



Haven Highlights

Fall Newsletter 2026

The Voices, Stories and Lives of Street Haven

A message from Andrea

The past three months have been a season of progress, connection, and community at Street Haven. While the challenges facing women experiencing homelessness and housing instability in Toronto remain significant, our team continues to show up with compassion, dedication, and a deep commitment to helping women build safer, more stable futures.

Community connection was at the heart of this quarter. From our staff Wellness Day to our Community BBQ and Garage Sale, we had wonderful opportunities to celebrate our people, connect with supporters, and reflect on the impact of our collective work. A heartfelt thank-you to everyone who joined us at our summer BBQ and Garage Sale to raise funds for Street Haven, and to Indie88 for helping spread the word and promote the event.



This September, we came together for our AGM to reflect on the past year's achievements and share what's coming next. It was an opportunity for networking, enjoying a meal together, and welcoming our new Board members to the Street Haven family. Congratulations to Leslie Gash of the Toronto Shelter Network, this year's Peggy Anne Walpole Award recipient. The Walpole Award recognizes individuals who have made an exceptional contribution through service to others, and Leslie embodies that spirit.

We are also proud to celebrate the recognition of our workplace culture and values. Street Haven received the Great Place to Work certification and was a semi-finalist for the 2026 Charity Village Best Diversity,

Equity & Inclusion in the Workplace Award. These milestones reflect the dedication of our staff and our continued commitment to fostering a workplace where people feel valued, supported, and included.

We are deeply grateful to the staff, partners, and generous donors who continue to stand alongside us, including Lions Club Forest Hill, Verity Club of Toronto, St. James Cathedral Church, Daniel Carman from Over the Rainbow, and the Junior League of Toronto, among so many other kind supporters. Your generosity, encouragement, and belief in our mission help make our work possible and create meaningful opportunities for the women we serve. Your generosity and commitment make a lasting difference, and we are grateful to have you alongside us as we continue creating brighter futures for women and families in our community.

In Gratitude,

Andrea Paszti

Behind the Scenes



Welcoming the Verity Club of Toronto as a New Community Partner

passionate dedicated professionals who want to understand the complexities of homelessness, how it affects women & what they can do to help, as a group and as individuals.

Verity is our neighbor and is located on Queen Street East, in the same part of downtown, Toronto where Street Haven has run its emergency shelter at 87 Pembroke Street since 1967 as well as multiple supportive housing sites. When a women's club like Verity rooted in our neighborhood turns its attention to the women who need support nearby, that is a community investing in itself.

Does your workplace, club, or group want to help? We'd love to hear from you. To learn more about how to get involved scan below the attached QR code.

Stories of Giving

This fall, the Verity Club of Women welcomed members of our leadership team to share our programs, our services, and the work we do every day to support women in our community. It was a chance to connect, to learn from one another, and to start building a relationship we hope will last for many years to come.

What stood out was the curiosity in the room. As Verity Club members are not looking for a one-time gesture. They are the

One Runner, One Goal



Daniel Carman Runs for Women at Street Haven

For the first time this september, Street Haven took part in the Constantine Yorkville Run. Daniel Carman of Over the Rainbow Ltd. was our lead fundraiser put his time, his network, and his name behind our mission. The response has been remarkable to have been brought into this community fundraiser by Daniel.

Joining us that day were community partners, donors, even a former resident of Street Haven who came by our booth to say hi. Seeing everyone together and cheering on Daniel at the race start, was a reminder that Street Haven is a part of so many people's stories, past and present.

Thank you, Daniel, and thank you to everyone who made the day possible. We're already looking forward to next year!

Corporate Partnership in Action: CIBC

A huge thank you to the fantastic volunteer team from CIBC, who spent the day with us at our shelter. Their time, energy, and care made a real difference.

The day started in our donation garage, where the team cleaned out and organized the space so incoming gifts can be put to good use. Then, they prepped inventory for our upcoming garage sale, helping us raise funds for the programs that support the women we serve. The most meaningful moment of the day was the team completely furnishing a new apartment for a mother moving into her

very first home. Piece by piece, they turned an empty space into somewhere warm, welcoming, and ready for a fresh start.

Hands-on corporate volunteering not only drives real, tangible change for the community we serve, but it also brings teams together in a powerful, memorable way. We are grateful to CIBC for their time and meaningful community partnership. If your organization is looking for rewarding team-building activities and impactful ways to practice Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), we would love to connect. Scan the attached QR code for more details.



Learn about corporate partnerships.

More Than a Grant

A grant can be the end of a story, or the start of one.

Our relationship with the Junior League of Toronto (JLT) began this spring, when Street Haven was chosen as one of its grant recipients. The JLT is an organization of women, founded in 1926, whose members volunteer and train to become community leaders. We were grateful for the support, but it did not end there.

The JLT chose Street Haven as one of its charities for Find the Good Day, a Junior League initiative that recognizes how small acts of kindness can transform communities. Their members created 24 Welcome Home baskets for our clients moving into a new home. Each one is filled with everyday essentials like cleaning and cooking supplies, & packed inside a laundry hamper the client gets to keep.

These basics matter. A woman stepping into a new chapter of independence and stability has a lot to think about. Having the basics already means one less thing to worry about, and one more reason to feel supported.

Want to do something similar with your group? Collection drives for hygiene products, clothing, and household essentials give women a fresh start.



Street Haven staff with JLT members delivering 24 Welcome Home Baskets.

~ Thank you, JLT.



Relax, Refresh, Reconnect

48 clients from across Street Haven's programs, including Shelter and Housing, Addictions, Mental Health, Community Outreach, the Seniors Program, and Employment and Training Services, came together for a summer outing to Toronto Island under the theme "Relax, Refresh, Reconnect."

Clients cycled on quadricycles, took scenic train rides, enjoyed amusement rides, danced salsa, and joined lively dance competitions with prizes and giveaways. Beyond the fun, the day gave clients a welcoming, inclusive space to build social connections, practice communication skills, take part in group activities, and enjoy the outdoors.

The highlight was seeing clients relax, express themselves, laugh, and connect with one another. It was a day of connection, community, and shared memories, and a reflection of Street Haven's commitment to provide experiences that promote well-being, inclusion, and social connection.



Learn about in-kind gifts.



Bringing Community Together



This summer, our Street Haven BBQ and Garage Sale at our 87 Pembroke Street shelter, brought our community together for a wonderful day of connection, generosity, and support. We are so grateful to everyone who came out, browsed the garage sale, enjoyed some BBQ, and helped raise funds for Street Haven & the women we serve.

A heartfelt thank-you to all the community members and donors who gave their time, donated items, made purchases, and contributed to making the event such a success. Your generosity reminds us of the power of community and what we can accomplish when we come together for a shared cause.

A special thank-you to Kim Ward with Indie88 for promoting the event and spreading the word. Your support helped us reach more people and bring our community together for Street Haven.

Our Work In Action

Shelter and Housing

At Street Haven, finding a safe and stable home is about more than having a place to live, it's about building a sense of belonging, maintaining important connections, and creating space for a fresh start.

While the path to housing stability can be long and uncertain, our commitment remains the same: to meet women with compassion, provide support without judgment, and help them move forward at their own pace.

These past few months were marked by continued efforts to support women experiencing homelessness and housing instability while advancing several significant housing initiatives. Despite ongoing challenges in Toronto's housing market, staff remained focused on providing responsive, client-centered services that promoted housing stability, well-being, and community integration. We successfully housed 10 women, a notable achievement given the limited availability of affordable housing options and increasing barriers faced by many clients seeking permanent housing.

For women experiencing homelessness, having a safe place to stay can be the first step toward a fresh start. At Street Haven, our Shelter Services team works every day to ensure women feel welcomed, respected, and supported as they navigate difficult circumstances and work toward a more stable future.

The quarter was also defined by important program growth and transition milestones. Finding permanent, affordable housing in Toronto remains a major challenge, and many women need to stay in shelter longer while they search for a place to call home. Throughout the quarter, our team continued to work alongside clients, offering guidance, encouragement, and support as they worked toward their housing, health, income, and personal goals.

Building trust is at the heart of this work. Staff made time to connect with clients, check in on their progress, and revisit individual plans as needs changed. These ongoing conversations help ensure every woman receives support that reflects her circumstances and priorities.



This quarter brought exciting progress. Women are now able to access supportive housing sooner, helping them take the next step toward independence and stability. We also celebrated the opening of 332 Chisholm Avenue, a new chapter in our work to provide safe, supportive homes for mothers and their children.

We also reached some important milestones in our supportive housing programs. At 91 Pembroke, tenants moved to 87 Pembroke as we prepared for upcoming construction and redevelopment. With thoughtful planning and individualized

support, the transition went smoothly, allowing women who have called the community home to maintain their familiar routines, relationships, and care. Our housing team continues to work closely with tenants, offering guidance, connecting them with resources, and addressing challenges before they become bigger concerns. This ongoing support helps women maintain their housing and feel confident putting down roots in their communities. We're proud to see women settling into their homes and building lives with greater stability. Our team also remains committed to making sure housing is safe, well-maintained, and responsive to the needs of the people who live there. These milestones reflect what's possible when housing and compassionate support come together. Every new home creates an opportunity for a fresh start, stronger connections, and a more hopeful future.



Training & Employment

This quarter, Street Haven is a winner of the Q2 Performance Challenge for 12-Month Employed outcomes, achieving a fantastic 33% increase. Congratulations to the whole team on a result that is worth celebrating!

Our Training and Employment team helped clients find stable housing, meaningful work, and new career paths.

Between July and September, 9 clients graduated from the Pathways to Independence program, and 100% of them maintained their housing. The team also welcomed 9 new referrals, strong collaboration with Ontario Health at Home, VHA, The Corner, Reconnect, and Sistering made this possible, including support for 3 clients with home and mobility assessments. Clients were also connected to the Furniture Bank and received MCIS language supports, so the move into stable housing came with the resources to make it a home.



We strengthened community partnerships with organizations such as Toronto Public Library, JW Marriott, Learn Formula, Ridge Associates, and BDO, creating employment opportunities, supporting referrals, and connecting clients to hiring opportunities and mentorship.



A Story of Hope

Funded through the Skills Development Fund, Women's Healthcare Pathways launched with 34 women enrolled in training: 11 in the Personal Support Worker (PSW) program and 23 in the Home Support Worker (HSW) program. The program pairs employment readiness and career coaching with industry-recognized certifications and occupational training at IDEA Training Collaborative and IBT College, helping women build rewarding careers in healthcare.

One of the new students is Carmel, had been thinking about going back to school for a long time, but trepidation held her back.

"As a 41-year-old, going back to school was always in the back of my mind, but so was the fear," she shares. "The fear that I am too old, and would I do good because it's been so long?"

Her timing couldn't be better. Ontario's population is aging, and the need for personal support workers (PSWs) is growing with it. Estimates cited by the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario suggest the province will need at least 50,000 more PSWs by 2032.

For Carmel, the difference started before her first class. "Thanks to Street Haven at the Crossroads preparing me and other students, I walked in feeling nervous but confident to start my Personal Support Worker (PSW) course."

We believe women deserve the opportunity to start a meaningful career at any stage of life, and Carmel is showing what that looks like. As she puts it: *"I am grateful to Street Haven at the Crossroads for having this program for women and to the entire team for helping me along the way."*

Welcome to Street Haven, Carmel!

Our Work In Action

Addictions and Mental Health

Our focus remains on supporting each client's individual recovery journey and recognizing that recovery does not look the same for everyone. Treatment extends beyond abstinence to include building practical recovery skills, strengthening relationships and community supports, developing strategies for managing mental health and substance use, and preparing clients for a successful transition back into the community.

A key priority continues to be strengthening the connection between live-in treatment and the supports available after Grant House. This includes helping clients develop meaningful connections to outreach, mental health, housing, and community-based services so that the end of residential treatment does not mean the end of support.



Lilly Bourani & Tishana Lynch attending Moss Park's International Overdose Awareness Day event.

International Overdose Awareness Day at Grant House provided an important opportunity for clients and staff to remember those who have died as a result of overdose, while creating space for education, reflection, and open conversations about substance use and the ongoing impact of the toxic drug supply. Although Grant House is an abstinence-based treatment program, we recognize that clients arrive at different points in their recovery and that providing non-judgmental information and harm-reduction education is an important part of supporting safety.

Community, identity, and belonging also remained important components of the work. Through various activities including recognizing the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, clients and staff were provided with opportunities for connection, reflection, learning, and recognition. These moments are particularly meaningful within addictions services, where experiences of trauma, stigma, discrimination, and social exclusion can be closely connected to substance use and barriers to care.

Mental health services continue to be an increasingly important part of Street Haven's integrated approach to addictions, trauma, and wellness. Rather than mental health and substance use as separate concerns, the program supports clients in understanding and addressing the ways these experiences intersect with one another, as well as with housing instability, trauma, relationships, and other social determinants of health.

One of the most significant developments this quarter was the commencement of the Afrocentric Spiritual Psychotherapy project. This initiative represents an important step in expanding culturally responsive mental health services at Street Haven and recognizes that healing can be influenced by culture, identity, spirituality, community, and lived experience.

We also renewed our partnership with the indigenous organization, 2 Spirits, strengthening our ability to connect clients with culturally specific and community-based supports. These partnerships are an important complement to our internal programming and allow us to draw on specialized community expertise while providing clients with a broader continuum of support.



Vince Pawis Sr. teaching Street Haven staff and clients about the Seven Grandfather Teachings, on National Day for Truth & Reconciliation

Our Work In Action



Outreach continues to play a critical role in engaging individuals who may not yet be ready or able to access residential treatment or more structured clinical services. The strength of the program lies in its flexibility and relationship-based approach. Rather than requiring clients to first fit into a particular service model, outreach allows Street Haven to meet people where they are and work alongside them to identify what support is most meaningful at that point in their lives.

While many outreach activities can be measured through referrals and service contacts, much of the most important work of outreach cannot be captured by a number. It is the process of building trust with someone who may have had difficult experiences with service providers, maintaining contact when circumstances are unstable, helping someone attend an appointment, supporting a housing application, or simply remaining a consistent and non-judgmental point of contact.

Our Funders



With Gratitude





Our Vision

A future where every woman lives in safety, dignity and hope.

Our Mission

We meet women where they are and offer integrated services to help them lead empowered lives.

Senior Management

Andrea Paszti, Executive Director

Ajay Walia, Director of Finance and Operations

Grace Kolawole, Director of Housing & Shelter Services

Cynthia Lewis, Director of Employment, Training and Special Projects

Dayna Moreash, Director of Addictions, Mental Health, & Outreach Services

Board of Directors

Tatiana Soldatova, Chair

Mary Chang, Treasurer

Grace Ma, Director

Stephanie Andrew, Director

Dr. Roisin Byrne, Director

Maeve Byrne, Director

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Current Needs at our Shelter

toiletries,
toothpaste,
cream, shampoo,
conditioner, new
underwears, new
bras, bedding,
winter clothes,
boots and towels



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