

Mission Statement

The mission of the Downtown Eastside Women's Center is to provide a safe, non-judgmental environment for women from all walks of life, who live and/or work in the Downtown Eastside. To achieve this goal, the Centre provided supportive surroundings with meals, counseling, advocacy and programs which nurture and empower members.

Philosophy

Established Principles:

The following values are the basic principles and beliefs of the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre. They determine the way the Centre operates.

- 1. A safe, non-judgmental place for women:** The Centre is dedicated to providing a safe place for women and children. They are treated in a non-judgmental fashion. Each woman's strengths and experiences are valued and respected. We define "woman" as anyone who lives as a woman (ie. in the case of a transgendered woman, she must identify and live as a woman).
- 2. Anti-poverty mandate:** Our mandate is anti-poverty, and we know that poverty is a systemic problem and not an individual problem. Every woman is entitled to the basic necessities of life, including safe, clean housing, food, clothing, education and other practical needs.
- 3. Feminist organization:** We are a feminist organization with feminism as our guiding philosophy. We are committed to analyzing and taking action against patriarchy. Every woman is entitled to a woman-only space. We believe every woman is entitled to self-determination, self-respect, self-esteem and safety.
- 4. Welcoming diversity:** We respect and welcome cultural diversity. The Centre has no political or religious affiliation. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, religion, political beliefs, age, culture, family status, place of ancestry, body size, or mental or physical ability in providing services. We acknowledge our differences yet we can appreciate our common experiences as women and work toward strength from those connections
- 5. Anti-racism mandate:** The Centre has an anti-racism mandate and is committed to unlearning racism. We will work towards an environment that is part of the solution in fighting racism.
- 6. Respecting rights to make choices:** We respect a woman's right to make her own choices. We are pro-choice on the issue of abortion.
- 7. Consensus decision-making:** We are committed to striving towards (non-hierarchical) consensus in decision-making. Members will always have a voice in the direction and general operations of the Centre.