

Interval House of Ottawa Newsletter

Fall/Winter 2011

Inside This Issue:

Hope for the Holidays 2

In the Public Eye 2

Out of the Darkness... 3

Rebuilding Lives 3

Voices: Concrete 3

Social Savvy 4

Help us Furnish Our New Home 4

The photographs used in this publication are for illustrative purposes only. They are generic pictures from clipart (unless otherwise identified).



The Next Chapter

The past few years have been quite eventful for Interval House of Ottawa. Our new home is almost finished and we are busily preparing to move into our new digs. The staff and volunteers of Interval House of Ottawa are hopeful as we move into the next chapter in the history of our organization.

We are still working with all levels of government to try to secure funding to continue to operate our current location in addition to our new building.

The need for more beds for abused women in the City of Ottawa is without question. As always, Interval House of Ottawa



was at capacity for most of the year—turning away on average 2 to 3 women per day.

We continue to advocate for increased funding to assist victims of violence in our community and hope that you will raise your voice with ours to ensure that this very important issue remains on the radar of our elected officials.

Change begins at home and we are optimistic that with the support of our community, the women who seek out our services will always be able to find shelter from the storm.

Karen MacInnis
Executive Director

A Basketful of Joy

For two years now, the Ottawa Basketeers have been helping our residents as they transition to their new lives—and their support has been, quite simply, amazing!

The Ottawa Basketeers are made up of a group of volunteers who take a simple laundry basket and fill it with generous amounts of care and hope. The baskets contain many items that most of us take for granted: cleaning supplies, kitchen items, linens, etcetera.

When our residents depart for their new homes they are provided with one of these baskets. They are deeply moved by the compassion and generosity of this group of fantastic volunteers!

Our heartfelt appreciation goes out to the Ottawa Basketeers for making a difference in the lives of abused women and their children! For more information about this great organization please visit their site: www.basketeers.ca.



Hope for the Holidays

With the leaves falling and snow just around the corner, staff and residents are busily preparing for the upcoming festive season!

Interval House of Ottawa strives to create an inclusive and diverse celebratory atmosphere during the winter holiday season. Our staff team goes out of their way to help alleviate any loneliness that our residents and their children may be experiencing as they transition from very painful circumstances, feelings which are often exacerbated during the holidays.

We rely on our community to help us provide our clients with support during this magical time of the year. If you are able to help, please get in touch with us (613.234.8511 ext. 210): we are excited to hear from you!

The women and their children who stay at Interval House of Ottawa are always grateful for your support and overwhelmed by your generosity. We hope that you can help us make this holiday season one to remember—where compassion, kindness and hope lead the day.



In the Public Eye

The 2011 Clothesline Project was a great success! Local women whose lives have been touched by violence were invited to paint t-shirts as a testament to their experience and hang it on the “community clothesline” at Minto Park, home of the Ottawa Women’s Monument. This is a

symbolic display to “air” the issue of violence against women.

Our residents contributed t-shirts to the cause and our staff and volunteers were active participants in the event. This project is a powerful demonstration of the impacts of violence and the need to bring this

important topic out of the private sphere and into the public eye. It is only then that we can make real progress towards ending violence against women in our communities.

We hope to see you at the 2012 Clothesline Project!



**1 in 4
Canadian
women will
experience
domestic
violence
within their
lifetime**

Out of the Darkness Comes the Light

As a staff member of Interval House of Ottawa (IHO), I have seen many stories of courage and survival. As a survivor of family abuse myself, I can relate. Everyday I struggle to overcome the impacts of the violence I experienced and witnessed—from poor self-esteem to fear of conflict, the consequences of domestic abuse can never be underestimated.

I grew up in an abusive home, where my mother was made to feel invisible and degraded. Her relationship didn't start out abusive—in fact, she even stood up to my father when they were first married. However, this did not last very long as she quickly realized the cost of sharing her opinion was far too high.

Over the years I had spoken with my mother about the abuse and the options available to her. It was hard

to be patient and understanding when all I wanted to do was to save my mom from my father.

In the last couple of years, my family has undergone quite a transformation. My father passed away and to say our



grieving process was complicated is the understatement of the century.

Despite the pain, I have witnessed something truly remarkable: my mother has begun to blossom. She has her own place now, is making friends and doing things for herself for the first time in her life—she is in the

driver's seat now and it is beautiful. The first time my mother visited IHO as a volunteer, she said to me "I didn't know this place existed—I could have left him and brought us here." It was a genuine light bulb moment for her.

My mother has reclaimed her voice thanks to supportive counseling services and through her work as a volunteer with IHO. She even participated in the Take Back the Night march this year—yelling out that she deserved safety and security, just like everyone else. Words cannot express how proud I am of her.

I know first hand how IHO makes a difference in the lives of the women and children who use our services and so does my mom. Abuse can stop—you just have to ask for help.

-IHO Staff Member & Survivor



Rebuilding Lives

"I wanted to say thank you for your support and kindness during the darkest period of my life. You were my first point of contact after the assault and made an enormous difference in helping me and my kids transition out of an abusive marriage. Without you, I could not have rebuilt our lives. I want you to know that you have made a huge, positive difference in our lives and, for that, I can never thank you enough. I will always remember you."

-Survivor

Voices: "Concrete"

Why does the ground suffer my footsteps
How could it allow my presence
After all that I have done
Haven't I exhausted its patience

How many times have I hit it
And welcomed its harsh charity
Cheek to cheek we did lie

Until I rose from purgatory

How could it suffer me to use it so
Pushing it away to pick myself up
Here I am again, fighting gravity
And yet, when the earth and I were level
There was balance for me.

-Survivor



SOCIAL SAVVY

New Site, Twitter and Facebook: Oh My!

Interval House of Ottawa has joined the world of social media! We are always striving for better ways to reach our community and build awareness of issues concerning violence against women. We have both a Facebook page ([facebook.com/intervalhouseottawa](https://www.facebook.com/intervalhouseottawa)) and Twitter account (twitter.com/intervalottawa)—please check us out and pass the word along!



We have also updated our website. In early November the new site will be live, so remember to update your bookmarks. Our new site will have more up-to-date information, including information on community events, resources and house activities so check back often to find out what is going on at Interval House of Ottawa (intervalhouseottawa.org)!

Help Us to Furnish Our New Home!

Our new house is almost complete—the ground was broken in May 2011! We hope to be in the house in January 2012, with doors opening in early February. We are now in the last stages of the project and are actively seeking financial support to ensure that we are able to properly furnish our new home. We need your help!

If you or your workplace, foundation or community organization would like to sponsor a room in our new home, please contact us (613.234.8511 ext. 210) for more information.

We need financial assistance to furnish the following rooms:

- ◆ 10 Bedrooms
- ◆ Living Room
- ◆ Dining Room
- ◆ Kitchen
- ◆ Computer room
- ◆ Meditation room
- ◆ Activity room
- ◆ Youth room
- ◆ Laundry room
- ◆ Playground

In times of crisis, a warm, comfortable and welcoming environment makes an incredible difference. Interval House of Ottawa has prided itself on providing a “home” for our residents and we sincerely hope that you will be able to help us to make our new house a lovely and welcoming space.



Established in 1976, Interval House of Ottawa is a non-profit residence that provides safe shelter for women and their children fleeing abuse.

Interval House of Ottawa is committed to ending the cycle of violence and to empowering women and children who are victims of violence. We provide emergency shelter for women and their children fleeing abusive relationships, and offer crisis intervention and prevention services, advocacy for victims and education about family violence for both victims of violence and the community-at-large.

Charitable Registration #: 107513145RR0001

Interval House
of Ottawa
Maison Interval d'Ottawa

Crisis Line: 613-234-5181

TTY: 613-234-5393

Phone: 613-234-8511

Fax: 613-234-9474

Email: ihouse@bellnet.ca

www.intervalhouseottawa.org

c/o 55 Eccles Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1R 6S3