

# Annual Report 2019-2020

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**BATTLEFORDS INTERVAL HOUSE**

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## Land Acknowledgement

Battlefords Interval House acknowledges that we are on Treaty 6 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis. We pay our respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of this place and reaffirm our relationship with one another. We are dedicated to ensuring that the spirit of Reconciliation and that Treaty 6 is honoured and respected.



## About Us

**The Battlefords Interval House Society Inc.** is a community-based non-profit, charitable organization which provides provide 24-hour emergency safe shelter and support for women and those with accompanying children leaving circumstances of violence and abuse. The shelter also provides services which may include crisis intervention, emotional support, safety planning, childcare, transportation, public education, and advocacy.

Battlefords Interval House is a 15-bed facility (6 rooms) and has the capacity to accommodate 19 residents.

### Our Mission

To work towards the elimination of violence by providing safe shelter, empowerment, support, education and guidance to women and their children in crisis.

### Our Values

Battlefords Interval House believes in providing a safe, respectful environment for women and their children experiencing violence.

### Our Goals

- To provide safe, secure housing for women in crisis
- To provide information and support to women in crisis
- To provide advocacy to women and children
- To build opportunities for self-help leading to empowerment

## Message from the Executive Director

When I hear the phrase 'women's shelter' the first thing that comes to mind is 'resilience'. Resilience of the women and children who utilize the Battlefords Interval House (BIH) services. These women come from all walks of life, but one common denominator is they all have come from violence and trauma. Their stories will vary, their pain will vary, but why they have come to BIH is the same. They all have no place left to turn; no place left to go. Often it takes their last molecule of energy, courage, to ask for help. These women amaze me!

Four decades is how long BIH staff, volunteers and the board of directors have devoted themselves to supporting women and children fleeing intimate partner violence and abuse. This service has remained steadfast over the many years. We provide emergency housing, food and clothing, emotional support, advocacy, and education. We provide education to our community and surrounding areas to help spread the word that violence kills, but there is support and hope for a violence free future.

Staff at BIH are available 24-hours a day, 7 days a week. There is always someone available to pick up the crisis line call and be there for someone. For the duration of our clients stay, they have access to various in-house programs and to our various community partners' programs. The relationships we develop with many community members, local businesses, and other agencies are all necessary for the success of our agency. They say it takes a village, and that is true in our case.

Another intricate part to this village is the incredible employees. Listening, being professional and supportive is part of the work they do. But internally they have heard about the violence and the trauma, thus they must find their own ways to digest this information. They do this 365 days a year. They are to be commended!

The last part to our village is the ongoing generous support we receive from the Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice, service clubs, churches, local and distant businesses, other not-for profit agencies, and of course all those many private individuals who consistently donate money and supplies to support women and children of the Battlefords and area. We are forever grateful to all who lend us their support.

The end of our fiscal year brought many new challenges with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. These are uncharted waters we sail, but the village has pulled together yet again. Support and guidance from the board of directors, the Ministry of Justice, the Provincial Association of Transition Houses and Services, Women's Shelters Canada, many businesses, organizations, and the community have all helped us to be resilient. Resiliency the common denominator for us all!

Thank you, take care and stay safe.

*Debbie Kovalsky, Executive Director*

## Message from the Board Chair

It is my honour and privilege to present the Battlefords Interval House 2019-2020 Annual Report, my first as Chair of the Board of Directors.

This year marks the 40<sup>th</sup> year of service for Battlefords Interval House. Thanks to the dedication of all our supporters over the last 40 years, Battlefords Interval House is so much more than just a shelter. In addition to providing safety, we also support women as they rebuild their lives, develop resilience, navigate systems, and heal from the trauma caused by violence.

It was an extraordinary year of accomplishments and challenges, especially in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic at the end of this fiscal year. On behalf of the entire Board, I would like to thank all Battlefords Interval House staff for their continued agility, adaptability, and dedication to client service.

I would like to recognize and thank our Executive Director, Deborah Kovalsky, for her steadfast leadership during the pandemic. The pandemic presented huge challenges in terms of safety and training for staff, protection of clients, appropriate measures to contain an outbreak within our facility and ensuring that adequate resources were in place. With thoughtful planning and key adaptations in the workplace, Deb played a crucial role in ensuring the safety and wellness of Battlefords Interval House staff and clients. Through Deb's management and staff commitment, Battlefords Interval House continued to provide an essential service to our community.

On behalf of the staff, Board of Directors, and the women and children we serve, I would also like to thank all of our volunteers, generous donors, funders and community partners for supporting us over the years. We especially thank our major contributor, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice.

Our future is certain to hold its fair share of challenges as well as successes. As our community continues to be thrust into the middle of a global pandemic, our commitment to deliver high quality services and programming has not changed. We continue to support women and children experiencing violence, when and where they need us. More work needs to be done, but together we can make a difference in the lives of women and children we serve.

*Elaine Blais, Board Chair*

## 2019-2021 Strategic Priority

**Objective:** Battlefords Interval House is committed to sustaining long-term fiscal health and administrative effectiveness by ensuring its financial systems and processes are efficient, integrated, and transparent and that they adhere to appropriate non-profit accounting principles as well as Ministry of Justice requirements.

### Tactics – Year 1 (2019-2020)

- Restructure bank accounts, banking practices, as well as corresponding financial record-keeping to better align with fund-based accounting as required by non-profit organizations. Develop a well-defined, transparent reserve fund structure, correlating 'Reserve Policy'.
- Transition tracking of undesignated donations/designated donations/grants to electronic reporting.
- Improve Executive Director access to Battlefords Interval House financial records for timely financial management and risk mitigation purposes.

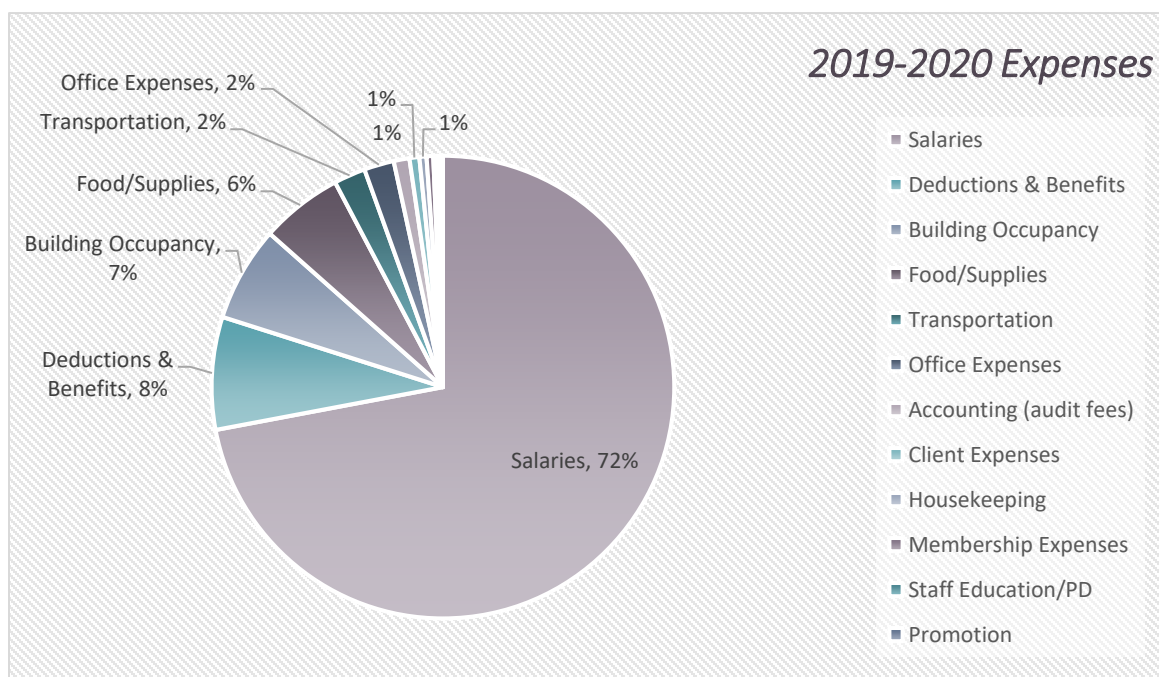
### Tactics – Year 2 (2020-2021)

- Complete implementation of the 2019-2020 tactics following year end audit approval.
- Streamline audit process.

### Special Thanks

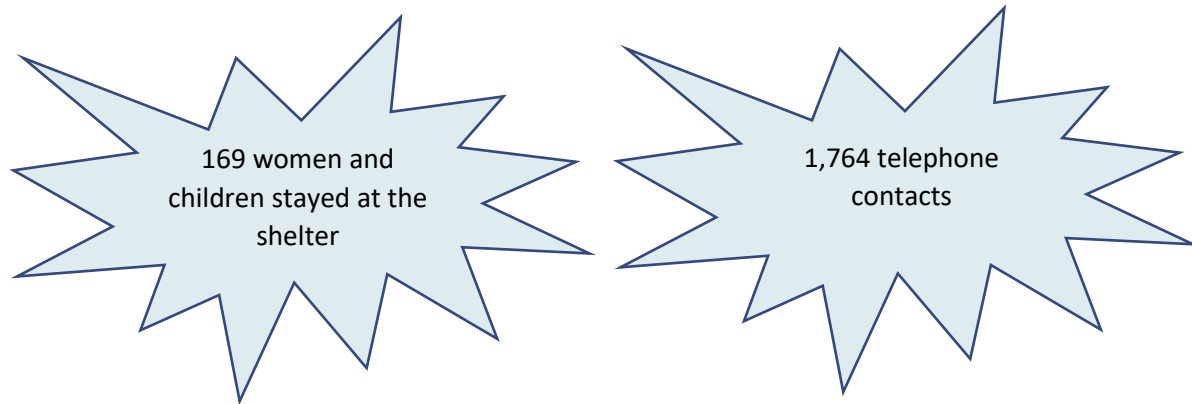
The Board of Directors extends a heartfelt thanks to Jan Allan, Director for her diligent work and financial expertise guiding the development and roll-out of our two-year strategic financial priority.

## Budget in Brief



## Program Report

24-hours/7 days a week support service is available to women and children of the Battlefords and area. This includes providing service to in-house clients, as well as telephone and website support for clients that are reaching out for assistance through these avenues.



The staff at Battlefords Interval House make every effort to provide relevant information and education to our clients about healthy relationships. We believe education and community involvement are integral to ending violence.

Here are some of the various community activities clients were able to participate in:

- Battle River Treaty Six Pancake Breakfast, June 21, 2019
- Nîpawistamâsowin: We Will Stand Up, June 25, 2019
- Battlefords Agency Tribal Chiefs Inc. (BATC) Urban Treaty Day, June 26, 2019
- Red Pheasant Cree Nation Pow Wow, July 2, 3 & 4, 2019
- National Child's Day – Field House, November 20, 2019

To support provision of quality service to clients, our staff attended the following professional development sessions:

- CPR and AED recertification
- Child Car Seat Clinic and Inspection
- Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment (ODARA) online training
- Opioid Addiction Recovery Services in-service presented by Battle River Treaty 6 Health Centre
- Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) course
- Online Employment Standards Training – 'Employment Standards' and 'Vacation & Vacation Pay'

## Community Partnerships

As we become more deeply connected with community programs and services, we offer our clients much more together than we ever could on our own. Strengthening community partnerships help to create a well-linked system – expanding options and support for women and their children as follows:

- Catholic Family Services of the Battlefords Inc. and Battleford's & Area Sexual Assault Centre Inc. each provide one educational group session per week at Battlefords Interval House.
  - Catholic Family Services deliver group support in areas such as: family violence, therapy for healthy relationships, grief/loss, disordered eating, etc.
  - Battleford's & Area Sexual Assault Centre Inc. deliver group support for survivors of sexual assault and/or abuse.
- Our staff assist with client referrals to the appropriate community agency (e.g. mental health, substance abuse, educational, family counselling) for clients who require additional external support.
- Battlefords Interval House joined with the Mental Health Capacity Building Initiative (Living Sky School Division and Light of Christ School Division) and Catholic Family Services Inc. to host their annual event on Wednesday December 6, 2019 to commemorate the *National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women*.



*Debbie Kovalsky of Battlefords Interval House, Mandy Melanson of Catholic Family Services of the Battlefords, as well as Erin Woytiuk with Mental Health Capacity Building Initiative led the vigil.*

- Battlefords Interval House initiated an ongoing working partnership with North Battleford Housing Authority (NBHA) and developed an application process for our clients to their agency that is streamlined, efficient and less 'wait' time for housing. When the pandemic unfolded in March 2020, a new process was implemented.



## Meet Jade

'Interval', a space of time between events, a moment in time! For a moment in time we offer a warm clean bed, cupboards full, bills paid, a peaceful violence free and stable home to women and children of the Battlefords and area. For a moment in time, we offer a refuge from someone's worst nightmare. When I speak of 'someone's worst nightmare' for many that could be a life-threatening medical diagnosis like cancer, but for many women and children, it is life threatening violence they are experiencing! Battlefords Interval House offers a moment in time for peace.

Meet Jade, she was a little shell of a woman, bruises filled the round of her eye and the back of her hand where she tried to protect herself. She brings her children and herself from her community, the place she had lived all her life. She leaves behind everything she has; her belongings, her clothing, her identifications, her extended family, everything! She also leaves her husband, to come to Battlefords Interval House for a moment in time, for rest from the violence of her husband. While at Battlefords Interval House she is offered the basics of life, food, shelter, and clothing. But what is more, she is offered the moment in time to find herself again. She is given the peaceful space to be able to think for herself, the support to work through the trauma her and her children just experienced. They are offered time to heal from their worst nightmare.

While with us at Battlefords Interval House, Jade was given the support to start over. Can you picture yourself starting over? We supported her to register her children in school, re-apply for her identifications, get her tax returns from Revenue Canada, apply for low income housing, and apply for Saskatchewan Income Support. She was supported to pursue counselling for herself and her children to work through the trauma they endured for many years. She healed from her external bruises and began the process to heal from her internal bruises. We watched her children change from being withdrawn and aggressive to their mother, and to one another, to becoming little people who were happy, smiling and cooperating with their mom. We watched Jade grow from a little shell of a woman to a self-supporting and confident woman and loving and caring mother. Jade qualified for Saskatchewan Income Support (SIS) and low-income housing. She was fortunate to receive some free furniture and household items to start over.

Jade is the statistic, she left her husband, her abuser for good on her seventh time leaving. Battlefords Interval House offered her that moment in time to find her way, to find her inner strength to grow. To find her person who she used to be before the abuse and the damage to her inner spirit. She was given the life saving time needed to regain her strength, to find hope for a better tomorrow.

## What's New and Different in 2019-2020?

- We are excited to announce that our new playground is completed! Thanks to *BATC Community Development Corporation – Let's Play Grant*, we are forever grateful.



- A new indoor play area was built in the main common room, thanks to the generous donation from *100 Women Who Care of the Battlefords*.



- Battlefords Interval House has a new business Facebook page to help with support resources, awareness, volunteer and staffing opportunities, donation needs, community support recognition, etc.



Who knew doing laundry could be so much fun?

- Staff and clients are thrilled with the new Maytag Commercial Washer/Dryer which is now our main laundry equipment.
- The old residential washer/dryer has become the backup equipment.

## Gratitude Report

As Battlefords Interval house celebrates its 40<sup>th</sup> year, we wish to thank everyone for their tremendous support. We are sincerely grateful to all those who make our work possible through donating funds, goods, services, and time.

### Funder

**Saskatchewan** Ministry of Justice

### Donations

100 Women Who Care of the Battlefords	Line Dance Club
Bank of Montreal, Staff Fundraiser	Macklin Senior's Club
Battle River Treaty 6 Health Centre, Wellness Program (training)	Maymont United Church, Mary Scott
Battle River Treaty 6 Health Centre, Staff Fund	McDonald, Murray and Marlene
Battleford Dental Group	Ottawa Community Foundation, William H. and Nora Hickson Kelly Fund
Battleford Quilters	Our Lady of Fatima Roman Catholic Church, Meota
Battlefords & Area Sexual Assault Centre; proceeds from The Vagina Monologues	Our Lady of Perpetual Help CWL, Cut Knife
Battlefords Union Hospital - Physio, Occupational, Speech and Language Therapies	PayPal Giving Fund Canada
Beta Sigma Phi, Preceptor Chapter	Polichuk, Irene
Biggar Associated Gospel Church	RBC Dominion Securities, Brendan Boothman and Molly Pederson
Boskill, Doug and Doreen	RBC Dominion Securities, Lobster Fundraiser
CanadaHelps	Richard Gibbons Law Office, Norsasklaw

Canadian Royal Purple Society, Cut Knife	Saskatchewan Health Authority – Pediatric Therapies Services
Chery Insurance Ltd.	SaskPower Women's Resource Centre, Regina
Crochet Knit and Knatters	SaskTel Pioneers
CUPE Local 5430	Shay, Robert and Donna
Delaney, Sharisse	Speers Pioneer Memorial United Church
Desjarlais, Owen In memory of Erica Desjarlais	St. Paul's Anglican Church Women
Discovery Co-op Food Store	St. Peter's CWL, Unity
Discovery Co-op Pharmacy	Stade, Lynne
Doug's Paint Shoppe Inc.	Steele, Lucille
Duncan, Brock and Sherry	Sunshine Card Club
Fabricland (Gaylo Enterprises Ltd.)	Tebay, Gary and Roberta
Gardipy, Karissa	Territorial Drive Alliance Church
Gut, Michelle	The Battlefords Housing Authority
Harder, Maddison	The Cup Café & Bakery, Bunnell, Rachel
Holy Family School Stewardship Club	Wensley, Gayle
Kanaweyimik Child & Family Services Inc.	Western Communities Foundations
Lascelle, Teresa	

### Grants

Community Grant Program for Sport, Culture, and Recreation; City of North Battleford
Community Grant Program for Sport, Culture, and Recreation; Town of Battleford
W. Brett Wilson and Family Donation

*Thank you*  
**FOR YOUR SUPPORT**

## Publicity



*100 Women Who Care the Battlefords met on Thursday, November 14, 2019 to hear presentations from community groups applying for a donation from them and select a winning entry. A sum of \$6,600 was awarded to the Battlefords Interval House. In the photo are Sandra Favel Rewerts of Battlefords Interval House, as well as Roni Keller and Kim Morrison.*



*Donations made to SaskEnergy's "Share the Warmth" program at Battlefords Union Hospital Foundation's 2019 Festival of Trees was accepted by The Battlefords Interval House. Seen in the photo are Shauna McGifford of BUHF, and BIH staff Joan Dutton and Nevenka Vas.*



## Board of Directors and Staff Members 2019-2020

### Past Board Members

We thank the following four outstanding volunteers for their service to our Board of Directors. They all played instrumental roles in guiding our organization with their insights and unique expertise. We are grateful for the combined thousands of hours they gave to Battlefords Interval House.

- Patricia Meiklejohn, Past Board Chair – years of service 1998-2019
- Olive Mills, Past Vice Chair – years of service 2007-2019
- Michele Allan, Director – years of service 2006-2019
- Rena Weikle, Director – years of service 2018-2019

### Board of Directors

- New board officers were appointed/elected as follows: Carol Johnson, Secretary on March 13, 2019; Elaine Blais, Board Chair and Sandra Favel Rewerts, Vice Chair on July 3, 2019.
- Director nominees Jan Allan, Rhea Good and Gail Heintz were elected to the Board of Directors at the Annual General Meeting held on June 26, 2019.

Elaine Blais – Board Chair  
 Sandra Favel Rewerts – Vice Chair  
 Carol Johnson – Secretary  
 Jan Allan – Director  
 Rhea Good – Director  
 Gail Heintz – Director

### Staff Members

**Executive Director** – Deborah Kovalsky

**Manager/Crisis Worker** – Karen Costello (resigned March 8, 2020)

**Permanent Crisis Workers:** Sheri Bear; Joan Dutton; Sheryl Ludwig; Michaela Smith; Jade Umpherville

**Casual Crisis Workers:** Amber Breault; Kesha Constant; Kimberly Holcombe; Larissa Ludwig; Sarah Sutherland; Leisa Swindler; Kelly Watt; Erin Woytiuk; Leanna Wuttnee; Jade Umpherville

**Shelter Support Worker** – Nevenka Vas (resigned March 15, 2020)

