



NOVA VITA

Help • Hope • Heal

ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021



Nova Vita
Domestic Violence Prevention Services

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD

The COVID-19 global pandemic has taken an emotional, physical, economic, social, and mental toll on everyone. Yet through the fear, uncertainty, and lockdowns, our dedicated Nova Vita team courageously continued to answer the call, discovering new ways to connect with our clients and our community, so that no one would be left behind.

As an emergency shelter for women and children, we know intimately how domestic violence thrives in silence and isolation. The calls from health and government officials to combat a viral pandemic with stay at home orders flamed the fires of gender-based violence in what the UN Women has declared The Shadow Pandemic. In our own community, we witnessed this impact with an escalation in the severity of physical and sexual abuse, a rise in mental health challenges, an intensification of drug use, and an increase in suicides.

It was imperative from the start of the first wave that we find ways to safely sustain our services, while creating new ways to connect and engage community members. We quickly implemented high standard infection, protection and control protocols within the residential shelter and throughout the building, including increased cleaning, mandatory masking, regular hand sanitizing, and at times eye protection. We screened every single individual who walked through our doors, set up isolation areas for new shelter admissions, and worked together with community partners to ensure there was a safe place to go for anyone in need. We quickly implemented the infrastructure for phone and video counselling to increase access to clients living in the community and created a 24 hour support line specifically for men in the early days of the pandemic. We intensified our presence on social media to connect with our community, ran a billboard campaign in Brantford and Paris, hosted virtual public education trainings, pivoted our signature Golf and International Women's Day fundraising events and even piloted a new one, Break the Silence on Domestic Violence.

What we didn't expect, which touched us profoundly, was the support from every day community members who gave to us in so many unanticipated ways. From mass producing hand-sewn masks for clients and staff in the early days of the pandemic when medical masks weren't yet readily available, to purchasing grocery store gift cards to pass on to outreach clients in need, to donating new tablets, games, and crafts to keep little ones busy and entertained in the shelter especially when self-isolating, and to the abundance of financial gifts that poured in all year allowing us to sustain our essential services for the safety and well-being of those impacted by violence and homelessness.

Our community showed up in a time of great need and magnified what it truly means to make a difference together. We at Nova Vita are truly humbled by your kindness and generosity and we simply could not have navigated these dark times without you. Your compassion and thoughtfulness has been an inspiration and a guiding light. On behalf of the staff, volunteers, Board of Directors, and the clients that we serve, thank you for wrapping your support around us so that we could continue providing essential safety and well-being services in Brantford and the County of the Brant.

Natasha Dobler
Executive Director

Paul Oddi
Board President



OUR VISION

A world where individuals, relationships, families, and communities **are safe, empowered, and healthy.**

OUR MISSION

Nova Vita works to **end interpersonal violence and abuse by supporting individuals and families** who have experienced domestic violence, intimate partner violence, or gender-based violence through the provision of crisis intervention, emergency shelter, transitional support, children's programs, and counselling; and by fostering accountability for those who harm through intervention, counselling, public education, and systemic advocacy.

OUR VALUES

At Nova Vita, we are:

- Trauma-Informed
- Inclusive
- Community-Focused
- Effective
- Accountable
- Leaders





We can help.

RESILIENT TOGETHER

My kids thought they were at a “kid’s hotel” where they played and learned with new “teachers.”



Thanks for giving me a safe place to stay and helping me get on the right path.



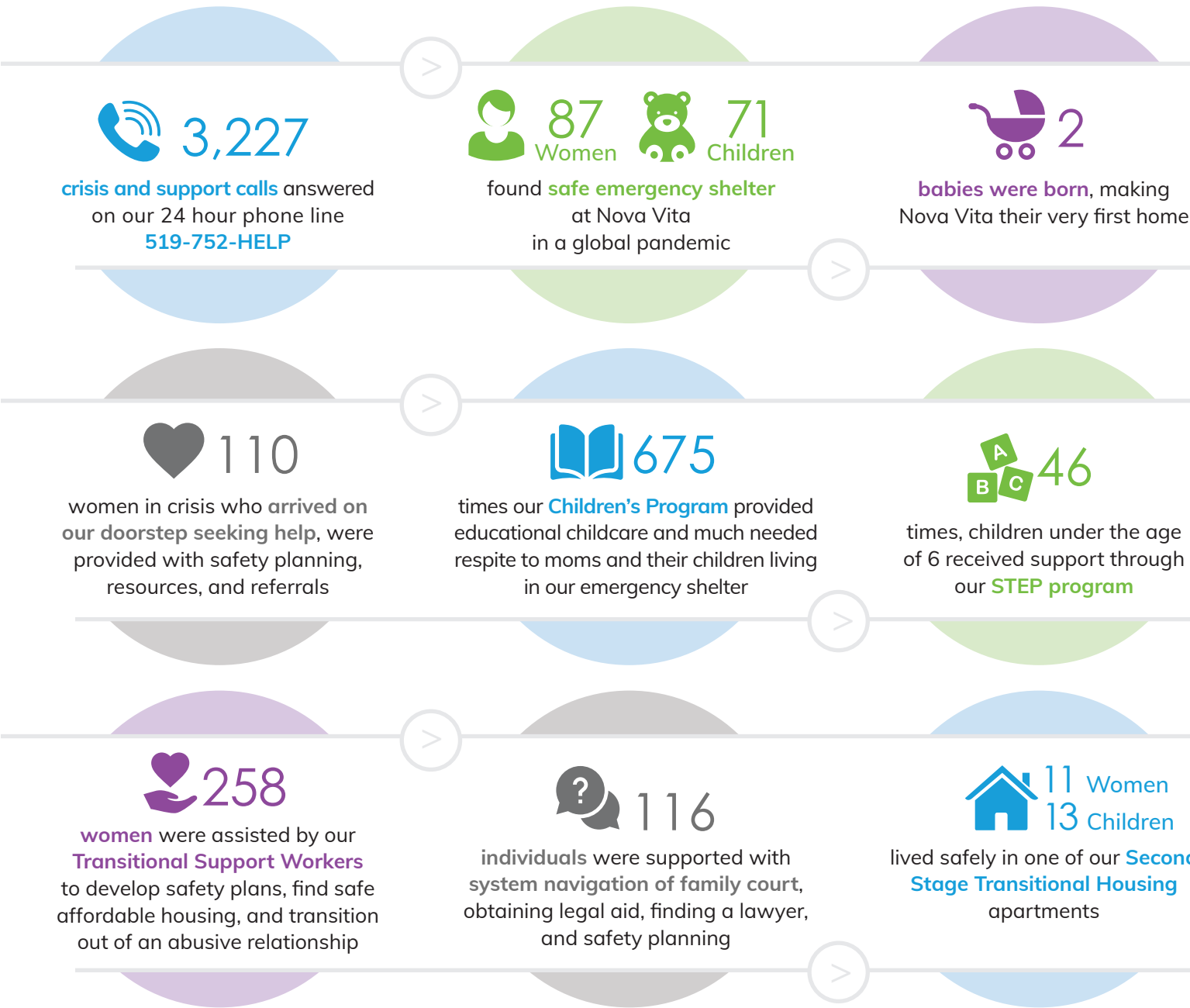
I was thankful my daughter and I had a safe place to be.

Crisis intervention and thinking on our feet is what we do best in the shelter: think fast, make important decisions with little information, and prioritize situations. That being said, COVID-19 and the pandemic definitely shook our confidence. We were faced with very quickly figuring out how to continue to help, heal, and provide hope to the families who need us all while balancing our own lives and experiences, and implementing strict health and safety measures to keep us all safe.

I’m always in awe and admiration by the knowledge, compassion, empathy, perseverance, and resiliency of the shelter staff and clients alike. In moments of clarity, I saw everyone come together. Our management team worked around the clock to prepare and support; staff from other departments helped to ensure the shelter could continue to run safe and efficiently; the brave families we serve worked together, sharing kindness together; and our community rallied behind us to support our Nova Vita families.

As difficult as the past year has been there has been value. We all found strengths we didn’t know we had; we formed stronger bonds with each other and with our clients; and although the world seemed overwhelming and unsteady, we found a way to continue to fight against domestic violence, gender-based violence, and intimate partner violence in our community.

Katie Maas, Manager of Residential Services



Every Nova Vita team member, stepped up, came together, pushed through the exhaustion and the uncertainty to make sure there was a safe place, a listening ear, and supports available to those in need.

Natasha Dobler, Executive Director



There is hope.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE TOGETHER WHILE SAFELY APART

Our Community Development Team is made up of staff and volunteers who thrive on human interaction and are always ready and willing to rise to any challenge that comes our way. COVID-19 is something we never could have planned for yet we practiced our pivot and got to work quickly to make Nova Vita pandemic resilient.

We were continuously inspired by our community's unwavering support and genuine gifts of HOPE. We witnessed our community rally friends and families through numerous 3rd party fundraisers that not only raised money for Nova Vita but also raised awareness and spirits amidst a global pandemic; we felt the love from our customers who shopped Closet Couture Boutique online and then came back to shop in person, smiling behind their PPE; we were in awe by the number of folks and sponsors that joined us to participate in the community events we were able to offer through safe, socially distant formats; and we were moved by the endless support made through the donation of urgently needed items, money and gift cards, all of which helped us respond to the constantly changing needs of each client we helped.

Thank you to our generous community for coming together while staying safely apart to make a difference for women and families impacted by violence and homelessness. We are grateful for each and every gift of HOPE.

Anne Ruddell, Community Development Manager



2020 ANNUAL PARTNERS

HEAL Level

Here is your opportunity to make a difference!

HOPE Level



HELP Level



THANK YOU FOR INVESTING IN NOVA VITA. WE ARE GRATEFUL TO ALL OF OUR SPONSORS, DONORS, MONTHLY DONORS, AND THESE ANNUAL PARTNERS FOR HELPING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE YEAR ROUND.



741

hours donated by our dedicated volunteers



21

public education presentations and community events, engaging over 882 people



792

bags of clothing donated



228

community supporters participated in one of our fundraising events





You can heal.

BRANTFORD POLICE SERVICES PARTNERSHIP ASSISTING VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND THOSE AT RISK

In early 2020, Nova Vita partnered with Brantford Police Services through an innovative project to provide enhanced services to individuals who have been trafficked or are at risk of being trafficked. Through this initiative, Nova Vita has established an Anti-Human Trafficking System Navigator to offer direct support services, crisis intervention, safety planning, and ongoing intensive wrap-around assistance. Each situation is highly sensitive and requires a personalized approach to help navigate their exit. In addition, raising awareness on how to effectively respond and best support someone at risk, is a key factor in mitigating risk. Our AHT System Navigator continues to provide presentations

and consultations to community partners interested in learning more about human trafficking prevention and intervention. Through this partnership opportunity, Nova Vita has also built a safe interview room attached to the shelter, a place where individuals at risk can receive support from not only Nova Vita crisis counsellors, but also police and community organizations who may need to meet with victims of violence in a safe and discreet location. Offering this physical location to community partners 24 hours a day, 7 days a week has been a life line for support, especially during the global pandemic, and has made a huge impact in our community.





 **29**
children who witnessed high-conflict or domestic violence in the home were provided with **supportive counselling** and **safety** planning


 **18** Mothers  **6** Fathers
were provided wrap-around supportive interventions, referrals and safety planning in our **Differential Response** partnership program with **Brant Family and Children's Services**

 **8** Children  **51** Parents
were supported in family-based programs through our **Child Witness** and **Caring Families** programs



 **204** **women** received individual and group counselling to heal from the violence and abuse they experienced

 **146**
men were helped to increase their knowledge, skills, resources, and self-awareness to develop and maintain healthier relationships

 **130**
individuals who used violence in their relationship, received psycho-educational counselling and intervention to interrupt the cycle of violence through our **Partner Assault Response Program**

CONNECTING SAFLEY

In response to the global pandemic, the Community Counselling Program was challenged to learn a whole new way of providing counselling support services to survivors of domestic violence. Never before had we used an online forum to provide counselling support services for individuals and groups. The global pandemic challenged us to find new ways to safely connect with our clients at home. Despite the occasional dropped call or lagging Wi-Fi, our clients are reporting to us that they feel connected, supported, and that we are with them as they make amazing progress in their healing journey. Because of COVID-19 we removed barriers that we had been facing for years.

Melanie McFadden, Community Counselling Manager

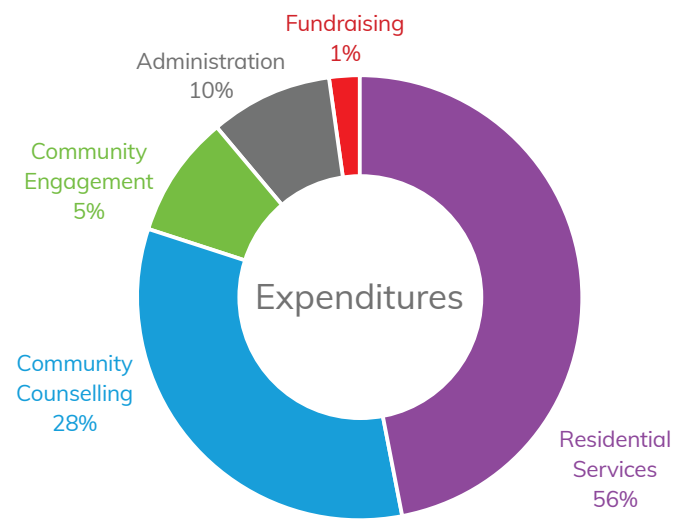
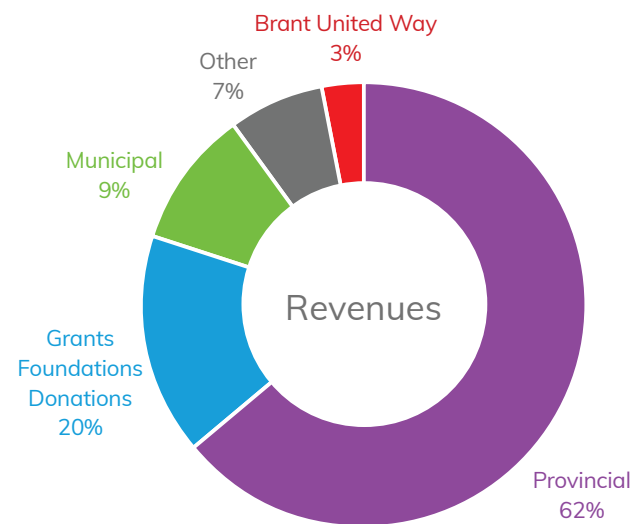
There were many days when I felt down and broken. Nova Vita was always there to help me feel better and stronger.

Everyone was caring and friendly and made me feel comfortable to talk about my bad experiences.

Meeting other people who understood how I felt and what I was going through really helped.

Working towards a safer tomorrow.

Financials



Provincial	\$1,836,806
Grants/Foundations/Donations	\$586,903
Municipal	\$254,512
Other Sources of Revenue	\$207,222
Brant United Way	\$93,700
TOTAL REVENUE	\$2,979,143

Residential Services	\$1,608,080
Community Counselling	\$808,748
Community Engagement	\$157,529
Administration	\$275,489
Fundraising	\$26,449
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,876,294

2019-2023 Strategic Plan: Our Balanced Scorecard



Stakeholder Outcome

Nova Vita delivers excellent programs and services for women, children, men, and gender diverse people based on our trauma-informed approach to addressing domestic violence, intimate partner violence, and gender-based violence.



Financial Outcome

Nova Vita actively pursues managed and sustainable growth.



Internal Processes Outcome

Nova Vita is a strength-based, trauma-informed, learning organization.



Learning & Growth Outcome

Nova Vita has strong partner and community relationships that support an effective community response to domestic violence, intimate partner violence, and gender-based violence.



\$228,135 +
The Escalating Costs of
COVID-19



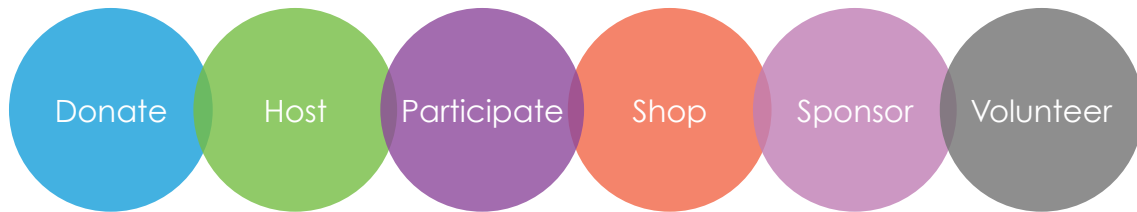
2020-2021 Board of Directors

We are grateful for the leadership of our volunteer Board of Directors who helped us to safely navigate our programs and services throughout this past year.

Paul Oddi, President
 Patricia Lovelock, Vice-President
 Janice Vilaca, Secretary
 Safi Hafiz-Zadeh, Treasurer
 Robert Kindon, Director
 Susan Swackhammer, Director
 Shannon McMannis, Director
 Candis McInnes, Director



You can make a difference.



SAVE THE DATES

Break the Silence on Domestic Violence
November 24, 2021

Hope for the Holidays
November & December 2021

Nova Vita Celebrates International Women's Day
March 9, 2022

Mother's Day Garden of Hope
May 2022

25th Annual Golf Fore Nova Vita
August 16, 2022





BOUTIQUE
CLOSET COUTURE

415 Fairview Drive | 519-758-0808 | Closet-Couture.ca

SHOP. SAVE. SUPPORT.



Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services

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519-752-1005 | www.novavita.org | @NovaVitaBrant   

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