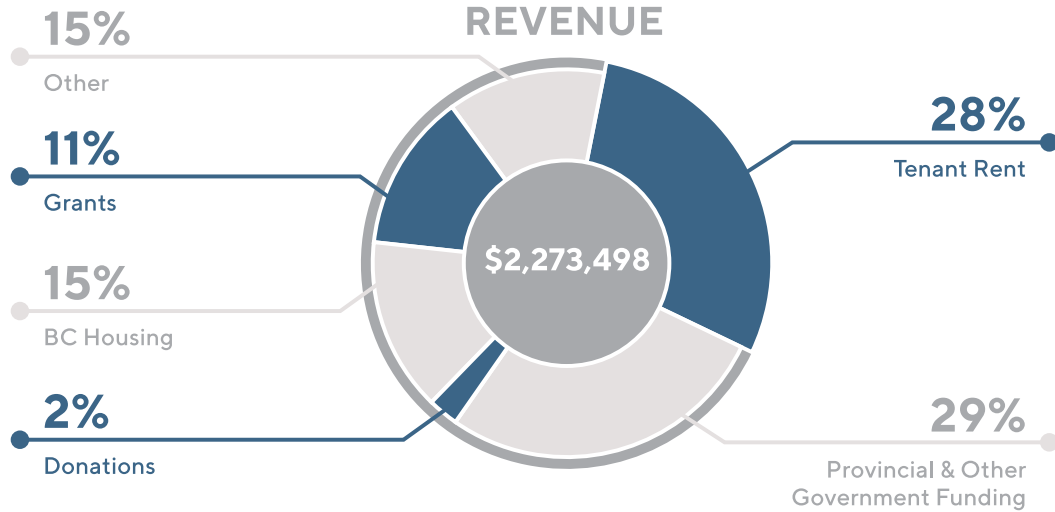
During the 2018/2019 year our Rent Bank gave out 19 loans. 1/3 (6) of them were repaid within the same year. 16 of the 19 loans were to single income women with children and 3 single men without children. This shows that there is a significant demand on single moms to meet the needs of their families in our community.

"I am a mature single mother, a full-time student at the university, I work a part time job along with working odd jobs to make ends meet. I made the decision to finish my degree because my full-time job did not financially

cover the cost of my family's basic necessities. My situation is not uncommon. The Rent Bank provides a functional option during challenging months. Not only has the Rent Bank allowed my family to remain housed and safe, but this resource provides me a sense of emotional security positively affecting my family's well-being. I believe a community that supports its members will see the trickle-down benefits which ultimately pays out in dividends. My family is grateful. Thank you." – Anonymous

16 OF **19** loans to single mothers

Financials



Thank You!

We are grateful for the generosity of our donors, sponsors, and funders whose support has changed the lives of women and youth in our community.

Year ended March 31, 2019. This information has been extracted from the audited financial statements prepared by Tenisci Piva Chartered Professional Accountants. The full statements are available at www.kamloopsefry.com or by request.



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