



Alice Housing

Alice Housing

Annual General Report

2009/2010



**DONNER CANADIAN
FOUNDATION AWARDS**
for Excellence in the Delivery of Social Services



MARITIME BUSINESS
**Ethics
AWARDS**
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THE MARITIME PROVINCES INC.

2009 WINNER

Introduction to Alice Housing

Alice Housing provides up to two years of safe housing and support for women and children leaving abusive and violent situations. Alice Housing contributes to saving lives by breaking the cycle of violence for women and children and, in doing so, women and children go on to live productive and peaceful lives. The economic benefit is that costs to the taxpayer are reduced.

Benefit to Women

- 83% of women at Alice Housing do not return to their abuser upon leaving the program.
- 100% of women felt their safety increased while living at Alice Housing.
- 78% of women made subsequent healthy decisions in their intimate and personal relationships.
- 52% of women entered the workforce or an educational program within the first two years of being with Alice Housing.

Benefit to Children

- 91% of children showed increased coping skills.
- 80% of children demonstrated long term success in school.
- 100% of children 13 years of age and over were not in conflict with the law.

History of Alice Housing

Incorporated in 1982, the W. Williams Non Profit Housing Association was named after a prominent African Nova Scotian teacher, social advocate and activist from the Annapolis Valley, Wilhelmina Williams. In the early 1990's, after community consultation concerning its name and knowledge of its programs, the organization changed its name to Alice Housing and registered as such in 1994. Alice was Wilhelmina Williams' middle name.

The first clients of Alice Housing arrived in March of 1983, as the organization opened its doors with 16 units in three properties located in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. Staffed by only the Executive Director, project funding enabled ad-hoc counselling programs to exist sporadically until 1998, when an additional staff person was added to offer counselling as needed. In 2001, a full-time Women's Counsellor was hired to meet the growing therapeutic needs of women leaving domestic violence. In 2004, a Drop-In Centre and youth building were purchased supported by funding from the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative. Due to ongoing sustainability challenges, the youth building was sold in 2007.

In 2006, with seed funding from the Community Mobilization Program, a long standing gap in services was filled with the creation of Healing the Bruises, a therapeutic counselling program for child witnesses of domestic abuse. With program outcomes far exceeding expectations, in 2007 Healing the Bruises became a full-time component of the Alice Housing program.

Second stage housing refers to longer term safe housing, following a stay in transition housing. With 19 units, Alice Housing is the one of the largest and oldest second stage housing organizations in Canada and the largest in Atlantic Canada. In the last decade, the organization has become a leader

in the Second Stage housing movement in Canada and is a charter member of the Federal Alliance of Second Stage Housing Providers. Alice Housing has been repeatedly recognized for its work by the Donner Foundation, which awards non-profit social services agencies deemed to be the best operated in Canada. Most recently Alice Housing was regionally granted the Ethics Award for Non Profits by the Better Business Bureau Of The Maritime Provinces, which recognizes organizations for their high ethical and professional standards.

Mission and Goals

Alice Housing's Mission is to "provide safe second stage housing and supportive counselling for women and children leaving domestic violence".

Alice Housing has two overarching goals to realize the mission:

- 1) To provide women and children the support and counselling needed to recover from the effects of abuse and trauma; and
- 2) To decrease the chance that women and children will return to abusive households.

To achieve these goals Alice Housing:

- Provides women with safe, affordable housing so they do not have to make the difficult decision between remaining in abusive relationships and becoming homeless;
- Provides safe, non-judgmental housing for women, with or without children, leaving abusive situations that have identified their own need for on-going support and counselling;
- Increases women's well-being and self-sufficiency;
- Ensures women and children feel safe and no longer live in abusive environments;
- Provides the opportunity for women to develop increased positive coping skills, enabling them to deal with a variety of personal issues and become aware of the cycle of abuse; and
- Provides children with the opportunity to heal from trauma in a safe environment.

Current Programs

To support the mission and goals, there are a number of programs in operation at Alice Housing. The programs fall under two categories – Core and Non-Core. Core programs are those that are directly related to and support the mission and goals. The Non-Core programs provide additional services to the women and children, but are secondary to the work of Alice Housing.

Safe Housing

After a two-tiered intake process and risk assessment, women and children entering the second stage housing component of Alice Housing do so from either a transition house or from an unsafe living arrangement. All have left an abusive household, often leaving everything behind. These families are in crisis and homeless when they enter the Alice Housing program. Alice Housing provides safe and affordable housing for these women and their children, along with the coordination of donations of furniture, food and other goods to ensure the family has the necessities needed to start their new lives. Rents are kept in line with Department of Community

Service (DCS) levels and geared to income to ensure the financial burden does not become a barrier to women leaving domestic abuse. All clients are required to follow a strict “no man” policy while on the properties of Alice Housing. Appendix 1 contains the profiles of the properties used for the Safe Housing program.

Counselling

Individual and/or group counselling is provided as women make the decision to leave abusive situations. Each woman, with the support of our women’s counsellor, develops short term and long term goals toward recovery, education, housing and career plans. Individual counselling and workshop attendance is mandatory for women accepted into Alice Housing.

Support Services

Women attend weekly group programs in an effort to share openly their experiences in a women centered and supported environment. This process also encourages the establishment of their support networks within Alice Housing and the community.

Advocacy Services

For many women leaving domestic abuse situations, everyday tasks are viewed as overwhelming and, in some cases, hopeless. Alice Housing staff routinely accompany women to legal appointments, Community Service meetings, court appearances and school meetings. When required, Alice Housing staff is involved with the local policing authorities, healthcare providers and Victim Services. The staff actively advocate on behalf of the client on issues regarding family benefits, mental health services, utilities, referrals to other community agencies, employment, and continuing educational opportunities.

Developmental Programs

Personal and professional development programs are available to women as they begin their recovery from family violence. These programs are crucial to women as they learn new skills and strategies for independent living in the community and include: workshops on parenting, budgeting, credit counselling, personality and temperament types, body image, self defence and self care; continuing education counselling; and career and resume counselling.

Healing the Bruises

Healing the Bruises, a counselling and support program for child witnesses of family violence, addresses a long standing gap in services to the children and youth of Alice Housing. Due to the long waiting lists for mental health interventions in our community, the Healing the Bruises program provides support as children explore their feelings surrounding the violence they have witnessed in their family. The program provides modified play and art therapy, toddler check-ins, one-on-one counselling for school aged children, STRAIGHTtalk for tweens and teens, workshops for mothers, and on-going parental support. In addition, our dedicated child/youth counsellor advocates in schools and other agencies involved with each family to ensure the right service is being provided to the right child at the right time.

Food Bank and Donations Room

For many women entering Alice Housing, the crisis they are experiencing includes financial strain and the provision of food through our Food Bank (provided by Feed Nova Scotia) is essential to many families. Staff also coordinate with donors the distribution of personal care products, clothing, small household appliances and, in some cases, furniture.

Auricular Acupuncture

Auricular acupuncture is a holistic therapy that is proven to decrease anxiety and depression, while increasing relaxation, tranquility and clarity of mind. All auricular acupuncture is performed by our Women and Child Counsellors, who are registered and trained in this therapy. The Child Counsellor also provides non-invasive auricular seeds for children eight years of age and older.

Christmas Angel Sponsorship and Back To School Programs

Through the coordination by staff, all families are sponsored for Christmas gifts and meals. All children and women attending school in September are provided with a knapsack of school supplies.

Outreach

As women leave Alice Housing to live independently in the community, their need for support services are often increased. Unfortunately, our current funding structure does not permit us to offer a comprehensive outreach program for women leaving the program. However, the food bank, community housing advice, donations room and office services are available to ex-clients.

Our Work - 2009-2010

Number of Housing nights	10,583
Number of visits to Drop in Centre	924
Phone\admin support	1803
Women counseling sessions	319
Mothers counseling sessions/assessments	270
Children's counseling sessions	221
Youth Outings	22
Women's Workshops	89
Group Participants	358
Child/Youth/Parent groups	38
Group Participants	276
Intakes	52

Look what else we did...

- ✚ Provided over 4000 kg of food through our food bank
- ✚ Provided Christmas sponsorship to 14 women and 16 children
- ✚ Provided back to school supplies for families
- ✚ Provided Thanksgiving and Easter meals to over 60 women and children

Co-Chairs Report 2010

Michelle Kelly, Rosemary Bulley

On a Saturday last September, the Alice Housing Board of Directors set a goal: we will have a well-formulated and comprehensive business case to seek out core funding by AGM time 2010. We will know what the core values, core services and core funding needs of this organization are. As I write this report, I am pleased to say we have achieved this goal and so much more.

This leads me to applaud our Strategic Planning Committee and the hard work that each board member put into Alice Housing this year. Last year at the AGM we reported that sustainability was an issue in this organization; that Government relations needed to be strengthened and that we needed a plan to get more fixed, core funding. For months the board members who sat on this committee met outside of regular board meetings, researched second stage housing in other jurisdictions and came up with an extremely comprehensive and logical goal and business case for this organization. The document, entitled "Proven Success, Worthy of Support," is compelling and is a huge step in establishing sustainability for this organization. The work that went into this project was exceptional and I am confident Alice Housing will be better off in the long-term because of it. To each board member – thank you for giving your time, resources and intellect to this project. I am certain that this business case creates a springboard to allow Alice Housing to go to government and logically argue a case for core funding of the Alice Housing programs.

Although many of our board members were focussed on long-term planning and funding, we also needed to ensure some energy was diverted to ensuring the organization maintained a balanced budget this year. Alice Housing had operated at a deficit for sometime in the past and this year we wanted revenue to exceed expenses. In order to accommodate this we moved the Art Auction to the Fall and created a new Spring event. In May of 2010, Alice Housing presented a luncheon event with keynote speaker Margot Franssen. The event was very well attended and received and attendees spoke positively about the format and keynote address. The event raised funds and the profile of Alice Housing and will be something we hope to continue in the future. Planning for the Art Auction is now starting and we expect to be able to increase ticket sales because of the public awareness the Spring event garnered.

In addition to our main fundraising events, our dedicated ED, Joanne Bernard, once again had a successful year in obtaining new grants for Alice Housing. Our revenue was over expectations and this is a definite sign that everyone's hard work in raising funds and raising the profile of Alice Housing is paying off.

In closing, I would like to once again thank all Board Members for their dedication to Alice Housing. Also, I want to recognize those who are leaving us this year. Linda Power is stepping off the Board this year and as Chair of our Personnel Committee, her skills in staff evaluations and policies will be missed.

Rosemary Bulley is also leaving the board this year. Rosemary came on the Board with significant fundraising skills and she has surely helped increase funding for Alice Housing over the last 3 years. In addition, when I found myself without a co-chair this past Fall, Rosemary graciously stepped up and filled that role. It was a pleasure working with you this year Rosemary and your efforts and positive attitude will be missed.

Michelle Kelly

**Minutes – Annual General Meeting
June 17, 2009**

Regrets: Laura Cummings and Linda Power

1. Approval of Agenda
 - (a) Moved by Rosemary Bulley and seconded by Darla MacPhee
2. Approval of 2008 Minutes
 - (a) Moved by Michelle Kelly and seconded by Rosemary Bulley
3. Reports
 - (a) Co-Chair – Anne Marie Coolen reported it was a very successful year seeing Alice Housing winner the Donner Award.
 - (b) ED Report – Joanne Bernard reported that this was a good year in public relations for Healing the Bruises and Alice Housing was honoured by winning the Donner Award. It was the first time the award was given to an organization East of Ontario. However, sustainability was becoming an issue and it was important to focus on building good government relations in order to access core funding for the organization.
 - (c) Personnel report – Linda Power as Chair included a report.
 - (d) Fundraising report – Rosemary Bulley reported that the economic downturn definitely had an effect on sponsorship and art auction ticket sales and the organization should be looking at adding another fundraising event.
 - (e) Finance report – Tara Larsen reported that the organization received a healthy audit opinion and that the results show an excess of about \$24,000. This was because of some increase in funding (mostly grants). There was discussion on how salaries had gone up to bring staff in line with the market and to allow for an increase to Andrea's hours to cover vacation time. It was also discussed that the organization should look to shift funding into more fixed resources.
4. Approval of Audit statements
 - (a) Moved by Margie Publicover and seconded by Sally Covert
5. Approval of Lyle Tilley as auditor
 - (a) Moved by Sasha Irving and seconded by Nicole Figuera

6. Nomination Report for 2009-2010 Board with Anne Marie Coolen and Michelle Kelly as Co-Chairs, Margie Publicover as Treasurer and Darla MacPhee as Secretary
 - (a) Moved by Darla MacPhee and seconded by Rosemary Bulley
7. The Board then presented the Alice Housing video and heard first hand from two Alice Housing women, Raven and Julie
8. Appreciation was then given to Tanya Moxley, Kelsey Smith and Constable Randy Wood
9. Motion to adjourn
 - (a) Moved by Margie Publicover and seconded by Sasha Irving

Alice Housing Annual General Meeting 2010

June 23rd, 6:30 p.m.

Christ Church

1. Welcome. Approval of Agenda.
 2. Review and approval of minutes of 2009 Annual General Meeting.
 3. Reports:
 - a) Co-Chairs
 - b) Executive Director
 - c) Personnel
 - d) Fundraising
 - e) Finance
 4. Motion to approve auditors and accountant.
 5. Nomination committee report and Board nomination for 2010 -2011.
 6. Appreciations.
Asher Tabak
The Zonta Club of Halifax
 7. Other
 8. Adjournment. Thank you.
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Personnel Report – 2009- 2010

Linda Power, Joanne Bernard

The mandate of the committee is to recommend policies to the Board regarding employee relations and other related matters. It develops reviews and ensures the implementation of sound personnel policies, procedures and practices appropriate to Alice Housing. (Alice Housing Board of Directors Manual)

Current Staffing Compliment:

Joanne Bernard	Executive Director
Andrea Beazley	Housing Coordinator
Susan MacPhee	Women's Counselor
Sarah Fletcher	Women's Counselor (Jan – June)
Tina Riley	Administrative Assistant
Lori Morgan	Child/Youth Counselor

Susan MacPhee began a 6 month Leave of Absence in January and during that time Sarah Fletcher was hired as her replacement for the term of the absence. Sarah conducted all of Susan's duties with professionalism, empathy and good humour. We appreciate her dedication to our clients and wish her luck with her future career and studies in the field of Social Work and in her new role as mother.

In May, a performance review was conducted by Linda Power incorporating the comments from both staff and board directors. The review was presented to the Executive Director in June.

Nominations Committee

Darla MacPhee, Joanne Bernard

The committee meets every Spring to determine the skill composition of the board for the upcoming board year. A call for applicants is made in the community and the committee vets each applicant according to skill set, experience and interest in Alice Housing.

This year, the organization was fortunate to have the majority of Board Directors returning. Leaving the Board will be Rosemary Bulley and Linda Power. Joining the Board of Directors is

Kathleen Jennex – Executive Director – Coverdale Centre

- Claudine Bardsley- Samson - Lawyer, Manager of Labour Relations and Benefits, Public Service Commission

Returning Board members are:

Michelle Kelly

Betty MacDonald

Darla MacPhee

Alison MacDonald

Margie Publicover

Sasha Irving

Catherine Sanderson

Jennifer Church

Denise Williams

Susan Hazelwood

Fundraising Report – 2009 – 2010

Sasha Irving, Jennifer Church, Michelle Kelly, Rosemary Bulley, Joanne Bernard

The annual Artworks and Auction was held last April and was a tremendous success. Alice Housing hosted 220 community supporters and the generosity of the artists was again unprecedented. This event raised \$19,000 for Alice Housing.

Foundation grants continue to be a cornerstone of the revenue development for Alice Housing and we were extraordinarily grateful for a one time donation from Telus from their Atlantic Canada Community Fund. We were one of only 6 agencies in Atlantic Canada to be chosen and were are most grateful.

The Christmas Sponsorship program was another success this year which each family being completely sponsored from gifts to the turkey.

We were also one of the beneficiaries for both the community and university productions of the Vagina Monologues which serves not only to raise much needed funds but provide public education on the issue of violence against women.

And finally this year our fundraising committee hosted a Business lunch with guest speaker Margot Franssen, founder of The Body Shop Canada. The Luncheon in May was very successful with 130 men and women in attendance to hear Margot's words of wisdom and the event raised \$6,000. Our business luncheon will now become a yearly event focussed on bringing the corporate community together to hear an amazing Canadian female speaker on issues relevant to women from all walks of life.

Alice Housing would like to thank the following friends for their generosity and continued support.

Feed Nova Scotia
Sisters of Charity
Christ Church
The Westin Nova Scotia
The Donner Foundation
Derek Cowie Design
Dalhousie University
The Mary Kay Ash Foundation
Clearwater Seafood's Ltd
Atlantic Lottery Corporation
Alice Housing Christmas Angels

Nova Scotia Department of Community Services
Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation
Grace Chapel
The Halifax Protestant Children's Infant Fund
Wickwire Holm Barristers and Solicitors
Telus
Futura Club
Beta Sigma Phi
Lindor
United Way of Halifax Region
East Coast Cine

Extreme Communications
Lyle Tilley Davidson
Nova Scotia Community College
Invis Inc
Air Canada
Emera
Halifax Regional Municipality
RBC
Halifax Cornwallis Progress Club
Prince Andrew High School
The Vagina Monologues - Community

Colour
BMO Fountain of Hope Employees Fund
Halifax Protestants Childrens Fund
Halifax Youth Foundation
1998 Foundation
Dalhousie Vagina Monologues Production
The Halifax Youth Foundation
The Flemming Foundation
The Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation
The Zonta Club of Halifax

To protect privacy, we do not list donations made by individuals. If we have excluded anyone from this list, please know that your kindness has not been forgotten and is greatly appreciated.



Executive Directors Report

I often feel lucky when I get to witness someone fulfilling their dreams. I recently had that honour as I watched two women who have called Alice Housing their home over the last year, walk across the stage at NSCC to receive their diplomas from the Women Unlimited Program. Both will be entering a technology or trade course in the Fall. Both come from very different backgrounds, ethnicities and experiences. But they both came with one goal in common: to move past the violence of their relationships and not let it define the rest of their lives. I was extremely proud when one of these women was chosen to be valedictorian by her classmates.

I remember first meeting her a year ago. A young mother from another country whose first language was not English, unemployed and desperate to escape her violent situation from her husband with no family in this country. To see her now is truly inspiring. Confident, determined, and dedicated to making her way for herself and young son. She took me aside at after the graduation and told me how grateful she was for Alice Housing. I was speechless.

These are just a few of the inspiring changes we see with the women and children who call Alice Housing their home every day. We also witness the many challenges that women face when leaving violence. The daunting experiences as they manoeuvre through the Family Court System, continued intimidation from ex-partners who still have access to their children, living in poverty, dealing with mental and physical health issues all endured while running a household as a single parent. With every challenge, the professional and caring staff of Alice Housing is there, offering assistance, support or encouragement for each woman to be her own best advocate.

Our goal at Alice Housing is to help women work towards their healing and fulfilling their dreams for a self sufficient life free of violence and intimidation. Our programs are geared for empowerment and planning for the future. Alice Housing is not a place to dwell; it's a place for moving on, making changes and fulfilling goals.

It's a place where children feel safe and supported. Healing the Bruises has helped 76 children since its inception and hundreds more in the community through our ***Healthy Relationships*** and ***What is Abuse*** presentations in area schools. Through the expertise of the Child and Youth Counsellor, children learn to express their experiences with violence in the home through modified art and play therapy, recreational outings and individual counselling.

This year has seen a tremendous focus on sustainability and strategic direction initiated by the Board of Directors. The Business Plan entitled ***Proven Success, Worthy of Support*** is a living document which will be the cornerstone for the quest for sustainability for years to come. The subsequent strategic directions to be taken in the future through government relations are exciting and unprecedented for this organization. In partnership with government and community, the future of Alice Housing will hopefully gain some solid financial footing so desperately needed to support our services for families.

As the funding partnership with Emera comes to an end in March, 2011, the quest is on to fund Healing the Bruises once again. This unique, effective and proven program for child witnesses of violence in the home is crucial not only to Alice Housing but to the community.

The job of Executive Director of this organization is often paradoxical. The uncertainty of funding and sustainability is always a pressure and sometimes our quest to help women and children does not always end in favourable outcomes. The responsibility of keeping women, children and staff safe is a constant priority. Keeping the profile of Alice Housing relevant in the community and on the government agenda is challenging and searching for dollars to “keep the lights on” is never-ending. However, I am lucky enough to have two support systems in this organization which never waiver or falter. (not every ED can say that). My staff is dedicated, fun, professional and experts in their fields of responsibility which makes my job so much easier.

My Board of Directors are committed volunteers, experts in so many areas all of which Alice Housing benefits, and supports the work of myself, staff and the organization with countless hours of their own time each year.

It does not get much better than that.....

Financial Report 2009-2010

This committee is comprised of Margie Publicover and Joanne Bernard. Ad Hoc member, Donna Fowler.

During the year ended March 31, 2010, Alice Housing had revenues of \$ 431,532 and expenses of \$404,358 which resulted in excess revenues over expenses of \$27,174. This is a significant improvement over the prior year's excess expenses over revenues of \$ 24,215. Alice Housing realized a gain on investments of \$ 29,280 based on the fair market value at March 31, 2010. This gain accounted for the majority of the increase in revenues. Donations and Fundraising revenues decreased by \$ 21,235 from the previous year. The donation revenue includes the second of three annual donations from Emera of \$50,000.

Overall, expenses remained consistent with the previous year with the exception of salaries and benefits. Salaries and benefits increased by as a result of performance based annual increments. Administration expenses decreased by \$2709.

In 2009, a subcommittee was struck as a result of the strategic planning session held in September 2009 to develop a business case for core funding from the Province of Nova Scotia. In April 2010, a draft of the proposal was approved by the Board of Alice Housing. During the 2010/11 the communication strategy will be implemented.

