GREATER PETERBOROUGH'S

# VitalFocus®

## Gender Equality

5 GENDER EQUALITY

March 2022

**Gender equality** is the freedom of all people to express their gender identity without discrimination and prejudice and with equitable rights and opportunities. Gender equality is a universal human right and is foundational for social justice and healthy, prosperous, and safe communities. Gender norms and stereotypes affect everyone.

Photo credit: Cherylanne James, Chippewas of Rama First Nation.

### About this Report

This report is based on a community survey of local charities and non-profit groups on gender equality locally. This report is connected to the project, Advancing Gender Equality in Nogojiwanong/Peterborough, led by Kawartha World Issues Centre (KWIC). This project ran from March 2021-2022 and engaged diverse people in workshop conversations to listen to their experiences and perspectives on gender.

***"If we are truly committed to creating communities where everyone belongs, it's time we take concrete actions towards a just recovery for all and a future grounded in gender equality."***

– Community Foundations of Canada

### Language of Gender

To understand how community organizations speak of gender locally, we asked "what language does your organization typically use around gender identity?" Their answers:

Community Foundation of Greater Peterborough

KWIC Kawartha World Issues Centre Connecting for Change

COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS OF CANADA

EQUALITY FUND

Canada

# Gender Equality and the Pandemic Locally

***"Like many other organizations, we have been responding to rising inequities resulting from the COVID-19 global pandemic. There is ample evidence that marginalized oppressed individuals have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic."***

– Debbie, Elizabeth Fry Society of Peterborough

We have been hearing the same thing for the past two years: marginalized populations continue to be disproportionately affected by the pandemic. Local organizations serving women see this first hand.

Organizations have received increased requests for support for basic needs including food and shelter. They see more people dealing with heightened anxieties due to the lack of access to COVID testing, accurate information about COVID and vaccines, and the inability to access online services without internet or devices.

***When it comes to work, women have had to bear the brunt of the labour interruptions as a result of the pandemic."***

- Hanah, Compass Early Learning & Care

School shutdowns and isolation requirements for children exposed to COVID-19 meant many parents were forced to stay home with their young children, and/or had to balance working from home while caring for young children. For single mothers, these constraints were felt even more keenly not just by them, but also by their employers. While some workplaces tried to pay at least a living wage or offer flexible hours, Tegan Moss from GreenUP observes that, "providing unique supports to staff experiencing this impact has proven difficult and it is clear that a workplace alone cannot address this deep inequity."

***"Being a mother I believe we get the tougher end of kids not being able to go to school or daycare. We sacrifice working from home so many of our partners can attend work and it's very hard to navigate."***

– Alexa, Nogojiwanong Friendship Centre

***"An already virulent problem is now becoming intensified and potentially more dangerous for survivors living with their abusers."***

– Jocelyn, KSAC

According to Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre, Peterborough has seen a huge increase in gender-based violence (GBV) since the inception of the pandemic.

**During lockdown phases in 2020 KSAC saw a 165% increase in crisis clients reaching out.**

**Crisis and client support in 2021: 8200 hours (538% increase since 2019)**

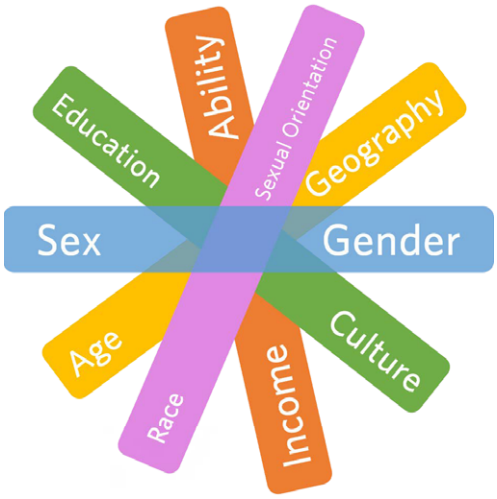
## Taking Action

**How can organizations be better equipped to advance gender equality in our community?**

- Offer training for staff and volunteers including Gender Based Analysis +
- Engage and pay everyone equitably
- Learn how to gather data without harming marginalized groups of people
- Find resources to hire consultants and review programs, policies and practices
- Create opportunities to collaborate with other organizations to share best practices
- Implement the TRC Calls to Action, the MMIWG Final Report and UNDRIP

# Intersections of Gender

- Gender equality cannot be achieved without also addressing racial, social, and economic inequalities together.
- Programs and services tend to focus on one form of inequality, but those who fall between the cracks often experience multiple forms of oppression simultaneously.




***Intersectionality*** *refers to aspects of a person's social and political identities that combine to create different modes of discrimination/ disadvantage and privilege/advantage.*

# Who's being left behind?

Being left behind in terms of gender equality depends on the intersecting factors of people's experiences. Locally, those most likely to lack adequate services, support, or inclusion in the broader community include people from one or more of the following identities and situations:

• 2SLGBTQ+/gender diverse • Indigenous • Black and racialized • New Canadians • Single parents and their children • Living on low incomes • Elderly • People living with disabilities• Mental health issues including addictions • Care workers • Those without internet, devices or digital literacy • English as a second language

**Visit peterborough.tracking-progress.org**

**Learn more!**

## Community Foundation in Action

# Fund for Gender Equality Grants

Nine local charities working to advance gender equality in Peterborough received $185,000 in grants from the Community Foundation between January 2020 and September 2021.

The **New Canadians Centre's** project supported newcomer women interested in learning how to start and maintain a home-based business. For many of the women, this was a first step out of their traditional roles as caregivers. Participating in the training with a like-minded group of women in a supportive environment gave them a renewed sense of agency and confidence, as well as providing an avenue for them to supplement their household income.

**GreenUP** held fun, gender-responsive climate action training especially for girls to develop their leadership skills, encourage their participation and equip them with the tools, connections, and capacity to help address climate change.

Given the pandemic's constraints, many organizations used their grants to evaluate their programs and plan for the future. **The Elizabeth Fry Society** evaluated and improved their existing services to criminalized women and identified ways to address the intersecting challenges they face.

Funding for these grants was made possible through Community Foundations of Canada, Equality Fund and the Government of Canada.

If you would like to support ongoing efforts to support gender equality initiatives in our community, visit **cfgp.ca** for more details.

*"Our research has shown us that QTBIPOC and immigrant/newcomer women and gender marginalized people are routinely not addressed by local community resources."*

– Scarlett Palmer, The Centre for Women and Trans People

# Advancing Gender Equality in Nogojiwanong/Peterborough Project

KWIC received a grant from the Community Foundation for the Advancing Gender Equality in Nogojiwanong/Peterborough Project, which informed the findings of this report.

The Project was guided by a steering team of gender equality advocates who advised on a series of workshops with partner organizations. Workshop participants discussed gender (in) equality and their intersecting identities. They reflected on the state of this issue to and how it impacts them.

Together, participants identified gaps and challenges in advancing gender equality, and envisioned the foundations for achieving it locally. Our project also contributed to the virtual Equal Futures Network Map of local gender equality services nationally.

**KWIC's report is coming soon. Visit www.kwic.info to learn more**

## What can you do to help create a more gender equal community?

- LEARN: Read more about KWIC's Advancing Gender Equality Project
- AMPLIFY: Share this report with your professional and social networks
- SUPPORT: Grassroots movements and community initiatives
- EDUCATE: Starting with yourself and talking with those around you
- GIVE: Donate to funds or organizations tackling issues that advance gender equality

***"It is everyone's job to address the ongoing issues."***

– Em, Nogojiwanong Friendship Centre

**Thanks to all the contributors to this report including**: CCRC, Compass Early Learning & Care, Community Foundation of Greater Peterborough, Elizabeth Fry Society of Peterborough, GreenUP, Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre, Kawartha World Issues Centre, New Canadians Centre Peterborough, Nogojiwanong Friendship Centre, Older Women's Network, OPIRG Peterborough, PARN, Trent Centre for Women and Trans People.

Community Foundation of Greater Peterborough

cfgp.ca • info@cfgp • #VitalPtbo

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We respectfully acknowledge that Nogojiwanong/Peterborough is the traditional territory of the Michi Saagiig and Chippewa Anishinaabeg, and our collective responsibilities in the Williams Treaties and Treaty 20.

Vital Signs is a community check-up conducted by community foundations across Canada that measures the vitality of our communities and identifies significant trends in a range of areas critical to quality of life. Vital Signs is coordinated nationally by Community Foundations of Canada.

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