A photograph of a Black woman and a young girl standing together in a room, looking out a large window. The woman, with long braids, has her arms around the girl. The girl is smiling and looking towards the camera. They are both wearing white tops and denim overalls. The background shows a bright window and a wicker chair.

# YOUR GENEROSITY CHANGES EVERYTHING

2022 - 2023 Impact Report



*“The organization's wrap-around approach leaves a true impact on the lives of those it serves.”*

My decision to join as a board member at Battered Women's Support Services in October 2016 was driven by a deep appreciation for the organization's sensitivity and dedication to supporting Indigenous women. Witnessing the support facilitated by initiatives such as the women's drum group and Indigenous counselling services reinforced my belief in the strength of BWSS's work.

As my journey on the board continues, I truly appreciate the organization's consistent commitment to flexibility and innovation in responding to the growing needs of the community.

At the heart of BWSS is the creation of a beautiful path to safety at every touchpoint. Whether through shelters, counselling, legal expertise, or cultural sensitivity, the organization's wrap-around approach leaves a true impact on the lives of those it serves.

I raise my hands to all who work and volunteer to do this critical work at this beautiful organization.

*Cecilia Point*

**Cecilia Point**

BWSS Board Member



# OUR MISSION

Battered Women's Support Services provides education, advocacy, and support services to assist all self-identified women in its aim to work towards the elimination of gender-based violence and to work from a feminist perspective that promotes gender equity.

The founding women at BWSS recognized that gender-based violence does not take place only between two individuals in isolation. Rather, violence occurs in a social context and worldview that systemically reinforces the power of some people to oppress others.

.....

"Battered Women's Support Services is privileged to operate and serve on the unceded, stolen homelands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓ əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlílwətaʔ (Tseil-Watuth) Nations of the Coast Salish peoples. We express gratitude to the Nations for their stewardship of these lands since time immemorial."

# SAFETY CHANGES EVERYTHING

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# OUR IMPACT

# 2022 IMPACT

**20,607** Crisis Line  
Callers

---

**4,677** Victims Safety  
Plans Completed

---

**506** 508 Hours Working with  
Survivors on Police Statements

---

**95** Direct Police  
Referrals

---

**1,200** Generous  
Donors

---

**\$1,046,578** Amount  
Raised

# PROJECT SPECIFIC STATS

## AWARE

150 Intakes

An average of 100 participants in the program per month

100 workshop hours provided/ weekly sessions: "Life Skills and the Job Search Process."

46 women found work and completed 52 weeks of sustainable employment

26 participants completed occupational skills training

## COUNSELLING

3,507 sessions

900 survivors accessed

## JUSTICE CENTRE

1776 survivors who accessed the program

144 Indigenous survivors

468 Racialized survivors served in a language other than English

576 Family Law Files Full Representation

1352 Family Law issues

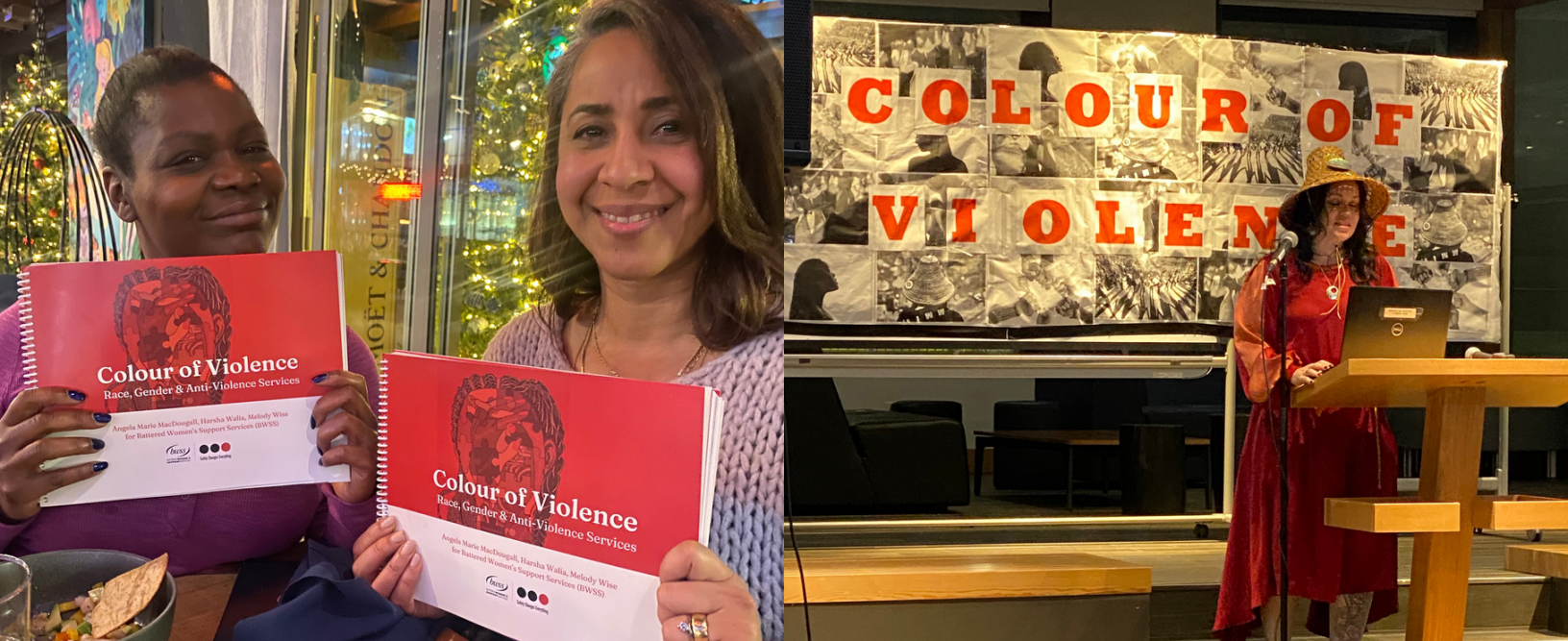
120 Child Protection Issues

504 Immigration/Refugee issues

An average of 2 family law and child protection clinics a month: an average of 6 survivors in each clinic







# COLOUR OF VIOLENCE: RACE, GENDER & ANTI-VIOLENCE SERVICES

Accessibility and adequacy of gender-based violence services in British Columbia (B.C.) for Indigenous, Black, newcomer immigrant/refugee, and racialized women and gender diverse survivors.

In November 2022, BWSS engaged in a community-based research project Colour of Violence: Race, Gender & Anti-Violence Services, where participants brilliantly and courageously shared their truth to provide public understanding and raise awareness on the experiences of Indigenous, Black, newcomer immigrant/refugee,

and racialized survivors accessing gender-based violence services in B.C. and to address the unintentional bias of service providers. Recognizing the barriers experienced by survivors of colour in accessing crucial resources, our initiative, Colour of Violence, builds on our existing culturally sensitive advocacy work, incorporating research, reports, specialized service manuals, public awareness, and training for frontline service providers across the country. This comprehensive approach aims to ensure not only appropriate response from systems but also unbiased and culturally sensitive service delivery for survivors of colour.



## THE OPENING OF THE JUSTICE CENTRE

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The Justice Centre fills a critical service gap for women who face systemic barriers in accessing legal support and achieving justice on their own.

Since 1979, BWSS has operated a community-based legal advocacy program in Metro Vancouver providing legal services and advocacy for women survivors of violence who are navigating family, immigration, child welfare and criminal law. As a continuation of this program, In May 2023, the Justice Centre at BWSS was launched, a legal

clinic providing trauma and violence-informed, multilingual, and culturally responsive legal services to diverse women who have experienced violence in BC. The Justice Centre provides a safe and supportive space for survivors to receive legal guidance and representation. Offering a comprehensive range of legal services, including support in navigating the complex legal system. The Justice Centre at BWSS ensures that the voices of survivors are heard and that their rights are protected.





# THE LAUNCH OF STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS

Strategic Interventions, designed to educate, transform, and intervene in the biggest social challenges of our time.

In May 2023, we launched Strategic Interventions, an immersive, innovative, and community-driven social enterprise. With a focus on events, training, workshops, presentations, keynotes, webinars, events, and workspace/event rentals, Strategic Interventions offers a well-rounded space and team of expert

facilitators, trainers, and presenters who possess a wealth of knowledge and experience for personal and professional development. Strategic Interventions provides an opportunity for individuals and organizations to receive world-renowned training, utilizing workshops and private training opportunities that are grounded in a strong theoretical framework for understanding violence against women and girls in relationships and systemic oppression.



A photograph of a city street at dusk. The street is paved with asphalt and has a yellow line on the left side. On the left, there are trees and a dark-colored pickup truck. On the right, there are multi-story brick buildings. In the background, a tall glass skyscraper is visible against a cloudy sky with a hint of sunset. The word "AWARDS" is superimposed in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the center of the image.

# AWARDS





## THE B.C. MULTICULTURALISM & ANTI-RACISM AWARD

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An award to recognize and celebrate the work that actively promotes multiculturalism and fights racism.

On March 21, 2023, to coincide with the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, BWSS was thrilled to receive the BC Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism Award

for our work in tackling systemic and institutional racism and reducing barriers for marginalized communities.

This recognition is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our volunteers, staff, and community of donors and supporters in tackling systemic and institutional racism and reducing barriers for women, femmes, and girls for decades.



## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF B.C. CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

**“Thank you for being unsung heroes in our province”.**

On June 2, 2023 we had the honour of having Parliamentary Secretary Mable Elmore visit our office at the Justice Centre, where she took the time to meet our team, engage in meaningful conversations, and graciously presented us the Certificate of Appreciation from the Legislative Assembly of BC for our unwavering commitment to providing Gender-Based Violence services through an intersectional approach for over four decades.

During her visit, PS Elmore, accompanied by her Ministerial Advisor, Diego Cardona, joined us in a productive discussion on ways to strengthen our support for initiatives dedicated to empowering and uplifting IBPOC women, femmes, transfeminine individuals, and girls. We are immensely grateful for the support and acknowledgment received from PS Elmore and her team, as we persist in our efforts to create a world where everyone can flourish without experiencing fear or discrimination.





## COMMUNITY SAFETY & CRIME PREVENTION AWARD OF DISTINCTION

Recognition for outstanding contributions to crime prevention, restorative justice, victim services, and community safety with the Community Safety and Crime Prevention Awards.

On November 3, 2023, Our Executive Director, Angela Marie MacDougall, accepted the Award of Distinction during the Community Safety and Crime Prevention Awards on behalf of Battered Women's Support Services. We have been honoured for our steadfast commitment to supporting crime

prevention and community safety, with a specific focus on addressing gender-based violence, advocacy, and restorative justice in British Columbia. "These award recipients work as our partners in crime prevention, victim services, and community safety, making a difference in the lives of British Columbians every single day," said Kelli Paddon, Parliamentary Secretary for Gender Equity. "I am so grateful for the work they do. It is their compassion, leadership, and advocacy for victims and survivors across this province that lends a voice to those who need it most."

A close-up photograph of a red woven hat with a black band. Below the hat, a black shirt with white lettering is visible. The background is blurred, showing more of the same items.

# YOUR IMPACT





# MY SISTER'S CLOSET

## An eco-thrift boutique for social change.

My Sister's Closet was born through our community who asked us to create more sustainable funding options to help move our mission of ending gender-based violence and working for systemic change.

After 22 years, the sustainability work continues to be driven by the power of the incredible people who volunteer, donate, and support the thrift revolution. We are proud to stand alongside the dedicated eco-thrift fashion community in Metro Vancouver, and now thrifting is moving ahead, taking on a completely new life, especially among the individuals of Generation Z. The reasons behind the continued rise of thrifting are numerous:

- The fast fashion industry is facing persistent scrutiny following the unethical treatment of its workers and unsafe working conditions in garment factories, most notably after the 2013 collapse of Rana Plaza in Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- The textile industry is one of the most pollutant-releasing industries in the world; surveys show that nearly five percent of all landfill space is consumed by textile waste.
- 20 percent of all freshwater pollution is caused by textile treatment and dyeing.

With your generous support, 2023 has been one of the most effective, where you helped divert 60,000 pounds of textiles from the landfill and raised \$838,048 for the work to end violence. My Sister's Closet is your go-to for thrift fashion, and the impact is compounded by the over 80 individuals who volunteer their time at our two locations on Commercial Drive and on Main Street in Vancouver.

Volunteers

87

Donations (lbs)

60,000

Amount Raised

\$838,048



# SWEAT TO SUPPORT SURVIVORS

A choose-your-own-adventure fitness challenge to support survivors.

From July to September 2023, our communities mobilized 230 people to Sweat to Support Survivors. An annual summer peer-to-peer fundraising challenge, participants utilize a fitness challenge of their own choosing to promote self-care and fitness and raise crucial funds for survivors.

Sweat to Support Survivors was established in 2020 by a committed community member and supporter, Lucy MacDonald. Upon hearing the dire realities women experiencing violence were facing during COVID-19, Lucy took action and rallied her friends to bring awareness and raise funds for BWSS.

Since 2020, this event has become an incredible way to take action on domestic, intimate partner, and sexualized violence in our community. Your support, alongside our incredible community members in our 2023 iteration, helped us to exceed our \$50,000 goal by raising \$53,543!



Teams

7

Participants

230

Donors

235

Amount Raised

\$53,543



# OUR TEAM



Battered Women's Support Services  
operates with the invaluable contributions  
of our dedicated staff and volunteers.  
Get to know some of our exceptional  
team members.





# AMBREEN

Manager, Community-Based Victim Services

*Direct Service and the Community-Based Response Teams ensures that survivors receive consistent, ongoing support from an anti-oppressive, trauma-informed, and intersectional feminist lens.*

Ambreen manages the Direct Service and the Community-Based Response Teams, which ensure that survivors receive consistent, ongoing support from an anti-oppressive, trauma-informed, and intersectional feminist lens. Her shared experiences with survivors striving to fight for their rights brought Ambreen to this work and BWSS. However, as she evolves in this work, she has grown to connect to this less from an individual perspective and more from a collective experience of advocating for change. BWSS carries an important responsibility to disseminate the knowledge that has been delicately shared and guarded over the years by employees, leaders, and survivors. "The Direct Service and the Community-Based Response Teams consist of CBVS workers and crisis volunteers. The impact of our work/program is the way we approach survivors. Our work is rooted in self-determination, moral agency, and making visible the oppressive systems that survivors operate in. The impact of this work is that survivors are finally "seen" as the resilient, resourceful, and strong force that they have always been. The practical support involves taking the barriers away when navigating the system so that they can focus on their safety and well-being."





# CLAUDIA

Manager, Advancing Women's Awareness  
Regarding Employment (AWARE)

*The AWARE  
program  
supports women  
to identify their  
skills and  
interests and to  
develop  
personal and  
career goals.*

A Mexican-Canadian activist born and raised in Mexico City, Claudia arrived in Canada as a landed immigrant in 1999. Always passionate about anti-violence work, Claudia works at BWSS to contribute to ending violence and abuse against women and girls in our communities and in the world. As the Manager of the Advancing Women's Awareness Regarding Employment (AWARE) Program, Claudia supports women and femmes to move out of the cycle of trauma and violence through employment. The AWARE program supports women to identify their skills and interests and to develop personal and career goals. AWARE is a flexible and accessible program helping women alleviate isolation, learn, and grow together in individual appointments and in a group setting. Importantly, AWARE participants learn how to strengthen their own personal and community support networks. "Survivors are often navigating many demands on their time and energy. Our continuous intake process helps women find what they require for their individual situations." Claudia is dedicating her energy, efforts, work, and time to support and empower self-identified women survivors of gender-based violence to become financially independent and achieve sustainable living.



# ELZA

## Women's Counsellor

Elza is an immigrant with a diverse background and has been working in the field of anti-violence for many years, both in Canada and in South America. Elza has been working in the STV Counselling Program since 2019 and provides counselling to survivors who currently experience or have previously experienced domestic, intimate partner, or sexualized violence. Through BWSS STV counselling program, survivors can access individual counselling and specialized support groups, among other supports, resources, and referrals. STV counselling program provides a safe, confidential counselling space for survivors to talk about, process, integrate and heal from their experiences, learn and gain an understanding of the impacts and types of gender-based violence intimate and intimate partner violence, and additional tools for managing their emotions within a recovery and empowerment strengths-based, trauma-informed, decolonial, intersectional feminist, an anti-oppression approach which reinforces survivors' rights to live free from fear and abuse, to autonomy and self-determination. "I work at BWSS because its mission of ending violence against self-identified women/femmes and girls and trauma-informed, decolonial, intersectional feminist, anti-oppression approach is in alignment with my own. The feedback we have received from survivors who attend individual counselling and/or specialized groups is that they no longer feel alone or like a victim and that they are survivors with diverse lived experiences, strengths, and inner resources who received additional information, knowledge, resources, support, and connections at BWSS that have enabled them to stand in their power, grow and thrive."

*STV counselling program provides a safe, confidential counselling space for survivors to talk about, process, integrate and heal from their experiences.*





# MEAZA

Program Coordinator, Black Survivors Program

Meaza is the Victim Support Worker and Program Coordinator of the Black Women's Program at BWSS. Meaza started out as a volunteer on the crisis line and then transitioned into being an employee after ten months. The Black Women's Program is an extension of the BWSS approach in creating culturally appropriate programs tailored to the diverse needs of various communities. "The Black Women's Program is beneficial in many different ways. It is a program that helps Black Women find healing and peace; it's a specialized program that is about providing a safe space for Black Women to come together and be unapologetically Black without the judgment and injustice they face when in professional or social settings. BWSS provides a sense of understanding and advocacy that women need by providing a place where women of all backgrounds, races, and religions can access the support they need."

*The Black Women's Program provides a safe space for Black Women to come together and be unapologetically Black without the judgment and injustice they face when in professional or social settings.*



# SHIANNE

## Manager of Indigenous Programs

Shianne first joined BWSS in May 2023 as a UVIC practicum student while completing her master's in social work with an Indigenous specialization focused on Indigenous women's safety and wellness, as well as decolonizing trauma and health care. Shianne was initially pulled to this work when she became an Elder's helper for Dr. Elder Roberta Price, who was facilitating talking circles for Indigenous women who experience violence. In these circles, Shianne witnessed how healing safe spaces supported women in sharing their experiences and healing through culture and community. Following this, she continued to work alongside Indigenous women, youth, and families within community health care. Knowing how BWSS supports and advocates for women aligns with her values and aspirations as working with women, particularly Indigenous women, is deeply personal for Shianne because of the impact that colonial violence has on her life as a Nehiyawlskwew (Cree woman) and on the women and Matriarchs in her family and community. Also, Shianne feels a deep sense of responsibility as a witness to women's experiences and to our future generations of children. *"The violence that women experience in our lives and on our bodies is insidious and deeply connected to the ongoing theft and violence of our lands. While this violence impacts Indigenous women disproportionately, we are all impacted - and we all deserve safety, healing, and justice."* Beginning as the Stopping the Violence Counsellor at BWSS, Shianne is now the new Manager of Indigenous Programs, where Indigenous women can access counselling from an Indigenous counsellor and do not have to be placed on a waitlist. They can also participate in various groups, such as the drum group, the healing arts group, and other culture groups that help reclaim and revitalize Indigenous traditional ways of healing and wellness. The Indigenous programs create safe spaces for Indigenous women to share their experiences and to be validated, understood, and accepted. Furthermore, the programs allow Indigenous women to reconnect, reclaim, and revitalize Indigenous cultures - which hold traditional ways of healing and wellness both as individuals and collectively.

*The Indigenous Programs create safe spaces for Indigenous women to reconnect, reclaim, and revitalize Indigenous cultures.*





# FINANCIAL REPORT

# REVENUE

Amount Raised in  
2022 – 2023

**\$3,477,000**



## SOURCES OF FUNDING

♥ Government Grants	\$1,240,958	♥ Social Enterprise	\$838,048
♥ Foundation Grants	\$346,982	♥ Program Revenue	\$4,434
♥ Donations and Fundraising	\$1,046,578		



# EXPENSES

Amount of Expenses in  
2022 – 2023

**\$2,918,453**



## ALLOCATION OF FUNDING

♥ Operations	<b>\$ 2,585,942</b>	♥ Administration	<b>\$ 246,894</b>
Wages and benefits	\$2,061,901	Rent and utilities	\$167,039
Program expenses	\$445,295	Office and miscellaneous	\$79,855
Consulting & Org. Development	\$54,954	♥ Marketing & Fundraising	<b>\$ 246,894</b>
Amortization of Capital Assets	\$23,792	Rent and utilities	\$167,039
		Office and miscellaneous	\$79,855

# OUR JOURNEY CONTINUES



*In 2024, expect to see some bold steps into new initiatives in training, legal and systemic advocacy, employment for survivors, and second-stage transition housing.*

The past three years have hurt as we stretched to meet the challenges in front of us at redline effort and our organization bent from the pressure of what it means to do anti-violence work through the effects of a global pandemic. Things became remarkably more challenging as we experienced the impact of the clawing back of the gender and racial equity gains, our communities had worked so hard for leading up to 2019.

The struggle was made easier because of you and all our communities across Metro Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, and internationally. We are honoured by all the relationships that teach us, sustain us, and inspire us. Our fabulous volunteers – 140 strong, our fierce staff team and enormously dedicated leadership team, our brilliant board members, our dynamic donors, our government partners, First Nations, Urban Indigenous partners, our community collaborators, our accomplices, and the over 45,000 people who reached out seeking information, support, healing, advocacy, and safety.

The urgency of this moment propels us forward as we reaffirm the vision, mission, and values, that have lasted the test of time, specifically how the founding women at BWSS recognized that gender-based violence does not take place only between two individuals in isolation. Rather, violence occurs in a social context and a worldview that systemically reinforces the power of some people to oppress others.

So, we stay on the frontline, meeting survivors where they are. Reading through our Impact Report, you will likely have noted how BWSS is perfecting a deep intersectional feminist, trauma, and violence-informed response. More than throwaway lines, this is our life, and it's shaped by 44 years of applying the lessons and teachings derived directly from the women, girls, and gender-diverse people we exist to serve. In 2024, expect to see some bold steps into new initiatives in training, legal and systemic advocacy, employment for survivors, and second-stage transition housing.

Thank you dearly and deeply for staying with us on this journey. We are eager to continue linking arms toward a world free of domestic, intimate partner, and sexualized violence.

A handwritten signature in orange ink that reads "Angela". The signature is fluid and cursive.

**Angela Marie MacDougall**  
Executive Director







# SAFETY CHANGES EVERYTHING



**DONATE TODAY**

Battered Women's Support Services is a  
Canadian Registered Charity (130361611RR0001)  
P.O. Box 21503, 1424 Commercial Drive, Vancouver BC V5L 5G2  
Crisis Line: 604.687.1867 | Toll free: 1.855.687.1868  
[information@bwss.org](mailto:information@bwss.org) | [@endingviolence](https://www.instagram.com/endingviolence) | [bwss.org](http://bwss.org)