

TO MEND A  
BROKEN HEART...



CASE FOR SUPPORT FOR THE  
CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW SHELTER

## Horizon pour Elle

Located in Cowansville since 1982, Horizon pour Elle offers accessible, safe, free and confidential assistance and housing services for women who are victims of domestic violence with or without children.

Be it verbal, psychological, economic or sexual abuse, we welcome women of all nationalities and from all over Canada to regain power over their lives.

Our services are available in French and English in Cowansville, Farnham and in Bedford:

### SHELTER

Housing for women who are victims of domestic violence with or without children.  
24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

### SUPPORT

Telephone support regarding the problem of domestic violence.

Support in conjugal crisis.

Support throughout the more difficult situations in a relationship.

### ACCOMPANIMENT

Accompaniment in various processes: legal, child protection services, lawyer, doctor, search for housing, social assistance, etc.

### FOLLOW-UP

Individual follow-up and external follow-up.  
Youth services and services for the mother and child relationship.

### DEFENCE OF RIGHTS

Against violence against women.

Raising public awareness about domestic violence.

## Domestic Violence in Numbers

According to the *Institut de la statistique Québec*, just over 12% of individuals in Québec who are married or in a common-law relationship, who have been in a relationship or in contact with a former spouse in the past five years, have experienced at least one form of violence in a conjugal context during the same period.

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*Sécurité publique Québec* states that in 2015, all combined police forces in the province registered 19 406 offences against a person, committed in the context of domestic violence.

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According to *Statistics Canada*, 84 individuals lost their lives in 2015 at the hands of their spouse, including 70 women, and 80% of domestic violence victims are women.


## Horizon pour Elle in Numbers

The current occupancy of the shelter oscillates between 80 and 85 %. The demand is growing. In the last years, we talked about more than 70 to 75 % of occupancy.



During the last 5 years, Horizon pour Elle has sheltered 415 women and 228 children who fled domestic violence. During these same years, the organization received 6541 requests for help from female victims, relatives or professionals concerned about the problem of domestic violence.

In 2017 alone, 1700 telephone consultations were made at Horizon pour Elle and approximately 80 women and 40 children were accommodated.



## The Consequences of Domestic Violence For Women



**37%** OF WOMEN WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED AT LEAST ONE VIOLENT EPISODE HAVE A HIGH PSYCHOLOGICAL LEVEL OF DISTRESS.

**6%** OF WOMEN WHO ARE OR WHO HAVE BEEN VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE HAVE HAD SUICIDAL THOUGHTS.

**98,2%** OF WOMEN WHO HAVE STAYED AT HORIZON POUR ELLE PRESENTED, ONE YEAR AFTER THEIR STAY IN ACCOMMODATION, AT LEAST ONE PHYSICAL OR MENTAL HEALTH ISSUE.

## For Children



**DIFFICULTY AT SCHOOL** AS MUCH AS IN THEIR LEARNING AND IN THEIR RELATIONS WITH OTHERS.

DIFFICULTY IN ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING **EQUAL RELATIONSHIPS** WITH OTHERS.

**DEVELOPMENT OF SLEEP,** CONCENTRATION, BEHAVIOUR AND POSSIBLY MENTAL HEALTH **PROBLEMS.**



## The Current Shelter

Horizon pour Elle shelter has 7 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, a kitchen, a small meeting room, an office for consultations, an office for the coordinator and an office for the administrative assistant. The shelter can accommodate 15 women and children. The staff consists of 12 permanent employees and 9 casual employees. To these are added 14 volunteers.

The shelter was built in 1982. Over the years, various renovations have been made to meet the needs of women and children who are assisted by Horizon Pour Elle. However, the building has now reached its limits. The existing building no longer meets safety standards, the requirements of the National Fire Code, nor the Building Code of Quebec.

In addition, the shelter is not adapted to accommodate people with reduced mobility and does not offer enough privacy. In fact, the spaces are limited and not very suitable for meetings between the employees and the clientele, who do not have access to closed offices. There are only 7 parking spots which forces people to park in the street of the residential area where the shelter is located, which also results in a lack of confidentiality.

## The Future Shelter

Horizon pour Elle has therefore made the decision to build a new home for the well-being and safety of the women and children hosted. This new 13-bedroom house will be accessible for people with reduced mobility, common areas will be more unobstructed and one of the rooms will be adapted. Sprinklers will also be installed to enhance the security of the premises.

The employees will have their own office space ensuring appropriate confidentiality.

The organization wants to create joining rooms for larger families as well as meeting spaces large enough to avoid having to rent premises externally for meetings and training. The parking lot will also have more spaces. The development of the plans will focus on respect and confidentiality.

The land where the house will be located is in Cowansville.

## **A warm approach, incredible listening and moral support...**

« Une femme brisée, dépouillée de son identité... Voilà qui j'étais, à mon arrivée à la maison Horizon pour Elle, en ce mois de mai 2018.

Dès le premier jour, l'approche chaleureuse, l'écoute incroyable ainsi que le soutien moral assuré par chacune des intervenantes auront été pour moi des plus significatifs. J'ai été accompagnée et encouragée dans mon cheminement personnel et la réorganisation de ma vie avec respect, discrétion et professionnalisme. Comment ne pas mentionner à quel point celles-ci m'ont aidée à redécouvrir mes forces et à croire en mon potentiel ? De plus, les liens d'amitié tissés avec les autres femmes aussi hébergées m'ont permis de briser la lourdeur quotidienne de l'isolement.

Je remercie sincèrement toute l'équipe pour sa disponibilité remarquable et de s'être toujours montrée soucieuse de mon bien-être tout au long de mon séjour. Merci pour votre sincère dévouement. Je ne peux que vous exprimer ma plus profonde gratitude. »

K.L.





## **I was able to breathe for the first time in the last 7 years...**

« Lorsque je suis arrivée avec mes enfants à Horizon pour Elle, je ne savais pas trop à quoi m'attendre. Dans ma tête, aller dans un centre d'hébergement pour femme victime de violence conjugale était pour les autres femmes et je croyais que ça ne s'appliquait pas à moi. Dès mon arrivée, une tonne de pression s'est retirée de mes épaules, j'ai pu respirer pour la première fois depuis les 7 dernières années. On me prenait en charge, et je me permettais de recevoir de l'aide, sans honte. Dès les premiers jours, l'adaptation s'est faite facilement, celle des enfants aussi, me prouvant que ma décision était la bonne et que nous étions en sécurité au bon endroit. Les suivis avec les intervenantes ainsi que leur aide m'ont fait comprendre encore plus profondément dans quel guêpier j'étais. Devant elles, j'ai pu libérer ma vulnérabilité sans jugement et peu importe l'heure du jour ou de la nuit. Elles m'ont accompagnée dans mes démarches, elles m'ont donné des outils pour avancer et m'ont permis de reprendre confiance en moi ainsi que de reconquérir mon pouvoir féminin.

C'est non seulement un refuge pour une question de survie, c'est un lieu où l'on peut se redécouvrir à nouveau, prendre un nouveau départ, avoir de nouveaux espoirs. En partageant mon expérience avec les autres femmes, je me suis rendu compte, en plus de ne pas être seule, que les schèmes sont identiques, mais à des intensités différentes, plus ou moins violentes, sans pour autant avec aucune séquelle. Les liens que l'on tisse avec les autres femmes et les intervenantes, l'entraide, l'écoute, la compréhension m'ont permis de voir les conditions féminines sous un autre œil. Joignant l'indignation et le mépris sur les actes de violence conjugale qui sont encore tabous de nos jours, mais également les centres d'hébergement et leurs ressources sont toujours méconnus de la population.

La question que je me pose depuis que je suis à Horizon pour Elle est : pourquoi n'y suis-je pas allée avant ? Aussi pourquoi ai-je attendu aussi longtemps avant de faire le pas ? Mon passage à Horizon pour Elle m'aura permis non seulement de me reprendre en main, mais aussi d'en apprendre plus sur moi et ce que je veux faire. En plus d'écrire un livre sur le sujet, je projette d'aller faire une formation en éducation spécialisée afin de devenir une intervenante dans ce milieu et ainsi venir en aide à d'autres femmes. »

Rosie

## **They provided a safe place for my daughter and I to stay during the time I removed myself from an abusive relationship.**

« I arrived at Horizon pour Elle in August 2015 with my nine-month-old daughter. I was welcomed and supported, judgment-free, during a three-month period. Horizon pour Elle explained the cycle of violence, the signs, as well as the symptoms to me. They provided a safe place for my daughter and I to stay during the time I removed myself from an abusive relationship.

Horizon pour Elle visited with me regularly to ensure I was well supported during my legal battles and interactions with my ex-husband. Horizon pour Elle provided my daughter and I with emotional, financial support and physical safety internally during one of the most vulnerable periods of my life and then externally even after leaving the shelter.

Horizon pour Elle is an essential community organization to ensure the safe removal of women and children who find themselves in abusive relationships. Without Horizon pour Elle, many women and children would be forced to navigate the complex reality of abusive relationships on their own, which without these community resources would be impossible for many.

Thank you to all of the employees, volunteers and generous donors of Horizon pour Elle. You have made a huge difference in my life and continue to do so for many other women and children. »

Charlotte Dickie





## Horizon pour Elle is known for...



**Bilingual services**



**Listening**



**Compassion**



**Support**



**Resources**



**Kindness**



**Solidarity**



**Trust**



**Security**

Horizon pour Elle is a dynamic, inclusive organization where women are welcomed without judgment. The employees are passionate about the cause and have the necessary expertise to showcase the skills and know-how of the women it hosts.

## The Corridors of Violence

Horizon pour Elle presents the interactive educational tool « Les couloirs de la violence amoureuse » in the secondary schools of its territory. More specifically, this tool is created for teenagers in secondary 4 and 5. They are immersed in a multimedia universe in which they evolve and discover the early signs of domestic violence.

### The objectives

- Educate students about the warning signs of domestic violence and its cycle;
- Recognize the manifestation of different types of violence;
- Give young people tools so that they can experience harmonious intimate relationships based on respect and the balance of power;
- Decrease the cases of domestic violence in the region;
- Encourage victims and abusers to consult available support groups and use the means available to cope.



## Help Us Mend Broken Hearts

### Objective: \$175,000

Together, let us provide a new home for women and children who are victims of domestic violence to regain power over their lives. Be part of this generous donor community that will ensure Horizon pour Elle's sustainability.

### Your financial contribution will allow us to:



-Initiate the first phase for the construction of a new shelter, to procure some appliances and renew the furnishings;

-To welcome women who are victims of domestic violence and their children in a safe environment that is better adapted to their needs;

-To accompany these women in regaining power over their lives in order to make them fully autonomous;

-Provide support to women in crisis or in abusive relationships;

-To continue our actions of domestic violence awareness campaigns targeting the population.

### Make a Donation (n. d'enregistrement : 107492373 RR0001)

-Online: <https://www.canadahelps.org/fr/dn/33767>

-By cheque to Horizon pour Elle: PO Box 248, Cowansville, J2K 3S7

### In-kind Donations

We are also looking for companies that would like to contribute to our project by offering different materials or services needed to build the new shelter.

Examples: Commercial refrigerator, dishwasher, stove, freezers, additional tables and chairs, furnishings for 6 additional bedrooms, for bathrooms, for the employees' offices, for the conference room, exercise equipment, curtains, bedding, outdoor games for children.

## **Our Team**

### **Cathie Sombret, General Coordinator**

- Ghislaine Fournier, Administrative Assistant
- Nathalie Demers, daytime employee, youth
- Louise Boulanger, Caseworker, women
- Angelica Déry-Urichuk, Caseworker, English-speaking youth
- Sophie Boudreau, Caseworker, women, animation, VIRAJ
- Line St-Laurent, Caseworker, women
- Sonia Evraire, Caseworker, mother-child, youth
- Sylvie Caron, Caseworker, animation
- Ève-Marie Landry, Caseworker
- Sonia Côté, Caseworker
- Josée Larocque, Caseworker

### **THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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