

Regina Transition House Newsletter

Help Us Build a Community where
Women and Children Live Violence Free



Providing Services and Food Security in Times of Uncertainty

The spread of COVID-19 into Saskatchewan has had profound impacts on agencies and services our clients regularly access. Many outreach clients fall into the high-risk category for adverse symptoms from the virus and have elected to self-isolate during this time. This method is effective for keeping clients safe and healthy, however they now lack access to supports and services they once heavily relied on. To help bridge the gap in services, our Outreach Advocate has created care hampers to drop at doors without contact. We've included donated soups from our partners at Soup Sisters and Broth Brothers, whose members continue to provide frozen soups, and donated food from the community. We've also included cleaning materials, hand soap, hygiene products, and community resources and guides for navigating services during the COVID-19 outbreak.

-Megan Brooks, Outreach Advocate



Stay Safe, Stay Healthy
Stay Strong
#strongertogether

Helping Women Includes Family Pets

As a former domestic violence counselor, and staunch advocate for animal welfare, I have taken the opportunity to educate myself about the link between intimate partner violence and animal abuse. As research strengthens in favor of this connection, more resources have become available to families in need.

Study findings supporting the strength of the bond between people and their pets begin to explain why victims remain in crisis situations, and delay leaving violent homes until their pets can be safely housed. Abusers often use violence against the animals in the household (including livestock) or the threat of violence, as a weapon to ensure submission of their victims. Because victims understand the extent of the harm that their abusers will inflict on their pets if left behind, many victims will remain in violent relationships and households. Failure to consider pets in emergency and temporary housing situations is a barrier to safety for families. The results of many studies support the position that batterers who also abuse family pets are both more controlling and use more dangerous forms of violence (sexual violence, rape, stalking) than batterers who do not. These studies also find that children who are exposed to domestic violence are three times more likely to treat animals with cruelty than children who are not exposed to such violence. Significant research has documented the relationship between childhood exposure to, and subsequent perpetration of animal cruelty and patterns of adult chronic interpersonal aggression.

Many shelters, including Regina Transition House, are taking steps to gain a greater understanding of the dynamics of animal abuse and women's decisions about their pets when seeking shelter. Many of these same shelters are also working to implement options to help facilitate safe housing of pets. One such program is the SAF-T Program (Sheltering Animals and Families Together), a global initiative, and non-profit organization (www.saft-program.org). I recently attended a Webinar with the founder of the program, Allie Phillips, a Family Protection Attorney. Allie has been educating criminal justice professionals for 23 years, has conducted 400 professional trainings, and has authored over 50 publications on protecting animals and families. One such publication is the SAF-T manual, developed specifically to guide shelters in their quest to becoming pet-friendly.

Of course, the extent to which each shelter can participate is dependent on many factors including, but not limited to available space and funding. We at Transition House have begun to feel our way around this process. It is a work-in-progress, but not impossible. We are managing this endeavor on a case-by-case basis, and so far have housed on-site, on a short-term basis, 2 cats with their families until a suitable placement could be found, and 1 dog with a medical note about the dog's therapeutic value for the woman's mental health challenges.

I will be contacting local veterinary offices to discuss no-cost vaccinations for pets that are in need, as well as reaching out to the community in search of temporary (confidential) foster placements. I will also be approaching pet stores for donations of cat and dog food, litter, and dishes so we have these things on-hand for our clients and their pets. All of these efforts will remove some of the barriers from families and potential fosters. We are able to assist our clients and their families obtain the peace of mind that comes from knowing their beloved pets are safe; we just have to be willing to plan, work together, and expect some bumps and discomfort along the way.

If you would like to discuss these efforts further, please contact the Transition House Shelter Coordinator, Allison, at 306-337-2813.

Thank you, and stay healthy!

Allison Brock
Shelter Coordinator

We Love Our Volunteers!

In December 2019, the shelter was the recipient of a much appreciated facelift in the form of a fresh paint-job, thanks to Team Depot, an associate-led team of volunteers from our local Home Depot. This lovely team provided all the supplies, and time out of their own schedules, free of charge, to brighten up the shelter for staff and clients. We had lots of laughs that day, and made some new friends. We hope to be able to work with them again this spring on some outdoor projects! Beautiful work, Home Depot, and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts!



Not only did we get a fresh new paint job this year thanks to community volunteers, we also welcomed another great group of volunteers from Royal Bank Canada, who helped us with some cleaning and decluttering projects. Because this fine group of volunteers dedicated their free time and elbow grease to brightening up our space, they were then able to apply for a grant on our behalf, which we appreciate more than we can say! Thank you RBC, for showing up and supporting our organization. We feel so fortunate to have been recipients of your kindness and generosity.

**Donations
Needed**

Current Most Wanted Items:
Hand Sanitizer | Face Masks | Soap | Shampoo
Conditioner | Diapers | Food Items

Are you interested in volunteering at Regina Transition House?

Our volunteers provide critical links to the women and children we serve. Our volunteers are people who bake cookies and play with the children. They also provide a quiet presence behind the scenes and help with essential tasks and events throughout the year in the shelter.

Do you want to make a difference in your community and in the lives of others? If so, there are three ways you are able to help out at Transition House:

Children's Activity Program | Kitchen Help | Yard and Household Maintenance

How do you become a volunteer?

Email our Shelter/Volunteer Coordinator at allison@reginatransitionhouse.ca to express your interest, and she will guide you through the orientation process from there.

Diversity Philosophy

We at Transition House value and respect the diversity of our community and our clients.

We recently enlisted a team of co-workers to address the antiquated language found in some of our training materials, policy and human resources manuals. The team is working to adjust language, particularly gender-specific terms, that might be considered exclusionary to particular groups of people.

As an organization, we have created a Diversity Philosophy, which frames our wish to recognize and honor the intrinsic value of every individual. In providing services, we do not discriminate or hold bias based on any person's identity, ability or socio-economic status.

-Allison Brock, term Shelter Coordinator

Become a Part of Our Monthly Giving Campaign



www.reginatransitionhouse.ca

#givealittlechangealot