

**SOFIA House
Executive Director Report
Annual General Meeting
June 22, 2016**

The mission of SOFIA House, working to break the cycles of violence continues to inspire the development of the program design for the agency. This report reflects how the agency has provided;

safe housing for the women and children

a supportive and nurturing environment

opportunities for growth

increase community awareness.

2015 was a year of connecting with the community to seek partnerships in supporting SOFIA House.

- identifying the social impact of domestic violence
- build true partnerships

Client Programs and Services

SOFIA House provides 4 distinct programs that generally run in parallel to provide multi systemic support

- Housing and Case management services
- Family management program
- Family summer program
- SOFIA House outreach program; SHOP

Housing and Case Management Services

To provide safety to families victim to domestic violence

SOFIA House is designed to address the safety concerns for the families so the Housing program is the top priority. The components of the program include maintenance staff to coordinate furnishings and living essentials for the apartments. The Family Support Shelter workers coordinate the family's financial, medical and legal needs as well as address individual goals for each family.

The Children program workers provide evening support and are available to the children for individual attention through consent from their mom. The on-call service is available 24 hours for emergency response and counselling. The ongoing resources of donations; including monetary contributions clothing, food and furnishings are coordinated by all staff to insure every family have what they need.

During the fiscal year of April 2015 to March 2016, SOFIA House served 25 families, which included 25 women and 70 children. The agency operated at a 91% occupancy rate. The average length of stay was 5.5 months per family. This turnover includes the families who resided at SOFIA House before and including March 2015 as well as tenants who joined us during the year and still live here.

Family Management Program

To provide opportunity for self development

The group program has always evolved to address the best practices for the client group at SOFIA House. This program identifies the need for family leadership and targets the families coping skills and enhances them into life skills. This program includes a Children's version that is delivered in conjunction with the Women's program to provide an alignment in skill development, key words and progress.

This year's strategy included our partnership with The Circle Project. The Circle Project is an aboriginal organization that offers counselling, job training, traditional parenting and the HOMES program that focuses on life skills for health living. The Circle Project provided a staff person to help facilitate our Family Management Program. This person was connected to the HOMES program and she became a contact for the women at the Circle Project, providing familiarity to another community organization. The purpose was to promote attendance to the HOMES program for our clients who were not engaged in any vocational activity as it also increased our capacity of service at SOFIA House.

Summer Program

An opportunity for mothers and children to spend time together through recreational activities

During the summer of 2015, the Summer Program received \$ in donations. The top three sponsors include the SK Lotteries Community Grant Program (\$4,854), Greystone Managed Investments (\$2,500), and Sasktel (\$1,000). These donations were obtained via letter requests, online funding applications and formal grant applications.

Sofia House Outreach Program (SHOP)

For present and past clients to connect and build a community network

This program welcomes previous and past clients to share in a discussion lead by our Elder Lina and ‘shop’ through our donations. We have 90% attendance from the current clients and we continue connect with past clients through social media.

SOFIA House had a number of clients return for support in an outreach capacity. We had one client return to share her story and one client who has joined our team in a part time capacity.

Governance/Administration

The SOFIA House staff had a significant change in membership. The focus at the start of this year was to see the opportunity and restructure the organization to evaluate the best capacity for service. We introduced an admin assistant position to streamline communication with Regina Housing Authority as well as with our community donors. This strategy was successful in organizing our procedures and policy development but our clients request for more counselling support was expressed through an evaluation and this year will be focus on developing a conducive team of Support workers available on site during peak activity hours for the clients.

The target for this year of our Strategic plan is to design a one voice campaign. In an effort to formulate our one voice we embarked in a social impact evaluation. On three occasions We have polled an audience to ask them to identify, by relationship only, a person they know that has been effected by domestic violence. The first event was at SOFIA House AGM event, a third party Lady in Red event and last was during an outdoor event in partnership with the Circle Project.

Funding

SOFIA House has managed quite successfully to operate without the assistance of Federal Government funding and received faithful support from the community. We have maintained the funding from the three consistent partners, Leader Post, United Way of Regina and The City of Regina. As well we have maintained a positive relationship with our partner at Regina Housing Authority.

SOFIA House was the recipient of some substantial donations but the most significant one was a residential property at 1300Athol street. This property was donated by a private family who had always supported women’s shelters and wanted this donation to go to a reputable organization in Regina. The donor chose SOFIA House based on our mission and our reputation that he discovered by our website.

Networking/ Community Education

The funding goal was to evaluate alternative funding streams and add funding to divide the revenue into different pots so we are not reliant on one funder. This year was our second very successful year in Third Party Fundraising events. During this year SOFIA House was invited to receive proceeds from 10 different events all initiated by community members.

Royal LePage garage sale		\$6,516
Charity Bracelets		\$300
Unifor Social Justice Fund		\$2,000
Masquerade ball	October 3, 2015	\$1,716
Kids Trading Post		\$100
Harvest King Records	Graveyard Strut October 31	\$1,050
Trifecta		\$1,800
Shoppers Drug Mart	donations from customers	\$26,259
Lady in Red	March 19, 2016	\$6,508
Mrs Global Canada pageant	April 2, 2016	next year budget (\$32,635)

We also participated in two university volunteer campaigns and had 4 Nursing students and 4 Social Work students from the Arts Cares program. A total of 64 volunteers have helped out and share our vision for a safe community.

Next steps

SOFIA House will be evaluating and moving forward on the next strategic plan for the agency. Some of the themes we are hoping to focus on may include

Investing in partnerships that will increase capacity.

Engage staff and Board in valuable decision making

Evaluate funding plan

Share our findings of our social impact.

Whenever a primary need is unmet, energy goes into meeting the need, rather than developing potentials. At SOFIA House we provide the primary needs and design our program to develop the skills required to enhance the woman's ability to lead her family to a life free of violence.

Respectfully submitted by
Sarah Valli

