

Annual Report



PREPARED BY:
Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre
SEPTEMBER 2024

The Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre acknowledges that we are located on the unceded, unsundered territory of the Anishinaabe Algonquin nation whose presence here reaches back to time immemorial.

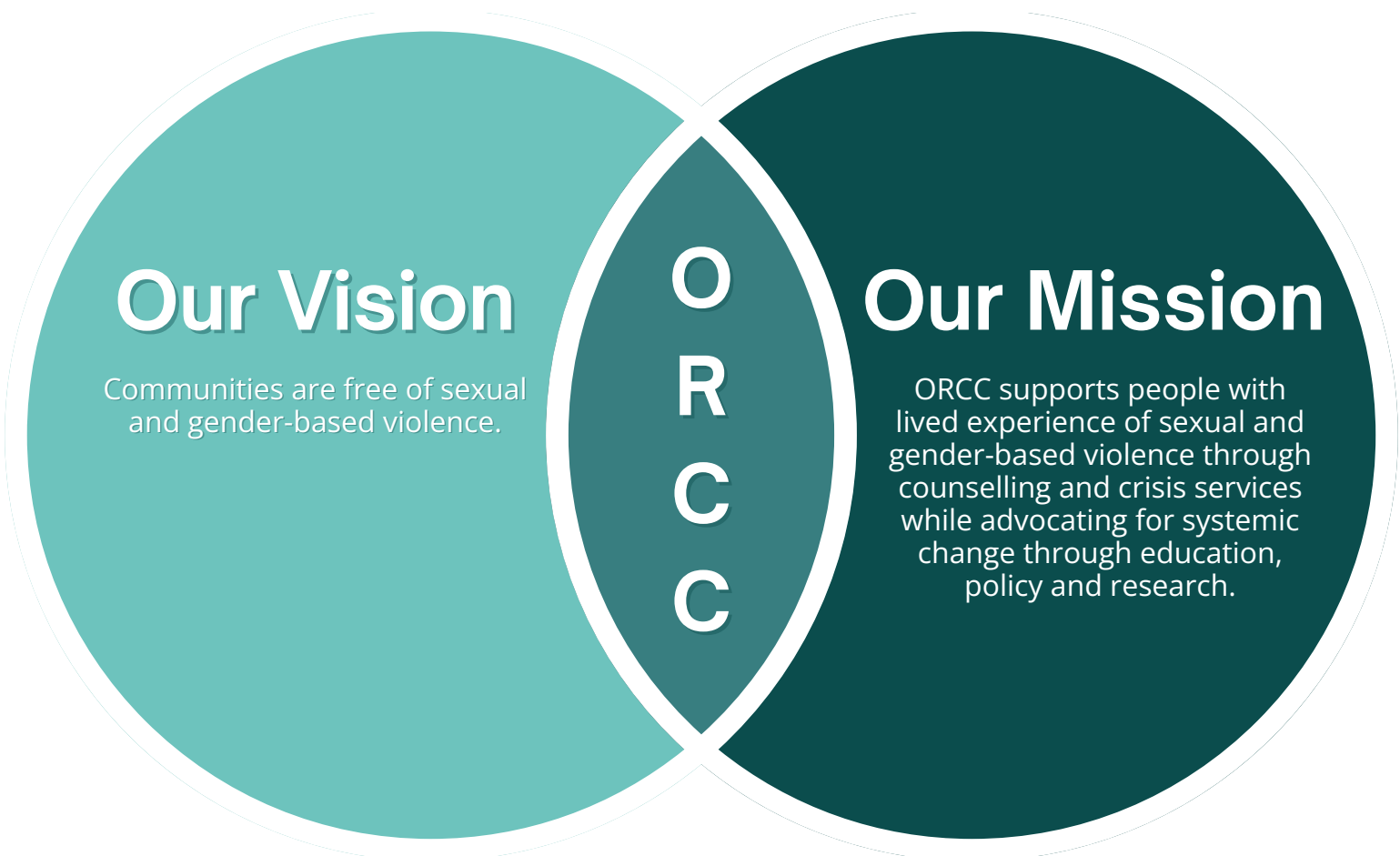
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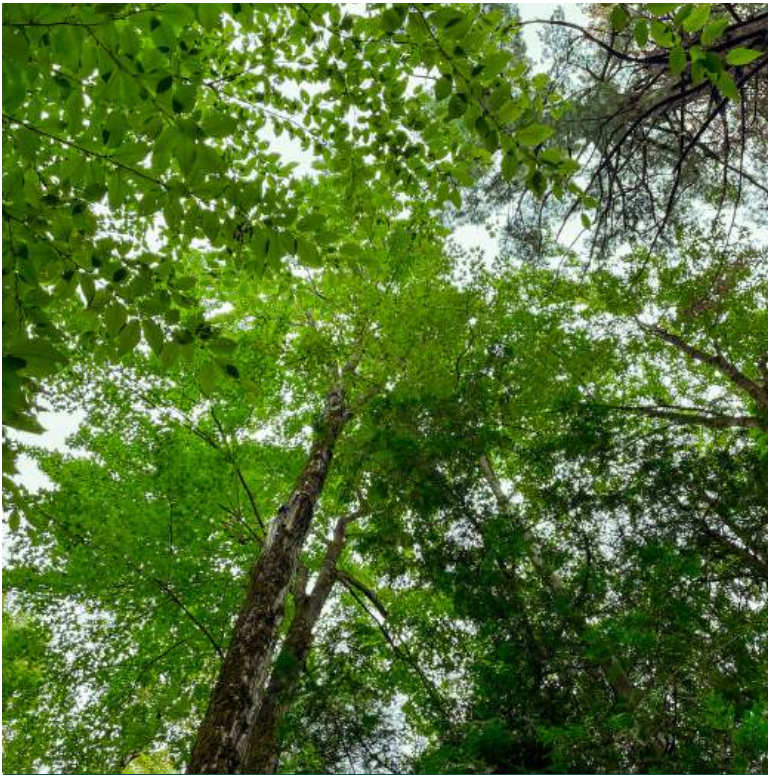
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About ORCC

Founded on December 14, 1974, the Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre (ORCC) stands as one of Canada's pioneering rape crisis centers. From its inception, ORCC has been dedicated to providing crucial emotional support to survivors of rape. Over the decades, we have remained steadfast in our mission to address sexual and gender-based violence. As the landscape of violence and healing evolves, so do we —ensuring our services are accessible to all who seek support.

Rooted in a feminist, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive philosophy, ORCC offers a range of services including advocacy, community outreach, service navigation, and trauma-informed, evidence-based counselling. We are here to empower survivors and help build a safer community for everyone in the nation's capital.





Welcome to Our 2023-2024 Annual Report

As we reflect on this past year, we are reminded of the profound strength and resilience of the survivors we serve and the tireless dedication of our staff, volunteers, and community partners. This report captures the important work undertaken to support survivors of sexual and gender-based violence in our community, while also addressing the ongoing challenges and systemic barriers that affect the individuals we serve.

The pages that follow highlight our programs, services, and advocacy efforts, as well as the stories of empowerment, healing, and hope that define ORCC's mission. We invite you to join us in reflecting on our progress and looking forward to the work that lies ahead in creating a safer, more just community for all.

With gratitude for your continued support,

The ORCC Team

Message from the Chair of ORCC's Board of Directors



On behalf of ORCC's Board of Directors, I am delighted to share this opening message highlighting our fiscal 2023-24 achievements.

This year, our message's central focus continues our journey of solidification of growth and modernization. To borrow the phrase coined by Candice Shaw, our Executive Director, 'we have not yet hit cruising altitude!' However, the phrase "joyful progression" from previous annual messages continues to resonate and reverberate throughout the organization as we move steadily and confidently forward.

This year, our message touches also on our history and the legacy passed on to us by ORCC's founders. In November 1974, our founders realized their vision of providing support and counselling to those with lived experience of sexual violence. Over the nearly fifty years since our inception, everyone who has touched the organization in whatever their capacity has honoured that legacy through the services and programs that were provided.

Today's vision is, at its core, that of our founders.

Our vision is this simple statement:

"Communities that are free of sexual and gender-based violence"

Some may say that this is unachievable. Pragmatically and realistically, this may be so. That being said, whether it is through our counselling services, through our service navigation services, through listening to the needs of our communities which leads to innovative and creative programming, through our partnerships and collaborations, through our research, and advocacy, we work hard every day to move the needle incrementally towards that vision. This is the story that unfolds as you read our annual report.

To our interest-holders - Without a doubt, no one organization can move this needle very far alone. However, working together, as we do, is a different matter! Our collective collaboration and partnerships have enhanced service provision for those who come to our respective organizations

Message from the Chair of ORCC's Board of Directors (continued)

in need, enhanced community understanding of sexual and gender-based violence and provides a solid platform for advocacy and systemic change. Together, we can and do move that needle. We look forward to our ongoing collaborations and partnerships and to those yet formed, as it does indeed take the proverbial village!

As I noted in last year's message, none of this would have been possible without the steadfast support of our funders. Thank you to our core funders - to the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services and the City of Ottawa. And thank you to new funders whose financial support augmented our ability to enhance our programs and services even further.

Last year, we presented our new logo, that of the resilient common Chickadee. As I noted then, this small Chickadee is a constant reminder to both the Board and staff of why we exist as an organization - not for ourselves but for those whose journey we share. This is our North Star, our promise.

Yet our common Chickadee serves as another reminder - that of possibilities - a future in which communities are free of sexual and gender-based violence. For those who come to us in need both present and future, and to communities both present and future - know that this, also, is fundamentally and inextricably tied to our North Star.

Respectfully,

Claudia Newman
Chair of the Board of Directors





Message from ORCC's Executive Director

ORCC's Deep 'Roots' and Varied 'Routes' Toward a Vision of Communities Free of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence.

In 1974, a small but determined group of women founded ORCC to address the pervasive impacts of sexual violence in our community. It is thanks to the hard work, vision, and dedication over the many years by the ORCC Board, team, partners, advocates, and the broader community that – five decades later – ORCC continues to provide much-needed supports to those with lived experience of sexual and/or gender-based violence in our community.

Although sexual violence has remained a prevalent issue in our community before ORCC's inception, the way it manifests and how we have come to understand and address it have shifted significantly over the years. Further, the context in which service providers like the ORCC operate today is vastly different than years ago. Today, we are currently seeing record levels of violence, including sexism, racism, transphobia, poverty, and housing insecurity. In addition to addressing these forms of violence, community organizations like ORCC face ongoing cuts to social services, scarce funding, and increasingly complex needs in the communities we serve.

In light of this shifting context and the challenges we see today, we at ORCC have sought to deepen our roots in our community to foster a community of care. This year, the ORCC team is furthering its learning journey of anti-oppressive approaches and embedding them across ORCC operations and services. This journey of leaning and unlearning has led to the development of an initial framework for a community co-created anti-oppressive resource aimed at supporting frontline service providers. In addition to our individual and group counselling supports and service navigation offered virtually and in-person around the city, this route has also compelled us to implement additional forms of supports for survivors that complement conventional counselling approaches. This includes the piloting of movement-based, art, and land-based healing modalities— supports that are ultimately intended to broaden our reach, making our services widely accessible to everyone with lived experience of sexual and gender-based violence in the Ottawa region.

Message from the ORCC's Executive Director (continued)

The route we have taken to adopting an anti-oppressive lens has also informed our approaches to ongoing community engagement, partnerships, and participation at community tables and coalitions to better understand the needs of the community we represent. With support across the sector and strategic leadership from the Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women (OCTEVAW), ORCC has prioritized community-building and has participated in numerous advocacy efforts across municipal, provincial, and national levels to strengthen coordination across our sector and to bolster promising avenues for lasting long-term systemic change.

And finally, this year marks another important milestone for ORCC and for me personally. For the past four years, I have worked alongside a powerhouse group of Indigenous women. As the MMIWG2S+ Urban Indigenous Action Group, we wrote the Urban Indigenous chapter of the National Action Plan for the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals (MMIWG2S+). Although my term with the group has ended this year, I will carry forward the knowledge, wisdom, and objectives into my work at ORCC, continuing our commitment to decolonial approaches in community-building, advocacy, and service delivery. A heartfelt Chi Miigwetch to this group for incredibly powerful work to date and certainly more to come.

As we commemorate the decades-long path we have travelled and look to the road ahead, we remain mindful of the paths we have taken and the ones we have yet to explore. As Claudia, ORCC's Board Chair noted in her statement earlier, we at ORCC tend to draw heavily on transportation metaphors — be it

planes, trains, or by foot — they are used to emphasize the varied routes we have taken over the years to meet the shifting and growing needs of the community. Although today looks different than years ago, our deep rooted and unwavering commitment to ending sexual and gender-based violence in our community remains the same. I am deeply grateful for the dedication and passion of our team, our partners, and the community who have supported us along this path to reach this milestone. Together, we can create a world where sexual and gender-based violence is a thing of the past; a world where services like those provided by ORCC are no longer needed.

Thank you for sharing in this journey alongside us.

Candice Shaw,
Executive Director, ORCC



Meet Our Team



LEADERSHIP TEAM



CANDICE SHAW
Executive Director



MADELINE MC MAHON
Director,
Finance & Operations



JANATH VESNA
Director of Programs

OPERATIONS TEAM



MEG SINCLAIR
Knowledge Translation &
Content Development Lead



ROSELIN DIXON
Community Outreach &
Communications Lead



ELIZABETH WILLIAMS
Finance & Operations
Coordinator

COUNSELLING TEAM



CARON CUFF
Service Navigator



ODERA ODENIGBO
Registered
Psychotherapist



ZAHARA SHEIKH
Registered Social
Worker (RSW) and
Psychotherapist



VALERIE WATERS
Registered Psychotherapist
(Qualifying)

**For inquiries regarding counselling,
please contact us:**

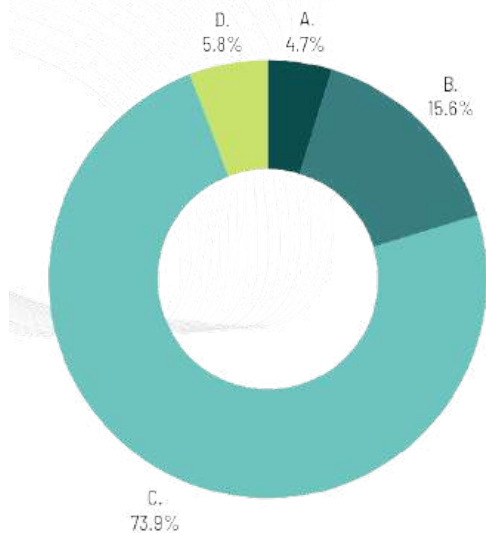
Phone: 613-562-2334 ext.105

Email: counselling@orcc.net

Empowering Our Purpose: A Look At This Year's Funding

ORCC is deeply rooted in the strength of our community and the dedicated teams within our organization, all working together to support people who have experienced sexual and gender-based violence. Our mission relies on the generosity of our donors and funders, whose contributions—whether new or longstanding—are the backbone of our efforts. Our financial summary of ORCC's 2023-24 fiscal year is a testament to the cumulative support that helps to sustain our work.

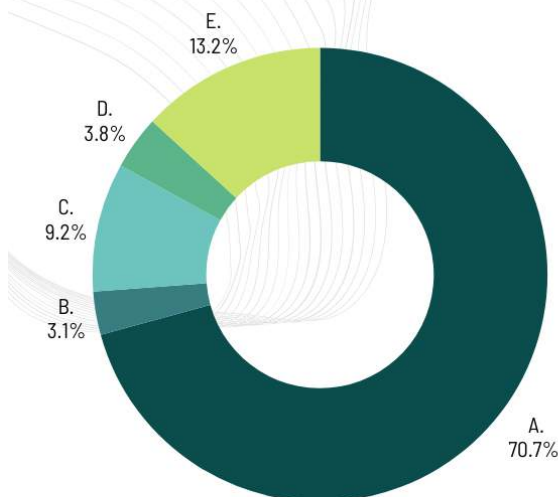
REVENUE



- A. Donations & Special Events - \$54, 873
- B. Grants from other organizations - \$180, 849
- C. Government funding - \$858, 923
- D. All other revenue - \$67, 680

Total Revenue: \$1,162,325

EXPENSE



- A. Salaries & Benefits - \$814, 071
- B. Service Delivery Partnerships - \$35, 608
- C. Professional Fees - \$105, 567
- D. Travel, Professionals Development & Program costs - \$43, 968
- E. Administration Expenses - \$151,773

Total Expense: \$1,150,987

It Takes A Community: Fundraising Highlights

The #SayItWithACard Campaign



In late November 2023, we launched the #SayItWithACard fundraising campaign for the second year in a row. Over a four-week period, we harnessed the power of social media to share impactful stories and vital information, encouraging our community to support survivors by sending virtual gift cards, mailing physical gift cards, or making direct donations through our website, www.orcc.net.

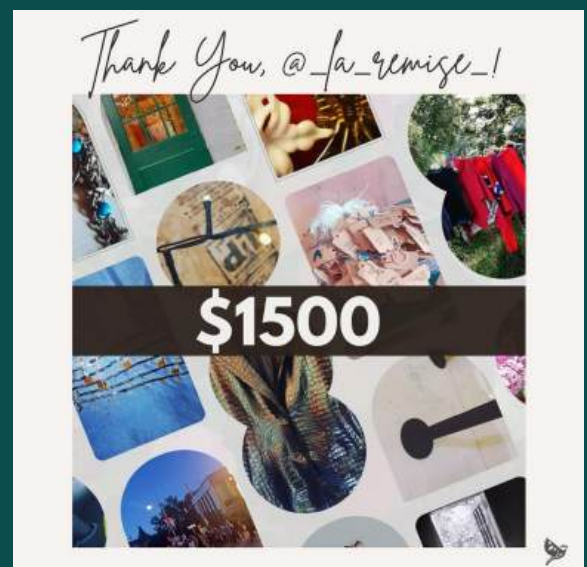
Thanks to the generosity of our donors, survivors received essential daily necessities, gained increased access to critical support services, and experienced the care of a stronger, more connected community. Every contribution made a meaningful difference, helping us continue our mission to empower and uplift those impacted by sexual and gender-based violence.

La Remise Shows that Giving Never Goes Out of Style

It can feel challenging to adequately convey gratitude when faced with wonderful acts of generosity, but the team at La Remise truly deserves a special thank you! On June 9, 2023, La Remise announced on Instagram the launch of a series of pop-up events throughout the summer, offering a curated selection of clothing and other beautiful items. All proceeds from these sales were generously donated to the ORCC.

Through their incredible fundraising efforts, \$1,500 was raised in support of ORCC's mission. This generous contribution will directly help individuals in our community as they navigate their healing journey from sexual and gender-based violence.

We extend our deepest appreciation to La Remise for their unwavering support. We are excited about the potential for future collaborations that will continue to create lasting change in our community.



Relic Piercing & Tattoo Hosts Fundraiser to Support Programming & Services at ORCC



On Sunday, March 24, 2024, Relic Piercing & Tattoo joined the global Still Not Asking for It (SNAFI) Annual Tattoo Flash Fundraiser to raise money in support of the Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre (ORCC). SNAFI is a collective of tattoo artists and advocates dedicated to fostering safer practices in the tattoo industry while supporting organizations working to prevent sexual violence and assist survivors.

Founded in Brooklyn in 2015, SNAFI has grown into a global event, with participating studios across multiple cities contributing to causes that support survivors of sexual and gender-based violence. This year, the team at Relic, led by co-owners Greg Fischer and Keri Bijoux, and joined by artist Heather Bisailion, created special tattoo designs for the fundraiser. Their participation marked their commitment to community collaboration and supporting ORCC's mission.

Keri emphasized the importance of community in their work: "Gender-based violence impacts all of us in some way, so doing something positive in Ottawa feels really important. This event helps us build connections with clients who might not otherwise feel comfortable coming into a tattoo studio."

For many survivors, body art can be an empowering way to reclaim their bodies after trauma, and Relic's team worked to create a welcoming and supportive environment. Greg, Keri, and Heather ensure that clients are comfortable by removing barriers, establishing clear communication, and offering designs that emphasize positive messaging and strength. ORCC deeply appreciates the ongoing support from community partners like Relic Piercing & Tattoo. Their dedication and the funds raised during the SNAFI event make a tangible difference in the lives of survivors, helping them move forward on their healing journeys.



Strides4ORCC Campaign: A Journey of Dedication and Impact

In 2023, Tamarack Ottawa Race Weekend Race Director Ian Fraser chose the ORCC as his charity for the Desjardins Charity Challenge. Pledging to run 10 kilometers daily from January 10 to May 23, Ian completed an incredible 1,054 kilometers to raise funds for our counselling programs and services.

The Strides4ORCC campaign kicked off in Ottawa with Ian and our Executive Director Candice Shaw meeting at the Women's Monument. From there, Ian partnered with various ORCC team members, including Meg Sinclair, ORCC's Knowledge Translation & Content Development Lead, in Pembroke and Roselin Dixon, ORCC's Community Outreach & Communications Lead, in Toronto, where they connected with Chix Run the Six. Additional stops with running groups in Peterborough and Cornwall rounded out the campaign's five-city journey.

Every step of the campaign highlighted the importance of supporting people who have experienced sexual and gender-based violence, making Ian's commitment both a physical and symbolic challenge.

During the Tamarack Race Weekend Health and Fitness Expo, our team was met with an outpouring of support. Visitors shared stories of resilience, underscoring the ongoing need for the services that ORCC provides.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Ian Fraser for his incredible dedication and for making Strides4ORCC a success for the second consecutive year. We also deeply appreciate every individual who contributed or raised funds in support of during the event.





Counselling Services: Inspiring Progress

Between 2023 and 2024, we proudly welcomed four exceptional professionals to ORCC's Counselling Team: Caron Cuff, Service Navigator; Odera Odenigbo, Registered Psychotherapist; Zahara Sheikh, Registered Social Worker; and Valerie Waters, Registered Psychotherapist – Qualifying. Each brings invaluable expertise, enriching our programs and deepening the support we offer to survivors in our community.



Building Hope Together: ORCC's Ongoing Collaboration with Cornerstone

ORCC proudly continues its long-standing partnership with Cornerstone, providing vital support to residents each week. Every Friday, an ORCC counsellor, often joined by a placement student, offers drop-in counselling and psychoeducational programming. Residents consistently share how much they value this time, looking forward to the meaningful activities and the chance to connect with a counsellor—finding both the engagement and the support profoundly impactful.

Empowering Healing and Growth at OCDC

At the Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre (OCDC), ORCC facilitates weekly psychoeducational sessions for individuals in the two women's dorms. Attendance is voluntary, and we consistently reach full capacity, with a blend of returning participants and new attendees who are drawn by the program's reputation. These sessions create a vital space for learning, reflection, and connection, covering topics such as consent, reclaiming intimacy after violence, and nurturing self-care. Each week, we foster an environment of healing, where participants take active steps in their personal journeys towards empowerment and resilience.



Counselling Services: Inspiring Progress (continued)

2564

number of individual counselling sessions both virtually and in-person from
April 1, 2023 - March 31, 2024

13

in-person art-based healing sessions were
hosted from April 1, 2023 - March 31, 2024

29

psychoeducation/processing sessions both in-person
and virtual from April 1, 2023 - March 31, 2024

Calls received by ORCC's 24/7 Crisis Line



583

Texts received by ORCC's Chat + Text Support Line

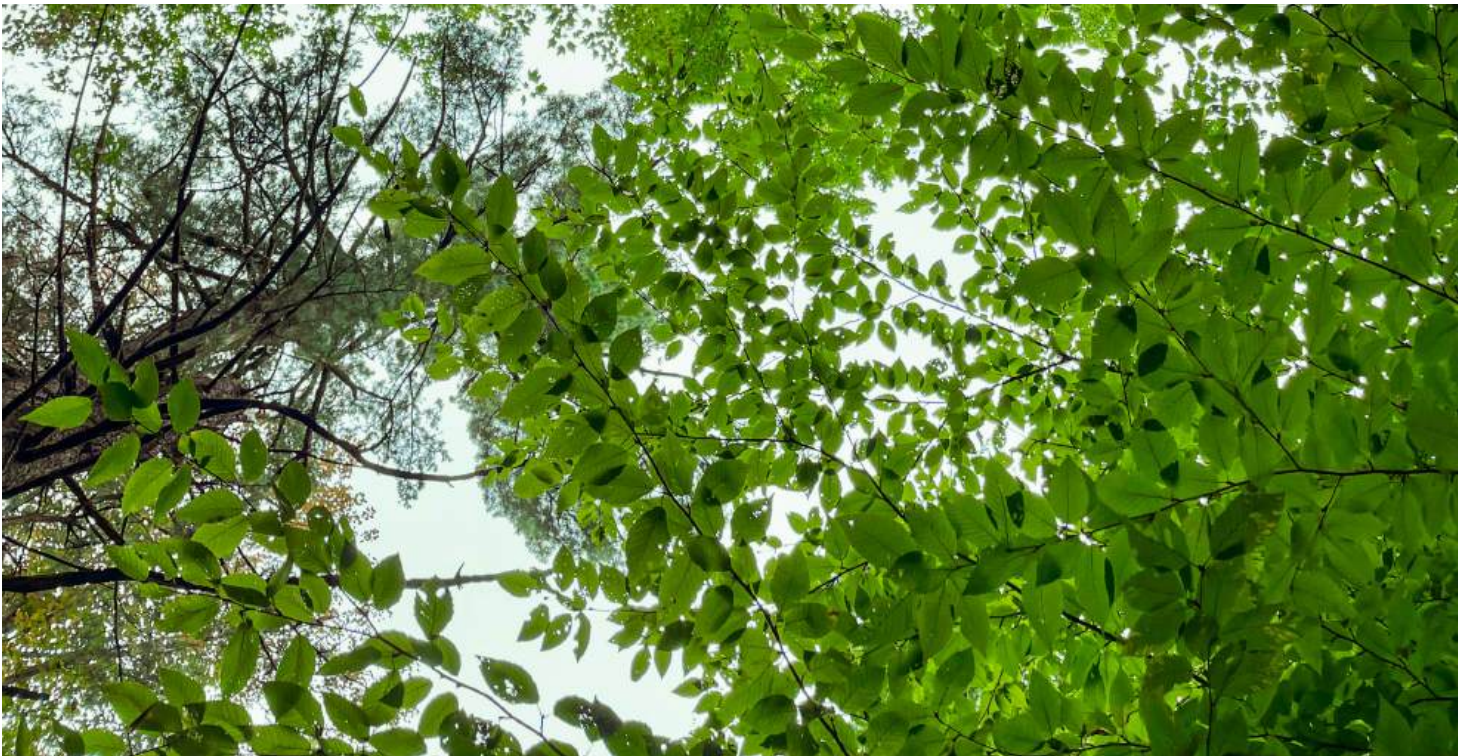
326



Note: Tracking of text chats started in Q2 of the
2023-24 Fiscal Year



New Resources & Collaborative Efforts



Launching ORCC's Online Community Resource Page: A Vital Tool for Survivors and Supporters

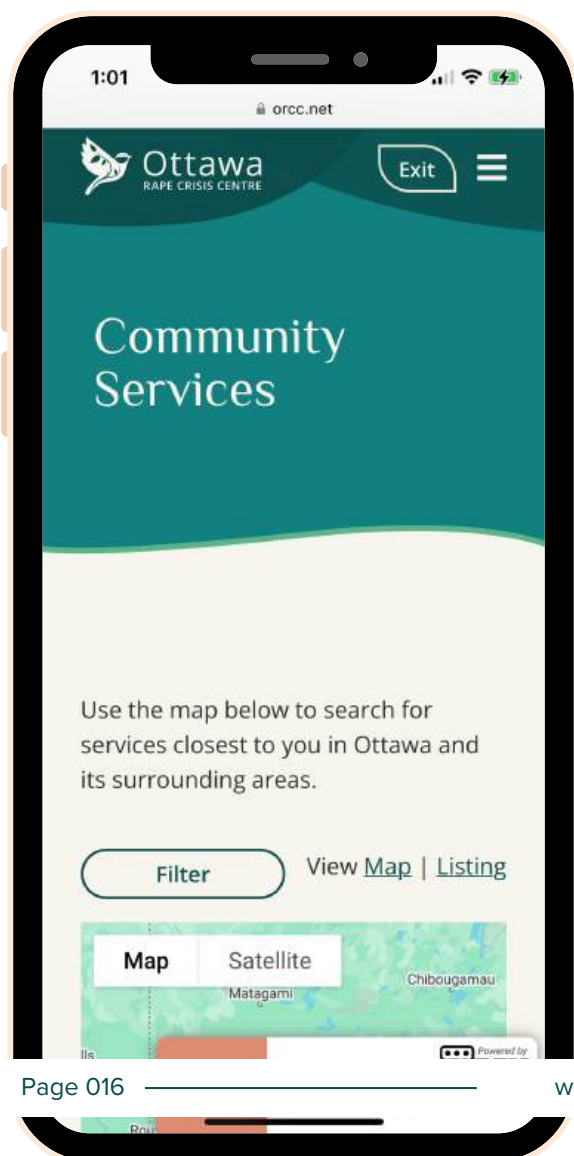
Last fiscal year, ORCC made a significant leap forward in our mission to support survivors of sexual and gender-based violence with the launch of our new Community Resource Page. This essential tool, accessible through the “Get Help” option on our website’s main menu, empowers survivors, their families, and supporters to easily connect with vital services in Ottawa and the surrounding areas.

Navigating the complexities of healing from trauma can feel overwhelming, and finding the right services can be a challenge. Our Community Resource Page was designed to simplify this process by offering a user-friendly platform where visitors can search for and filter services based on specific needs. Whether someone is seeking healthcare, community

supports, shelter/housing, or help with substance use, this resource provides access to a wide array of programs and organizations dedicated to supporting survivors.

We are committed to ensuring that every individual who visits our site has a seamless and empowering experience. This page represents our ongoing dedication to making critical resources more accessible and fostering a sense of community for those in need of care and support.

The ORCC Community Resource Page is just the beginning. As we continue to grow, we are constantly seeking ways to enhance our offerings, ensuring that our services remain relevant and responsive to the evolving needs of the community.



The Many Benefits of the Community Services Page Include:

- Access to a comprehensive list of supports at any time, from anywhere. This is especially beneficial for those who may not have the ability or feel ready to reach out for help directly through traditional channels.
- The filtering options allow users to quickly narrow down services to those most relevant to their circumstances. This saves time and reduces the stress of sifting through unrelated resources.
- Holistic support addressing many of the intersecting challenges site visitors may be facing —from housing and healthcare to substance use and community supports.
- Dynamic and up-to-date information, ensuring that site visitors have access to current services and resources as they evolve.
- Self-guided navigation that empower people who have experienced GBV to take control of their healing journey at their own pace.



Building Bridges to End Human Trafficking: Insights from ORCC's 2024 Rural Symposium

On March 19, 2023, nearly 80 participants from various rural organizations across Eastern Ontario gathered both online and in person at the Carleton Place Collective Inc. for a symposium hosted by the ORCC. This event highlighted our ongoing engagement with community organizations in the region, particularly in anti-human trafficking efforts.

Recognizing that human trafficking is deeply rooted in systemic and structural inequalities, we have been working to develop comprehensive strategies that address these underlying causes. Since our inaugural symposium in 2023, we have identified several key areas of focus, including housing, mental and physical health supports, drug policy reform, and guaranteed basic income. These insights have informed the creation of a collaborative Action Plan framework aimed at fostering coordinated, systemic responses to human trafficking.

The 2024 symposium was a platform for powerful discussions led by ORCC's Knowledge Translator and Content Development Lead, Meg Sinclair, and Community Builder and Consultant, Kayla Spagnoli. Together, they facilitated conversations on how we can mobilize collective efforts to tackle the root causes of human trafficking. We are deeply grateful to all who contributed to this hybrid event, as their lived experiences and insights have enriched our understanding of the unique challenges faced by rural communities.

ORCC remains dedicated to building on the momentum generated by these symposiums and strengthening our partnerships to bring an end to human trafficking. By working together, we can create lasting change in our communities and advance toward a future free of trafficking.

One key outcome from the symposium is the release of the [Anti-Human Trafficking Rural Symposium report](#), now available on our website.

Strengthening Connections through Community Outreach

As we reflect on the 2023-24 fiscal year, we are filled with deep gratitude for the opportunities we've had to connect and collaborate with our community. Your unwavering dedication to our shared mission has fortified our collective efforts to support and uplift those who have experienced sexual and gender-based violence in Ottawa and beyond.

There is wisdom in the African proverb, "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." This past year has reaffirmed the power of partnership, as we have worked hand in hand to create pathways for change, resilience, and hope for so many.

Looking ahead, we are inspired by what the future holds. Though challenges and milestones remain unknown, we are excited to continue this journey alongside you. Together, we can amplify our impact, creating safer, more inclusive spaces for all. It is your continued commitment that propels us forward, and we are eager to see what we can accomplish, united in purpose and vision.



Thank You for Your Support!

Our Team

ORCC Board of Directors

- Claudia Newman, Chair
- Jeanette Doucet, Co-Chair
- Kayla Cavanagh, Treasurer
- Mary Masarella, Secretary
- Emma Pratt, Member-at-large
- Shannon Satov, Member-at-large
- Megan Simon, Member-at-large
- Sharon Rouleau, Member-at-large
- Mary Witherspoon, Member-at-large

ORCC Staff

- Candice Shaw, Executive Director
- Janath Vesna, Director of Programs
- Madeline McMahon, Director of Finance & Operations
- Elizabeth Williams, Finance & Operation Coordinator
- Meg Sinclair, Knowledge Translation & Content Development Lead
- Roselin Dixon, Community Outreach & Communications Lead
- Odera Odenigbo, Registered Psychotherapist
- Zahara Sheikh, Registered Social Worker
- Valerie Waters, Registered Psychotherapist (Qualifying)
- Caron Cuff, Service Navigator

Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the following funders. | Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre tient à remercier sincèrement les bailleurs de fonds suivants de leur soutien financier.



Women and Gender Equality Canada

Femmes et Égalité des genres Canada

Ontario Trillium Foundation



Fondation Trillium de l'Ontario

An agency of the Government of Ontario
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario



Canadian Red Cross

Financial contribution from



Public Health Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé publique du Canada



United Way East Ontario

Funded by the Government of Canada

Canada

