

EMPOWERMENT
THROUGH ACHIEVEMENT

c.10
Communication
CW: <u>Nov 27/12</u>
Item: <u>32</u>

Dear Mayor Bevilacqua and Members of Council,

It is with great pleasure that we provide you this information package about Empowerment Through Achievement (ETA) Vaughan Women's Shelter. ETA Vaughan is a non-profit organization serving York Region and neighboring communities across the Greater Toronto Area, operating both an emergency Shelter and an Outreach Centre for women and children escaping abusive homes and relationships. In addition to serving York Region and surrounding communities, ETA Vaughan is one of the few shelters which accept women and children from out of province – catering to a greater population in need of emergency shelter, accommodations and resources. We also provide cultural and dietary needs such as Halal, Kosher and any other requested products.

Since welcoming its first family in December 2009, ETA Vaughan has been able to provide emergency care for many families. By promoting a safe haven as well as support and counseling, in order to rebuild self-esteem and confidence, women and children can move forward to lives free from violence. Many families which have come through our Shelter maintain contact with us via our Outreach Centre and receive, not only our support, but also keep us up to date on their accomplishments.

The Outreach Centre has been open and providing services to our clients who are transitioning into their new homes, as well as the public since July 2010. Some of our services include counseling (individual and group), community outreach and providing resource tools and referrals. Since opening, we have also been working on developing programs and courses for both the Shelter and Outreach Centre.

Since opening in 2009, ETA Vaughan Women's Shelter developed a program in 2011 for the youth, called YAE (Youth Achieving Empowerment). This involves in school mentoring and abuse awareness, developing healthy relationships by educating the youth on becoming aware of any abusive situation. The program has been so successful that we have been invited to present to fifteen schools and this number continues to grow.

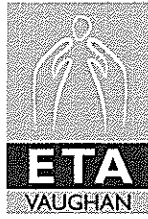
We here at ETA Vaughan recognize that violence against women is a serious and ongoing issue, crossing all social, ethnic and economic boundaries that affect us all. ETA Vaughan's mission is not only to help families who suffer abuse, but to also be a part of the fight to end it completely. In support of this effort, ETA Vaughan will be expanding in size and scope to assist more families caught in the cycle of violence and abuse. The funding needs and cost of such an endeavor is high, but the rewards of offering dignity, respect and freedom from violence are well worth the effort.

YORK REGION

10480 Islington Avenue, P.O. Box 128, Kleinburg, Ontario, L0J 1C0

Tel: 1-877-ETA-1888

www.etavaughan.com



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Within this package, I have enclosed our organization's brochure material. Please take a few moments and read through our literature. Our goals are to keep the community informed as well as build partnerships in support of our organization.

Thank you,

Kind Regards,

Marie Fiorellino

Executive Director

Secretary/Treasure

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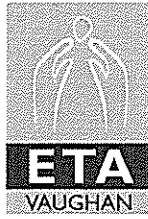
PAST CLIENTS TESTIMONIALS

"What I liked most about my stay, was in fact how supportive the staff were in helping me in my crisis time. If you didn't take me last night, I would have gone back and ended up in the hospital with no teeth. I called five shelters and they refused me...ETA is exactly what a shelter should be staff and people who listen to you and take you in time of crisis."

"The staffs at ETA was very supportive to me, they motivate me in every aspect of my life. I am leaving ETA today December 28, 2011 feeling like a champion. Thank you ladies at ETA with love."

"Thanks for always taking the time to listen to the problems and the things I was concerned about. Thanks for always believing in me and encouraging me to do by best. You guys are the awesomest. I'll always be grateful to you all. God bless you guys and make you all successful in every step of the way in life."

"I like that ETA Vaughan is a safe environment and staff members provide services with respect. I liked the quietness of the place, and relationship with clients and staffs."



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The Need for ETA Vaughan Services in York Region and the City of Vaughan

As an Emergency Shelter and Women's Centre, ETA Vaughan provides essential services, supports and resources to some of the most vulnerable individuals in the community. At this time it has become evident that our services have been utilized to the point where expanding our ability to support women, children and youth who are escaping violence is imminent. It is clear that violence against women and children is not dissipating in York Region, in fact it is growing. At ETA Vaughan, we provide emergency shelter and make all efforts to empower our clients to rebuild their self-respect and self-worth in order to move beyond their previous lives which were governed by fear and violence.

According to the 2010 York Regional Police Annual Statistical Report, 2010 saw an increase by 5.9% of sexual assault reports since 2009. Furthermore in 2010 York Region saw an increase in Domestic Occurrences (including reported and unreported assaults) by 20.9% from the previous year. Finally in addition to this, in 2011 ETA Vaughan Women's Shelter saw an 86% increase in the women, children and youth that we served over the previous year.

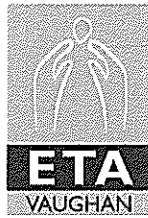
It is clear from this information that there is still much work to be done to eradicate violence against women, children and youth. ETA Vaughan's response to this increasing need and crisis is to expand its capacity and ability to provide meaningful services to more women, children and youth in York Region and the GTA. However, in order to do this more funds are required to meet this very serious gap in resources.

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SHELTER OPERATION

ETA Vaughan is a 15 bed shelter that has provided life saving services and resources to its many families since its opening in December 2009. Our needs have doubled over the last two years. ETA Vaughan continues to provide much needed services to the Violence Against Women (VAW) clientele at community and out of province level. As a result of request for shelter and having to turn these families away due to lack of space, expansion is being addressed to facilitate, educate, empower and advocate that families can live violent free lives.

ETA Vaughan operates with the philosophy of empowering women and children on pillars of dignity, self-worth and the right to live abuse free lives. Throughout their stay and beyond, women and children engage in activities including but not limited to:

Health – Ensuring that women and their families health are maintained

Safety – Formulating safety plan geared to the individual family situation

Heightened/Red Alert Protocol – The shelter is accessible to essential personnel only;

Heightened screening and vigilance when a family of a high-risk nature is housed

Financial – Advocating for financial supports that enables the family to be independent

School – Registering children in schools, transportation and safety protocols – ghosting etc

Employment – support women to keep current job if feasible; research & provide job leads, interview prep

Housing Advocacy – Application; placement & Advocacy to the region of choice for families for rent geared to income; semi-permanent and permanent housing with government and private landlords

Legal – Inform families of their legal rights through legal aid lawyer referrals, advocacy, transportation, affidavit assistance and obtaining interim custody of their children

Counselling – 24/7 individual/group counseling and workshops throughout the family stay to address emotional turmoil, violence recognition, prevention strategies, referral and resources

Multi-cultural interpretation services (MCIS) – provided where language is a barrier

Transitional Support Services – provided at the outreach office to support women's return to the community as sole support parents or return to their marriage realize their dreams and get some extra support

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