



Downtown Eastside



**Annual Report 2024/2025**

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We gratefully acknowledge that our work takes place  
on the unceded territories of the **xʷməθkʷəy̓əm**  
**(Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səl̓ílwətaɬ**  
**(Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. We honour the Indigenous**  
**women among us and across these lands.**

# Letter from the Executive Director



Dear Friends,

2024-25 has been another busy year for the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre (DEWC), a significant focus being developing our internal infrastructure to ensure adequate support for the essential work. After years of continued growth, the need for a structure to support it became evident. As we witness so many women's organizations and services closing or cutting services, we see the resulting increased demand at DEWC.

This year, DEWC served over **288,000 meals**, assisted **247 women** to secure and/or maintain housing, provided emergency shelter to **1,800 women**, and connected **127 women** to **advocacy, victim services, sexual assault response**, and over **50 culturally relevant, trauma-informed programs**. We know that long-term sustainability is vital.

This year, DEWC secured long-term provincial funding for the Drop-In Centres. This is an incredible achievement which comes after many years of effort to ensure the sustainability of the Drop In programs. We are grateful to DEWC Board Member who facilitated the long overdue decision to permanently fund this vital program. As a result we have been able to extend the hours and days

of operations at both Drop In sites as well as allows us to build and expand programming.

As we reflect on this past year we also continue to be inspired. Despite the ever-challenging environment marked by on-going systemic gender-based violence, rising costs, a toxic drug supply crisis, increasing homelessness, this report provides a snapshot of our collective efforts and the impact it has. Every number represents a life touched, every program a moment of community.

**We would like to thank the In Area Volunteers/Peers who undertake an enormous amount of work to ensure the operation of DEWC.** Without the dedication and commitment of the in-area volunteer/peers, we would not be able to provide the services and programs that we do.

We recognize that many of the volunteers live in extremely challenging circumstances including poverty and homelessness, yet consistently show up to contribute to making a safe space for women and to ensure that DEWC remains reflective of our mission and purpose.

**We would like to thank DEWC staff who continue to provide essential services within a very**

**challenging environment.** Although incredibly busy, chaotic, and stretched for resources, DEWC staff work with commitment, care, and generosity.

**We recognize the Board of Directors who volunteer many hours to oversee the work of DEWC.** We really appreciate the dedication and hard work of each board member. We are also extremely grateful to the Fundraising Committee members who have been working to support our long-term goals and priorities such as Herstory.

**Finally, a thank you goes to all of the women who access the DEWC, for contributing in so many ways to make it the special and unique space that it is.** Every day, DEWC members are supporting staff or other women; helping to clean up; reaching out to women in distress; sharing food with women who come in hungry; and laughing, joking, singing – creating a welcoming and safe space.

We know that as the demands for services and support programs continue to grow, offering a space of safety, and community for women in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside remains the priority.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alice Kendall".

Alice Kendall, Executive Director



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*“In a challenging and often under-resourced environment, our staff and volunteers work tirelessly to support women in the community. We recognize and appreciate them.”*

- Katy Allen, Chair of the Board

# Letter from the Board Chair



Dear supporters,

It is my privilege to share the 2024/2025 Annual Report for the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre. Each year, this organization bears witness to the extraordinary strength and contribution of women in the community—and this past year was no exception. Despite ongoing systemic challenges, DEWC continued to provide a critical refuge and support system.

DEWC programming extends beyond crisis response—building community, celebration, and opportunity for reflection in a safe space. This year we celebrated, Indigenous-led events, holiday gatherings, pop-up markets, and volunteer-led workshops. These moments of joy and connection matter deeply. They are proof that healing and pride are possible, even in the face of systemic gender-based violence, homelessness, and poverty.

We are grateful for the partnerships that made this work possible: collaborations with Vancouver Coastal Health, BC Housing, Indigenous leaders, and grassroots organizations strengthened our capacity to respond to complex needs with compassion and care.

We would like to acknowledge our incredible volunteers who gave nearly 10,000 hours of their time, and our dedicated staff whose commitment

drives our mission forward. In a challenging and often under-resourced environment, our staff and volunteers work tirelessly to support women in the community. We recognize and appreciate them.

As Board Chair, I am committed to stewarding this organization through a time of continued transformation—ensuring that our decisions remain rooted in feminist, trauma-informed, principles that reflect our Mission and Mandate. We will continue advocating for policy changes: a national and provincial gender-based violence prevention and response plan that ecommendations contained in the Final Report, National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG); real housing solutions; effective strategies in response to the toxic drug supply, and sustainable funding to uphold our mission.

To everyone who contributed this year—thank you. Your support made every meal, every moment of connection, and every act of care possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katy Allen".

Katy Allen, Chair of the Board

# Our Year at a Glance / Key Impact Stats



**287,742**  
meals served across 5 sites

**116,895**  
302 Columbia  
Drop-In

**88,857**  
412 Cordova  
Shelter

**41,820**  
265 Shelter

**25,630**  
25 East Hastings  
Drop-In

**14,540**  
398 Powell  
Warming Space

*“I look forward to coming to the Women’s Centre for my meals, it can be the highlight of my day to have something the staff so clearly put love into.”*

- Anonymous participant



**9,499**  
volunteer hours  
contributed by women  
of the dtes community



**127**  
women supported  
through Victim Services

responded to

# 150 & 219

initial repeated  
sexual assaults

99

*“Since I started coming to the centre, I have found a very good and strong sisterhood and connection I never thought was possible.”*

- Anonymous participant



**2,819**  
external referrals



**1,369**  
internal referrals



**1,206**  
mental health  
advocacy services

## Over 50 community events/ program offerings

## including:

## **Spring & Harvest Dinners, National Indigenous Peoples Day, Truth and Reconciliation Day, and other holiday celebrations**



# Program Highlights

## Drop-In Centres

(302 Columbia & 25 East Hastings)



Our Drop-In Centres remained a vital refuge, **open 13 hours a day, 7 days a week**. We provided nutritious meals, showers, toiletries, clothing, harm reduction supplies, and connection to critical services. New community-building programming included karaoke, trivia nights, and parklet beautification projects. We welcomed practicum students from local colleges, and hosted seasonal events such as the Spring Dinner and Lunar New Year. Partnerships with the City of Vancouver, VCH, Sheway, and many others enriched our service delivery.

## Shelters

(265, 398, and 412 Cordova)

Our shelters continued to operate at or near full capacity, serving over **1,800 women** this year. 412 Cordova provided 24/7 emergency shelter to numerous women daily, with over **42,000 meals** served. All shelters offered culturally relevant programming, peer-led support, renovated bathrooms, and consistent programming like art nights and movie nights. New storage systems improved logistics and supply sharing. The sites also supported increased mental health needs and helped women transition into housing, often after long shelter stays.



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*"I completed a 9-month college program since coming to DEWC. The centre helped me get access to meals and housing which is hard enough to get when you're a student, but even harder when you're unhoused."*

- Anonymous participant



## Kitchen Services

Across all sites, our kitchen team served **287,742 meals**. We launched a rotating seasonal menu co-created with women at each location, supporting cultural inclusion and ownership. The kitchen team led efforts to upgrade smallwares and celebrated special meals across all sites. Despite challenges from aging infrastructure, staff shortages, and rising food costs, the team continued to anchor our programming in nourishment and dignity. Partners like Terra Bread, Khalsa Aid, and Save-On Foods played a vital role.

## Specialized Services

Our team responded to **150 initial** and **219 repeat** sexual assaults, provided individualized support to **127 women** through our Victim Services program, and connected survivors to more than **2,800 external resources** to ensure they had access to the care and services they needed.

Onsite supports included income assistance applications, court accompaniment, and trauma-informed care planning. Weekly mobile health clinics in partnership with VCH brought STI screening, wound care, flu vaccines, and mental health supports directly to women in our shelters.

*Our motto: “kick open doors for women to walk through with keys in their hands”*

– Cheryl Sutton  
Director, specialized services & programs

## Housing Outreach

With a vacancy rate under 1% and record-high rents, our housing team worked through immense barriers to support women in securing and maintaining housing. We served **247 women**, successfully **housed 65**, prevented **43 evictions**, and issued **120 rental subsidies**. The team also completed **70 apartment setups** and nearly **100 grocery shops**. Partnerships with BC Housing, Atira, Aboriginal Mother’s Centre, and private landlords helped extend our reach. One notable success was housing six women together in a single unit to preserve safety and community.

*I have been homeless for 18 years, over half of my life. Since I found a place, I am feeling at home for the first time in a long time. I even secured a job.”*

– Anonymous participant

## Cultural and Indigenous Programs

Led by a deep commitment to decolonial and culturally relevant programming, we hosted events for National Indigenous Peoples Day, Pride Month, Truth and Reconciliation Day, Herstory, and Black History Month. Activities included language circles, pop-up shops, art workshops, and a fashion show. Community partners like Vancouver Indigenous Fashion Week, the Crossing Art Gallery, and the African Descent Society supported meaningful engagement. Participation in cultural and expressive programs remains one of the most valued aspects of our service.

## Volunteer & Skills Development



Women with lived experience took leadership through our peer-based volunteer model, shaping programming and creating a bridge to long-term engagement. Volunteers received training in trauma-informed care, de-escalation, and communication. A program evaluation highlighted how involvement helped women access housing, education, and healing. Many activities—including bingo, movie nights, beauty evenings, and holiday dinners—were initiated and led by volunteers.

***"I give back to the community by providing my services through volunteering to the people in the Downtown Eastside, especially seniors, women and children. It feels good to support my community when the most I could give is my energy and time."***

— Lily

## Facilities & Operations

Our facilities team completed over **2,000 maintenance requests** and led major capital projects, including installing air conditioning at 398 Powell, fully renovating 412's showers, and opening the Pender Admin Office. This work ensures safer, more dignified environments for women and frontline staff. Climate adaptation, IT infrastructure upgrades, and accessibility improvements remain top priorities going forward.

## Chinese Seniors Outreach



Our Chinese Seniors Program hosted community outings to the Dragon Boat Festival and Mid-Autumn events. The Fan Dance performance stood out as a major highlight. Ongoing programs like Tai Chi, karaoke, art groups, and tech cafés brought connection, joy, and dignity. The program continues to play a critical role in reducing isolation among Chinese-speaking elders, with support from SUCCESS and the Chinese Canadian Museum.

# Special Initiatives & Events



## Fundraising Events:

### Herstory Annual Gala

Women of the Centre participated as models, celebrating strength and individuality while raising awareness and over **\$224,000** for the organization.

### Crossing Pop-Up Shop

A seasonal marketplace where women sold handcrafted items and art, supporting empowerment through entrepreneurship.

### Vancouver Half Marathon & 5K

Each year, DEWC is overwhelmed by movement of people who choose to take part in this event. It's a fun event whether you're walking the 5k as a family or trying to beat your BP in the 21.1K. Team DEWC raised a total of **\$8,739**.

## Community & Program Events:

- **Cultural Celebrations:** Lunar New Year, Mid-Autumn Festival, Red Dress Day, Truth and Reconciliation Day, National Indigenous Peoples Day, and Black History Month
- **Seasonal Events:** Spring Dinner, Harvest Dinner, Christmas Dinner, New Year's Celebration, Mother's Day Celebration, and Halloween Party
- **Wellness & Engagement Activities:** Summer BBQ / Fun Day, Elder Gatherings, Children's Holiday Party (with photos with Santa), Fan Dance Group Performance (Chinese Seniors Program)
- **Skill-building & Drop-In Activities:** Tech Cafés, Trivia Nights, Movie Nights, Karaoke, Bingo (2,000+ sessions), Resin Workshops, Art Expression, and Writing Workshops
- **Support Clinics:** Free Tax Clinic, Hearing Clinic, Elder Abuse Prevention Talk, and onsite mobile health services through VCH partnerships



# Looking Ahead / Strategic Priorities

## Expanding

our programs to meet women where they are, offering new opportunities for healing, growth, and empowerment.

## Extending

hours of operation so that women have a safe and welcoming place to turn throughout more of the day and evening.

## Strengthening

partnerships with community allies to create a stronger network of support and advocacy for women in the DTES.

## Continuing

to stand at the forefront of meeting the urgent and evolving needs of women, ensuring safety, belonging, and hope for all who walk through our doors.

## Investing

in staff, volunteers, and leadership so that our frontline response remains strong, compassionate, and rooted in community.

## Building

a sustainable foundation that ensures DEWC can serve the women of the Downtown Eastside not only today, but for generations to come.



”

*“I love that there is so much support and advocacy at DEWC.*

- Anonymous participant

# Supporters & Donors

We extend our deepest gratitude to every individual, organization, foundation, and business who contributed to the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre this year. Whether through monthly giving, in-kind donations, event sponsorship, or one-time support, your generosity made our work possible.

Because of you, we were able to serve nearly 288,000 meals, provide thousands of women with safe shelter and crisis support, and host dozens of healing, cultural, and community-building events. Your commitment fuels real, lasting impact.

We honour your contribution, and we are profoundly grateful to stand with you in this work. Thank you for believing in the power and strength of women.

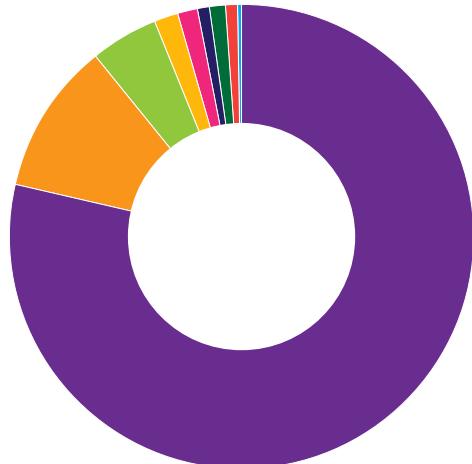


Andrew Mahon Foundation | Benefaction | Canadian Online Giving Foundation  
Canadian Women's Foundation | Charities Aid Foundation | Djavad Mowafaghian Foundation  
Ghai Charitable Foundation | Giftfunds Canada | Gore Mutual | The Houssian Foundation  
Lotte & John Hecht Memorial Foundation | PayPal Giving Fund | Port of Vancouver  
Private Giving Foundation | Raven Foundation | Strategic Charitable Giving Foundation  
Vancity Community Foundation | Vancouver Foundation | The Wheelbarrow Fund

# Financial Overview

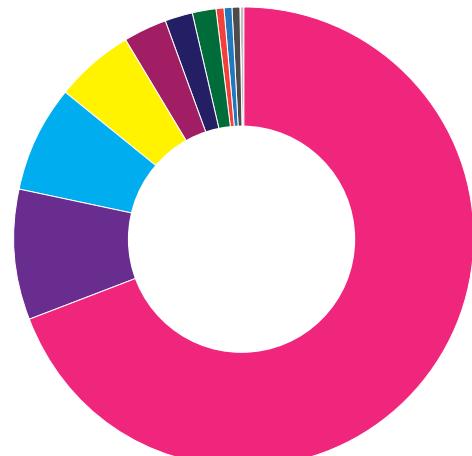
## Revenue

|                                |                      |              |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| ● Grants and contracts         | \$ 10,975,622        | 78.67 %      |
| ● Donations                    | \$ 1,467,576         | 10.50 %      |
| ● Foundation revenue           | \$ 661,616           | 4.75 %       |
| ● Charity and community groups | \$ 256,932           | 1.85 %       |
| ● Assets                       | \$ 173,448           | 1.25 %       |
| ● Gaming grant                 | \$ 140,000           | 1.00 %       |
| ● Interest and other income    | \$ 139,308           | 0.99 %       |
| ● Donations in-kind            | \$ 116,104           | 0.83 %       |
| ● Memorial fund                | \$ 20,260            | < 0.5 %      |
| <b>Total</b>                   | <b>\$ 13,950,866</b> | <b>100 %</b> |



## Expenses

|                                  |                      |              |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| ● Salaries and benefits          | \$ 9,438,604         | 69.25 %      |
| ● Food                           | \$ 1,254,680         | 9.25 %       |
| ● Program costs                  | \$ 1,018,465         | 7.5 %        |
| ● Facilities                     | \$ 762,322           | 5.5 %        |
| ● Human resources                | \$ 449,769           | 3 %          |
| ● Amortization of capital assets | \$ 280,260           | 2 %          |
| ● Office                         | \$ 258,954           | 1.75 %       |
| ● Event expenses                 | \$ 70,669            | 0.5 %        |
| ● Insurance                      | \$ 69,222            | 0.5 %        |
| ● Professional fees              | \$ 28,729            | < 0.5 %      |
| ● Travel                         | \$ 9,003             | < 0.125 %    |
| ● Fees and dues                  | \$ 2,856             | < 0.125 %    |
| <b>Total</b>                     | <b>\$ 13,643,533</b> | <b>100 %</b> |



Excess of revenue over expenses from operations \$ 307,333

Other income  
Unrealized gain on marketable securities \$ 13,039

Excess of revenue over expenses for the year \$ 320,372

# Our Board of Directors

**Katy Allen**

Chair of the Board

**Shannon Kidd**

Board Co-Chair

**Gemma Bishop**

Secretary

**Alejandra Glazebrook**

Treasurer

**Samantha Watkins**

Volunteer Rep

**Debbie Baker**

Member

**Andrea Glickman**

Member

**Sylvia Isaac**

Member

**Maria Jack**

Member

**Naomi Kronitz**

Member

**Robin Raweater**

Member

**Laura Track**

Member

**Lorelei Williams**

Member

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*“DEWC programming extends beyond crisis response—building community, celebration, and opportunity for reflection in a safe space.”*

- Katy Allen, Chair of the Board

Downtown Eastside  
**Women's  
Centre**



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<https://dewc.ca/>



@DEWCVancouver