



**REXDALE WOMEN'S CENTRE**

# Annual Report 2015–2016





# About Rexdale Women's Centre

## Our Vision

At Rexdale Women's Centre, our vision is that in the Greater Toronto Area all immigrant, newcomer and refugee women and their partners, children, parents, and other family members of all generations have everything they need:

- to access education, housing, services, programs, and meaningful/ gainful employment;
- to effectively settle and integrate into the local community and fully participate in Canadian society;
- to become self-sufficient and financially secure;
- to have respectful, caring and harmonious relationships with their partners, family members, neighbours and community members; and
- to live happy, safe, healthy, and socially active lives in which they are honoured and respected for who they are regardless of their background or gender.

## Our Mission

Rexdale Women's Centre is an independent, not-for-profit, voluntary agency that serves high-need women and their family members residing in the Greater Toronto Area.

Our Mission is to support immigrant, newcomer and refugee women and their family members of all generations to become fully participating members of Canadian society who are self-sufficient, financially secure, safe, happy, healthy and socially active. We accomplish this by enhancing our clients' individual functioning skills and by facilitating their access to resources, agencies, and community services. In particular, we assist our clients by providing programs and services that include, but are not limited to, settlement services, English language classes, violence prevention services, children's services, family support services, and post-settlement services, among others.







# 10,742

*Total individuals assisted*



# 33,743

*Services provided*







# Who We Assist

## CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS FOR APRIL 1, 2015 TO MARCH 31, 2016

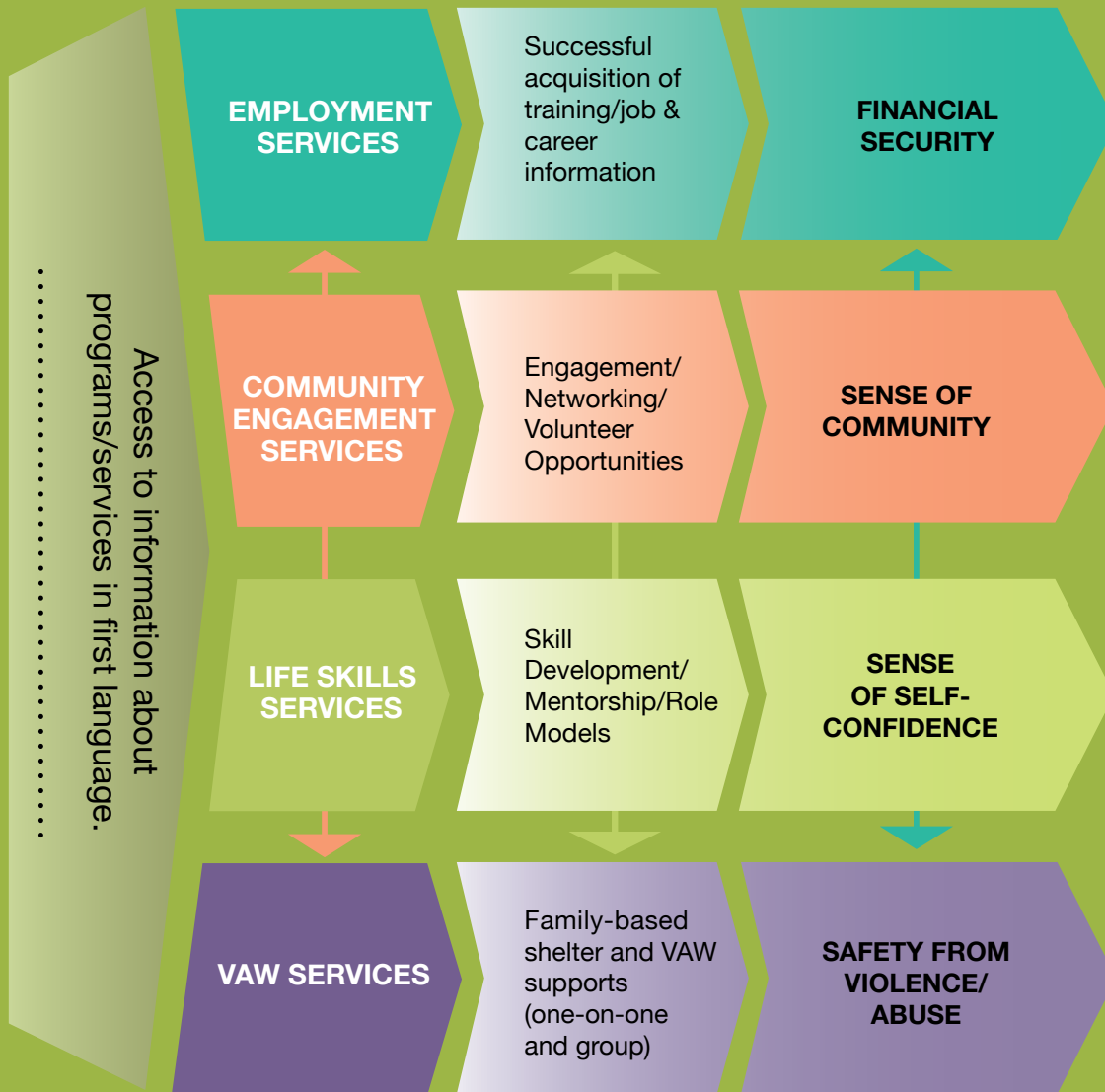
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS SERVED	TOTAL INDIVIDUALS		
New clients	6,356		
Previous-Returning clients	4,386		
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>10,742</b>		
SERVICES PROVIDED	TOTAL SERVICES	TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	
<b>DIRECT SERVICES (ONE-TO ONE)</b>			
Needs Assessment And Referrals	5,419	5012	
Information & Orientation	23,395	9542	
Employment	788	417	
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>29,602</b>	<b>14,971</b>	
GROUP SERVICES	TOTAL OF SESSIONS	TOTAL UNIQUE INDIVIDUALS	ATTENDANCE
Information & Orientation Group Activity	2749	3,795	27,245
Community Connections Group Activity	572	756	9,621
Language Training Enrollment	820	135	6,765
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>4,141</b>	<b>4,686</b>	<b>43,631</b>
<b>OVERALL TOTAL SERVICES</b>	<b>33,743</b>		

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	PERCENTAGE
South & Central Asia (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka)	41%
Middle East (Iraq, Iran, Syria)	16%
Africa (Somalia, Nigeria, Ghana)	15%
North America (Canada, USA)	3%
Caribbean (Jamaica, Dominican Republic, St. Vincent)	6%
Central- South America (Mexico, El Salvador, British Guyana, Colombia, Ecuador, Chile, etc)	5%
Asia (China)	2%
Eastern – Western Europe (Russia, Poland, Hungary, Italy)	1%
East Asia (Philippines, Vietnam)	0.4%
Others	11%

AGE	PERCENTAGE
Children and Youth (Up to 24 years of age)	17%
Adults (25 to 64 years of age)	71%
Seniors (65 years +)	12%

GENDER	PERCENTAGE
Female	60%
Male	40%

Women  
and Their  
Families  
in the  
Community



## Rexdale Women's Centre Theory of Change

By 2034, as a result of our work, women in the GTA are healthy, happy, productive, succeeding and contributing to their communities. They are able to make real changes that result in a better life for the families they may have. We recognize and value that women are all unique, complex and multi-dimensional.

# Employment Services

**762**  
*Number of clients served*

## Short Term Supportive Counselling

Women need support in order to make informed decisions as they may not have information in order to overcome personal obstacles and crisis. Without critical pieces of information, women may not have the confidence to make the decisions that are right for them. We provide culturally, and linguistically appropriate support for women when they encounter difficulties in moving ahead.

## Employment Support Groups for Women

Connecting, practicing and learning are some methods utilized by the participants to develop realistic employment goals. For women, especially, immigrant women and women from racialized communities with foreign credentials gainful employment is elusive. We assist women who are seeking to enter the workforce, or who are looking to establish themselves in the profession for which they have been trained.

## Employment and Career Counselling

Number of Clients Served: 568

Securing employment is one indicator of an individual's ability to contribute to society. Immigrant women, women from racialized communities, and refugee women face additional barriers to finding employment and re-establishing their careers when they settle in Canada. We provide assistance to women to determine their career and employment goals.

Linkages are made with other employment related services in the community, English language classes, training, apprenticeship and volunteer opportunities. With the right connections and supports, women spend less time trying to navigate numerous services and eligibility criteria.

"I liked the Employment Program because I found new friends. I learned how to set goals. It makes me happy because now I know how to plan my career. I learned about essential and communication skills. I learned English and how to use the computer. I have my resume ready and I am confident to go for a job interview soon. I thank all my counselors at Rexdale Women Centre for their guidance and support throughout this program." *Geethani Dammika Lokumanage*



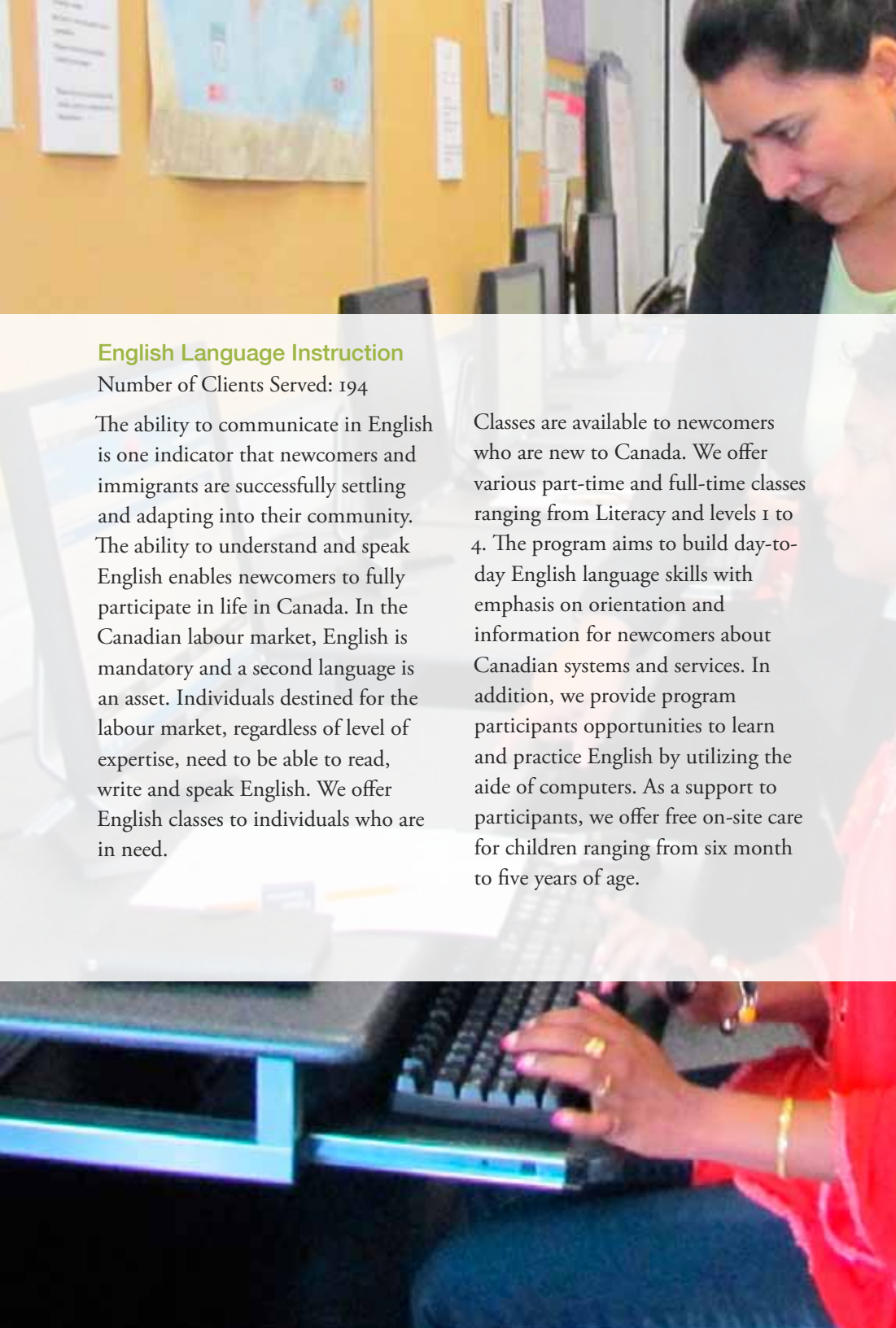
### English Language Instruction

Number of Clients Served: 194

The ability to communicate in English is one indicator that newcomers and immigrants are successfully settling and adapting into their community. The ability to understand and speak English enables newcomers to fully participate in life in Canada. In the Canadian labour market, English is mandatory and a second language is an asset. Individuals destined for the labour market, regardless of level of expertise, need to be able to read, write and speak English. We offer English classes to individuals who are in need.

Classes are available to newcomers who are new to Canada. We offer various part-time and full-time classes ranging from Literacy and levels 1 to 4. The program aims to build day-to-day English language skills with emphasis on orientation and information for newcomers about Canadian systems and services. In addition, we provide program participants opportunities to learn and practice English by utilizing the aide of computers. As a support to participants, we offer free on-site care for children ranging from six month to five years of age.

“I was forced to resign from my full time employment last year. This was the time I realized that I was out of money. I felt as though I was a burden to my family and a noncontributing member. All the employment agencies were being contacted but I received no response. I decided to seek for formal support and visited one of the service providers, Rexdale Women’s Centre. The employment counselor helped me gain deeper knowledge about the trends in the labour market and what fields were booming. I was helped to focus on what I can do to change my situation. I got my resume and cover letter done. I was also guided on how to do proper job searches to attain new employment. This experience taught me the importance of seeking formal support when it comes to dealing with things beyond your control. I was emotionally empowered and helped regain my confidence to do something different. I took a decision to go back to school and now I am employed again. It taught me to be more adaptive to the hire and fire system of Canada as well as to be self motivated. The counselor provided me with moral support which I needed the most. These professionals are available to guide individuals in gaining access and provide resources to the people they serve to live a better life. Thank you for the help and support.” *(Participant X)*



## Welcoming Communities

# 513

*Number of clients served*

Welcoming Communities program offers social support to newly-arrived immigrants in order to ease the stress of starting life in a new country. The program facilitates newcomers' integration into Canadian society and local community life and creates connections and promotes understanding between newcomers and the broader community. One integral component of the program is to match or pair newcomers with a settled Canadian volunteer in an arranged social relationship where there is a sharing of information about the community and its resources. In addition, group activities, such as Cooking Clubs, Movie Nights, and English Conversation Circles, connect newcomers' to the broader community and establish social supports for integration.

REXDALE WOMEN'S CENTRE  
Assisting Newcomers to Settle and  
Integrate into Canadian Society  
A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE



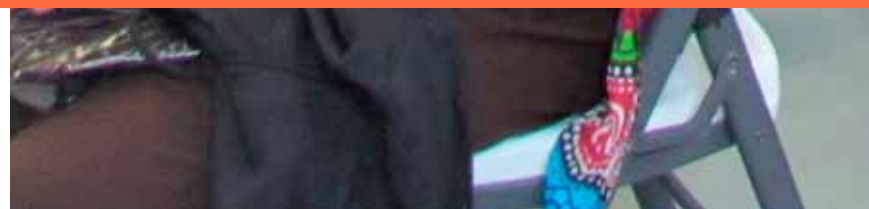
## CLIENT TESTIMONIALS:

Di is an immigrant from China who is very passionate about learning English. She participated in multiple programs at Rexdale Women's Centre (RWC), including the English Conversation Circle. She comes regularly and is a dedicated participant in the English conversation circles because she wants to improve her English speaking skills so that she can be independent. Di said that through her participation in the group, she now has confidence in communicating with other participants and facilitators in the group. She feels encouraged to share her opinions and discuss her views in the group. She was matched with a volunteer in the Mentorship program, who helped her find a job and integrate into Canadian society. Di now has a job and is working full time. She is thankful to RWC for all the services that were provided and now feels empowered and motivated to work in Canada.



“I came from India to Canada a few years ago. I came with little fluency in English and it was very hard for me to speak confidently. It was not easy for me to answer calls, go shopping, pay my bills and talk to other people. I felt like this until I heard about Rexdale Women's Centre's English Conversation (ECC) classes. After attending the ECC classes, I noticed a difference in my English skills. I was able to do everything by myself without any assistance. The ECC classes brought confidence in my life.”

*Kanubhai Chhotabhai Patel*







“We cannot find the words to express our feelings about your surprises that you prepared for the Christmas and New Year’s celebration. It was a lot of fresh and delicious food and we loved it. We can only say: thank you very much. God bless you and you will be rewarded for making other peoples’ lives happy and counted.” *Urvashi Jadeja*

## Ethno-Cultural Seniors

Canada’s population is aging and communities are working hard to address the needs of this emerging group. Seniors from diverse cultural groups have limited access to community resources and services. Increasingly, immigrant and ethno-cultural seniors struggle with isolation caused, in part, from limited financial means to go out, or from being left alone all day or not knowing about how to access services. Feelings of isolation impact their ability to function and lead to increased health risks.

We offer many programs and services for ethno-cultural seniors in their own language. We assist seniors to settle into Canada, to engage with other seniors from other cultures, to share views, ideas, traditions and to learn new skills. We provide assistance in establishing social recreational groups, fitness and yoga classes, computer and internet training, leadership development, civic engagement and community matters, social events and activities, community and educational workshops, excursions, and information on community resources. Through these activities, immigrant and ethno-cultural seniors build social supports and connect with other seniors of Afghan, Assyrian, Gujarati, Italian, Punjabi, Spanish, Tamil, Urdu and West Indian origin.

**567**  
*Number of clients served*





# Community Engagement, Civic Participation, Leadership and Volunteering

Our Community Engagement program enables us to increase public awareness about our programs and services, as well as build quality relationships with the community members. Our community engagement and volunteering program have encouraged connections with more than 4,300 community members per year.

We conduct presentations and participate in community events to achieve our goals. This past year we conducted 40 community presentations, 59 community events, and 57 information booths at malls, schools and places of worship.

Volunteering provides opportunities for individuals to contribute their time and expertise for a cause they believe in; and/or utilize their skills and experiences; and/or improve their Canadian job opportunities or, fulfill degree obligations. Volunteers have been instrumental in enabling us to successfully execute community events, increase public awareness, assist with research and policy development, and assist with community development and partnerships with local agencies and other service providers.

## Community Kitchen

In partnership with North York Harvest Food Bank and Toronto Public Health, Rexdale Women's Centre offers free hot meals once per month for community residents. Individuals enjoy a hot meal prepared by trained volunteers; they socialize with other community members and learn more about community services. Community Kitchen Program is run by volunteers who received safe food handling training, as well as nutrition information, in order to prepare delicious and healthy meals. 482 individuals participated in the Community Kitchen and 36 volunteers contributed to making this program a success.

This past year we organized **93 group sessions** for volunteers. A total of **637 individuals** volunteered their time and contributed **22,857 hours** of support.



# Special Events

## National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women Celebration

On December 6, 1989, Marc Lépine, armed with a mini rifle and hunting knife, entered the L'École Polytechnique in Montreal, Canada and shot 28 people. Claiming that he was “fighting feminism”, Marc separated the men from the women and killed 14 female engineering students. It has since been called the “Montreal Massacre”.

On December 8th, 2015, Rexdale Women's Centre Women's Centre (RWC) honored the Montreal Massacre by hosting a National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. RWC invited guest speakers to help inform and educate community residents on gender based violence. Over 100 women, representing a diversified ethno-linguistic demographic, engaged in a candle lit ceremony that included 2 minutes of silence intended to commemorate the lives lost, heard from a variety of guest speakers, including RWC's Executive Director, Fatima Filippi and engaged in a theatrical performance called “Advocacy for Change”, put on by the Black Creek Community Health Centre.

## Black History Month Celebrations

On February 12th, 2016, Rexdale Women's Centre (RWC) celebrated Black History Month by hosting a Celebration of Cultures event. Over 250 community residents participated in an all-day event that honored the legacy of black Canadians, past and present. The event highlighted the many achievements and contributions of those who helped shape Canada's Black history. In doing so, the event helped encourage cultural awareness, social integration, intergenerational relations and promoted local business developments.

## Take Back the Night and Women's History Month Celebration

On October 21st, 2015, Rexdale Women's Centre (RWC) celebrated Women's History Month by hosting a Take Back the Night event that intended to help encourage awareness on sexual violence and harassment. RWC's Take Back the Night celebration engaged over 90 women, all of which represented a diversified ethno-racial and linguistic demographic. In addition to a presentation on sexual violence and harassment, a panel discussion facilitated by Constable Verma from 23 Division; Rebecca Shaw from Victim Services Toronto; and Guncha Murara and Vino Shanmuganathan from the Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic, served as a learning opportunity on victim supports and services. Of notable importance included a victim account on the unfortunate reality of abuse. Once a victim, a client in RWC's violence prevention program shared her experiences of abuse and highlighted its impact on the lives of her children and herself. Having overcome what was once her dark reality, she was now speaking with confidence as a survivor, sharing her experiences of how she encouraged and now maintains a life free from violence. The event was well received and provided an opportunity to share, celebrate, commemorate and empower women.

### International Women's Day

On March 8th, 2016, Rexdale Women's Centre (RWC) celebrated International Women's Day. RWC, in partnership with a number of community organizations, hosted a celebration of respect, appreciation and recognition of the economic, political and social contributions made by women in Canada.

Over 250 women representing a diverse, ethno-racial demographic, participated in activities that promoted awareness and empowerment. When provided with the tools, empowered women and girls are better able to make choices that best meet their needs and those of their families. As such, the event highlighted some of the many tools that encourage empowerment, including the importance of education, financial independence, involvement in one's community and an understanding of one's right to live free from violence. Employing place-based strategies, RWC highlighted the contributions of ethnic and/or immigrant women and in doing so, helped promote citizenship, civic memory, civic engagement and recognition of the core democratic values grounded in our history.

### South Asian Heritage Celebrations

On May 24th, 2016, Rexdale Women's Centre organized a South Asian Heritage Celebration that highlighted the historical contributions made by the South Asian community in the development of Canadian society. Community residents engaged in cultural performances including South Asian song and dance, shared experiences and resources, all of which provided an opportunity to familiarize the participants with South Asian culture, heritage and traditions.







### Fitness for Life

The Fitness for Life (FFL) project assisted over 260 participants with their health plan needs. From July 2015 to March 2016, the FFL project offered free exercise and recreational classes that aimed to increase opportunities for sports, recreational participation and the development of fundamental movement skills, leading to physical literacy for immigrant and newcomer women, older adults and seniors.

Components of the FFL exercise programme included:

- Warm up sessions and gradual elevation of heart rate
- Cardiovascular exercises – low impact aerobics, light jogging etc.
- Gentle exercise training with body weight, resistance band and dumbbells
- Stretching for range of motion improvements
- Balance training
- Age Appropriate games, cultural dance, movement activities (e.g. Yoga/Tai Chi, Zumba)

- In addition to exercise classes that ran four days a week and recreational activities that were offered once a week, participants were provided with an opportunity to attend monthly health and well-being workshops that focused on chronic disease prevention.

All exercise sessions were supervised and guided by a fitness team, including a registered kinesiologist and two certified fitness and recreational specialists, who trained the participants on safety and proper techniques. In promoting healthy lifestyle changes, the FFL project helped foster an active, fit and vibrant community.

### Enhancing Ethno-cultural Seniors' Community Integration, Connection and Engagement Project

The Enhancing Ethno-cultural Seniors' Community Integration, Connection and Engagement project, facilitated between April 2015 and March 2016, was helpful in providing opportunities for seniors, including social networking, visiting community institutions, and exploring recreational opportunities in the Rexdale area/GTA. Over 200 seniors were excited to have opportunities to meet with their peers, other service providers and stakeholders to enhance their information about available resources in the community. Some of their activities included participation in advisory

committee meetings, workshops and field trips to the Toronto Zoo, Toronto City Hall, Service Canada, WAVE Clinic, George Brown College, Ontario Science Centre and the Toronto Eaton Centre. In addition to establishing a strong alliance among seniors representing diverse cultural groups, this learning has helped improve awareness and understanding of ethno-cultural seniors and their experiences while living in Canada, as well as information about available community resources.

Ethno-cultural senior leaders have played a key role in the advisory meetings to plan and implement seniors' activities and to disseminate the project information, which inspired other seniors to be trained as community leaders. This train the trainer process led to better community integration, connection and engagement. Seniors were happy that they were able to enjoy excursions, and outing along with sharing and exchanging information. Overall, the project was successful in implementing culturally sensitive activities for seniors with opportunities to connect, contribute and integrate in the community.



## Special Projects

### Seniors' Storytelling: ["Sharing Life Experiences, Traditions and Culture"]

Through storytelling, Rexdale Women's Centre promoted social participation and inclusion of ethno-cultural seniors. We offered our ethno-cultural seniors, opportunities to share their life experiences, traditions and cultures with their peers and other age groups. This initiative assisted seniors to develop social networks as well as to reduce their isolation and build social supports. The storytelling project encouraged them to expand their ability to tell their own stories as well as to connect with others. Folktales were used as a vehicle to break isolation, and ethno-cultural seniors were encouraged during the project to share family stories.

Riddles, proverbs, old sayings, folklore, nursery rhymes, weather sayings, songs, and chants all played an important role in promoting storytelling skills among ethno-cultural seniors. Organized sessions were instrumental in bringing diverse communities close to each other through the sharing of commonalities in their folktales and traditions. Through sharing stories, cultural traditions are also transmitted to next generations and resulted in enhanced value and respect for ethno-cultural seniors.

### "Shaping the Future Together by Sharing Information"

The project was instrumental in raising knowledge and awareness about victim of crime issues as well as about services and assistance available to victims and their families. In addition, through this project we organized an open house and community information booths to provide knowledge and information to assist victims of violence to move beyond victimization and to shape their life. In addition, through this project we recognized staff/community volunteers/organizations for their hard work to support/assist victims of crime.



# Support for Women and Families

## Parenting and Family Supportive Counselling

Raising healthy children can be a difficult but rewarding challenge for parents. For newcomer, refugee and single parent families the challenges may be greater than anticipated. Financial resources may be inadequate and families may be at greater risk of poverty and isolation. Newcomer, immigrant and refugee parents need support to raise healthy children in a new country with different culture, values and language. We provide support for parents to cope with the many challenges and rewards of raising healthy children.

## Nobody's Perfect Parenting Groups

Many parents and grandparents lack the social networks and supports for positive parenting. Connecting, sharing and building skills with peers are often effective tools in addressing the lack of confidence, and skills when parenting. We offer parenting groups for parents with children from birth to six years of age. In the groups, participants learn about child development, effective discipline methods, information on Canadian institutions and service. Participants share skills, views, ideas. Many develop social support networks once the group is finished.

## Eating for Two Prenatal Nutrition Program

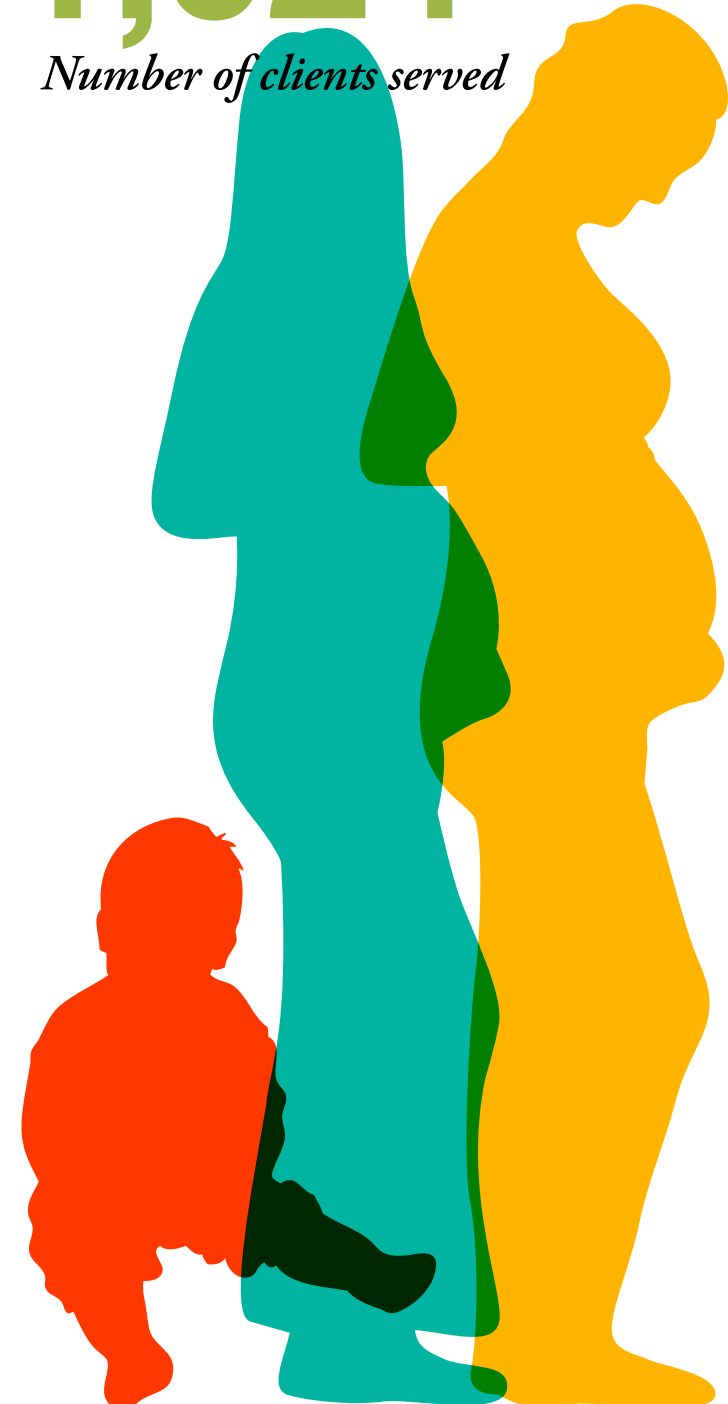
This program is offered to expectant and new moms to promote healthy development of their children and to encourage healthy pregnancies and reduce the risk of low birth weight babies. The program supports women who have limited social support and who may be new to Canada. Rexdale Women's Centre's staff provides information and referral, connects moms to resources in the community and provides support for day to day living and challenges. We offer this program in partnership with the Etobicoke Brighter Futures Coalition, Toronto Public Health, and the Rexdale Community Health Centre.

## Feeding With Love

This program provides a continuum of care for women and their children from birth to twelve months of age. The program promotes healthy eating for women and their babies. Rexdale Women's Centre provides information and referral, connects moms to resources in the community and provides support for day-to-day living and challenges. We offer this program in partnership with Toronto Public Health, Albion Public Library and Rexdale Community Health Centre in offering the program for newcomer women and women living on low-income.

# 1,024

*Number of clients served*



## CLIENT TESTIMONIALS:

Anita came from Sri Lanka in January 2015 with her two young children. Through outreach conducted by RWC in the community, she got connected to a RWC counselor and was invited to the Nobody's Perfect parenting program. Her 3 year old daughter was not yet speaking a word and Anita was frustrated and could not understand how to cope and help her daughter. Through the Nobody's Perfect group sessions, she learned about child development and with the support from participants and RWC counselor, Anita was encouraged and agree to be referred to see a speech therapist. Now her daughter who is in JK, can talk well and has no difficulties speaking.



Maria was born in Canada and was referred to RWC from the Children's Aid Society as her two children were removed from her care because of the use of punitive discipline. Maria was invited to attend the Nobody's Perfect parenting group at RWC as well as to make use of one-on-one parenting supportive counselling. As a result of attending the group and one-on-one sessions, Maria was reunited with her children. She understands how to use positive parenting skills for discipline and is a better parent.



# Newcomer Settlement Services

**8,431**  
*Number of clients served*

Newcomers, refugees and immigrants need assistance to connect to resources and services in the community because of limited knowledge of the Canadian service delivery systems, and/or a limited ability to speak English or French.

Newcomers need assistance in finding suitable housing, learning English, registering their children in school, obtaining equivalency of official education documents, job search and employment. We offer services in 20 different languages at various locations throughout the city. We provide information, referral and access counselling with regards to services such as health, housing, employment, training and education, legal aid, finance, social services, and immigration issues. Our staff act as a liaison between clients, government departments, cultural/community groups.

## Newcomer Workshops and Information sessions

Number of Clients Served: 7,412

Workshops sessions are designed to provide newcomers, immigrants and refugees with information, orientation and support to assist in their integration into the community. Workshops sessions run throughout the year and are available in 20 different languages. Registered participants may qualify for transportation assistance. Free child minding also available.

## Settlement Services in Language (SSIL)

Number of Clients Served: 532

SSIL is a joint initiative between Rexdale Women's Centre and the Toronto District School Board-Language Program. The goal of the project is to improve settlement service delivery for newcomers and their families by having staff working directly at the English language program. Our staff facilitate access to information and students become aware and are able to access the full range of services and community resources.

## Library Settlement Program (LSP)

Number of Clients Served: 487

LSP is a joint initiative between Rexdale Women's Centre and Toronto Public Library. The goal of the project is to improve settlement service delivery for newcomers and their families by having staff work directly at the libraries. Our staff assist newcomer families to become aware and able to access the full range of library services and community resources.

## Youth Settlement Services

Number of Clients Served: 51

We provide settlement and integration services for youth from 16 to 26 years of age within a culturally sensitive, non-discriminatory and supportive environment. We assist youth to settle, as well as build self-esteem, leadership and conflict resolution skills. We assist youth to find employment, seek out volunteer opportunities and provide peer support.





## CLIENT TESTIMONIAL

Aram is a newcomer to Canada. Aram, his wife and two children landed in Winnipeg in Dec 2014. Then, he moved with his family to Toronto in April 2015. He came to Rexdale Women's Centre (RWC) asking for help to settle in Toronto. I went with Aram and his wife to an immigration office to transfer their file from Winnipeg to Toronto. I helped them enrol in ESL classes to improve their language skills and helped their two children to enrol in school. I also helped them apply for the Child Tax Benefit, GST, and I filled the request to amend the record of landing application for Aram's children. Aram and his wife participate in community activities that help them learn about their community. Aram and his family are now settled in Toronto and they appreciate the help they have received from RWC.

## Special Events

### Syrian Refugee Hotel

Most recently, Rexdale Women's Centre (RWC) participated in the humanitarian initiative to resettle 25,000 Syrian refugees across Canada, by caring for more than 330 clients for 10 weeks at one of the hotels located on the airport strip. RWC not only has first-hand knowledge of the needs of refugees and their families gained from their settlement work, but also direct experience with newly arrived Syrian families and their immediate settlement and orientation needs. We offered a variety of (re) settlement and integration services at the hotel from February to April, 2016.

Some of these services and/or activities included information sessions (RAP sessions), fitness classes, English Conversation Circles, English language classes, fieldtrips to the mosque and Niagara Falls. In partnership with other community organizations, RWC offered services on a 24/7 basis. Upon their departure, the Syrian families expressed thanks to RWC for the role its staff members played in their efforts with settlement and integration into Canadian society.

### Welcoming Syrian Refugees

On January 26th, 2016, Rexdale Women's Centre held a Community Information Fair that provided community agencies with an opportunity to share resources, experiences and collaborative efforts as they relate to the welcoming of Syrian refugees to Canada. This community event was open to all and had about 14 organizations participating, which provided information and materials on the different programs and services they offer. It provided an opportunity for networking, including an information exchange between community partners on referral processes, community needs and available resources.









# Violence Against Women, Crisis Intervention and Violence Prevention

**824**  
*Number of clients served*

## Spousal-Domestic Abuse Support and Crisis Counselling

Immigrant women, refugee women and women of colour face specific challenges that create barriers which can make them more vulnerable to abuse. Many women seek out our services to address the violence that they are experiencing in their lives. For some women, assistance comes in the form of disclosure and respect. We provide one-on-one assistance to women who are experiencing violence in the home or dealing with a crisis in their lives. Counsellors assist women to understand the cycle of abuse and help women to develop safety plans and to address a life free of violence for themselves and their children.

## Medical and Legal Referrals and Client Accompaniment

Women, who are experiencing abuse in the home, find it difficult to obtain the services they need in order to cope with their situation. Counsellors provide culturally and linguistically sensitive services in guiding women to obtain medical and legal services. Many times, our staff will accompany women as they attend appointments. Our staff will provide on-going support as women face the difficult task of navigating through the legal and court systems.

## Support Groups for Women on Spousal-Domestic Abuse

Support groups offer women a unique opportunity to gain information, share experiences, build confidence and develop safety plans when dealing with abuse. We provide women with information about their rights and how they can be supportive to other women who are experiencing domestic abuse. Support groups are designed to provide women with information and support related to domestic abuse. We assist participants to develop a safety plan and to make decisions to leave an abusive relationship.

“I was working full time and giving all my income to my husband and had no access to my income and was not included in any financial decisions. After attending RWC women’s support group and one to one support from RWC counselor, I came to understand that I had a right to keep my income and be involved in financial decisions. I got the strength and courage to speak to my husband on the issue and consequently, I opened a joint account with my husband while maintaining an individual savings account in my own. RWC thank so much for the assistance and support!!!” *(Participant Y)*

"After leaving an abusive relationship, I came to RWC for one on one support and information. After assessment and identifying my needs and issues with the RWC counsellor, social assistance and Legal Aid were secured for me by the counselor. I have a 6 months old son and with the RWC counsellor support and guidance, I managed to arrange my son to stay with my parents in order for me to pursue further education. The RWC counselor came across a free IT training program for youth at Ryerson University and gave me all the information for applying for the training. I did apply and got it. When I completed the program, I got a very good job and now I am very happy working and my parents continue to support me and help to care for my son while I am working. I would not be able to achieve it without the support and guidance from the RWC counselor and my parents support. Thank you so much!!!" *Rabia*

### Partner Assault Response Program Groups

Ending violence against women involves working and educating men about the different forms of abuse, the effects of violence on their children, the pattern of violent behavior and developing alternatives to physical, emotion and financial abuse. We offer groups for court mandated male offenders. In the group, we assist men to develop a better understanding the cycle of violence against women. We work with them to understand and accept responsibility for their violent behaviour and to develop alternative strategies to deal with anger and violent outbursts.

### Partner Assault Response Program – Spousal Contact

When court-mandated male offenders attend groups, we maintain regular contact with their female spouses or partners. Through these contacts, it is our goal is to ensure the safety of the women and their children. Many times, the female partners tell us that they feel safer as a result of their male spouse or partner attending the group for men.



## Children's Services

**853**  
*Number of clients served*

### Care for Newcomer Children – Language Instruction

This program is available to parents with children from six months to five years of age who are registered and attending the English language program. Our staff assist children to participate in daily activities such as reading, story-telling, singing, creating crafts, in a welcoming and supportive environment.

### Preschool Program and Family Drop-In

The program provides structured early learning opportunities for children from two to five years of age. Parents also help to supervise the children and support the program. Weekly workshops and information sessions are held on parenting for the adult participants. Our staff assist children to learn songs, partake in dancing, drama, craft making and reading circles.

### School Readiness

Our staff work with parents who accompany their children to the program, to learn about their child's development needs as well as acquiring new or brushing up on existing skills. Guided by trained staff, the children participate in activities such as craft making, singing, dancing, drama, play/groups and reading circles. Guided by trained staff, the children participate in activities such as craft making, singing, dancing, drama, play/groups and reading circles.



“My daughter has become more independent since she started going to RWC nursery. She can eat by herself, get dressed, hold a pencil and trace alphabetical letters. Her communication with her peers has improved a lot. I am glad she joined this daycare and I am grateful to her wonderful teachers. They made all this change happen for my child.” *Fadumo, Munira's mother*





“A friend of mine recommended that I attend one of the Rexdale Women Centre workshops. He told me that while I am in the workshop, my kid can participate in the children’s program. I really enjoy the benefits of the program.” *Jignesh Jatin*

“My child really loves the child minding atmosphere, and definitely loves the toys. It’s a place where he feels safe and really enjoys.”

*Rashmi Rao*

# Systems and Social Change

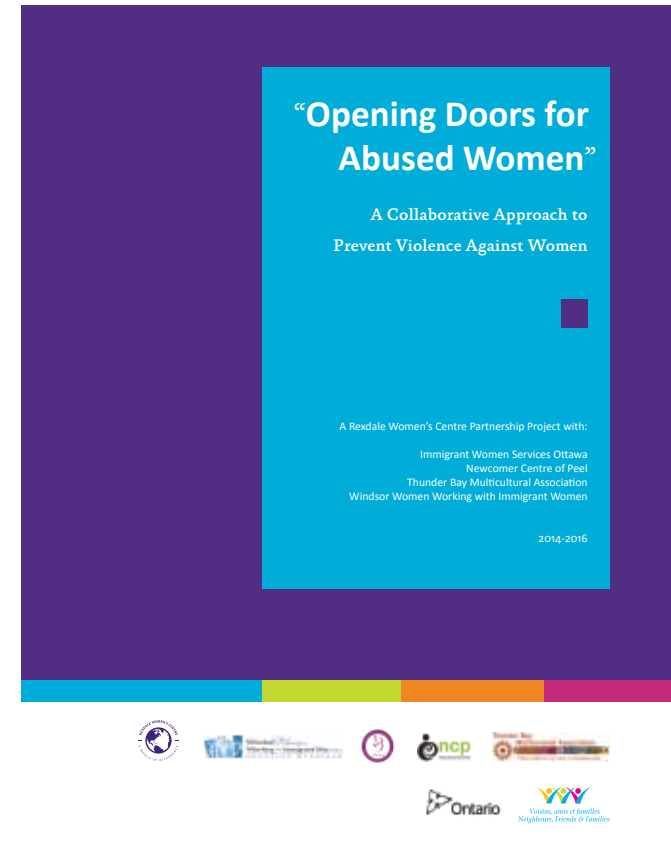
## Special Projects

### Opening Doors for Abused Women

The Government of Ontario, through the Ontario Women's Directorate's Neighbours, Friends and Family campaign, has focused its efforts at investing in public education campaigns to help raise awareness and an understanding of violence against women. Employing bystander theory, the campaign's principle theory maintains that neighbours, friends and family members all play a vital and active role in helping end violence against women as well as preventing it from occurring. The campaigns aim to encourage a mind-shift in societal perceptions, attitudes and behaviours that continue to perpetuate the misconception that violence against women is a private, rather than societal issue.

In May 2014, the "Opening Doors for Abused Women" provincial partnership consisting of Newcomer Centre of Peel, Windsor Women Working with Immigrant Women, Thunder Bay Multicultural Association, Immigrant Women Services Ottawa, and Rexdale Women's Centre as the lead agency was formed.

The "Opening Doors for Abused Women" project included the delivery of community-based public education campaigns across the province to improve the capacity of frontline settlement, legal, health and social service providers on how to recognize the signs of woman abuse and what they can do to help support. Our project's goal to improve awareness and understanding is evident in the fact that more than 250 participants attended public education sessions and symposiums, more than 3,000 publications were distributed and more than 400 different organizations were reached.



## Toronto West Local Immigration Partnership (TWLIP)

### The Rexdale Domestic Violence Collaborative (RDVC)

The Rexdale Domestic Violence Collaborative (RDVC): *Breaking the Cycle: A Coordinated Services Response for Abused Women* project's mandate is to promote a comprehensive and effective response to domestic violence in North Etobicoke. To support a coordinated response, the RDVC has engaged in an inter-disciplinary agency collaboration to develop a one-stop, accessible, case-management model of service delivery. This work is critical and will address service gaps, increase access and ultimately, improve outcomes for women who are experiencing domestic violence in our community.

Funded by the Status of Women Canada, the project is based out of the Rexdale Community Hub and includes a partnership between the Rexdale Women's Centre (Lead), Rexdale Community Legal Clinic, Rexdale Community Hub, Legal Aid Ontario, Albion Neighborhood Services and Toronto Employment and Social Services.

Together, the six partners will develop an inter-agency case management model, including protocols, then implement the model via a coordinated assessment and referral team within the hub. This will empower women who are at risk of, or are experiencing domestic violence to engage with timely access to supports and services.

A manual, with guidelines from the project, will be shared as a best practice in providing services to victims of domestic violence in North Etobicoke. The model will help satisfy a place-based approach to domestic violence intervention and prevention, one informed by evidence and theory from a diverse range of sources, including staff within/across the sector, survivors of abuse, etc. Employing an inter-disciplinary approach, one that helps strengthen collaborative efforts, the manual will ensure a comprehensive, coordinated, and effective response to Domestic Violence in North Etobicoke.

The Toronto West Local Immigration Partnership (TWLIP) is a collaborative initiative to enhance local delivery of services for newcomers, while promoting the innovative and efficient use of community resources through improved coordination among social service agencies as well as other community stakeholders. The geographical area of the Toronto West LIP quadrant extends north from Lake Ontario to Steeles Avenue West, west to the Mississauga boundary and Highway 427, and east to the Humber River, Dufferin Street and along the CP rail line.

TWLIP is comprised of partner agencies: Delta Family Resource Centre, Job Start, Social Planning Toronto and Rexdale Women's Centre. Each partner agency operates out of 4 geographical areas: North Etobicoke, Central South Etobicoke, Black Creek and York-South Weston. Together in collaboration, the four partner agencies are responsible for the development and implementation of a Toronto West settlement strategy to improve newcomers' access to settlement services and other community programs, and to improve newcomers' transition into the labour market.

In 2015/16, the TWLIP lead by members of the Planning and Coordinating Committee (PCC) has focused their efforts on the following five activities:

1. Educational Resources for Newcomer Families
2. Newcomer Mental Health
3. Removing the Canadian Experience Barrier (Train the Trainer Project)
4. Service Coordination
5. Newcomer Civic Participation

# Condensed Financial Statements

12-Month Period Ended March 31, 2016

These statements are condensed from the full version prepared by  
Berman, Lofchick & Lum, LLP Chartered Accountants

<b>REVENUES</b>	<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>
Government	\$ 3,017,273	\$ 2,780,015
Private Sector	\$ 527,079	\$ 439,235
Other	\$ 139,112	\$ 175,532
Capital Contributions from funders ( <i>net</i> )	\$ 55,559	\$ 62,420
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 3,739,023</b>	<b>\$ 3,457,202</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 2,934,651	\$ 2,695,654
Operating and Programme Expenses	\$ 473,005	\$ 420,194
Building Occupancy	\$ 305,764	\$ 278,881
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 3,713,420</b>	<b>\$ 3,394,729</b>
<b>Excess Of Revenues Over Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 25,603</b>	<b>\$ 62,473</b>

A full copy of the audited financial statement is available upon request



# Our Supporters

The Rexdale Women's Centre gratefully acknowledges our financial supporters and donors.

## Funders

### Government of Canada

Citizenship and Immigration Canada  
(Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship)

Citizenship and Immigration Canada -  
Multiculturalism-InterAction Grant

Department of Justice Canada  
Human Resources and Skills Development  
Canada

### Government of Ontario

Ministry of the Attorney General  
Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and  
International Trade  
Ministry of Tourism  
Ontario Women's Directorate

### Municipal

City of Toronto

### Public Sector

Etobicoke Brighter Futures Coalition  
United Way of Toronto and York Region

### Foundation

Ontario Trillium Foundation

### Private Donors

Bayer Inc  
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Donna Barbs  
Karen Sung  
Martin Grove United Church  
Rutu Gadhia  
SocaCize Fitness  
TD Canada Trust  
University of Toronto-Facilities and Services  
Uzma Ashraf

Valentina Colucci

Veritas Communications

## Service Partners

Albion Neighborhood Services  
Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services  
Community Micro Skills Development Centre  
Delta Family Resource Centre  
Emery Collegiate Institute  
Etobicoke Brighter Futures Coalition  
George Hull Centre for Children and Families  
Humber College Employment  
Resource Centre  
Immigrant Women Services Ottawa  
Jane and Finch Community and  
Family Centre  
Job Start  
Newcomer Centre of Peel  
North York Harvest Food Bank  
Rexdale Community Health Centre  
Rexdale Community Legal Clinic  
Rexdale Employment Resource Centre  
Social Planning Toronto  
Thunder Bay Multicultural Association  
Toronto District School Board LINC-  
Albion Mall, Rexdale, Kenton, Civic Centre  
Toronto Public Health  
Toronto Employment and Social Services -  
Attwell & Golden Mile  
Toronto Public Library- Albion, Humberwood,  
Richview  
Tropicana-Community Services Organization-  
AYCE Employment Services  
Windsor Women Working with  
Immigrant Women  
YWCA - Bergamot Avenue Apartments

## Service Collaborators

2667 Kipling Humber Property  
Management Group  
3001 Finch Avenue Property  
Management Group  
920 Queen's Plate Property  
Management Group  
Academy of Learning  
Action for Neighbourhood Change  
Ahmadiya Muslim Community Building  
Barbra Schlifer Clinic  
Braeburn Neighborhood Centre  
Children's Aid Society  
City College  
Early Years Centre - North Etobicoke  
Ernestine's Women's Shelter  
Etobicoke North Early Years Centre  
Federation of Metro Tenants Association  
George Brown College  
Gord & Irene Community Centre -  
Under Toronto P & R  
Humber College  
Humber Summit Resource Centre  
Humberwood Community Centre -  
Under Toronto P & R  
Learning Enrichment Foundation  
Medix College  
North Kipling Community Centre -  
Under Toronto P & R  
North York Community House  
Office of the Provincial Advocate for  
Children and Youth  
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving  
Immigrants  
Ontario Network for the Prevention of  
Elder Abuse  
Ontario Early Years Centre - Etobicoke  
Polycultural Immigrant Community Services  
Radio Latina  
Red Door Women's Shelter  
Rexdale Alliance Church  
Rexdale Community Health Centre  
Rexdale Community Hub  
Rexdale Community Legal Clinic  
Rexdale Employment Resource Centre  
Ryerson University  
Seneca College  
Sheridan College  
Sleep Country- Charity Bed Program  
South Asian Legal Clinic  
Tamil Seniors Group at North Kipling  
Community Centre  
Toronto Catholic District School Board-  
St. Maurice Catholic School  
Toronto District School Board -  
Daystrom & Kingsview Village Public Schools  
Toronto Employment and Social Services  
Toronto Fire Department  
Toronto Parks and Recreation-Humberwood &  
North Kipling Community Centres  
Toronto Police Services - Div. 23  
Toronto Public Health  
Toronto Star - Santa Claus Fund  
Toronto Victim Services  
Trios College  
University of Guelph at Humber  
William Osler Health Centre  
York University  
YWCA - REACH Program

## Where to find us



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Rexdale Women's Centre  
is a registered Canadian charity.  
Charity Number 119118297 RR0001



**United Way**

Toronto

A United Way member agency