



**BIG HILL HAVEN**  
A SAFE TOMORROW STARTS TODAY.

# Annual Report

## 2021-2022



# TRADITIONAL LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

*Big Hill Haven Acknowledges the Traditional  
Lands upon which we live, work and play*

Big Hill Haven is located on Treaty 7 territory, traditional lands of the Stoney Nakoda peoples of the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley bands, the Tsuu T'ina, the Niisitapi (Blackfoot) peoples of Siksika, Piikani and Kainai Band. We also respectfully acknowledge that we are on the homelands of the Metis Nation within Region 3.

We recognize the resiliency, successes and teachings of Indigenous peoples and we honour the courage and strength of Indigenous women. We honour them as life givers and caregivers. We honour and learn from their consistent strength and remarkable endurance. We are grateful for the traditional Knowledge Keepers and Elders who are still with us today and those who have gone before us.

We recognize this land as an act of truth and reconciliation and express our deepest gratitude to those whose territory we reside on or are visiting.



# MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR



In November of 2021, after the Past Chair, Valerie Gilmore, completed her two-year term in this role, I was honoured with the appointment as the new Chair of the Board of Big Hill Haven. I want to recognize and applaud my predecessor for her ceaseless commitment to this organization and our community and the many ways that she has impacted this work. Her accomplishments during her term as Chair were many, but most notably she led the opening of Big Hill Haven's first shelter space and rebranded the organization to set it on a path toward improved visibility in our community and a more defined voice and purpose; both achievements which continue to have an incredible impact on those whom we serve and support.

As we continue to navigate the needs of clients and the public, in a post-pandemic world, the Board of Big Hill Haven has remained firmly committed to advancing the work of the organization while taking steps to ensure long-term sustainability. During this last fiscal year, the Board brought on Big Hill Haven's first ever Executive Director, Wanda McGinnis. Wanda's expertise, passion and leadership made an immediate impact on both our operations and the culture of this organization. We look forward to shaping the future of Big Hill Haven in collaboration with her and are so very grateful for all that she brings to this society, the sector, and our community.

As we shift our focus to tomorrow, the Board remains solidified in our dedication to and gratitude for this incredible community. As we work with our partners, trusted advisors, and talented staff to ensure that we meet the ever-evolving needs of our clients and this sector, we ground ourselves in our shared belief that a safer tomorrow starts today.

**On behalf of the Board of Big Hill Haven, thank you for your support both past, present and in our shared future together.**

Yours Truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "J. Blanchet". The signature is stylized with a large, flowing "J" and a cursive "Blanchet".

Jenessa Blanchet

# MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



In January 2022, I was fortunate to join Big Hill Haven as Executive Director. I am humbled by those who make up the Big Hill Haven Board of Directors. They are an incredibly passionate and dedicated group, committed to the organizational vision, mission and values.

In the months since joining Big Hill Haven I have witnessed a brave expansion of emergency shelter services, a steadfast commitment to organizational sustainability, an honouring of community investment and a recognition of teamwork, focused on a relentless commitment to local families who need safe spaces. It is no surprise that the vision, mission, and values that guide the organization are reflected in every person who works, volunteers, and supports Big Hill Haven.

Exploring opportunities to be innovative, collaborative, and supportive, creates an organizational culture that empowers and inspires. These are important traits for an organization to embrace, particularly an organization committed to making the world safer for those experiencing abuse. Big Hill Haven is a forward-thinking organization committed to supporting families in the community in which they live.

**Thank you to our donors, partners, volunteers, and the Big Hill Haven team for all you do to make the community safer. I look forward to contributing to the ambitious goals of Big Hill Haven as we navigate a safer tomorrow for all.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Wanda McGinnis'.

Wanda McGinnis

# OUR IMPACT

**Big Hill Haven was founded on the following principles:**

**Vision:** Our community has ended family violence through supporting and empowering families

**Mission:** Big Hill Haven provides a safe place for women with or without children leaving domestic violence and empowers them to rebuild their lives by providing support services and advocacy. We lead our community in understanding the issues related to family violence in our community.

**Values:** Big Hill Haven employees and volunteers are committed to the following ethical values to carry out our mission: respect, integrity, inclusiveness, honesty, confidentiality, support, empathy, best practices, and safety.

Big Hill Haven has been offering support to women living in unsafe situations since 2018. The Outreach program honours the complexity of leaving an abusive relationship, while providing education, information, and support aimed at increasing safety. Risk assessments and safety plans are completed with each client and referrals and resources responsive to a client's unique needs are provided. Linking families to formal support networks that assist them is vital in decreasing isolation and risk associated with unhealthy and abusive relationships. Outreach supports increase opportunities for families to pursue lives free from abuse. Since the pandemic, calls for outreach supports have continued to increase.

While outreach programs have the capacity to support many families, emergency shelter spaces are necessary to support those facing imminent risk. In August 2020, Big Hill Haven opened an emergency shelter space. Due to significant demand for space Big Hill Haven increased our emergency shelter capacity in February 2022. Families reaching out to Big Hill Haven are reporting increased risk and escalating violence in their homes. Additional shelter space has allowed us to support these families.

Big Hill Haven's emergency shelter model reflects innovative sheltering practices, incorporating post pandemic learnings. The model limits communal spaces, which were strained under traditional sheltering practices during the pandemic. Clients are supported using a trauma and violence informed framework that is client centered and strengths based.

In addition to family violence programs and supports, each family is provided basic necessities, including: food, clothing, toys, dishes, cookware, sheets, towels, and access to community referrals and resources. Women with or without children are offered shelter space for up to 30 days. Given Big Hill Haven's current funding limitations, those living in Cochrane and area remain the highest priority.

During their stay, clients receive intensive support, including limited childcare made possible through a vital collaboration with the Boys and Girls Club. Additional supports include:

1. risk assessment
2. safety planning
3. crisis support
4. abuse education
5. emotional support
6. connection to community referrals and resources
7. court support
8. basic needs support
9. system navigation
10. community network support

Big Hill Haven continues to work closely with community partners, including RCMP and Victim Services to ensure the community response to family violence reflects individual risk factors and supports effective safety planning strategies. The collaborative community response ensures supports and services are available and accessible to those fleeing violence in Cochrane and area.

*Big Hill Haven continues to show incredible leadership, dedication and innovation to address the complex issue of family violence. The Supporting the Supporters workshop is an incredible program that has raised the awareness and skill of informal supporters to recognize and respond to family violence.*

*I have so much respect for you and the work you are doing. Big Hill Haven is making an incredible difference in the community!*

*-Kim Krawek Manager FCSS*

Due to current limitations, Big Hill Haven programs are available during business hours with limited after hour access. After hour requests are directed to the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter 24-hour crisis line. Big Hill Haven programs and supports are available during the following hours:

Monday - 8:30 - 4:30  
Tuesday - 8:30am - 4:30pm  
Wednesday - 8:30am - 4:30pm  
Thursday - 8:30 am - 4:30pm  
Friday - 8:30am - 4:30pm  
Saturday - closed  
Sunday - closed

During 2021/2022 Big Hill Haven noted an increase in calls for support, with higher numbers of elders seeking supports. Big Hill Haven is working collaboratively with community partners to improve supports for seniors in our community.



**104**

**Individuals were supported  
by Big Hill Haven Programs  
and Services**



**299**

**Nights of safety provided in  
Big Hill Haven emergency  
shelter spaces**



**69**

**Children who are safer  
because their caregivers  
are connected to Big Hill  
Haven programs and  
services**

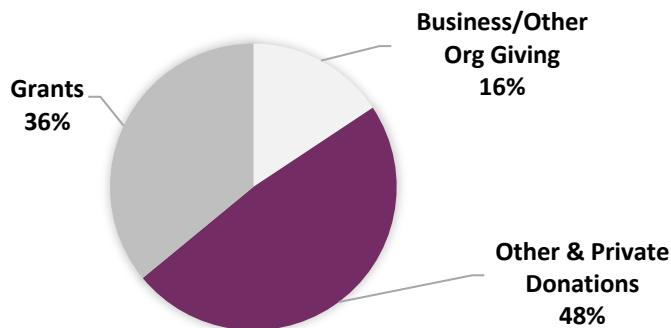
# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

*For the fiscal year April 1, 2021, to March 31, 2022*

Revenues were \$461K and expenditures were \$227K, resulting in a \$234K surplus predominantly the result of unrestricted giving from corporate and private donors.

Revenues were up \$90K or 24% over prior year, due to a \$66K increase in grants to fund expanded services and emergency shelter and a \$24K increase in private and corporate giving.

## REVENUE



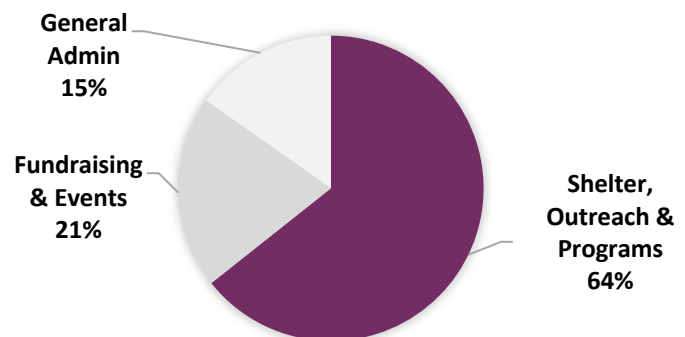
### FUNDING SOURCES

|                             |           |
|-----------------------------|-----------|
| • Business/Other Org Giving | \$72,339  |
| • Grants                    | \$165,947 |
| • Other & Private Donations | \$223,113 |

|        |           |
|--------|-----------|
| TOTAL: | \$461,399 |
|--------|-----------|

Expenditures in the year increased by \$57K or 33.5% over prior year as part of costs related to expanding shelter space, staffing and office space to meet client and organizational needs.

## EXPENDITURES



### FUNDING USES

|                                |           |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| • General Admin                | \$34,308  |
| • Fundraising & Events         | \$46,435  |
| • Shelter, Outreach & Programs | \$146,318 |

|        |           |
|--------|-----------|
| TOTAL: | \$227,061 |
|--------|-----------|

Big Hill Haven maintains a focus on sustainability and in the absence of contractual funding, aims to hold reserves to cover operating costs for future periods to ensure continuity of service for our clients and the community.



# LOOKING TO THE FUTURE



We are a responsive and growth focused organization firmly committed to our community and the work that we do within and beyond it. With challenging times behind, and an unwritten future on the horizon, we are dedicated to incorporating past experience with sector wide learnings, community consultations, and stakeholder feedback to develop a comprehensive and sustainable plan for the future in an ever-evolving environment.

We have seen how quickly the world can change and how quickly the needs of clients and our community can shift, expand and diversify.

We have seen how environmental factors can have a significant impact on affordable housing and the strain on community services and supports.

And we have also seen how an incredible community such as this, can open arms, hearts, and doors to support those in need.

We are exceptionally optimistic for the future of Big Hill Haven and the remarkable direction that we are stewarding this organization toward and look forward to collaborating with our community and partners to achieve a safer tomorrow for all.

# OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Jenessa Blanchet

Joy Steppacher

Taylor Kawaguchi

Jeff Brunner

Tracey Radloff

Debbie Leah

Jacquie Matechuk

Sandra Gateman

Margaret Van Tighem

Wanda McGinnis

Board Chair

Vice Chair

Secretary

Director

Director

Director

Director

Director

Honorary Board Member & Co-Founder

Ex-Officio Member & Executive Director

*We believe a  
safer tomorrow  
starts today...*



# THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

Each family that seeks the support of Big Hill Haven benefits from the generosity of donors in our community. We could not offer the supports and services that keep families safe without the commitment of the community and their compassionate support of each other.

We are humbled by the confidence our supporters place in us. We are committed to ensuring that families in need of safety understand how important they are and how much the community cares about them.

Each of you is an integral part of Big Hill Haven's journey, and together, we will continue to pursue our vision where our community has ended family violence through supporting and empowering families.

*The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members.*

*-Coretta Scott King*





# **BIG HILL HAVEN**

**A SAFE TOMORROW STARTS TODAY.**

[bighillhaven.com](http://bighillhaven.com)

Cochrane Women's Emergency Shelter Society

Charitable Registration #709526099 RR0001

Box 1544, Cochrane, AB, T4C 1B5