

A STRONG FOUNDATION, A BOLD FUTURE

CELEBRATING 22 YEARS OF LEADERSHIP, ADVOCACY, AND TRANSFORMATION



2024-25 IMPACT REPORT

Acknowledging the Land

Luke's Place acknowledges the lands and people of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, which is covered under the Williams Treaties.

We are situated on the traditional territory of the Mississaugas, a branch of the greater Anishinaabeg Nation, which includes Algonquin, Ojibway, Odawa and Pottawatomi.



OUR STORY

Luke's Place was founded because of the tragic death of Luke, a 3 ½ year old boy, killed by his father during his first unsupervised access visit.

Following Luke's death, professionals and survivors in Durham Region began to meet to explore solutions for addressing the difficulties experienced by women survivors and their children. These meetings led to research, culminating in a report and a community conference. One of the recommendations of the conference was to develop a resource centre for women leaving violent relationships and dealing specifically with custody and access issues. There was unanimous support to name this centre Luke's Place.

Luke's Place Support and Resource Centre for Women and Children was incorporated in December 2000 and opened its doors to begin delivering services in September 2003.

Mission and Vision

Luke's Place envisions a family law system that promotes healthy, safe families, living free from abuse and the threat of abuse.

Mission statement

Luke's Place works with women who have been subjected to abuse to support them and their children through the family law process. We provide women, their children, and their communities with specialized services, resources, and information about family law and intimate partner violence.

Charitable Registration Number

88761-1218-RR0001

*We use the term women to include all self-identified women (including two-spirited, cisgender or transgender women) 16 years of age and older.

SPOTLIGHT ON CAROL BARKWELL

MILESTONES THAT MOVED US

After more than **39 years** of unwavering dedication to the violence against women (VAW) sector, **25** of which were dedicated to Luke's Place, Carol Barkwell has retired from her role as Executive Director.

What began as a small organization offering services to women in Durham Region has grown under her leadership into a provincial resource centre that provides support to women and training to other frontline advocates across Ontario and Canada.

Her dedication and passion for advocating for survivors of intimate partner violence (IPV) have shaped Luke's Place into a leader in the sector. In possession of quiet confidence and strength, Carol has made a lasting difference in the lives of countless women, and her legacy will continue to inspire the work we do every day.

Under Carol's leadership, Luke's Place:

- Created a unique wrap-around approach to supporting survivors, serving as the model for Ontario's successful Family Court Support Worker Program, now being adapted by organizations nationwide
- Advocated for reforms to the Divorce Act and Children's Law Reform Act to better address IPV; intervened at the Court of Appeal for Ontario and the Supreme Court of Canada in the first strategic litigation, and continued efforts to declare IPV an epidemic and bring it to the legislature
- Launched in-person and online training for legal service providers on delivering family law support to women who have been subjected to IPV
- Created and expanded access to a legal clinic connecting unrepresented women across Ontario to family law lawyers for free summary legal advice and limited scope services
- Developed innovative resources for survivors and service providers on IPV and family law
- Mentored countless advocates, legal professionals, and students
- Received numerous awards and recognition for work in gender justice and legal reform, such as the Ministry of Attorney General Award

On behalf of the Board, **thank you, Carol**, for your outstanding leadership and lasting impact.

MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE

It is with deep gratitude that I reflect on this past fiscal year at Luke's Place, my final year as Executive Director.

This year, our team supported more women than ever before, helping them to navigate the complexities of the family law system with compassion, dignity, and expert legal guidance. Our team's tireless efforts ensured that women subjected to intimate partner violence had access to the resources, information, and support they need to more safely navigate the family court process.

We saw continued growth in our in-person and virtual legal support, expanding access to services for women across Ontario. Of particular note is the expansion of limited scope legal services within our legal clinic, which offer critical support and enhance safety for women who would not otherwise have access to a lawyer.

We have enhanced training for lawyers, adding timely modules and resources to the online course. This past year, we took our flagship "After She Leaves" training program for women's advocates back on the road, offering in-person sessions in five geographically diverse communities throughout Ontario. We also created new tools and resources to support women in family court, including a new guide to using CaseLines and the Justice Services Online portal.

As part of our advocacy work this year, we were honoured to have played a key role in driving the conversation around family law reform in Ontario and nationally, including our involvement in the Ahluwalia v. Ahluwalia case at the Supreme Court of Canada. Additionally, we called for reforms to Ontario's mandatory charging policies, advocated for legal representation for survivors in family court, and raised awareness about the importance of legal professionals receiving training and education on issues of intimate partner violence.

I leave this role with a full heart and deep appreciation for the remarkable people who make Luke's Place what it is today. To our dedicated staff, volunteers, board, and supporters, thank you for your trust, passion, and tireless commitment to this work. It has been a true privilege to lead this organization, and I will always carry with me the strength, resilience, and community spirit that define Luke's Place.

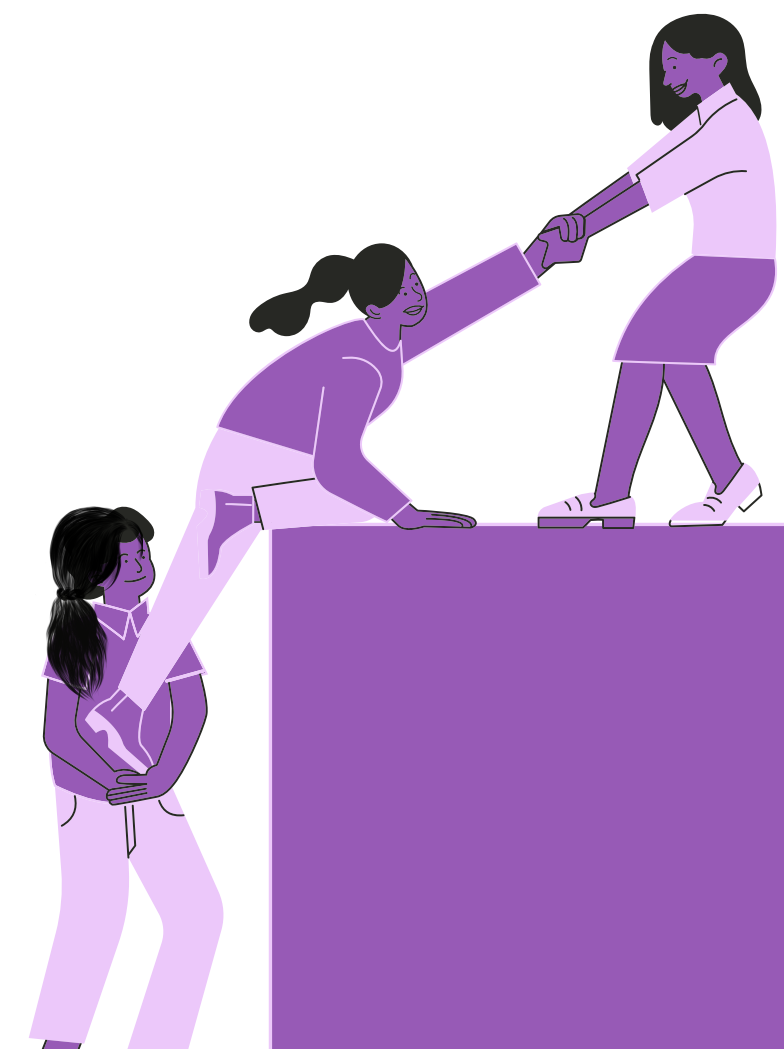
Carol Barkwell

Carol Barkwell
Executive Director

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Thanks to all your help, I feel so much more confident moving forward in this process. I can't express how much I appreciate everything you've done for me through Luke's Place. Thank you once again for your continued support during this challenging time. I am so grateful.






– Luke's Place client



WOMEN'S DIRECT SERVICES

SUPPORTING, GUIDING, EMPOWERING

This past fiscal year, our team supported **1,147** women, an **8%** increase from last fiscal year, through our legal and family court support services, including:

-  Safety planning
-  Family law information and legal system navigation
-  Court document preparation, accompaniment, and debriefing
-  Informational workshops
-  New Family Law Networking Group


Legal Clinic

We continued to provide women across the province access to key legal services, including summary legal advice, court form drafting, and representation in court.

With the support of our staff lawyers, law students, and volunteer lawyers, we provided summary legal advice to over **250** women this year.

Our **33** volunteer lawyers donated over **270** hours of their time to provide summary advice to women and deliver public legal education workshops.

Luke's Place gratefully acknowledges the financial support of **Durham Community Foundation**, made possible by their community endowment funds.

 I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to all of you. The services and support you have provided have been invaluable during the hardest time of my life.

Thank you for the guidance and the confidence. I honestly couldn't have done this without Luke's Place.

-Luke's Place Client



ADVOCACY

ADVOCATING FOR JUSTICE AND SAFETY



This past fiscal year, Luke's Place continued to be a strong advocate for survivors, pushing for family law reforms that prioritize women's safety, lived experiences, and access to justice.

We amplified survivor voices in consultations on parenting and legal system barriers, strengthened our call for improved training for family court professionals, and championed survivor-centred approaches to law and policy reform.



We intervened at the Supreme Court of Canada in Ahluwalia v. Ahluwalia to advocate for the importance of creating legal remedies for survivors that are accessible and reflect their experience of violence



We submitted a brief to the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs on the criminalization of coercive control



We testified before the Standing Committee on Justice Policy about the need to declare IPV an epidemic, and the challenges survivors face navigating the family law process in Ontario



We released a discussion paper calling for a review of Ontario's mandatory charging policies



We provided feedback to Legal Aid Ontario, urging more equitable financial eligibility criteria for women navigating IPV in family court



We joined many other VAW organizations to support the immediate passage of Bill 173, declaring IPV an epidemic in Ontario



We launched a social media campaign to advocate for the implementation of Keira's Law through dedicated judicial education programs on IPV, coercive control and trauma

RESEARCH

LISTENING, LEARNING, TAKING ACTION

In partnership with longtime academic collaborator Dr. Mavis Morton from the University of Guelph, we continued our province-wide research project focused on the family law experiences of women and gender-diverse survivors with intersecting identities.

This year, we expanded outreach to include more survivor voices through:

- **389** surveys
- **36** survivor interviews
- **14** interviews with organizations providing services to diverse IPV survivors

This research will provide key learnings and insights that we will share with other service providers and use to inform our service delivery going forward.

Look out for key findings in the upcoming 2025/26 Annual Report.

“Expanding my general knowledge and vocabulary has boosted my confidence in supporting individuals who have experienced intimate partner violence as they navigate the family court process.”

-Service Provider who attended our in-person training



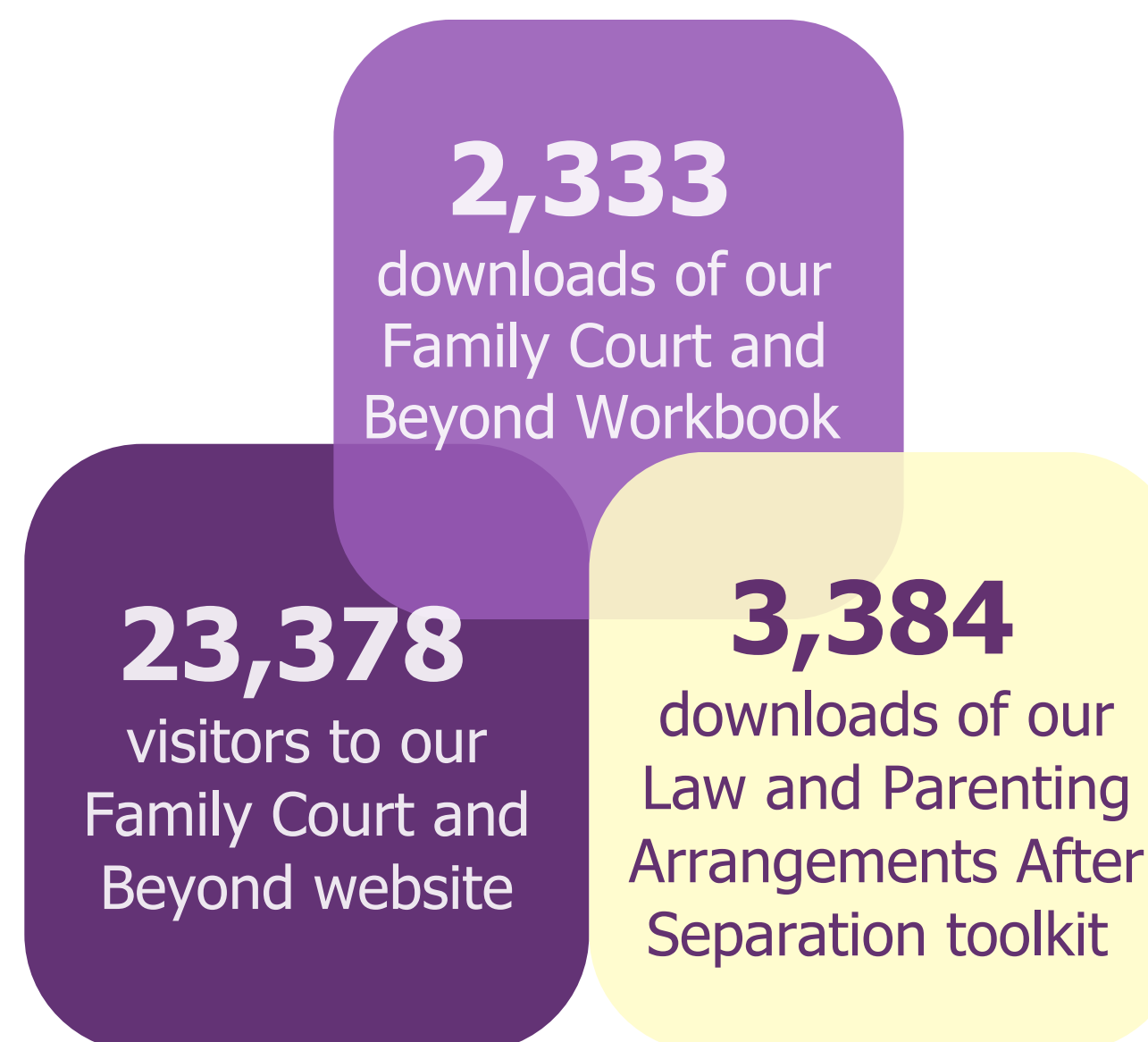
KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION

FROM INSIGHT TO ACTION

This past fiscal year, we deepened our impact by continuing to provide women with access to public legal education workshops and resources, helping them engage more confidently with the family court system.

We also focused on supporting service providers across Ontario by sharing tools and information they need to assist women navigating the family law system. Through **in-person training**, **webinars**, and **written resources**, we shared our expertise to help ensure women receive informed, compassionate support.

We continued to promote our key legal resources, including The Law and Parenting Arrangements After Separation Toolkit, with downloads of this resource more than **doubling** since last year.



Virtual reach

- **100K+** users visited Luke's Place websites
- **600K+** impressions across social media accounts
- **200K+** reach across social media accounts



Training

- **+300** women's advocates trained through live, in-person training sessions
- **+400** professionals registered for our online e-learning courses
- Launched a new e-learning Course, Parent-Child-Contact-Problem (Alienation), which saw an impressive **89** enrollments in its first few months
- Facilitated **48** public legal education workshops for women



Resources

- **6000+** downloads of our FREE resources
- **76** informational blogs on LukesPlace.ca
- **34** informational resources created, and **9** live webinars held for Family Court Support Workers

THANK YOU!

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the many volunteers who gave their time, energy, and talent to help women and families access justice. A special thank you to the granting agencies and donors who helped us improve women's and children's lives. Your generosity enables us to focus on doing what we do best: supporting women and sharing our expertise with stakeholders across Canada.

Building a strong foundation with our donors, so we can step **boldly into the future together.**



The service and support that you provide are immeasurable.

Thank you for providing this service to those of us who would be otherwise lost.

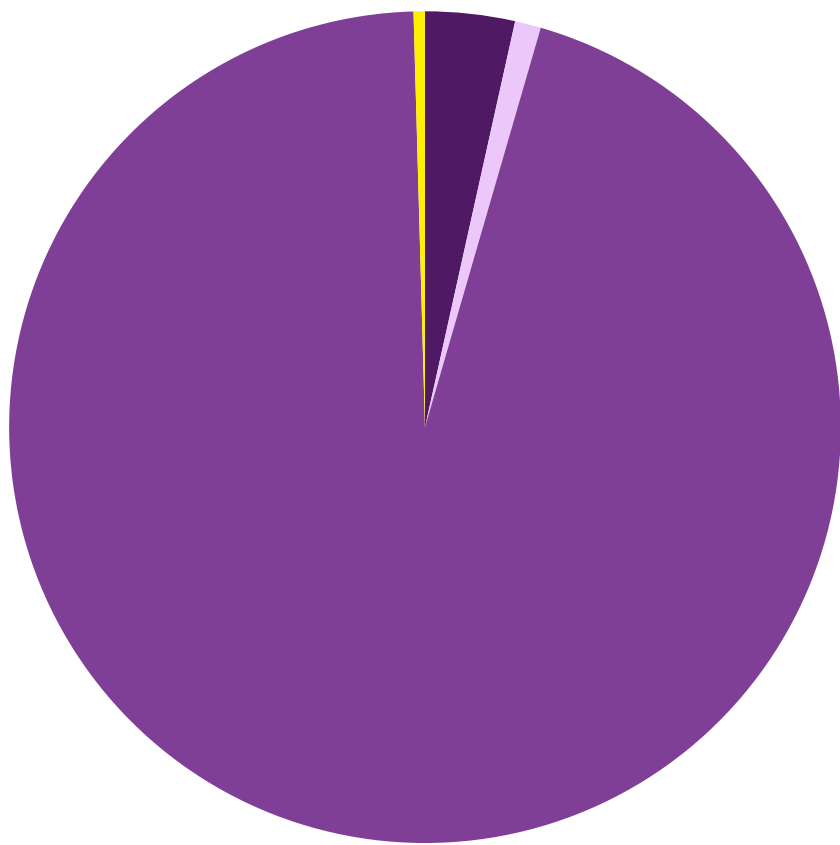
– Luke’s Place client



FINANCIALS

Excerpts taken from audited Financial Statements prepared by Dawn Flett & Associates and approved on June 18, 2025. A complete financial statement is available at LukesPlace.ca.

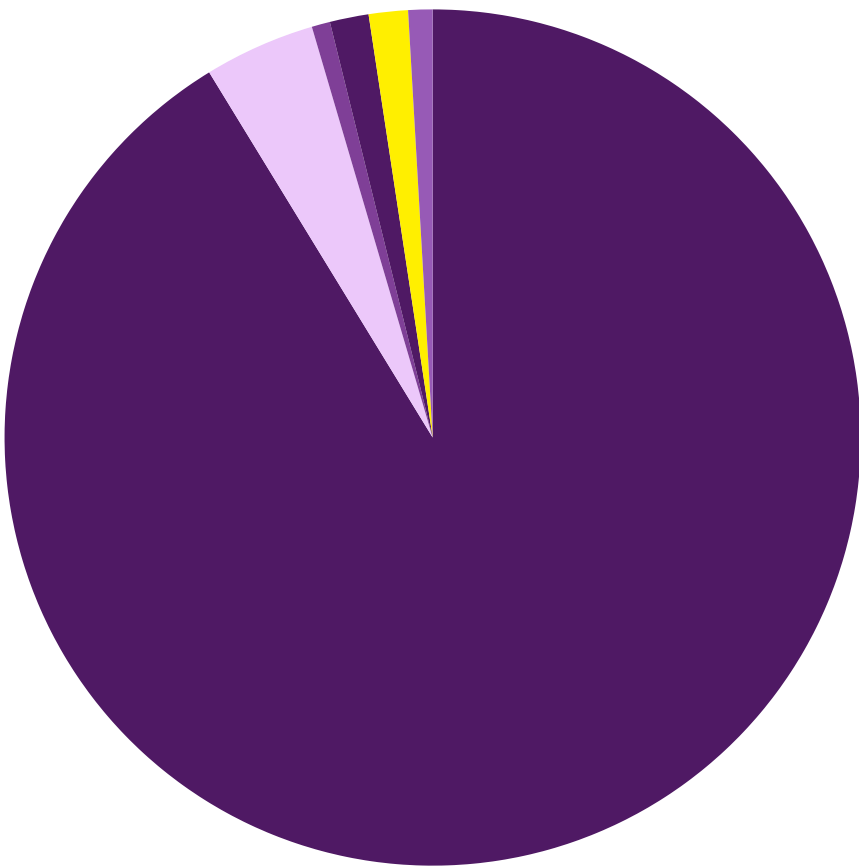
REVENUE



Grant funding	95.06%
Donations and fundraising	3.48%
Education and training	1.01%
Other	0.44%

TOTAL REVENUE \$2,331,904

EXPENSES



Wages and benefits	69.74%
Professional services	3.20%
Program and resources	0.53%
Occupancy	1.12%
Office and general	1.13%
Insurance	0.7%
Amortization	0.0%

TOTAL EXPENSES \$2,329,985

Board of Directors

- Aparna Dixit, Past President
- Donna Babbs, President
- Kimberley Gavan, Vice President
- Rebecca Boyd, Secretary
- Mazie MacDonald, Treasurer
- Ruth Chun, Director
- Jill D’Souza, Director

Find us online:

LukesPlace.ca
FamilyCourtandBeyond.ca
LukesPlaceTraining.ca

[LukesPlace1](#)

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[Luke's Place Support & Resource Centre for Women & Children](#)

