



YWCA Peterborough Haliburton 2023-2028 Strategic Plan

A Vision For The Future

A Message from our Board President and Executive Director

A strategic plan is more than a set of goals or a list of benchmarks. It is a description of who we are as an organization, and a pathway to where we hope to be in the future. That vision for the future is to help women and their children create a life where they can experience more than the basic human right of physical safety – where they can feel free to be themselves and carve out a life of their own choosing.

We are thrilled to share our new strategic plan with the public, on behalf of our Board of Directors and our staff. It is a time of significant renewal and growth for the YWCA, both here in Peterborough-Haliburton and for the organization nationally and globally.

After emerging from the most stringent restrictions of the pandemic, and facing the increased challenges for gender equity and the safety of women, we are at an important point of transition alongside fellow agencies that deal with gender-based violence.

Amid shortages of funding for service organizations, as well as shortages of affordable housing and food, we must be more mindful than ever of our mandate and mission, and ways we can continue to serve women in our community as needs rise while resources diminish. Yet we intentionally choose not to operate from a mindset of scarcity, instead planning and thinking creatively and openly about how to achieve our goals. This is where a well-defined strategic plan can serve us most, by helping us to keep thinking outside of existing lines and focusing on the future we desire. We're grateful to all of our supporters and partners for walking beside us on this path.


Sherri Ireland, Board President


Kim Dolan, Executive Director

Our Vision for the Future of the YWCA in Peterborough and Haliburton

**YWCA cultivates a just, equitable,
inclusive community where all
women, children, and gender diverse
people can thrive.**

Our vision for the future of our organization is centered on our role in helping to create a community that matches our values. This new statement references justice, equity, and inclusion with specific intention of illustrating some of these values: first and foremost, that members of our community should be able to expect and demand that their human rights and freedoms will be respected, including freedom from violence and abuse. We also believe in equitable access to resources, meaning that services and opportunities will be made available to those people who need them most and who lack access to other resources. Inclusion is a pillar of our values, and we work to make sure people of all backgrounds, abilities, ethnicities and belief systems are able to benefit from our services. We have also referenced gender-diverse people to reaffirm that all woman-identified individuals are welcome in all of our spaces, including trans women.

Our Mission Statement

YWCA Peterborough Haliburton exists to help women and children in our communities live safely, eat well and know satisfaction and joy in their daily lives. We offer shelter, educational programming, counselling, and advocacy, in collaboration with the community and women themselves. The YWCA knows that its fiscal management, community reputation and most importantly, valued staff are the basis for these trusting relationships.

Although the core of our organization is based on emergency shelter and safe spaces to keep women from immediate harm, our mission goes far beyond physical safety. We need to meet women where they are at in their journey through the experience of gender-based violence or abuse, whether they simply need a listening ear free from judgment or a safe place to talk about their relationship, or if they need more active and expert support from professionals who can help them navigate complex court systems, housing and financial arrangements, or physical and mental health issues. And we are committed to the policies and best practices that will keep those who work with us and for us safe.

Our Commitment to Reconciliation

We begin by acknowledging that YWCA Peterborough Haliburton is located on Nogojiwanong, meaning place at the end of the rapids. This is Treaty 20 Michi Saagiig territory and in the traditional territory of the Michi Saagiig and Chippewa Nations, collectively known as the Williams Treaties First Nations, which include: Curve Lake, Hiawatha, Alderville, Scugog Island, Rama, Beausoleil, and Georgina Island First Nations. We respectfully acknowledge the Williams Treaties First Nations as the stewards and caretakers of these lands and waters in perpetuity, maintaining its health and integrity for generations to come.

Our organization's historical underpinnings are undeniably settler, white and Christian. We recognize the brutal colonialization that Indigenous Peoples have endured as genocide. We are committed to engaging in this work in meaningful ways that challenge colonialism and its many associated harms.

Decolonizing ourselves and our organization is work that will take generations, but we believe we must do everything we can in the time that we have. We question our past ways of leadership and authority, and look to Indigenous ways of interacting in community for guidance.

Inclusivity and Anti-Oppression

YWCA Peterborough Haliburton recognizes that systems of oppression and discrimination mutually reinforce one another. It is at these points of intersection where people are most vulnerable, and oppression is strongest. We acknowledge that the barriers women can face, including racism, classism, ableism, misogyny, and colonialism, require a sophisticated understanding of anti-racism /anti-oppression principles. We are committed to operating with a solid awareness about our individual privilege and an intersectional focus on systemic oppression in the lives of women and children.

Our primary definition of the people we serve is based on an inclusive approach. We include all women-identified people in our use and understanding of "woman" and "women," regardless of the sex they were assigned at birth. Our goal is to make sure that all gender-diverse people – who have been excluded and oppressed by nature of their identity, and who are more vulnerable to gender-based violence than cisgender people – will feel safe and welcome in all YWCA spaces. We also consciously train our staff to be knowledgeable and welcoming to people of all ethnic and religious backgrounds, so that we are not re-traumatizing people at vulnerable times or placing invisible barriers between our services and those who need them most.

Our Strategic Directions for 2023-2028

Over the next 5 years, YWCA Peterborough Haliburton will...

1. **Support women navigating change and transitions**
2. **Strengthen external relationships**
3. **Drive transformation**
4. **Centre collaborative care**
5. **Lead for a dynamic future**

In broad terms, these five strategic directions represent our path forward for the organization. In many cases they also represent the work we do today, and have done over the decades since the YWCA was founded. Our plan for the next 5 years is to further define and clarify what these goals mean to us, how each segment of our organization can embody and implement them, and how we can reach out to partners and work in a more collaborative way.

Our goal is not to be all things to all people – we are one of many social service agencies in our community and region, so our best work lies in clearly outlining our role within this complex network and partnering effectively with those whose expertise lies in complementary areas. The following sections outline each strategic direction in more detail.

Our Strategic Directions for 2023-2028

We will support women navigating change and transitions, resulting in communities where women can thrive.

We will advocate for women and girls

The YWCA listens to women in Peterborough and Haliburton who are dealing with changes in their lives and making choices about their futures. The social and political environments around us are changing, and women are feeling a much higher impact on their safety, economic security, and access to basic services. The YWCA will learn from and adapt its programming and services to stay responsive to women's needs. We will focus on supporting women to find safety, reach employment goals, work toward home ownership, and achieve financial stability. We value the diversity of knowledge, perspectives and problem-solving that a wider range of partners bring to our work. To support women at all stages of their journey, the YWCA will adapt and expand its services to reflect women's priorities and ambitions.

We will use data-driven learning and expand services rooted in the social determinants of health

We will focus on developing a data-based vision for the future, particularly in safety and housing

Our Strategic Directions for 2023-2028

We will bring humility, authenticity, and hard work to our relationships

We will strengthen external relationships, resulting in a collaborative community with a clear understanding of roles.

The YWCA is a collaborative service provider, working within a wider network of social service organizations in Peterborough and Haliburton. We actively engage with partners, donors, organizations, and individuals working to address violence, poverty and oppression. Our commitment to reconciliation and inclusion shapes our operational decisions, our collaborative approach and our responsibility to amplify marginalized voices. We will use our position in the community to speak up, reach out, and expand the tables where we sit, mindfully redefining our role to best support women.

We will centre reconciliation and model anti-racist, anti-oppressive practices

We will cultivate broader partnerships and engage new people

We will continually reflect on our role in collaborations, sharing leadership

Our Strategic Directions for 2023-2028

We will drive transformation, resulting in an agile foundation to pursue ambitious goals.

We will create an organizational culture of leadership and mentorship

The YWCA seeks out connections and resources for sustainable, expansive operations. We reject scarcity and fear-based claims that we cannot provide safety and stability for everyone in our community. We collect and use reliable data to make evidence-based decisions. We bring curiosity and open-mindedness to hard challenges, disrupting outdated thinking. We cultivate relationships with donors, funding partners, and board members to support future leadership.

We will act to strengthen the tools and opportunities available to women, and their confidence to advocate for themselves and their families and to take on leadership roles in the public and private sectors. The YWCA will drive this work, modeling approaches, building skills, and creating opportunities for women and girls to lead change. The YWCA will be proactive and ambitious about the future for women in Peterborough and Haliburton.

We will create environments where brave conversations are a norm, and gender bias is challenged

We will establish service benchmarks and integrate data collection and analysis across the organization

We will transition from responsive to proactive succession planning and funding diversification



Our Strategic Directions for 2023-2028

We will centre collaborative care, resulting in a healthy, inclusive organization that attracts staff and volunteers who seek bold change.

The YWCA treasures relationships as its greatest resource. We cultivate strong, genuine, caring relationships with women relying on our programs, partners in our community, and the staff and volunteers who are integral to our operations. We will strengthen and nurture communication across our organization. The YWCA commits to making the best use of our human, financial and reputational resources as a strategy of care and respect.

We will focus on retaining and attracting staff and volunteers into meaningful roles

We will develop and mentor staff as a succession strategy

We will create opportunities for community engagements

We will actively revisit our values in decision making

Our Strategic Directions for 2023-2028

We will lead for a dynamic future, resulting in a strong fiscal footing and stable governance to underpin transformative change.

We will explore governance models

The combination of economic pressures and pandemic-related change has led to uncertainty, general fatigue, shrinking budgets and service cuts across the social justice community. As we collectively transition out of this period, the YWCA will act with future-oriented leadership. The YWCA Board is revitalizing its membership with new, diverse voices. We commit to continuing this process of renewal, examining governance practices and cultivating a culture of accountable, engaged leadership. Many non-profit organizations face unstable financial prospects as funders, donors and economic forces adjust to new spending priorities. To navigate these changes, the board will support dynamic, sustainable funding as a foundation for transformative service delivery. We will create compelling opportunities for our community to support our mission in authentic and meaningful ways.

We will continue to recruit diverse board leadership through mentorship, outreach, and succession planning

We will cultivate an active board culture of curiosity, accountability and engaged decision making

We will pursue diverse, sustainable funding sources and deepen donor relationships



YWCA
PETERBOROUGH
HALIBURTON

How To Reach Us

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General Line: 705-286-1942

24 Hour Crisis Line

Toll-free call 1-800-461-7656 or text 705-991-0110

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