



Celebrating 33 Years of Service

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025



Our Values

& Guiding Principles

Value: Gender Equality

- Principle #1: Advocate for and support all individuals who identify as women.

Value: Reproductive Choice

- Principle #2: Uphold women's right to make reproductive choices.

Value: Self-Determination

- Principle #3: Recognize that each woman is her own greatest resource.

Value: Woman-Centered Approaches

- Principle #4: Acknowledge that every woman's response to trauma and violence is distinct.

Value: Non-Judgmental Practice

- Principle #5: Believe in a woman's strength to create positive changes in her life.

Value: Empowerment

- Principle #6: Differentiate between empowering someone and merely enabling them.

Value: Intersectionality

- Principle #7: Understand how various forms of oppression shape women's unique experiences of violence.

Value: Inclusivity

- Principle #8: Use empowering, inclusive, and respectful language.

Value: Safe Spaces

- Principle #9: Endeavor to create a welcoming, validating, accessible, and accepting environment.

Value: Systemic Change

- Principle #10: Recognize and accept responsibility for the power imbalances that arise from privilege in interactions with one another and service users.

Company Vision



A world free of oppression and violence for all women and children.

Company Mission



Sandgate Women's Shelter is dedicated to empowering all persons who identify as women and their children through safe shelter, resources, information and advocacy in order to eliminate violence in their lives.

A Message From

OUR CHAIR,
PRESIDENT

It is my honor to serve as Chair of the Board of Directors at Sandgate Women's Shelter and to continue the legacy of my mother, Ellen Sands, in whose memory the shelter was named. Sandgate stands as a lasting tribute to Ellen's life and values—a place where women and children can find safety, support, and hope.

As her daughter, I am very proud to carry forward this mission and to witness the impact Sandgate continues to have in York Region.

This past year has not been without its challenges. Sandgate has faced staff shortages, Board turnover, and significant organizational change. Yet through it all, our teams have remained focused and resilient. We have put in the work to stay on track and ensure that our services continue to meet the needs of the women and children who rely on us.

I am inspired by the outstanding achievements of our dedicated staff, who work tirelessly to advance our mission to end violence against women and children. I'm especially grateful for the opportunity to work alongside our Executive Director, Michelle Smith, and most recently our Interim Executive Director, Sadita Graham, whose leadership has been nothing short of transformative. Sadita has not only guided the organization through a period of transition with compassion and clarity, she has stabilized the agency, strengthened internal operations, and reinforced our commitment to service excellence. Her impact has been felt across every level of Sandgate, and we are deeply grateful for her dedication.

While Sandgate has faced challenges this year, we have remained steadfast in our commitment to the women and children we serve. Through resilience, teamwork, and a clear focus, we have continued to make meaningful progress on our three-year strategic priorities to provide safe shelter and transitional housing, deliver advocacy & support services and breaking cycles of violence through prevention-based programming.

One of our most exciting developments is the Traditional Housing Project. With architectural plans finalized and funding secured, we are on track to break ground in mid-2026, with a targeted completion date of mid-2028. This project will expand our capacity to provide safe shelter and transitional housing to women and children in need.

We are also proud to announce that the Ellen Sands Memorial Bursary will restart in 2026. This bursary provides financial support to a woman who have been assisted by Sandgate in pursuing post-secondary education or skills training. Honoring Ellen's memory and her belief in the power of education and independence, the bursary will help to empower women to build brighter futures for themselves and their children.

In the coming weeks, we are excited to resume programs at our Richmond Hill site, restoring essential services to families in our community. This reopening is a testament to our organizational resilience and the strength of our support systems—for both the women and children we serve and our dedicated staff. Our sincere gratitude goes out to the United Way of Greater Toronto, our planning consultants, architects, funders, and donors who make our work possible. Special thanks to our incredible staff and Board members for their tireless commitment to this important work.

As we move forward, we do so with an unwavering commitment to our feminist, anti-violence mission, while continuing to adapt to meet the evolving needs of women and children across York Region.

With warm regards,
Johanne Miceli

A Message From

OUR INTERIM,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It is an honour and a privilege to be serving as Sandgate's Interim Executive Director. We have collectively served 105 women and 102 children and responded to over 500 crisis calls.

The past year has been filled with many adversities, including the temporary closure of our south shelter and yet Sandgate remains a beacon of light to all who seek shelter from life's storms.

As we look forward to the future, we are focused more than ever on the reopening of our south shelter and strengthening our core foundations and philosophies of practice. Our team has endured many changes but demonstrate their resilience and commitment to care. We do this by showing up each day, ready to work, ready to help our women and children.

I would like to thank our donors, stakeholders and dedicated Board of Directors for their generosity, time and attention to Sandgate. To our staff team, thank you for continuing your journey with Sandgate. It is my hope that our time together will be made more fruitful by doing work that is far reaching and positively impactful. Thank you!

Sincerely,
Sadita Graham





Board of Directors

Johanne Miceli, Chair / President

Johanne is honored to serve on the Board of Directors at Sandgate Women's Shelter; an organization deeply rooted in her family's legacy. Sandgate was named in memory of Johanne's mother, Ellen Sands, who tragically lost her life to violence. The shelter stands as a lasting tribute to Ellen's values—a place where women and children can find safety, support, and hope.

A dedicated mother of three, Johanne brings a strong personal commitment to supporting survivors of domestic violence and the frontline teams who help women and children heal and rebuild their lives. With a professional background in communications, governance, and advocacy, she is passionate about advancing Sandgate's mission and contributing to its vision of "a world free of oppression and violence for all women and children."



Angelica Milu, Vice chair

Angie is an experienced strategic leader, passionate and dedicated to empowering women in need. With over 20 years' experience managing operations, including over a decade of entrepreneurial experience, she brings a unique perspective and a wealth of knowledge to our nonprofit women's shelter organization. With a positive and impactful mindset, she is ready to make a lasting difference in the community.

Ana-Maria Pivato, Treasurer

Ana-Maria is a Payroll Leadership Professional certified by the National Payroll Institute of Canada, with extensive expertise in accounting and global payroll management across various industries, bringing strong financial operations, compliance, and leadership skills to the board. Her lifelong passion for supporting vulnerable communities is demonstrated through 14 years as a dedicated World Vision sponsor and volunteer work with Charity Projects in the UK, reflecting her deep commitment to helping women and children in need of safety, family reunification, and advocating for refugees and newcomer immigrants. Ana-Maria is honored to serve on the board, where she continues making a positive impact and contributing to building stronger, more compassionate communities.





Tasha Caruso, Secretary

Tasha is a results-driven Senior Brand Manager with over 20 years' expertise in B2B marketing, communications, project-management and small business brand development and successfully orchestrates cross-functional initiatives that combine data-driven insights with strategic storytelling. Her extensive experiences will help strengthen Sandgate's visibility and impact in York Region.

Jeannine Rosenberg, Director

Jeannine has been a supporter in one capacity or another of Sandgate Women's Shelter for a number of years. Following a career in the Canadian Publishing industry she hopes to bring some of her marketing and publicity skills to the board in order to help broaden and strengthen Sandgate's profile with the public, stakeholders and supporters.



Carey Smith, Director

Carey is a dedicated advocate for women and families affected by domestic violence and crisis. With a professional background in insurance management and technology partnerships, she brings a unique blend of empathy, professionalism, and cultural sensitivity to her role on the board. Carey is committed to driving positive, impactful change through collaborative efforts and compassionate leadership.

Diana Peca, Director

Dynamic operations leader with a strong background in customer service and team management, currently serving as Branch Operations Manager at Kaycan Saint-Gobain. Recognized for building high-performing teams, streamlining branch operations, and achieving measurable results, including national recognition for customer satisfaction. Dedicated to fostering collaboration, operational excellence, and a customer-first culture. Adept at resolving complex issues, strengthening client relationships, and ensuring compliance with industry standards.



Together

We Make a Difference

Each year, we welcome hundreds of women and children to our shelters and serve hundreds more through our community programs. Because of our wonderful community and small business owners and their donations of products or third party events, such a difference is being made in the lives of these women and children who access our services. Sandgate Women's Shelter of York Region has been blessed by having so many supporters, and while we cannot acknowledge each one in this report, we're especially grateful to our funders who align with our vision of a world free of oppression and violence for all women and children.

Annual Impact Report

The outreach program offered by Sandgate goes beyond mere assistance, it embodies the spirit of empowerment, support, and inclusivity. Through a variety of innovative programs and initiative, I have witnessed individuals from all walks of life receive the resources guidance and encouragement they need to overcome challenges and realize their full potential.

Community Programs Statistics

220

clients served through our transitional housing support program

125

housing applications completed

140

clients served through our outreach counselling support

+20

outreach events & drop-in sessions
Let's Talk Program (children ages 4-18
+ concurrent mother's group)

Shelter Statistics

105

women accessed our services

102

children accessed our services

495

crisis calls received

7

families accessed our second stage housing

Staff & Community Impact

Our team is made up of mothers, daughters, sisters, and leaders dedicated to supporting women and children. Together, we bring compassion, safety, and empowerment to those we serve.

An Update

our transitional housing project



Lynn Butler, Transitional project lead

Sandate's Transitional Housing Project has been many years in the making. The first major step was in 2022 with the donation of funds to purchase property. Then this past year it was full steam ahead as we organized to secure funding and undertake required studies and surveys.

We engaged the planning consultants and the architect and began the planning process. The new building will host a combination of 10 one-bedroom and studio units that will house from 15 – 20 individuals for up to four years. The complex features a common room and laundry area for residents and colourful accents that will bring life to the two-storey structure, helping it to blend comfortably with the neighbourhood. We anticipate breaking ground in mid-2026 with a target completion date in mid-2028.

This initiative is an important next step in how we support women and their children as they transition from emergency shelters to independent living. It will help those who are ready to move forward but still face barriers like discrimination and affordability to securing stable housing.

A Special Thank you to for their ongoing contributors over the past year.



United Way

**Michael Smith Planning
Consultants**



SHS CONSULTING

Hilditch Architect Inc



Remembering our history

Sandgate was named in memory of Ellen Sands - beloved friend, daughter, sister, aunt, and mother. Ellen was also a woman who suffered from domestic abuse, which ultimately led to her death in January 1991 at the age of 39. In the span of 18 months, prior to Ellen's death, two other women were killed by their abusers. This all took place in Georgina, a town of only 10,000 people.

These deaths promoted an outpouring of support for action towards ending violence against women in the community.

In June of 1992 at the official opening of Sandgate, the people were asked to express their thoughts and wishes for 15 years in the future. One note in particular reads:

*"When all seems lost, remember women's strength
begins life, supports love and lives forever."*

The **Ellen Sands** Bursary

We are proud to announce that the Ellen Sands Memorial Bursary will restart in 2026. This bursary provides financial support to a woman who has been assisted by Sandgate in pursuing post-secondary education or skills training. Honoring Ellen's memory and her belief in the power of education and independence, the bursary will help to empower women to build brighter futures for themselves and their children.



Please email info@sandgate.ca for further information and application details.

Strategic Priorities

2023 - 2026

As Sandgate moves to actualize its vision, we have developed the following strategic priorities to guide us along the way.

01. Invest

Invest in fund development and increase resources to serve survivors of gender-based violence

02. Reinforce

Reinforce Sandgate's internal structure and systems



03. Enhance

Enhance Sandgate's programs and service offerings

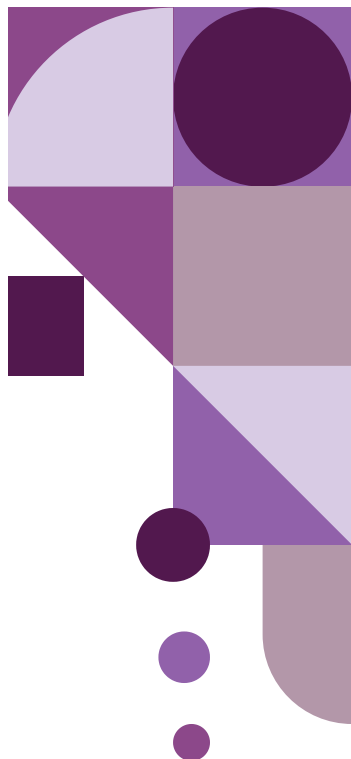
04. Explore

Explore, invest and collaborate to expand access to transitional housing Sandgate services



Programs & Services

Our programs in York Region offer a wide range of services designed to support and empower women and their children who wish to transition to a life free of violence.



 24 Hour Crisis Call Line	 30 Emergency Beds	 Safety Planning	 Assistance With Emergency Transportation
 One-on-one Supportive Counselling	 Women's Support Groups	 Let's Talk (Child Witness Program)	 Public Education & Advocacy
 Referrals To Appropriate Services	 Legal & Court Support	 Child Care & Parenting Support	 Housing Applications Support
 Second Stage Apartments	 Wheelchair Accessible Facilities	 Translation & Interpreters	 Meals, Clothing & Personal Necessities

Social impact

"Even without family and while facing struggles from my past, I never felt completely alone. Thanks to Sandgate, I was able to begin this new chapter of my life with hope and dignity. I will never forget this kindness."

"Through caring guidance, I learned to believe in myself once more. Simple things like wellness activities brought peace to my body and calm to my mind."

"When I arrived at Sandgate, I had escaped severe abuse and was frightened, exhausted, and uncertain about my future. The warmth, professionalism, and dedication of the staff gave me the strength to begin healing. I found safety, support, and a sense of family again."

Financial Report

2024/2025

	<u>2025</u>		<u>2024</u>	
	Operating Fund	Capital Fund	Total	Total
REVENUE				
Ministry of Children Community and Social Services (MCCSS) (Note 10)	\$ 2,299,161	-	\$ 2,299,161	\$2,347,092
United Way-Operating Grant	217,007	-	217,007	332,610
Donations and fundraising	112,497	-	112,497	94,889
Interest and dividend income	23,161	-	23,161	22,829
Net unrealized gain (losses) on investments	22,777	-	22,777	19,032
Region of York-PNA	15,588	-	15,588	19,674
Second stage housing and other income	15,352	-	15,352	12,905
Grants	9,385	-	9,385	104,975
CMHC mortgage forgiveness (Note 9)		-	-	38,372
	\$2,714,928	0	\$2,714,928	\$2,992,378
EXPENSES				
Wages and benefits	1,784,825	-	1,784,825	2,052,566
Repairs and maintenance	266,308	-	266,308	232,380
Amortization	-	117,958	117,958	120,984
Professional and consulting fees	87,348	-	87,348	85,335
Supplies and general	66,479	-	66,479	60,591
Emergency transportation	58,212	-	58,212	64,221
Utilities	43,527	-	43,527	41,063
Insurance	41,187	-	41,187	41,084
Grants to YRCCS	40,000	-	40,000	40,000
Staff training	36,814	-	36,814	19,473
Residents' food	33,622	-	33,622	46,937
Telephone	26,706	-	26,706	29,439
Residents' needs allowances	15,954	-	15,954	18,615
Rent and property taxes	12,439	-	12,439	14,023
Travel	6,222	-	6,222	12,174
Membership fees	3,383	-	3,383	3,483
Residents' personal needs	-	-	-	1,559
Fundraising	-	-	-	-
	2,523,026	117,958	2,640,984	2,883,927
EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR				
	191,902	117,958	73,944	108,451
Fund balance, beginning of the year	1,261,027	1,918,387	3,179,414	3,070,963
Interfund transfers (Note 11)	(409,879)	(409,879)	-	-
	\$1,043,050	\$2,210,308	\$3,253,358	\$3,179,414



www.sandgate.ca

Mailing Address:

P. O. Box 248
Sutton West, L0E 1R0

Admin Line:

905-722-4043

24 Hour Emergency Crisis Line:

1-800-661-8294