





## 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

*“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

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.”

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

- Jocelyn, Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre

According to Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre (KSAC), 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)**

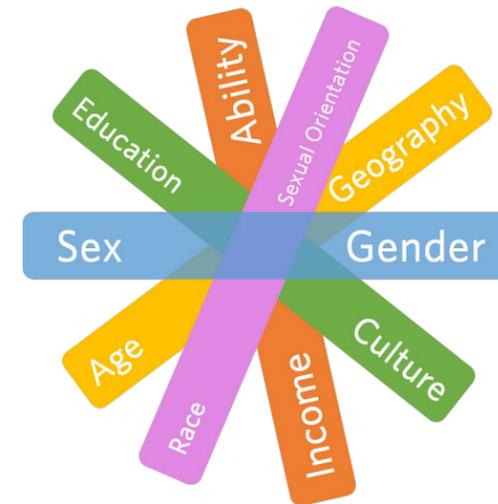
## Taking Action

**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](http://peterborough.tracking-progress.org)

## 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](http://cfgp.ca) for more details.

**Learn more!**