



YRCCS
York Region Centre for Community Safety



Suite 107, 25 Deverill Court
Markham, ON L6G 0C7
Phone: 905-836-7601
Fax: 905-836-2617
www.yrccs.ca

Monday September 25th, 2023

To: York Regional Council of the Whole

From: York Region Centre for Community Safety Board of Directors

Re: Motion to Declare Gender-Based Violence and Intimate Partner Violence an Epidemic in York Region

The York Region Centre for Community Safety (YRCCS) Board of Directors would like to thank Regional Council for supporting the motion to declare gender-based violence and intimate partner violence an epidemic in York Region.

The creation of the York Region Centre for Community Safety (YRCCS) began in 2008 when York Regional Police (YRP) had visited the Family Justice Centre (FJC) in San Diego, California. With the leadership of YRP and Sandgate Women's Shelter, support from United Way of York Region and Ontario Trillium Foundation, and the commitment of service providers in York Region, YRCCS opened in 2013 so that survivors of intimate partner violence and sexual violence in York Region would gain access to multiple services at a single location and not be forced to retell their stories.

In 2019, YRCCS was incorporated as a stand-alone non-profit charitable organization, and we became an affiliate of the global Family Justice Centre Alliance. Notably during the pandemic, the number of clients requiring wrap around services from YRCCS' multi-disciplinary team of professionals increased by over 20% and this need continues to grow. During the height of the pandemic from 2020-2022, we supported 1,676 adult survivors and 2,169 of their children. YRCCS is the only co-located service delivery hub of its kind in York Region that utilizes a trauma-informed approach to ensure that survivors of domestic violence have to only tell their story once to be connected to essential justice and community supports and services.

Our team includes five full time community practitioners that bring expertise in the areas of trauma-informed social work practice as well as a sound understanding of gender-based violence and its impact on community safety and health. The Executive Director, Jaspreet Gill, was recognized with an Outstanding Leadership Award at a health conference in Nevada this past July.

Among the core priorities of our Strategic Plan (2020 – 2023) is enhancement of YRCCS services. As the Board of Directors of YRCCS, we are acutely aware that this strategic goal can only be accomplished by building YRCCS' organizational capacity to fully serve the growing need in the community. Our Board of Directors include dedicated community members from York Region who bring a range of expertise in not-for-profit leadership, accounting and financial management, human resource management, law, health, and government. We are committed to addressing the need for sustainable and diversified funding to ensure continuity of services.



YRCCS
York Region Centre for Community Safety



Suite 107, 25 Deverill Court
Markham, ON L6G 0C7
Phone: 905-836-7601
Fax: 905-836-2617
www.yrccs.ca

It is important to raise the awareness of YRCCS' important role in ensuring the safety and well-being of York Region community members and ensure that our unique service delivery model can continue to assist community members in crisis. Regional Council's declaration of gender-based violence and intimate partner violence is an epidemic in York Region is a great start and will demonstrate to the community and survivors their stories and lives matter.

We respectfully request Regional Council support us through ongoing advocacy and lobbying for sustainable funding and raising our profile. We have advocated to the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services for core funding. Without annual funding, the future of YRCCS is in jeopardy. YRCCS requests from Council at least \$100,000 to support this year's sustainability. Gender based violence is not seen as a larger community issue and this lack of understanding often translates to further vulnerability for survivors and families.

We also request Council to consider appointing YRCCS as an advisor to the Human Services Planning Board of York Region to attend meetings and participate in working groups. YRCCS shares the vision of York Region as an inclusive community.

In January 2021, a Joint Declaration for a Canada Free of Gender-Based Violence was endorsed by the Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers responsible for the Status of Women. A National Action Plan outlines five pillars to support survivors and their families. Increased sustainable operational and core funding for improved services and programs is an opportunity for action. Since the endorsement in July 2023, further implementation is required to establish agreements with all provinces. In the meantime, YRCCS is committed to address gender-based and intimate partner violence in York Region.

Sincerely,

Christina Dawson
Board of Directors
York Region Centre for Community Safety