

2024 | 2025 GRATITUDE REPORT



Birchway
N I A G A R A

A growing community of allies gives hope for a safer future.

In a world where headlines too often remind us of the ongoing injustices and violence faced by women and marginalized communities, it's easy to feel disheartened. But at Birchway Niagara, we are constantly reminded of realities that are more powerful than despair: the strength of community, the resilience of survivors, and the impact of unwavering support of allies like you.

While the work we do together to address gender-based and intimate partner violence can be challenging, it is also filled with hope and progress. Every step forward—every safe night in shelter, every empowering conversation, every life changed—is made possible because of a growing network of allies who believe in a future free from abuse.

Thanks to your generosity and advocacy, we were able to expand our services in meaningful ways this past year. One remarkable example is the incredible success of fundraising efforts like the Birchway Book Riot, which allowed us to add five additional shelter beds for most of the 2024–2025 fiscal year. That means more women and children have a safe place to turn—and more futures are being rebuilt with dignity and strength.

This is the power of community.

Thank you for standing with us. With your continued support, we will keep pushing forward toward a community without abuse.

With deep gratitude,



Jennifer Gauthier
Jennifer Gauthier,
Executive Director

WE EXIST

to protect and
empower.

WE WANT

a community
without abuse.

You provide hope—and inspiration.

Over the past year, you didn't just support the work of Birchway Niagara—you inspired it.

By showing up at events in record numbers, by volunteering more time than ever before, by encouraging friends, family and colleagues to support survivors of abuse on their journey, and by making gifts to sustain our services, you lit a spark.

That spark ignited a powerful new movement: the 15 Beds Campaign.

This campaign, featuring a "Birchway bed", shows the tangible impact that allies like you make when you support Birchway Niagara.

**15 of our beds—one third of the 45 beds
Birchway Niagara operates— exist only
because of community support.**

Please join us in spreading the word about the campaign you inspired when you helped us open additional safe beds last year.

Every \$150 raised provides a safe bed for a night, and every \$55,000 raised secures a safe bed for an entire year. Your support is making these milestones happen. **Thank you.**

Learn more at birchway.ca/15beds.



Why every bed counts.



62

From November 26, 2023 to November 25, 2024, the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses reported **62 femicides** (gender-related killings of women and children) in Ontario. This number is consistent with the previous year and demonstrates why your ongoing support is so critical.

We will be a shoulder to lean on, a voice to advocate for, a space to feel safe in, an ally to trust, a guide to navigate, and a counsellor to heal for everyone affected by abuse of all forms.



3

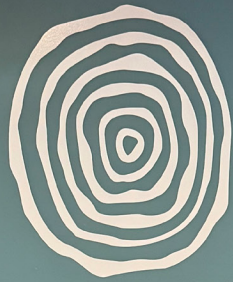
lives were lost in Niagara during the same time period.

While not every person experiencing abuse will reach out for support, **every additional safe bed means that fewer survivors will be turned away**, changing—and possibly saving—lives.

In two of the three deaths in Niagara, the perpetrator was an adult family member who was not an intimate partner.

Abuse can happen in any relationship.

Your support is helping women and children, even when the abuse is not at the hands of a partner or spouse.



Birchway

N I A G A R A

Coaching Boys into Men

Building community mentorship to prevent future violence

Birchway Niagara is proud to have been selected to present the Coaching Boys into Men program in South Niagara. This evidence-based series of brief, coach-led conversations helps student athletes cultivate healthy, respectful relationships.

By weaving lessons on teamwork, integrity and fair play into everyday practices, coaches are giving young people lifelong skills that will improve their lives, create safer communities and increase the impact of **Birchway Niagara's prevention program, which reached 1,729 participants last year.**

In 2024-2025...

7 high schools in South Niagara participated in Coaching Boys into Men.

25 coaches and teachers were trained by Birchway Niagara staff to use the program, impacting hundreds of students.



Photo credit: Futures Without Violence

**Coaching Boys
INTO MEN**

Pictured left to right: Amanda DiZio (Gillian's Place), Samantha Forbes (Birchway Niagara), Alicia and Sarah (Interval House of Hamilton)

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Statement of Revenue and Expenses for the year ended March 31, 2025

REVENUE	2025	2024	EXPENSES	2025	2024
Ministry of Community and Social Services – Annualized Funding	1,608,313	1,493,949	Emergency Shelter	2,034,203	1,940,009
Ministry of Community and Social Services – One-time Funding	92,515	200,668	Legal & Housing Support Services	229,157	217,684
CEVAW *	30,119	30,119	After Care Support Services	82,067	65,091
MAG Family Court Support Worker	47,680	47,500	Prevention and Public Education	79,454	83,608
Branscombe Family Foundation	0	0	Special Projects	129,750	101,682
Donations and Fundraising	964,223	842,202	Fundraising	287,131	279,739
Federal Government	0	224,191	CEVAW*	30,119	30,119
Regional and Municipal Funding	34,850	24,450	Management & Administration	257,753	249,551
United Way of South Niagara	59,777	59,777		3,129,635	2,967,483
Special Projects	81,025	31,344			
Miscellaneous Grants	44,574	17,000			
Niagara Prosperity Initiative	82,067	65,091	Excess of Revenue over Expenses	61,409	182,773
Niagara Community Foundation	52,251	36,296	Allocated to Stabilization Fund	-61,409	-182,773
Investment & Miscellaneous	93,650	77,669			
	3,191,044	3,150,256		0	0

*Birchway Niagara is the transfer payment agency for the Coalition to End Violence Against Women (CEVAW)

2024/25 Board of Directors

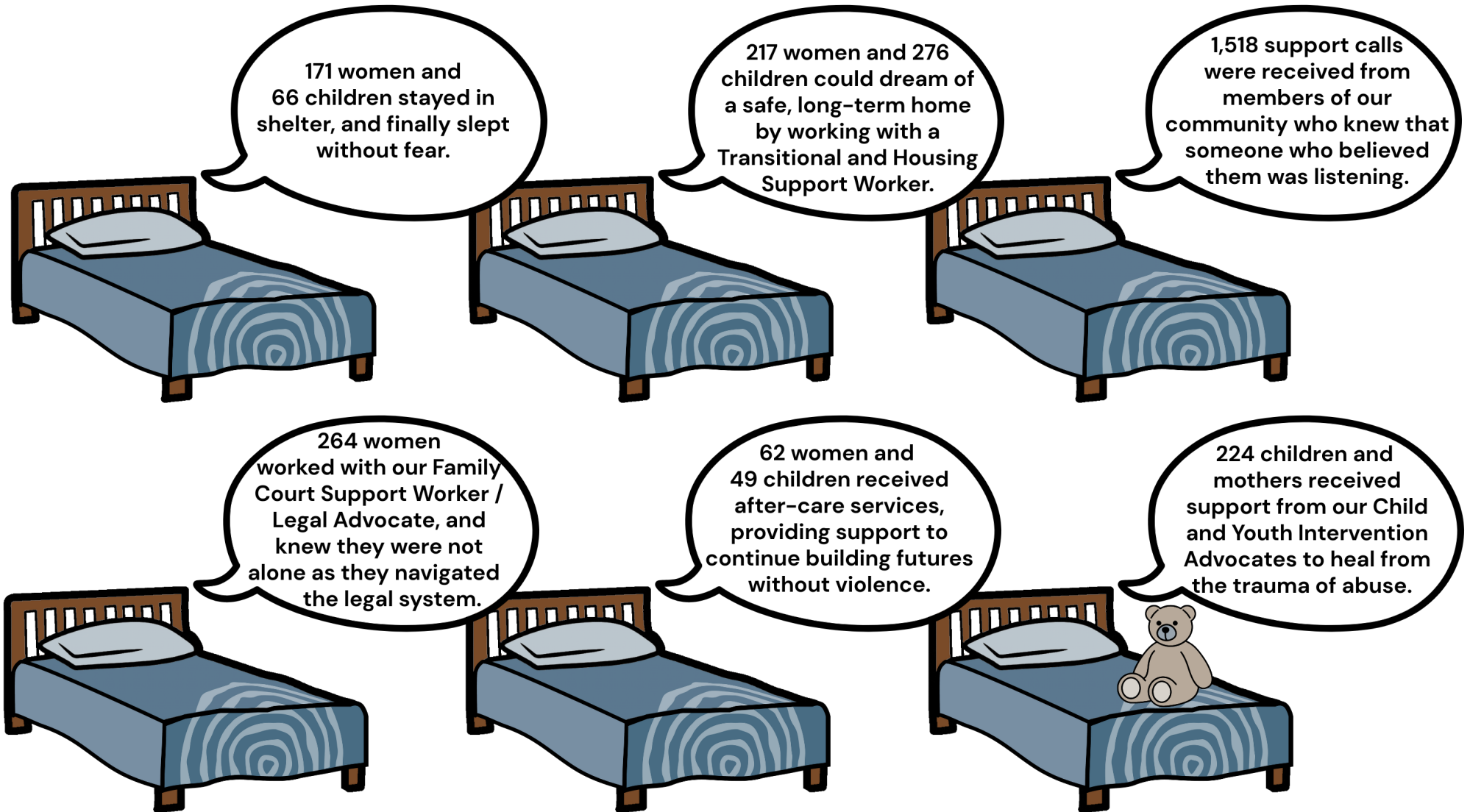
PRESIDENT – Jennifer Kodis
VICE PRESIDENT – Chelsey Lapointe
TREASURER – Edwin Leung
SECRETARY – Belinda Anderson
PAST PRESIDENT – Anthony Reitboeck

DIRECTORS

– Anas Abidrabbu – Deep Singh
– Devon Rowan – Saroj Vasant
– Narissa Sawh – Marlene VanderSpek
– Chamanjit Sidhu

Your gifts provide so much more than a bed.

What you made possible in 2024-25



Gifts of time keep safe beds open.

How volunteers are making an impact

Approximately 5,000
volunteer hours
contributed to over
\$308,000 dollars
raised through Birchway
Niagara fundraisers.



Birchway Niagara's work simply wouldn't be possible without the dedication of nearly 300 volunteers.

From our board and shelter volunteers to our Speaker's Bureau, committee members, bingo volunteers, book sorters, and fundraising volunteers—you made this an unprecedented year.

Because of your time and energy, Birchway Niagara was able to expand in-shelter programming and reached more people with life-changing awareness. Birchway's signature fundraisers (Brunch, Bid & Bowl, the Allied Against Abuse Daily Raffle and the Birchway Book Riot) also saw record-breaking success, supporting nearly six safe beds for the entire year.

Thank you, volunteers!



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Community fundraisers create peaceful nights

How our allies are breaking the cycle of violence

In 2024–2025, Birchway Niagara's community allies hosted 24 third-party activities, raising awareness and \$209,522 to support survivors. That's nearly four safe beds fully funded for one year through community events!

Third-party events raised
\$209,522 in 2024–2025!

Last year's events included a day of sunshine and suds at the Great Wolf Lodge "Car Wash for Kids", nights full of music, comedy, cowboy boots and even 80s prom dresses, a motorcycle ride, golfing, fashion, football, a walk-a-thon, holiday events, barbecues, basketball, drives for toys and essential items—and more!



Thank you to our
community allies!!



**Your gift.
Their future.**

**Create a community without
abuse as part of your estate planning.**

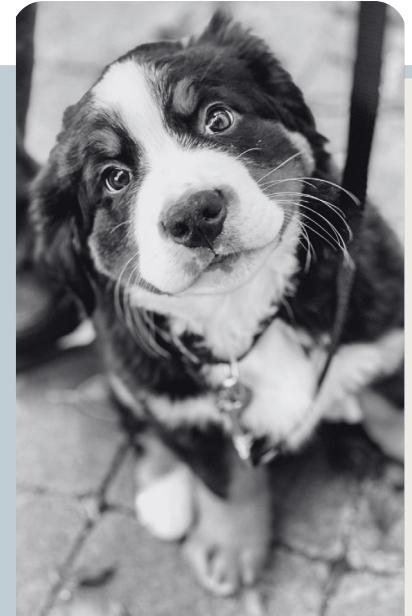


Interested in increasing your impact?
Reach out to learn more

**Did you know that Birchway
Niagara is growing again?**

Pet-friendly spaces and a
community room are part of a
capital campaign to remove barriers
for survivors of abuse.

Contact Amanda to learn how you
or your organization can help.



Are you looking for more ways to ally with Birchway Niagara? Contact
Amanda Braet, Director of Development and Stewardship, to explore
your options, which might include:

- Monthly giving
- Estate planning
- Gifts of securities
- Volunteering
- Hosting an event
- Event sponsorship
- Advocacy
- In-kind donations
- Capital campaign support
- Creating an online fundraiser

Contact Amanda at 905-356-3933 ext. 241 or AmandaB@birchway.ca.



Heal families.

ONE MONTH AT A TIME

Become a monthly donor
www.Birchway.ca

**Birchway
NIAGARA**

Outstanding Community Partner - Great Wolf Lodge



Great Wolf Lodge has supported domestic violence services in South Niagara for decades, regularly donating prize packages to our Brunch, Bid & Bowl event—including generous “Stay and Play Getaway” packages for our auctions. At our 2024 event, their team had the whole crowd howling when they doubled their donation to include a second package! In 2025, they not only increased their support by becoming our title sponsor, but also directed proceeds from their “Car Wash for Kids” to Birchway Niagara and Gillian’s Place. Pack members (staff) also generously support our clients with in-kind donations.

Outstanding Volunteer - Cheryl Scott



As Birchway Niagara’s longest-serving volunteer, Cheryl has supported domestic violence services in Niagara Falls since the very beginning. For over 40 years, she has played a vital role in shaping our work, especially through her leadership with the Book Riot, our largest annual fundraiser. From sorting books and serving on the planning committee to lending a hand at events, Cheryl’s energy and commitment have never wavered. Whether supporting behind the scenes in the office or out in the community, she continues to be a powerful advocate for survivors.

Outstanding Staff Member - Erika Bodnar



If we could add another title to Erika’s official role of “Administrative Assistant,” it would be “Chief Cheerleader.” Erika brings a positive attitude and contagious energy to work every single day. She’s always ready to lend a hand, keeping us organized and making each of our lives a little easier. Whether she’s supporting donors, staff, or community partners, Erika consistently goes above and beyond—making everyone around her feel valued, supported, and appreciated.

**Congratulations
to our 2025**

**Outstanding
Ally Award
Winners!**

**Please join us in
celebrating these
community leaders and
passionate advocates for
Birchway Niagara.**

**Thank you for lighting the
way to a safer future for
everyone impacted by
abuse.**



24hr Support Line
905-356-5800

Call or text. Collect calls accepted.

Allied against abuse.

www.birchway.ca

[in](#) [ig](#) [fb](#) @birchwayniagara



8903 McLeod Rd
Niagara Falls ON
L2H 3S6
905-356-3933
Charitable Registration # 131135717RR0001

