



November 2023

Housing and Homelessness Bulletin

The Housing and Homelessness Bulletin is a monthly source of information where you can find news articles, information on community events and opportunities for learning. This bulletin is meant to support the work you do and keep you apprised of new and emerging information. We encourage you to read this bulletin and discuss its contents with your colleagues. While delivering important information we also hope to bring some light and fun to your day by adding a little humour throughout each and every bulletin.

Highlights in this issue



Staff Feature

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Meet the Grace House/Chartwell Team at Support House!



What's Happening?

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Register to learn about rental housing topics with the Canadian Centre for Housing Rights.

STAFF FEATURE

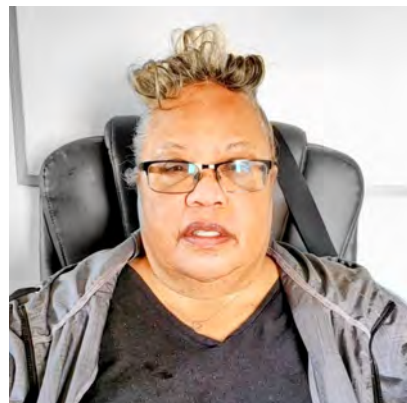
Get to know the folks that work behind the scenes.

In this section we will be featuring a new individual each month who is doing awesome work in Halton!



Through Support House, there is a range of supportive housing options for individuals living with mental health and/or substance use concerns. Both Grace House and Chartwell are two congregate residences in Oakville that offer a supportive living environment for people exiting homelessness. Vacancies are filled through Halton Region's By-Name List. Each home operates from a harm reduction approach and is staffed to meet the needs of the residents.

Working at Grace House since 1999, **Kim** has been an integral part of the structure and foundation of this home. Kim's experience prior to Grace House included working at the integrated OW/ODSP office in Peel, as well as a 60-bed Men's shelter in Toronto. Kim now supports both Grace House and Chartwell as the Supervisor of these homes, while still supporting many of the front-line operations. Through Kim's Supervisor role, she ensures that both life skills development and wellness programming are offerings within the homes. It is easy to recognize that both staff and residents alike are very fond of Kim and that her long commitment to both Grace House and Chartwell is highly valuable. Kim shares ***"I believe that I have the privilege to make a difference in people's lives. It is an opportunity that I don't take lightly, and so I surround myself with like-minded people. I come to work with this mindset every day."***



Support / **House**

STAFF FEATURE



Angelina is the full-time staff at the Chartwell residence, which offers a supported independent living environment to residents coming out of homelessness. Angelina learned from a young age about housing instability, having spent some of her childhood in family shelter environments, mostly with her Mom. Angelina has witnessed firsthand how mental health and substance misuse affect both the individual and family, seeing her own Father struggle for many years. Through these experiences, Angelina became interested in working in the field. Angelina gained her post-secondary education through McMaster University, in Social Psychology. Angelina shares that ***“operating from a person centered, harm reduction, strengths based and person centered approach”*** is central to the success of this work.

Upon meeting **Victoria**, she explained that her initial journey was in pursuit of Early Childhood Education. However, Victoria soon pivoted to the field of Social Services after seeing her brother struggle with his own addictions, mental health and interactions with the justice system. Victoria became very interested in her brother's recovery, ultimately leading her to complete her post-secondary education through Guelph-Humber in Family and Community Social Services. Prior to coming to work at Grace House, Victoria worked at a couple of different youth shelters. Now working at Grace House where residents stay up to 4 years Victoria shares ***“you get to build a relationship with people you are working with”***.



Elijoy is also a staff member at Grace House, coming to this work with a background in Nursing. Elijoy recently completed her RPN designation, after attending Sheridan College. Elijoy shares, ***“When I come in every client is at a different level, some are at baseline, some might be unwell or having an episode. I get a report from outgoing staff and check-in with everyone to see where they are at.”*** Elijoy further explains that working with residents at Grace House can look different every day, sometimes requiring psychosis management, ensuring that the client's needs are being met. Other days, residents may simply want your company, which may look like cooking dinner together or playing board games.

STAFF FEATURE



Through meeting and speaking with **Robert**, it is obvious that his gentle and calm nature is a great fit for this work. Prior to Grace House, Robert shares that he worked in varying fields including the restaurant business, web design and as an artist. When Robert first met his wife who is a Child and Youth Worker, her influence helped Robert to find a new path in Social Services. Robert attended Humber College in pursuit of this career. Prior to coming to Grace House Robert worked for many years in a youth shelter and as a residential Supervisor. Upon coming to Support House, Robert has worked in all three congregate settings, including Chartwell, Life House and now Grace House. Robert brings a lot of passion to his work, leaning on his inner artist in his work with clients. Robert talks about the wall mural that the residents of Grace House are currently working on. Explaining ***"it is an art piece that represents connections"***. Each resident gets their own square to work on, which is an opportunity to showcase what connections means to them. Robert believes that creativity can be a great coping strategy, and that spending time together doing creative things can help build an organic relationship with residents in a less stressful way.

The genuine passion and creativity that Grace House and Chartwell staff bring to their work is both noticeable and profound. Thank you for all that you do!



Back (L to R): Christina Jabalee, Robert Hurd, Victoria Lynn, Angelina Madia, Jeremy Daniels
Middle: Kim Allen
Front: Elijoy Moses



LET'S LAUGH!

Laughter is contagious. Have you ever been in a room, looked across the aisle, found someone yawning, and then immediately felt the need to yawn yourself? Turns out, just like yawning, laughter is also contagious. Studies suggest that when you hear someone else laugh, you're more likely to laugh too.



Click [here](#) for a laugh



**"Laughter is the
language of the soul."**

-Pablo Neruda



WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Find out what's going on in your
community?

Please join us! Series about Housing Rights

Presented By: [Canadian Centre for Housing Rights](#)

Email Faiza.Bhatti@halton.ca to register for any of the
following sessions:

Rental Housing Basics

Thursday, November 23rd, 2023
10-11:30 a.m.

Eviction Prevention and LTB Hearings

Thursday, November 30, 2023
10-11:30 a.m.

Repairs and Maintenance

Thursday, December 7, 2023
10-11:30 a.m.

Training will take place over Zoom from 10-11:30

The [Canadian Centre for Housing Rights](#) is Canada's leading non-profit organization working to advance the right to housing for the past 35 years.



**Canadian
Centre for
Housing Rights**



IN THE NEWS

Read about the latest news happening across all communities in housing and homelessness.

St. Thomas forum puts faces to homelessness

Published by: The London Free Press

Written By: Brian Williams

- If a homeless person could wave a magic wand to change something, what would it be? Answer: Simple – housing, and the personal security that brings.
- “I’ve been up to the top and had everything I wanted, and just through circumstances and trauma and everything happening at once, I lost it all,” the 41-year-old said. DeVree said he worked in the oil industry in Alberta until he lost his job in 2013 and divorced. Everything went downhill from there, he said.
- “It’s a really nice opportunity to get together in an equal setting on equal footing” for the public and the homeless to learn about each other.”
– Adam Marshall of the Salvation Army
- The idea was to humanize homelessness and recognize “voices that are otherwise marginalized.” – Dana Vanzanten of the St, Thomas public library



THANK YOU

We couldn't do it without you!

If you have an article you would like to share or an event that you would like highlighted please email

Melissa.Pongracz@halton.ca

Additional suggestions and contributions always welcome!



Support House Response Team

Trauma-informed/Harm Reduction community outreach to unsheltered/unhoused individuals or individuals at immediate risk of becoming unsheltered with mental health and substance use concerns.

CRITERIA

People experiencing significant mental health and substance use concerns, that are unhoused/unsheltered.

WHY REFER?

- Complex mental health/substance use situations.
- Person could benefit from wrap around supports.
- Person is not interested in discussing/disclosing mental health and substance use concerns.

HOW WE SUPPORT

- Develop crisis plans and provide resources for immediate concerns.
- Develop unified care plans to create circle of care (including MH & A and primary care.)
- Provide harm reduction supports/resources.
- Peer connection.
- Supportive goal planning.
- Supportive counselling.
- Warm transfer to MH & A supportive housing.
- Continued support in community until well connected.
- Assist with housing search if requested by lead agency.

If you feel our team should be involved please email **BOTH** of the below email addresses:

SHRT@supporthouse.ca
halton@housinghelpcentre.ca