

*On one day, 41 sheltering organizations across the province recorded how many women and children they helped.*

# Alberta 2012 Data Count

*Seeing I am not alone,  
I became stronger.*

SHELTER RESIDENT,  
SHERWOOD PARK



**ACWS**  
Alberta Council of  
Women's Shelters

Bigstone Cree Nation Women's Emergency Shelter Society  
Brooks and District Women's Safe Shelter Society  
Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter Association  
Camrose Women's Shelter Society  
Catholic Social Services  
Central Alberta Women's Emergency Shelter Society  
Community Crisis Society  
Discovery House Family Violence Prevention Society  
Dr. Margaret Savage Crisis Centre Society  
Edmonton Women's Shelter  
Ermineskin Women's Shelter Society  
Fairview & District Women's Centre Association  
Fort McMurray Family Crisis Society  
Grande Cache Transition House  
Grande Prairie Women's Residence Association  
Hope Haven Society  
Kainai Children Services Corporation  
Kerby Centre  
Lloydminster Interval Home Society  
Lurana Shelter Society

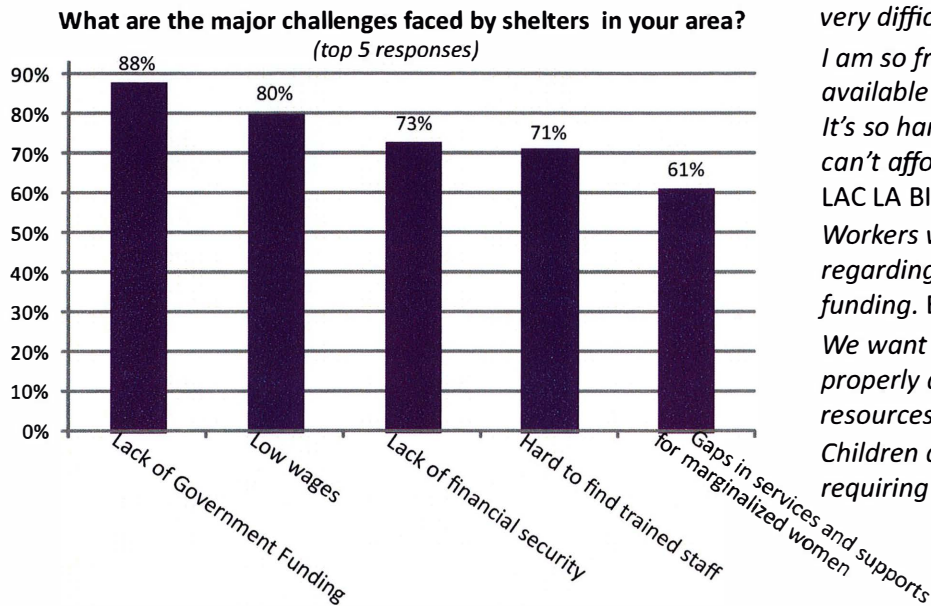
Medicine Hat Women's Shelter Society  
Mikisew Cree First Nation  
Mountain Rose Women's Shelter Association  
Northwest Alberta Resource Society  
Peace River Regional Women's Shelter Society  
Pincher Creek Women's Emergency Shelter Association  
Region 3 Family Based Care Society  
Safe Haven Women's Shelter Society  
Seniors Association of Greater Edmonton (SAGE)  
Sonshine Community Services  
St. Paul & District Crisis Association  
Stoney Tribal Administration  
Strathcona Shelter Society  
Sucker Creek Emergency Women's Shelter  
The Brenda Strafford Centre for the Prevention of Domestic Violence  
Wellspring Family Resource & Crisis Centre Society  
WINGS of Providence Society  
Yellowhead Emergency Shelter for Women Society  
YWCA Lethbridge & District  
YWCA of Banff  
YWCA of Calgary

On one day, Alberta shelters helped 1,281 women and 1,481 children.



Of the women helped, 39 were known to be pregnant.

## Barriers to success



*There simply is too much demand for the amount of resources in our community. This makes our work very difficult.* CALGARY

*I am so frustrated that supports that should be available to this family have to be fought to obtain. It's so hard to witness the struggles of women who can't afford a good lawyer fighting for their children.* LAC LA BICHE

*Workers were supporting a woman in limbo regarding her immigration...there is no government funding.* EDMONTON

*We want to help, but often lack the resources to properly assist women, especially with mental health resources.* MORLEY

*Children are coming with a greater depth of need requiring greater integrated services...* CALGARY

## Prevention

Shelters recognize that to end domestic violence, they need to conduct prevention activities and reach people earlier. Shelters are well positioned to do this, since they have frontline expertise and know the demographics in their communities. 100% of shelters are involved in primary prevention initiatives and are rarely funded to do this work.

*We are partners in a community program.* COLD LAKE

*It was good to mingle with the community and I enjoyed meeting people and making contacts for the shelter.* HOBBEWA

*There is way more awareness and the message is out there and being heard.* FAIRVIEW

*I wish you were here when my mother was fleeing from my father when I was little. Now I'm here as an adult. Things might have been different.* RESIDENT, STAND OFF

Top primary prevention initiatives shelters are involved in:

- 88% Public Awareness
- 80% School Programs
- 66% Education of Service Providers
- 59% Media Campaigns
- 54% Community Mobilization
- 49% Work with Men



# Safe, affordable housing

**Shelters were asked: If you were able to change one thing that would make things better for abused women and their children what would it be?**

**54% of shelters said safe, affordable and accessible housing.**

*Frustrated with a lack of resources for women when they leave eg. not enough second-stage shelters; not enough resources for singles housing. CALGARY*

*I came to the shelter because we had no where to live and I had to take my kids away from the alcohol, drugs and verbal abuse. RESIDENT, WABASCA*

*Frustrations with the lack of accessibility to urban shelters for women who either want to return to the city or need to move to the city for various reasons. With no housing and no where for the women and children to go, frustrations are growing for both staff and clients. As a result we are granting more and longer extensions and therefore turning away more families. Too many women are returning to unsafe and unhealthy relationships. WHITECOURT*

*Frustrations with lack of housing. LLOYDMINSTER*

*A client who has been doing really well has been determined and working hard for her 21 day stay is becoming frustrated because she cannot find appropriate housing. She has now had to fill out a Request for an Extension which has added to her stress. (This is a single mother of 4 children under the age of 5.) MEDICINE HAT*

*Our shelter was able to finally set up a repeat client with second-stage shelter, after trying to get this women the help she needs and deserves for so long. It was such an amazing feeling to finally succeed in such a huge way in support of this woman. The programming at second-stage will I'm sure be a great benefit and source of support for this client and her daughter. CAMROSE*

*We find working at a second-stage shelter a privilege and invaluable intervention in that we work where the client lives. CALGARY*

# Equitable pay for shelter workers

**80% of shelters indicated that low wages for staff are a major challenge. 71% said that another major challenge is that trained staff are difficult to find.**

*This is rewarding work, with women/children. [Though] financially not rewarding. CALGARY*

*Thank you for making us feel welcome and accepted; The staff are so upbeat and positive it gave me hope PINCHER CREEK*

*I wish I could do more help them to move away from violence. I wish I could fix everything for the women and make it O.K. for them. STAND OFF*



*I wish there was more we could do. FORT CHIPEWYAN*

*I do this work because I believe in people's ability to make change in their lives. No one is beyond hope. LETHBRIDGE*

*The Crisis Workers were amazing. They were always there for me, even when I didn't realize I would need them. Every minute of support that they offered was priceless to my growth. They have an uncanny sense for when a person needs a kind word or hug or even alone time. RESIDENT, RED DEER*

**Number of women who reported being threatened by a gun: 35**

**This number is up 62% from last year.**

*Government repealed the gun registry, and efforts must remain focused on bringing it back into effect. ENILDA*

**On this same day, 90 women and 63 children could not be accommodated.**

## 88% of shelters offer specialized services to at-risk women:

78% provide specialized services for Aboriginal women

51% provide specialized services for Immigrant women

51% provide specialized services for Disabled women



## Thank you Alberta! On one day, Albertans helped shelters by:

Donating clothing vouchers - Transportation - New clothing - Diapers - Toys - Gift cards - Cash - Quilts - Personal care products - Household items - Used furniture - Non-perishable food - Christmas adopt-a-family program - Movie passes - Fast food vouchers - Boots - Formula - Dishes - Practicum student volunteer time - Fundraising - Collective kitchen - Child care - Time sorting and moving items for apartments - Blankets and sheets - Snow-shovelling services - Children's books - Maintenance man worked on boiler - Used clothing - Used furniture for clients that are moving into their own apartments - Conference costs - Supplies - Public relations - Table & space were donated in order for the shelter to have a booth at an event - Appliances - Recreational items - School & Art Supplies - Electronics - Grounds Care - Free yoga class - Answering the phones - Building maintenance - Cooking & baking - Grocery shopping - Winter outerwear - Back packs - Working at the store - Clean-up following event - Care baskets for clients - Frozen whole chickens - Organizing the storage room - Running support groups and social gatherings - Student help conducting evaluations - Help running programs - Outreach work - New housecoats for each new resident as well as new slippers

## On one day, shelter staff and women in shelter said:

*Clients are in need of basic needs; food, clothing, shelter, child care, employment, respite care, social and emotional support.* STAFF, FORT MCMURRAY

*Finally I can sleep tonight!*

RESIDENT, ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE

*No woman's life story is the same, and therefore it is so important to remember that the way to healing is always different.* STAFF, BANFF

*There are so many issues that I am facing. My time here will not be enough and that is a big burden to carry.*

RESIDENT, TABER

*Just to be able to give a little bit of hope and to be able to provide resources to help her and her children makes you feel like you are making a difference. Exhausted.*

STAFF, GRANDE PRAIRIE

*I am amazed at the courage these women have; I am humbled that they trust me and share these painful experiences with me; the kids are incredibly resilient and so loving in spite of all the violence they have witnessed.*

STAFF, PINCHER CREEK

*Increasing exposure of shelter to violence against immigrant women.* STAFF, HIGH LEVEL

*The staff here truly saved my family, and most of all, helped me to see I am stronger than I could have ever imagined.* RESIDENT, HIGH RIVER

*Our work is always challenging and sometimes we may have moments where we say that we can't do any more and we quit -- but you know what? I always notice that tomorrow is another day and that I am here every morning with my sleeves rolled up and ready to get back to work.* STAFF, BROOKS

*Everything is too hard. I can't find a place to live; I can't find a job; I don't know what to do about childcare. It's just too hard.* RESIDENT, STRATHMORE

*More complicated in the courts, more gender neutral responses. i.e. mutual charges.* STAFF, HINTON

*We have a great deal of pride, hope and care for their well-being and future endeavors*

STAFF, GRANDE CACHE

*I feel safe here.* RESIDENT, ST. PAUL

*Women are starting to speak out more against domestic violence.* STAFF, PEACE RIVER



ACWS celebrates 30 years of inspired collaboration in 2013