

You walked the Walk....now it's time to talk the Talk

Walk a Mile is Her Shoes® asks men to literally walk one mile in women's high-heeled shoes. It's not easy, but it's fun and it gets the community talking about a difficult topic: violence toward women and girls. It's critical to open up communication about domestic violence because when hidden away, it's almost impossible to stop. Unfortunately, this is a topic of conversation most people avoid, but Walk a Mile in Her Shoes® provides several opportunities to get people talking and keep the conversation going throughout the year. For preventive education, it helps men better understand and appreciate women's experiences, thus changing perspectives and helping to improve gender relationships and decrease the potential for violence. For healing, it informs the community that services are available for recovery. It demonstrates that men are willing and able to be courageous partners with women in making the world a safer place.

What Every Man Can Do to Help End Men's Violence against Women

We know that not all men are violent. There are many men in our lives that we love and count on...they are our spouses, brothers, fathers, sons and friends. For all of the good men, the following are some ways you can help in ending violence against women.

LISTEN TO WOMEN...LEARN FROM WOMEN.

Learn about violence by asking a woman who trusts you how violence has affected her life. Your role is to neither challenge her on the details, nor debate whether something really should have bothered her or not. It is to listen. Simply trust that if she tells you something hurt her, then it did.

LEARN ABOUT THE PROBLEM.

Some forms of violence have a greater physical or emotional impact than others. But all forms of violence contribute to the very real fear and suffering that women in our society endure. The basic rights that most men enjoy – safety in their homes, ability to go out at night, a job free of harassment – are a source of fear for women in much of the world.

PUBLICLY SHOW YOUR SUPPORT.

Change will occur if we each accept personal responsibility to make sure change happens. As men who care about the women in your lives, you can take steps to help ensure that women live free from fear and violence.

CHALLENGE SEXIST LANGUAGE AND JOKES THAT DEGRADE WOMEN.

One of the most difficult things for men is to learn to engage with other men on this issue... to question sexist language... to speak up when men talk lightly of violence against women...to intervene with men who engage in violence against women.

EXAMINE HOW YOUR OWN BEHAVIOUR MIGHT CONTRIBUTE TO THE PROBLEM.

If you've ever called a woman degrading names like stupid or slut; forced or pushed a woman to do something sexual she didn't want to do; if you've hit, pushed, threatened or kicked your spouse or girlfriend, then you've been part of the problem.

WORK TOWARDS LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS.

Changes in attitude, behaviour, and institutions take time, and so we must look at how we raise future generations. We must teach our children by example so they know that using violence in personal relationships is unacceptable and that for boys to become men, they do not need to control or dominate women, men, or children.

excerpts from www.whiteribbon.com

UPCOMING EVENTS:

If These Walls Could Talk

A one-hour presentation bringing you inside the walls of Gillian's Place to see our shelter and programs first hand, so you may give feedback on how we can get the word out to more people about the great work being done for abused women in our community. All are welcome.

Jan 20 – 5:30 Feb 8 – 12:00

Feb 24 – 5:30 Mar 8 – 12:00

Please call 905-684-4000 ext. 233 to RSVP – space is limited.

International Women's Day Festival Niagara celebrating women in the arts

On March 6, 2011, Gillian's Place and Women's Place of South Niagara will be partnering for the first time ever on this new event. We are thrilled to be combining our efforts celebrating the achievements of women on International Women's Day while at the same time, bringing awareness to domestic violence and violence against women.

For more information about this exciting new event, please visit www.gilliansplace.com/events or call Joanne Dooley at 905-684-4000 ext. 235.

"Change will not come if we wait for some other person, or if we wait for some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek."

— Barack Obama



Items needed on a regular basis at the shelter:

- Non perishable food items (canned vegetables, canned tuna, cereal, spaghetti sauce, granola bars and drink boxes)
- Housecoats, pajamas, slippers
- Bed linens and towels

Holiday Season Wish List

Gift Certificates: Wal-Mart, Zellers, Pen Centre, Fairview Mall, Grocery, Entertainment, Restaurants

New and unwrapped please.

For the mom's:

- Housecoats & pajamas
- Shoes and winter boots
- Undergarments and socks
- Bed linens, blankets, towels and throws
- Hair brushes, blow dryers
- Curling irons and flat irons
- Hair products (shampoo, conditioner, etc)
- Journals / diaries

For the children:

(please no toys or games that promote violence)

- Harry Potter, Star Wars, iCarly
- WebKinz, Zhu Zhu Pets
- MP3 Players, iPods, CD players
- Portable DVD players & DVDs
- Board games
- Lego
- Dora/Diego, Backyardigans
- Art/craft kits, makeup / nail kits
- Nintendo DS, Wii, PlayStation3 and Xbox games
- Batteries

For a complete list of shelter needs, please visit our website www.gilliansplace.com

2010 WINTER NEWSLETTER

the next chapter

One in four Canadian Women has experienced violence at the hands of a partner.



GILLIAN'S PLACE
empowering abused women of niagara



"For it is in giving, that we receive"

Christmas time brings with it memories of growing up in a home with two great parents and a generous Santa Claus. These are my memories – not my children's.

Our family is one who works together to ensure our needs are met. It is almost a daily struggle sometimes to keep milk in the house. With the onset of autumn comes the onset of my holiday anxiety. Granted, my kids don't ask for much. They don't ask for name brand clothing or high-end gaming systems, but most winters it seems it takes everything in me to make sure they have proper winter gear. Then, their schools start their Christmas food and clothing drives. I visit the food bank every 60 days for our 30 points throughout the year, and at Christmas time I find myself sending canned goods to school with the kids for donations. My children have no idea I go to the food bank – they think the numbers on our cans mean I got them on clearance.

If Gillian's Place wasn't around to help us out at Christmas, Santa would be filling the tree with dollar store gifts and our dinners would be half-spoiled food. For the past number of years Gillian's Place has sponsored our family at Christmas. This isn't just for presents for the kids; they also provide me with a grocery gift card and/or a turkey for the Main Event. I have photographs of my children waking up Christmas morning and opening some of the most thoughtful gifts – all purchased by people who don't know us. Even I am not left out. I have been given some great items to help me dress for work or organize our home.

Everyone knows Christmas shouldn't be about the gifts – it's about family being together. I am lucky to have the kids I have

in that they don't have high expectations, but how would it be without our annual help? It would be the worst feeling in the world for my two to wake up Christmas morning to nothing and then sit down to a frozen meal.

The sponsors who choose to help the families from Gillian's Place must work quite hard at what they do. Their gifts are always age-appropriate, and always items I would have no way of providing myself. The staff of Gillian's Place must also work exhaustingly. Every detail is thought out. If I was unable to pick up our gifts, a staff member or volunteer would deliver them to me. There is always wrapping paper and even tape.

I have learned so much through the work done at Gillian's Place. I know I will not always be in this situation. I know I will come out of this and I will be stronger as a result. I also know that I will give back just the way I see all the sponsors do.

My son is a teenager and my daughter is much younger and with the help of everyone involved in the Christmas sponsorship program, they don't feel any different from their friends after the holidays. For me, the phrase 'thank you' just doesn't seem enough. Thank you for saving my sanity. Thank you for giving my kids memories I could have no hope of providing. Thank you for seeing a need and doing what you can to help.

-Former resident of Gillian's Place and recipient of the Gillian's Place Adopt-a-Family Christmas program

24/7 Support Line **905-684-8331**



SHELTER SERVICES NUMBERS Fiscal Year 2009/2010

- 1,920 Crisis Calls were received by the Shelter
- 248 Lived in the Shelter (141 women and 107 children)
- 27 Women were re-directed due to no available space
- 35 days was the average length of stay at the shelter
- 12,000+ Women and children have found safe emergency shelter since 1977

Outreach SERVICE NUMBERS Fiscal Year 2009/2010

- 467 Women sought emergency support who did not reside in the shelter
- 586 Women obtained Family Law advice and advocacy within the criminal justice system
- 193 Women received support transitioning into an abuse free life
- 150 Children who have witnessed violence against women were seen by a Child & Youth Counsellor through our outreach services
- 1,396 Total women and children served through outreach

24/7 Support Line
905-684-8331

A Busy Year at Gillian's Place

Gillian's Place is seeing more and more women reach out to us for help. Our shelter is busier than it has ever been being at full capacity since January, and though we would not ever turn someone away who was in need of our service, this past summer alone, we had to look to our community partners for help in safely sheltering 46 women and 65 children because every one of our 35 beds were full. Our crisis outreach appointments are four times what they were even two years ago, and by the end of August, we had already seen more women to date than in all of 2009. To the end of September, our counsellors had answered over 1800 calls on our crisis support line. Community support will be more important than ever, as we forge ahead to meet the increased demand in service for abused women and children in Niagara. They need us now more than ever, and we can start this holiday season.

We all know how difficult the Holiday Season can be financially. When struggling to make ends meet, gift buying can seem to be an overwhelming expense. To make the Holiday Season a little easier for our clients, Gillian's Place offers many ways you can assist to share the joy of the Holiday Season in a meaningful way.

Adopt-a-Family

You can help put smiles on children's faces this Christmas by adopting a family that are residents or former residents of Gillian's Place. Our Adopt-a-Family program matches a donor to a family that needs help (both donor and family remain anonymous). When you choose to help, Gillian's Place supplies a wish list provided by the mom and her children which you can use to shop with.

Every year the need for this program increases; without adoption, many families would not be able to experience the joy of the Holiday Season. Last year Gillian's Place helped 44 families. This year, our list of women and their children who need this program has already exceeded 40. With the economic downturn we anticipate our list of families may double.

Corporate Tree Tags

Your business can support Gillian's Place by displaying tree tags this holiday season. The tags will contain the age and name of a child being helped by Gillian's Place. Encourage your employees and/or customers to take a tree tag and purchase a gift for that child.

Holiday Drives

Host a holiday drive for the clients of Gillian's Place in your business, family or community organization. Drives are a great way to collect items continuously needed by the women and children at Gillian's Place.

For more information on any of these programs, please call 905-684-4000 ext. 233.

Be a Star of Hope

With the holiday season fast approaching, we already know the number one question we will be faced with from the children staying at our shelter this Christmas.

"Will Santa find us here?"

For most, the Holiday Season is a time of joy and celebration with family and friends, but for women living in an abusive home, it can mean fear and isolation. Increased financial pressure during the holidays time can mean an escalation in the violence, causing many women and children to flee their homes and seek refuge and safety at Gillian's Place.

This season many families will join together to celebrate the holidays, free of abuse, surrounded with comfort, emotional support and understanding. Together, with your help, we will provide them the opportunity to experience the joy of the season in a secure home. For these families, safety and security is the best gift they will receive this holiday season. Though many children miss their homes during the holidays, they also express that they "feel better" at Gillian's Place knowing that their family is safe.

We invite you to make the holidays more joyful for the families we serve by sharing your own blessings with those who are overcoming the odds and beginning new lives of peace and safety. To become part of the magic, please become a star of hope.

On behalf of the children and their Moms who will be living at Gillian's Place this holiday season, thank you.

I wish you hope peace and happiness.

With warmest thanks,
Anne Armstrong, Executive Director Gillian's Place

YES, I want to be a STAR OF HOPE

- \$784 – one week of safe shelter for a woman over the holidays
- \$270 – safe shelter for a Mom and her two children on Christmas
- \$112 – one day of safe shelter for a woman
- \$65 – one hour of emergency counselling
- Another gift amount: \$ _____

YES, I want to be a STAR OF HOPE year-round!

I would like to donate \$ _____ each month to all the ongoing services offered by Gillian's Place.

(To give monthly, simply attach a cheque marked "VOID" or fill-in your credit card information.)

DONATION METHOD:

Make your secure donation online at www.gilliansplace.com.

Cheque (payable to "Gillian's Place") Visa Master Card

Please Print Name _____ Email _____

Address _____

Credit Card # _____ Exp. _____ Signature: _____

Charitable Number: 12971 8037 RR0001 Gillian's Place respects your privacy. We will not sell, trade, or share your name, address, or other information. The information you provide will be used occasionally to help keep you informed by mail and email. This may include newsletters, the Annual Report, e-newsletters, and letters concerning the needs of abused women and children. If you do not wish to receive this information, please check this box.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION: Gillian's Place is constantly striving to lower administrative costs. Beginning in 2011, we will no longer be sending a bi-annual newsletter through Canada Post and will be sending a monthly newsletter via e-mail. To ensure that you continue to receive communication from Gillian's Place, please ensure that we have up-to date contact information, by e-mailing development@gilliansplace.com with the subject heading "contact info".

Men working to end domestic violence



Each year, an ever-increasing number of men are joining Walk a Mile in Her Shoes® to end violence against women. Walk a Mile in Her Shoes® is a fun opportunity for men to educate the community about a very serious subject and to rally the community to take action to prevent gender based violence.

This year's event saw a record breaking 150 men raising more than \$55,000 for Gillian's Place! We were thrilled with the amount of support from our community. With the Pen Centre Sears Court packed with supporters, spectators and the hundreds of men walking there was an unmistakable excitement in the air!

The golden shoe awards were given to:

- Highest Pledged Individual** - Joe Carlomusto who raised over \$7,890
- Highest Pledged Team** - Royal Pumps who raised more than \$9,239
- Highest Pledged School/Sports Team** - Junior A Falcons who raised \$300

Special mention to first time walkers Brent Nickel who raised over \$2800, Team FightFit raising \$7000, Team Southridge for raising \$6460 and the FirstOntario Men who brought in \$4730!

This year also saw the addition of many father and son teams. Violence against women will not end until men become part of the solution. These children are learning early on that silence is affirming and though their voices are small, they play an important role in creating positive change and making our community a safer place for women and girls.



To all the men who took up the challenge and walked a mile in HER shoes for Gillian's Place, we thank you. We celebrate you.



"I felt very privileged and humbled to participate in the Walk a Mile in Her Shoes event last year. Having raised nearly \$5,000 was very rewarding, knowing it goes towards this great cause. I was shocked to hear some of the abuse that goes on against women from all walks of life in the Niagara Peninsula. I hope I can raise awareness by participating again this year."

Joe Carlomusto
Vice President of
CIBC Wood Gundy
2010 Golden Shoe Winner



"Being my first year participating in this fundraiser, I've been overwhelmed by the response of family and friends. It's the generosity of sponsors that will truly make this event a success."

Brent Nickel
High School Teacher
2010 Online Profile
Picture Winner