

Discovery House

domestic violence ends here.



Discovery House is a non-profit organization providing a continuum of care to women and their children fleeing domestic violence. We facilitate transitional housing – offering longer-term, safe places for women and children to call home while they begin rebuilding their lives. We provide mothers access to counselling, support and programs to ensure they never return to abusive partners. We work directly with children, to mitigate the effects of trauma and prevent the cycle from repeating. **Discovery House is about hope.** From the moment women and their children walk through our yellow door, their lives are changed, forever.

HOW WE HOUSE

When a woman flees her home with her children and enters an emergency shelter, she is considered homeless. A shelter is a temporary solution but is not a place that a family can begin healing. We provide transitional housing – a longer-term safe place for women and children to call home while they begin rebuilding their lives.

In 2016 we housed over 650 women and children year in two main ways: in our secure, 19-unit apartment complex and through our Community Housing Program (CHP), in affordable rental properties throughout the city. We also own one single family dwelling, Rosie's House, which we rent to larger families.

An average stay is typically 7 months, but some families are with us for up to year – then have access to programs and support for up to two years following – or as long as needed to ensure they continue down the path to independence.

THE DISCOVERY HOUSE APARTMENT

The Discovery House building is located in Calgary, Alberta, with an undisclosed address to ensure client safety. It contains 19 individual apartments, community spaces, and the Discovery House offices. It is close to neighbourhood schools, a pool and shopping, with easy access to public transportation. There is a double locked door that is patrolled 24 hours with cameras and security.

Our apartment clients come to us through a shared intake program – a streamlined collaboration between the Brenda Strafford Society, The Sunshine Centre and Discovery House. When leaving an emergency shelter, the shared intake program allows a client to be interviewed and have her needs assessed once rather than 3 times. This approach reduces stress and means that vacancies are quickly filled across multiple second stage shelters.

The Apartment Building contains: Nine 2-bedroom furnished apartments; Nine 3-bedroom furnished apartments; One 4-bedroom furnished apartment.

While our units are furnished and utilities are covered, our clients do pay rent. Families buy their own groceries and our partnership with the Food Bank and local businesses allows us to help supplement our clients' kitchens with dry goods, non-perishables, bread and fresh produce from community gardens.

Our apartments have secure, indoor parking as well as laundry rooms on each floor. Shared community spaces are enjoyed by all and include:

A Common Room, with a TV and couches, where clients can build community host birthday parties, share meals and participate in programming.

A secure outdoor Courtyard, with a playground, community garden, seating area and picnic tables.

A cozy Computer Room, with two computers for tutoring or client paperwork.

A safe and secure Childrens Centre, staffed with child development workers. Here kids access toys, books and craft supplies. The Centre has direct access to the courtyard for outdoor play.

A tiny Library with books for all ages. This space includes a corner stocked with after-hours emergency supplies, including diapers and pantry items.

The Community Housing Program

Our Community Housing Program (CHP) matches clients with available and affordable housing throughout the city by working with local partners such as the Calgary Homeless Foundation, Calgary Housing, and Horizon Housing. Our clients sign their own leases, but we work with them to understand lease agreements, their rights and responsibilities as tenants, and help find subsidies. We cover moving costs such as transportation and damage deposits, which are often barriers to securing housing. Although these clients are living independently in the community, they still have access to Discovery House programming and support, with our team helping them connect to community resources.

Allowing mothers and their children to be integrated into the community allows them to feel part of a neighbourhood, to enjoy outdoor space and to begin their journey to independence.

Rosie's House

Rosie's House was donated to Discovery House. We act as landlords and rent it out to a deserving family on a yearly basis, with the tenants covering their own utility bills. With a yard to call their own, each family at Rosie's House gets a fresh start.



To learn more about the work we do, or to find out how you can support our work, please contact us:

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