

On one day, 43 sheltering organizations across the province recorded how many women and children they helped. We would like to share their stories with you.

2011 *alberta* Data Count



A Safe Place
Awo Taan Healing Lodge
Bigstone Cree Nation Women's Shelter
Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter
Camrose Women's Shelter
Canterra Safe House
Central Alberta Women's Emergency Shelter
Columbus House of Hope
Crossroads Resource Centre
Discovery House
Dr. Margaret Savage Crisis Centre
Eagle's Nest Stoney Family Shelter
Ermineskin Women's Shelter
Grande Cache Transition House
Hope Haven
Kainai Women's Wellness Lodge
Kerby Rotary House
LaSalle Residence
Lloydminster Interval Home / Dolmar Manor
Lurana Shelter Society
Phoenix Safe House / Musasa House
Mikisew Cree First Nation - Paspew House
Mountain Rose Women's Shelter
Odyssey House
Peace River Regional Women's Shelter
Pincher Creek Women's Emergency Shelter
Rowan House Emergency Shelter
Safe Haven Women's Shelter
Safe Home
Safe House
SAGE Seniors' Safe Housing
Sonshine Community Services
Sucker Creek Emergency Women's Shelter
The Brenda Strafford Centre
Unity House
Wellspring Family Resource & Crisis Centre
Wheatland Shelter
WIN House I, II & III
WINGS of Providence
Yellowhead Emergency Shelter
YWCA Lethbridge & District Harbour House
YWCA of Banff
YWCA Sherriff King Home

"It is wonderful to witness change and growth. It's a honour to work so closely with families." Shelter Worker, EDMONTON

Shelters provide so much more than a safe place to stay. Here are some of the ways Alberta shelters helped women and their children on data count day:

STANDOFF: provided resources/referrals for clients to obtain rent and damage deposit assistance

FORT MCMURRAY : took elderly woman to another province to secure safe housing for her

“I have been using the Outreach program for years and appreciate that I feel comfortable to return when I need to”.
resident, TABER

PEACE RIVER: consoled crying, sick children

WHITECOURT: sat in on meetings to advocate for our clients with children services, the RCMP, legal system

EDMONTON: booked appointment with a specialist and looked into early education programs

FAIRVIEW: obtained clothing from clothing depot

WABASCA: transported woman to her appointment at the hospital

“Thank you for all the support and family violence education that I received as well as support to my children. Thank you for the support of the outreach support as I transitioned to independent living in the community. You saved my life”. *resident, EDMONTON*

STANDOFF: listened without judgement

EDMONTON: helped mothers get their children into school or to the doctor or any appointments that they may need help with

PEACE RIVER: found inspirational poems and read them out loud

On one day, Alberta shelters helped 744 women and 606 children.

Of the women helped, 52 were pregnant.

FORT MCMURRAY: created a special group on bullying and ways to deal with it

LLOYDMINSTER: helped with legal aid, grief counselling and mental health counselling

CAMROSE: helped a mom establish plan for dealing with child exposed to trauma and domestic violence

“Thank you... for making all the phone calls and advocating for me, for connecting me with the Nurse, the school liaison, and I appreciate your referrals in the community”.
resident, CALGARY

“Got lots of information and referrals. Helped me with emotional needs, helped me with housing stuff, and gave me a safe place to stay”.
resident, GRANDE PRAIRIE

“I felt stuck today, but I realized how powerful we are as a collective team and

“Poor implementation of domestic violence laws.” “Training and beds to accommodate women with addictions.” “Need programming ie: Outreach, Child Support & need infrastructure ie: building.” “Second stage shelters receive no core funding from Government.” “Lack of shelters, permanent housing and affordable housing.” “Limitations and inconsistencies in financial supports to the client affected by domestic violence.” “Due to low security we cannot take “high risk women” which means women from our rural communities are usually sent to other shelters.”

Barriers to realizing healthy futures:

Alberta shelters were asked what are the major challenges faced by shelters in their area. The top four answers were:

89% Lack of government funding

82% Low wages for staff

64% Hard to find trained staff

36% Poor legislation or bad implementation

Number of women helped on one day in Alberta who were threatened by a gun: 22

“It’s frustrating trying to find local housing. I’m nervous that I won’t find anything by the time my 21 days are up”. *resident, BLACK DIAMOND*

“It was very difficult for me, as a woman without children, to find shelter space”. *resident, CALGARY*

“I want to go home, but have no where to go.” *resident, MORLEY*

Number of women turned away due to lack of resources (money, staff, space, etc.) on one day: 70

Number of children turned away due to lack of resources on one day: 78

“Justice system’s lack of understanding of domestic violence.” “Lack of supports for women after they leave the shelter, such as affordable housing, child care and transportation.” “Provincial Legislation vs Federal (On Reserve Shelters); Lack of funding received by INAC for the on reserve shelters.” “Myths which keep domestic violence a family affair. Myths, too, which suggest shelters can do it all and as long as victims are hidden, no one else needs to be concerned or do anything.”

the knowledge that we have makes us unstoppable” Shelter staff, TABER

On one day, Albertans helped shelters by:

Donating food and clothing - Pro bono legal support - Organizing Community donation drive - Cash donation from community organization - Retailers donating clothes - Accessing the Food Bank - Giving children's clothing & furniture - Cleaned yard and raked leaves - Company offered to sponsor Christmas hampers - Volunteer dental hygienist - Donating personal care products - Free hair cuts to residents - Giving a baby stroller and crib - Free advertising - Cash donations from local businesses - Revenue from shelter thrift store - Making dinner for residents - Providing gifts for children's Christmas party - Volunteered translation services - Free expertise from support organizations - Free bedding, towels & diapers - Donations of cell phones - A free couch - Donating school supplies, stuffed animals, bread, soup, blankets, dishes - Organized golf tournament

I am so thankful to be here. LETHBRIDGE

I was able to stay as long as I needed. WHITECOURT

This is the first time I have felt safe in a long time. TABER

I can do it myself and I will be strong to protect my children. EDMONTON

I feel safe in the shelter, even though my situation is scary. ST. PAUL

I guess I am not over-reacting to marital problems as my husband claims. MEDICINE HAT

I had the best sleep last night in a long time and didn't have any nightmares. MEDICINE HAT

The important thing is that we are safe today. We are warm, have soft pillows to lay our heads, warm food and people around us that love us and care for us. CAMROSE

If not for the shelter, I'd be on the street or staying with someone who beats me up. GRANDE PRAIRIE

here's what women had to say

The experience of having to come to a shelter is both humiliating and humbling, domestic crisis, somehow has an embarrassing effect and further weakens our already shattered self-esteem. GRANDE CACHE

With their guidance and knowledge I was able, within a few days to think more clearly and perform the beginning task of preparing to live outside of my abusive relationship. GRANDE CACHE

A client said that she appreciated the shelter services but really wanted to leave soon so she would have a home of her own. STRATHMORE

I have a place to stay and food to eat. I feel like my son and I are safe. PEACE RIVER

They always had time for me. Which made me feel like I actually mattered. RED DEER

I don't like communal living but I am so thankful to be here and have the supports. MEDICINE HAT

I have gained so much more than I thought I would from my stay here. EDMONTON

I can finally breathe and think about a better tomorrow. CALGARY

I need you to help protect me from my husband. TABER

This is my second chance. MEDICINE HAT

Thanks for listening to me. CALGARY



"I am so exhausted in the best way", said a Calgary staff member after completing two intakes back to back.