

Sistering

A Woman's Place

2009
demographic

survey

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2008, Sistering began working on a demographic survey in order to:

- increase our understanding of the range of women who access our services;
- identify the programs best suited to women we serve, and;
- identify ways to continue to respond to the impacts of poverty, homelessness and trauma on women’s lives.

This report provides an overview of the following findings as reported by the women who participated in the 2009 Demographic Survey:

- demographic and socio-economic characteristics;
- daily challenges including physical and mental health issues, substance use, child and adult abuse, interactions with the criminal justice system, sources of support, and;
- experiences of accessing community support services.

Key Findings & Recommendations

Findings	Recommendations
<p>Sixty-three percent of the women in this survey indicated that TTC fare was the most helpful service that community-based organizations offer. Furthermore, 30% of participants reported that <i>not</i> having access to public transportation was an obstacle to accessing community support services.</p>	<p>1. Sistering, in collaboration with program participants, the broader drop-in network and other partner sectors (e.g. anti-poverty organizations), should develop and implement a strategy to lobby the municipal, provincial and federal governments for access to public transportation for populations that experience low income.</p>
<p>Sixty percent of survey respondents reported that their preferred spoken language was one other than English. The most prevalent languages reported by participants were Mandarin, Spanish, Cantonese and Portuguese. Additionally, 51% of survey participants reported that they experience language barriers when accessing community support services.</p>	<p>2. Sistering should continue to provide programs and staff in the most prevalent languages spoken by participants, noting that language needs of populations served will change over time.</p>



Findings	Recommendations
<p>Fifty-eight percent of survey respondents worked a <i>minimum</i> of six years ago.</p>	<p>3. Sistering should continue to provide programs that develop income and employment capacity of participants (e.g. On the Path Pre-Employment program, Inspirations Studio) and ensure participants access all eligible government supports</p>
<p>Forty-eight percent of the women in this survey currently receive a government transfer as their main source of income. These transfers provided participants with an estimated annual income that ranges from \$5,874 to \$19,356. It is important to note that the after-tax low income cut-off (LICO) for unattached individuals in the City of Toronto was \$18,373 in 2008.¹</p>	<p>4. The Street Health Report 2007 <i>Research Bulletin #2 on Women and Homelessness</i> recommends that, “The Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services should raise benefit levels for Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program by at least 40% (to reinstate the 23% cut made in the 1990s and adjusted to reflect a current minimum standard of living), then index and adjust rates annually to meet this minimum standard of living.”²</p>
<p>Thirty-nine percent of women in this survey had been homeless or under-housed in the past (in the thirty days prior to participating in the survey)</p>	<p>5. Street Health’s <i>Research Bulletin on Women and Homelessness</i> also recommends that, “The City of Toronto, with adequate funding from the Governments of Canada and Ontario, should increase the availability of affordable and adequate housing in Toronto. This should include the construction of new affordable homes, improvements to sub-standard existing social housing to make it safer for women, and rent supplements that follow the individual rather than the housing unit.”³</p> <p>6. Sistering should continue to provide housing support for participants that experience or are at risk of becoming homeless.</p>



Findings	Recommendations
<p>Thirty-seven percent of survey participants have had personal contact with the mental health system, and 25% currently experience physical health issues.</p>	<p>7. Sistering should continue to offer on-site, comprehensive and non-judgmental primary health care services through its partnership with Inner City Health Associates. These services should include referrals to addiction, mental health and counselling supports, as well as care for HIV-positive and transitioning individuals.</p>
<p>Between childhood and adulthood, experiences of sexual assault increased by 2% (13% to 15%) among survey respondents. The majority of participants, who experienced violence as children or adults, did not receive support for this trauma.</p>	<p>8. In the broader context, Sistering should continue to participate in campaigns, coalitions etc that advocate for the end of violence against women (including transgendered women). Internally, Sistering should continue to support participants who experience or are at risk of experiencing violence.</p>
<p>The majority of survey participants (80%) were born in a country outside of Canada. Fifteen percent indicated non-permanent resident status.</p>	<p>9. Sistering should continue to offer immigration and settlement support on-site and with partner agencies. Externally, Sistering should continue to work with coalitions and campaigns that advocate for the end of deportations and detentions and the implementation of a full inclusive regularization program for all non-status people.</p>
<p>Two percent of survey participants identified as First Nations.</p>	<p>10. Sistering should connect with First Nations women, agencies, coalitions and groups to increase our knowledge of issues, programming needs and advocacy initiatives specific to the needs and issues of First Nations women.</p>



1.0 INTRODUCTION

Sistering – A Woman’s Place is a women’s organization that offers practical and emotional support to women through programs which enable them to take greater control over their lives. Guided by the principles of Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression, Sistering works to change the social conditions which endanger women’s welfare.

Sistering operates a multi-service women’s centre for women who have been affected by poverty, homelessness, trauma and displacement. The core services offered are basic needs for daily living, housing support services, counselling, advocacy and income and employment supports.

There are three locations in Toronto: the main Drop-In Centre on Bloor Street West, a Drop-In/Outreach Centre located in Parkdale, and two social purpose enterprise art/craft-based studios, Inspirations Studio, on Queen Street West and Spun Studio located at the Drop-In on Bloor Street.

Women (participants) from all three locations were involved in the survey: 10 from Inspirations, 25 from the Parkdale Drop-in/Outreach Centre and 94 from the Bloor Street West Drop-in. The majority of women who participated in the survey access our Bloor Street West location where currently we see between 150-200 women each day. The numbers of women accessing services at our Drop-In on Bloor Street have grown dramatically since 2008 with an increase of almost 100%.

Sistering conducted its last participant survey in 2004, at which time we were serving approximately 100 women each day at our main Drop-In with a 25% increase in the winter months. At that time, space was identified as an issue: The Drop-In (previously located on College Street) had outgrown its available space with a need for larger meeting rooms, quiet space, more laundry facilities and greater accessibility. In 2007, Sistering moved into a permanent, larger, and more accessible space on Bloor Street West. This survey is, in part, a way to better understand the populations of women accessing services at our new site.

The purpose of the 2009 Demographic Survey is to:

- Gain an understanding of the diverse needs of the women who use Sistering services in order to improve program development, service delivery and advocacy initiatives;
- Identify the community-based resources and services that are important to the women that Sistering serves, as well as the barriers that participants experience when accessing these programs;
- Document the impact of poverty and trauma on women’s lives.



2.0 OVERVIEW OF SURVEY PROCESS

The process for the development and implementation of the 2009 Demographic Survey included nine stages:

1. *Survey Development:* Students from York University developed the demographic survey as part of their coursework for a 2008 Introduction to Women's Studies class taught by Professor Cheryl van Daalen-Smith. The students pilot tested the survey through focus groups with language-specific populations (Mandarin and Spanish) at Sistering's Bloor Street West Drop-in. Former staff of Street Health Nursing Foundation in Toronto (Erika Khandor and Kate Mason) also provided advice and guidance regarding the survey tool and its implementation.
2. *Project Leadership:* Sistering convened a committee of staff to develop an implementation plan for the demographic survey that included: site-specific engagement, translation/interpretation into eight languages, various options for participant engagement and an honorarium. Based on an estimated participant population size of 1500 women, we set our target sample size at 10% to ensure a representative sample size, with accuracy of results within plus or minus 5%, 95% of the time. In total, 129 of women participated in the survey.
3. *Survey Translation:* Sistering staff (Tina Cai, Lourdes Carvajal and Rosa Delgado) translated the survey into Chinese script, Portuguese and Spanish.
4. *Volunteer Recruitment:* Sistering staff (Ellen Bercovitz) recruited and trained volunteers to assist with the implementation of the survey, particularly in Mandarin, Spanish and Urdu languages.
5. *Interpretation:* Sistering hired interpreters from the Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic to assist with conducting survey interviews in Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu.
6. *Survey Implementation:* From February to April 2009, the demographic survey was administered by volunteers under the direction of an external consultant at all three of Sistering's locations. Survey respondents could participate in written, verbal or a group format in the language of their choice. All respondents received an honorarium and were guaranteed anonymity.
7. *Data Compilation and Draft Survey Report:* Results of the survey were compiled and expressed as a percentage by site and the organization as a whole.
8. *Presentation of Findings to Key Stakeholders:* The findings of the demographic survey were presented to participants at each site between May and June

2009. Women were invited to provide their reactions to the findings, and share their experiences to exemplify or challenge the data (these responses have been incorporated into this report). Presentations were also made to Sistering staff, the Board of Directors and 2008-09 Annual General Meeting attendees. All stakeholders were invited to provide input towards the findings.

9. *Survey Limitation:* Unfortunately, no participants from transgendered, transsexual or intersex communities participated in the first iteration of the survey from February to April 2009. As such, Sistering invited participants from these three populations to complete the survey during July 2009. The results from this engagement are attached as an addendum to this report.

REPORT FORMAT

The following report presents the demographic and socio-economic characteristics, lived experiences (regarding physical and mental health, substance use, criminal justice system, child and adult abuse), sources of support and experiences of accessing community support services (including Sistering), as reported by women who participated in the 2009 Demographic Survey in the following format:

- Anonymous comments from survey participants
- Survey data compiled in table format, expressed as a number and percent, followed by a summary of the data (Highlights). Please note that:
 - i. Totals may not exactly equal the sum of their components due to rounding.
 - ii. Single and Multiple Responses: A single response occurs when a respondent provides one answer only. A multiple response occurs when a respondent provides two or more responses to a question.
- Relevant statistical information from municipal, provincial and/or national sources
- Recommendations based on key findings
- Glossary of acronyms
- Definitions
- Two appendices that include the survey data by each of Sistering's locations (Appendix A) and results of the survey with transgender participants (Appendix B)



3.0 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

3.1 AGE

“When I came to Canada, I was already more than 70 years old. I haven’t been here for 10 years therefore I am not eligible for OAS. Right now I am going through financial difficulties and have to work to support myself.”

Parkdale Drop-in / Outreach participant

“For the women under 30 years of age, there is a lack services geared towards us within the current social services system. There are a number of youth programs. But, if you are between the ages of 25 and 30, you are often stuck with nowhere for you to go and nothing that really fits your needs.”

Drop-in participant

Table 1: Survey Respondents by Age Range

Age Range	Number	Percent
46 to 60 years	42	34%
61 to 74 years	38	31%
31 to 45 years	22	18%
More than 75 years	16	13%
21 to 30 years	4	3%
Less than 20 years	1	1%
Preferred not to answer	1	1%
Total	124	101%

Highlights:

- Overall, more than half of the women in this study (65%) were between the ages of 46 to 74 years; 18% between 31 to 45 years, 13% were 75+ years, and 5% were under 30 years of age.



City of Toronto – 2006 Census Canada Statistics

- The population between the ages of 45 and 64 years increased from 22.5% in 2001 to 24.7% in 2006. Individuals aged 15 to 24 years increased slightly from 12.4% to 12.7%.⁴
- The proportion of residents aged 25 to 44 years fell from 33.9% in 2001 to 32% in 2006.⁵
- The two fastest growing five-year age groups were 80-84 and 55-59 year olds. They grew by 30% and 25% respectively since the 2001 Census.⁶

3.2 FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS

Table 2: Survey Respondents by Marital Status

Marital Status	Number	Percent
Widowed	36	29%
Single	34	27%
Partnered	34	27%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>	20	16%
Total	124	99%

Highlights:

- Twenty-nine percent of survey respondents indicated that they were widowed. An equal proportion of women in this survey reported that they were single and partnered (27% each).
- Among single women, 41% (14) were lone parents. Twenty-six percent (9) of partnered women had children (data not shown).

City of Toronto – 2006 Census Canada Statistics

- The structure of the family in Toronto continues to change. Among Toronto families, 70% were married couples, 9% were common-law couples and 20% were led by lone parents in 2006. It is interesting to note that the number of common law families increased by 10.4%, lone parent families by 4% and married couple families experienced a decline of 0.8% between 2001 and 2006.⁷
- Single persons increased by 5.2%. Toronto experienced a 1.8% drop in the number of widowers.⁸



3.3 RACIAL/CULTURAL GROUP

Table 3: Survey Respondents by Racial/Cultural Group

Racial/Cultural Group	Number	Percent
East Asian	39	31%
White, Caucasian	22	18%
Hispanic, Latin American	19	15%
Black, African Canadian	9	7%
South Asian	9	7%
Mixed Heritage	7 ⁹	6%
Western European	6	5%
Eastern European	4	3%
Don't know	2	2%
First Nations	2	2%
Southeast Asian	1	1%
West Asian	1	1%
Caribbean Canadian	1	0.6%
French Canadian	1	0.6%
Northern European	1	0.6%
Total	124	100%

Highlights:

- Thirty-one percent of women in this study indicated that they were of East Asian descent, followed by White, Caucasian (18%), Hispanic, Latin American (15%), Black, African Canadian and South Asian (7% each), mixed heritage (6%), Western European (5%), Eastern European (3%), French Canadian, Caribbean Canadian, North European, West Asian (1% each).
- One percent of respondents indicated that they do not know their racial and/or cultural background.

City of Toronto – 2006 Census Canada Statistics

- Nearly half of the City of Toronto's population (47% or 1,162,635 people), are visible minorities, up from 42.8% in 2001. By comparison, the non-visible minority population in Toronto declined by 6.5% and 11.3% over the respective periods.¹⁰
- The largest visible minority populations in Toronto were:
 - South Asian at 298,370 or 12.0% of the population
 - Chinese at 283,075 or 11.4%
 - Black at 205,555 or 8.4%
 - Filipino at 102,555 or 4.1%
 - Latin American at 64,860 or 2.6%.¹¹
- 13,605 persons in the City of Toronto (0.5% of the total population) were Aboriginal. Aboriginal peoples in Toronto comprise 42.6% of those in the GTA. From 2001 to 2006, the number of Aboriginal peoples in the city increase by 2,235 (19.7%). Among Aboriginal peoples in Toronto, 67.1% were North American Indians, 26.8% were Métis and 1.4% was Inuit.¹²

3.4 COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

“When you're not born in Canada, the first years are very hard. It took 7 years to become a landed immigrant.”

Parkdale Drop-in / Outreach participant

“Being born in Canada, but not from Toronto is an issue. People haven't heard of other places in Canada that are not urban. It is difficult to navigate and adapt to the city. People get lost here.”

Inspirations participant



Table 4: Survey Respondents by Country of Origin

Country	Number	Percent
China	33	27%
Canada	22	18%
Portugal	8	6%
Mexico	7	6%
India	6	5%
Guatemala	4	3%
The Philippines	4	3%
Jamaica	3	2%
Botswana	2	2%
Chile	2	2%
Colombia	2	2%
Ecuador	2	2%
England	2	2%
Guyana	2	2%
Pakistan	2	2%
Venezuela	2	2%
Antigua	1	1%
Australia	1	1%
Brazil	1	1%
Croatia	1	1%
Cuba	1	1%
Czech Republic	1	1%
El Salvador	1	1%
Ireland	1	1%
Italy	1	1%
Malaysia	1	1%
Slovakia	1	1%
South Africa	1	1%
South Korea	1	1%
Sri Lanka	1	1%
Taiwan	1	1%
Trinidad	1	1%
United Kingdom	1	1%
United States	1	1%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>	3	2%
Total	124	106%

Highlights:

- The majority of the women in this study (80%) were born in a country outside of Canada: The largest proportions of women were from China



- (27%), Portugal (6%), Mexico (6%) and India (5%).
- Eighteen percent of the sample was born in Canada.

3.5 CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION STATUS

“Most of us are sponsored to come to Canada by our adult children. When we come, we lose our independence (including financial). This is very hard since some of us have lost their jobs due to the recession. We always feel we are a burden for our families. We feel very isolated in the neighbourhood because we don’t speak the language.”

Drop-in participant

Table 5: Survey Respondents by Citizenship and Immigration Status

Citizenship/ Immigration Status	Number	Percent
Canadian citizen	73	59%
Immigrant	32	26%
Non-permanent resident	19	15%
Total	124	100%

Highlights:

- Overall, close to 60% of the women in this survey reported that they were Canadian citizens; 26% were immigrants and 15% indicated non-permanent resident status.

City of Toronto – 2006 Census Canada Statistics¹³

- Half of the city’s population (1,237,720 persons) was born outside of Canada, up from 48% in 1996. The proportion of the city of Toronto’s population who are citizens has been increasing (currently 85%). However, levels in Toronto are still significantly lower than Ontario (92% were citizens) and Canada as a whole (94%).
 - In 2006, the city of Toronto was home to 8% of Canada’s population, 30% of all recent immigrants and 20% of all immigrants.
 - The top regions of origin for recent immigrants settling in city of Toronto were:
 - South Asia (26% – predominantly India at 12%)
 - East Asia (22% – predominantly China at 18%)
 - Europe (14% – primarily Eastern European countries)
 - Middle East and West Central Asia (11%)
 - Caribbean, Central and South America (10%)
 - South East Asia (10% – predominantly Philippines at 8%)
 - Africa (6%);
 - United States (2%); and
 - Oceania (less than 1%).



3.6 LANGUAGE

“When I first came to Canada from Jamaica, even though my first language was English, others thought I did not speak English. This is because of the accent and broken style of English that is spoken in Jamaica. This made it difficult to be taken seriously and get good employment.”

Drop-in participant

Table 6: Survey Respondents by Preferred Spoken Language & Other Language(s)

Language	Preferred Spoken Language		Other Spoken Language	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Cantonese	10	8%	1	1%
Czech	0	0%	1	1.4%
English	49	40%	21	31%
French	1	1%	5	7%
German	1	1%	1	1%
Gujarati	1	1%	0	0%
Hindi	0	0%	1	1%
Italian	1	1%	1	1%
Korean	0	0%	1	1%
Mandarin	25	20%	2	3%
More than one language	8 ¹⁴	6%	17 ¹⁵	25%
Ojibwe	0	0%	1	1.4%
Portuguese	7	6%	2	3%
Punjabi	3	2%	1	1%
Setswana	1	1%	1	1.4%
Spanish	14	11%	6	9%
Tagalog	2	2%	1	1%
Tamil	0	0%	1	1.4%
Tongues	0	0%	1	1.4%
Urdu	1	1%	2	3%
Total	124	101%	67	95%

Highlights:

- Overall, 60% of the women in this survey reported that their preferred spoken language was one other than English. The most prevalent of these languages were Mandarin (20%), Spanish (11%), Cantonese (8%) and Portuguese (6%).



- Forty percent of survey participants indicated that their preferred spoken language was English.
- Six percent of Sistering respondents indicated that they had *two preferred spoken languages*: English and French, Korean, Portuguese or Spanish; Hindi and Gujarati or Punjabi; Punjabi and Urdu. Twenty-five percent of respondents that had two preferred spoken languages also spoke an additional language such as Malaysian, Marachi, Polish, Slovak or Urdu.
 - Fifty-four percent of survey respondents reported that they spoke another language *as a second language*: English (31%), Spanish (9%) and French (7%) were the most predominant second languages among survey respondents.

City of Toronto – 2006 Census Canada Statistics¹⁶

- Forty-seven percent of the population had a mother tongue in a language other than English or French. The top 5 mother tongue languages in 2006 were:
 - Chinese (420,000)
 - Italian (195,000)
 - Punjabi (138,000)
 - Tagalog/Pilipino (114,000)
 - Portuguese (113,000)

3.7 SEXUAL IDENTITY/ORIENTATION

Table 7: Survey Respondents by Sexual Identity/Orientation

Sexual Identity/ Orientation	Number	Percent
Heterosexual/ straight	107	90%
Celibate	4	3%
Bisexual	2	2%
Lesbian/gay	2	2%
Don't know	1	1%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>	8	7%
Total	124	105%

Highlights:

- Seventy-eight percent of women in the survey indicated that they were heterosexual/straight, while 10% identified as bisexual, 3% as celibate, 2% as lesbian/gay and one percent did not know their sexual identity/orientation.



- Six percent of respondents preferred not to respond to this question.
- In the first iteration of the 2009 Demographic Survey, none of the participants identified as transgendered, transsexual or intersex. As such, Sistering conducted a second iteration of the survey with members of these communities. See Appendix C for results of this survey.

Canadian Community Health Survey 2003 – Sexual Orientation¹⁷

- Among Canadians aged 18 to 59, 1.0% reported that they consider themselves to be homosexual and 0.7% considered themselves bisexual.
- About 1.3% of men considered themselves homosexual, about twice the proportion of 0.7% among women. However, 0.9% of women reported being bisexual, slightly higher than the proportion of 0.6% among men.
- About 1.3% of men considered themselves homosexual, about twice the proportion of 0.7% among women. However, 0.9% of women reported being bisexual, slightly higher than the proportion of 0.6% among men.

Discrimination, Harassment, Judgmental Attitudes and/or Violence

- In connection to their gender identity or sexual identity/orientation:
 - » 15% (18) of women in the survey experienced discrimination;
 - » 3% (4) experienced harassment;
 - » 2% (3) experienced violence;
 - » 2% (2) experienced judgmental attitudes;
 - » 2% (2) experienced discrimination and harassment;
 - » 4% (5) experienced discrimination, harassment, judgemental attitudes *and* violence;
 - » 1% (1) experienced domination and control;
 - » 72% (89) did not experience any of the above.

3.8 RELIGION AND FAITH

Table 8: Survey Respondents by Religion and Faith

Religious Preference	Number	Percent
Christian	66	53%
Buddhist	17	14%
No religious affiliation	14	11%
Hindu	4	3%
Muslim	4	3%
Spiritual	3	2%
Agnostic	2	2%
Eastern religions	2	2%
Aboriginal traditions	1	1%
Jewish	1	1%
Sikh	1	1%
Multiple religions	1 ¹⁸	1%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>	8	6%
Total	124	100%

Highlights:

- Fifty-three percent of survey respondents reported Christianity was their religious preference, compared to Buddhism (14%), no religious affiliation (11%), Hindu and Muslim faiths (3% each), agnosticism, Eastern religions and spirituality (2% each), Aboriginal traditions, Judaism and Sikhism (1% each). One per cent identified multiple faiths and 6% preferred not to respond to this question.

Data from Statistics Canada article, *Who's Religious*¹⁹

- Survey data showed that over one-half of Canadians (53%) reported that they engaged in religious activities on their own at least monthly, while about 11% did so a few times a year. (According to previous research, only about 32% of adult Canadians attended religious services at least monthly).²⁰
- Immigrants were also more likely to engage in private religious practices and attend religious services than the Canadian-born population.²¹



4.0 SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

4.1 EDUCATION

“Due to my education level, I could not advance at my job, even though I’m capable of doing the work. Educational qualifications are a major barrier towards employment.”

Inspirations participant

Table 9: Survey Respondents by Highest Level of Formal Education

Highest Level of Formal Education	Number	Percent
Primary/elementary school	35	28%
High school	29	23%
College	19	15%
University	15	12%
No formal education	11	9%
Apprenticeship or trades	5	4%
Some high school	4	3%
Some college	3	2%
Some primary/elementary school	1	1%
Other: English as a Second Language	1	1%
Preferred not to answer	1	1%
Total	124	99%

Highlights:

- Over half of women who participated in this survey reported that primary/elementary school (28%) and high school (23%) were the highest levels of formal education that they have completed. Fifteen percent reported college as their highest level of educational achievement, followed by university (12%) and apprenticeship/trades (4%).
- Three percent of women have completed some high school; 2% some college; and one percent some primary/elementary school.
- Ten percent of respondents indicated that they do not have formal education.
- Although this was not a question in the survey, 8 out of 25 (32%) respondents from the Parkdale Drop-in/Outreach indicated that they were educated abroad.



City of Toronto – 2006 Census Canada Statistics²²

- In 2006, 37.4% of City of Toronto residents aged 25 to 64 had a bachelor's degree or higher. This compares with 28.8% in the rest of the GTA, 26.0% in Ontario overall and 22.9% for Canada.
- The majority (58.7%) of all City of Toronto residents aged 25 to 64 with post-secondary qualifications achieved their highest qualification in Ontario. However, a significant share (35.2%) obtained their highest qualification outside Canada, compared to 15.7% of all Canadians who obtained their highest credentials elsewhere. A small share (6.1%) of City of Toronto residents studied in another province, most commonly Quebec at 2.5%.

4.2 EMPLOYMENT

“For a middle-aged woman, losing one’s job is a big deal. It is difficult to find a new job because employers view you as out-dated. You may be able to do the job, but they’d prefer someone younger.”

Drop-in participant

Seventy-one percent (88) of the women in the survey have been employed in the past, 28% have not (35), and one percent (1) preferred not to respond to this question. Among the 88 women who have been employed in the past, 60 (68%) recalled how long ago they worked:

Table 10A: Survey Respondents by Their Recollection of Last Time Worked

Length of Time	Number	Percent
1 to 5 years ago	17	28%
10 to 15 years ago	10	17%
16 to 20 years ago	9	15%
21+ years ago	11	18%
Less than a year ago	8	13%
6 to 9 years ago	5	8%
Total	60	99%

Table 10B: Survey Respondents by Type of Work Done in the Past

Type of Work	Number	Percent
Multiple fields	21 ²³	24%
Factory work (e.g. sewing machine operator)	12	14%
Service industry (e.g. retail)	10	11%
Industry (e.g. agriculture, forestry)	7	8%
Social sciences (e.g. child care)	5	6%
Education	4	5%
Trades (e.g. construction)	4	5%
Government services (e.g. lawyer, interpreter)	3	3%
Health care	3	3%
Administration	2	2%
Culture (e.g. art)	2	2%
Management	1	1%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>	14	16%
Total	88	100%

Highlights:

- Overall, 58% of women in this survey worked a minimum of six years ago: 6 to 9 years (8%), 10 to 15 years (17%), 16 to 20 years (15%) and 21+ years (18%). Twenty-eight percent of survey respondents worked one to five years ago and 13% worked less than a year ago.
- The largest proportion of survey respondents (single response) have been employed in factory work (14%) and the service industry (11%). Two percent of respondents preferred not to answer this question.
- Almost one-third (24%) of respondents have worked in multiple fields such as administration, business, culture, education, health care, industry, religion, sales, service industry, social sciences and trades.

City of Toronto – 2006 Census Canada Statistics²⁴

- 1,242,215 City of Toronto residents were employed in 2006 (14,200 or 1.2% more than five years earlier). However, the population aged 15+ increased by 46,000 people and the labour force participation rate declined only slightly. As a result, the number of unemployed City residents rose by 10,000 and the unemployment rate increased from 7.0% to 7.6%.
- At the national, provincial and municipal level, the unemployment rate for females rose faster (or fell slower) than for males, between 2001 and 2006.



4.3 INCOME

“You end up getting sicker and sicker when you’re on ODSP.”

Drop-in participant

Table 11A: Survey Respondents by Main Source(s) of Income

Income Source	Number	Percent
Multiple sources of income	28 ²⁵	23%
Ontario Disability Support Plan (ODSP)	24	19%
Ontario Works (OW)	17	14%
Old Age Security (OAS)	12	10%
Family members / friends	9	7%
Sponsorship	6	5%
Wages: Part-time work	6	5%
Canada Pension Plan (CPP)	5	4%
Wages: Casual work	4	3%
Personal Needs Allowance (PNA)	3	2%
Wages: Full-time work	2	2%
Workers Compensation	2	2%
Child Tax Benefit	1	1%
Layoff benefits	1	1%
Private pension	1	1%
No income	1	1%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>	2	2%
Total	124	102%

Highlights:

- Forty-eight percent of the women in this survey received government transfers as their main source of income: ODSP (19%), OW (14%), OAS (10%), CPP (4%) and the Child Tax Benefit (1%). See Table 11B for current ODSP, OW and OAS benefit rates.
- Over twenty percent (23%) of survey respondents reported multiple sources of income that include: alimony/child support, CPP, Canada Pension Plan Disability (CPPD), family/friends, Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS), Goods and Services Tax (GST) credit, private pension, OAS, ODSP, OW, panhandling, sponsorship, stipends, wages (full-time, part-time, casual and piece work).
- One percent of respondents reported that they have no source of income and 2% preferred not to answer this question.

Table 11B: Government Transfer Payment Benefit Rates

Type of Benefit	Monthly Benefit Payment Rates
Ontario Works (OW)²⁶	
Single	\$572
Couple	\$989
Single Parent + 1 Child*	\$920
Single Pare + 2 Children**	\$984
Couple + 1 Child*	\$1,036
Ontario Disability Support Plan (ODSP)²⁷	
Single	\$1,020
Couple	\$1,552
Single Parent + 1 Child*	\$1,423
Single Pare + 2 Children**	\$1,543
Couple + 1 Child*	\$1,613
OAS²⁸	
All recipients	\$489.54 to \$516.96

*Child under 13 years of age.

**One child under 13 years of age, one child 13 years of age or older.

4.4 HOUSING

“One woman, who is on ODSP, was recently forced out of her apartment of several years due to it being converted into a condo. She tried to go to the Housing Tribunal, to no avail. She was forced to find a new place to live on short notice, resulting in renting a very expensive basement apartment (\$700/month). There was/is nowhere for her to turn for support and aid in this housing issue. Now, since she has to spend so much money on rent, she has no other choice than to come to Sistering for food. Otherwise, she would not be able to eat.”

Sistering Volunteer

Table 12A: Survey Respondents by Current and Past Living Situations

Living Situation	Current		Past	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
An apartment	68	55%	50	40%
A house	34	27%	26	21%
Homeless or under-housed (includes anywhere outside, in a shelter or hostel, crowded living conditions and group homes)	21	18%	48	39%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>	1	1%		
Total	124	101%	124	100%

Table 12B: Survey Respondents by Living Companion

Living Arrangements	Number	Percent
On my own	52	42%
Partner	16	13%
Adult children	15	12%
Young children	8	6%
Adult child and grandchildren	8	6%
Multiple responses	8 ²⁹	6%
Friends	6	5%
Other relatives	6	5%
Roommates, strangers	5	4%
Total	124	99%

Highlights:

- In the past,
 - » 39% of respondents experienced homelessness;
 - » 40% lived in an apartment and 21% lived in a house. Note: Not all respondents who live in a home own their residence.
- In the thirty days prior to the survey,
 - » 18% of respondents experienced homelessness;
 - » 55% were living in an apartment and 27% in house.
 - » One percent of women did not indicate where they live currently and in the past.
- In terms of living arrangements:
 - » 42% of the women in this survey stated that they are currently living alone;
 - » 13% live with their partner;

- » 12% live with adult children;
- » 6% live with young children, and an adult child and grandchildren (each);
- » 5% live with friends or other relatives (each);
- » 6% live with roommates or strangers (e.g. group home residents).

“In 2002, a total of 31,985 different people stayed in an emergency shelter in Toronto one or more times during the year — an increase of 21% since 1990. There are still a large number of people sleeping outside and many people are doubled or tripled up in housing, which puts them at significant risk of becoming homeless. The number of single men and women needing emergency shelter are at the highest levels since 1992.”³⁰

City of Toronto, *The Toronto Report Card on Housing and Homeless* (2003).

5.0 DAILY ISSUES

“Prior to becoming disabled, one woman had a very good career. She worked as her own boss, was happy. Now, her employment opportunities are limited. Part of her identity has been taken away now that she cannot work.”

Sistering Volunteer

Table 13A: Survey Respondents by Issues Affecting Their Daily Lives

Issue	Number	Percent
Multiple issues	44 ³¹	35%
Literacy in English (English is second language)	23	19%
Other	16 ³²	14%
Emotional challenges	14	11%
Learning challenges	11	9%
No issues	11	9%
Lack of educational opportunities	1	1%
Lack of training opportunities	1	1%
Preferred not to answer	3	2%
Total	124	101%

Highlights:

- Single response: 19% of survey respondents indicated that literacy in English (English is their second language) is an issue that affects their daily life, followed by emotional challenges (11%), learning challenges (9%), lack of educational and training opportunities (1% each).
- Over one-third (35%) of respondents reported that they experience a combination of issues on a daily basis which can include acclimatizing to Canadian weather, crowded living conditions, emotional challenges, grief, guilt, learning challenges, literacy in English, loneliness, mental health issues, relationship challenges, poverty, weight gain, lack of employment, resources, housing and time.
- Nine percent of the sample stated that they do not experience any issues.

Table 13B: Survey Respondents by Issues Affecting Their Daily Lives, Disabilities

Issues	Number	Percent
No issues	37	30%
Physical health	31	25%
Multiple disability issues	27 ³³	22%
Vision	12	10%
Learning	10	8%
Trouble getting around (mobility)	3	2%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>	4	3%
Total	124	100%

Highlights:

- Over one-third (45%) of the sample reported that they have a disability (single response): physical health (25%), vision (10%), learning (8%) and mobility (2%).
- Among participants who experienced multiple disabilities (25%), the following were noted: chronic health issues (e.g. diabetes, high blood pressure), hearing, learning, mental health issues, mobility and vision. See Table 13C for detailed listing of physical and mental health issues experienced by women in the survey (those bolded were most noted by respondents).

Table 13C: Physical and Mental Health Disabilities Identified by Respondents

Physical Health issues	Mental Health issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • arthritis • back problems (e.g. sciatica) • diabetes • falls • hearing • high blood pressure • high cholesterol • hip problems • leg problems (including knees & ankles) • Leukemia • memory decline • osteoarthritis • osteoporosis • paralysis • Pre-Menstrual Dysphoric Disorder (PMDD) • problems with major organs: gall bladder, liver, heart • sleep disorder • thyroid problems • varicose veins • vision issues • weight gain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • anxiety • bipolar disorder • depression • Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) • paranoid schizophrenia • Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)



Statistics on People with Disabilities in Canada and Ontario³⁴

Total Number and Percentage of People with Disabilities in Canada and Ontario:

Approximately 4.4 million people in Canada have disabilities, representing 14.3% of Canada's population; Approximately 1.85 million people in Ontario have disabilities, representing 15.5% of Ontario's population

Age:

National statistics indicate that 43.4% of people aged 65+ have a disability, while amongst those aged 15-64, 11.5% have a disability. Of the total population of Canadian children aged 0-14, 3.7% have a disability; In 2006, 47.2% of Ontario's seniors (age 65+) have a disability. Among the working age population (age 15-64), 12.6% have a disability. Among children (age 0-14), 3.8% have a disability

Employment:

In 2006, half (49.5%) of working age adults (15 - 64) with disabilities are either unemployed or not in the labour force, compared to a quarter (24.5%) of working age adults without disabilities. The employment rate for people with disabilities is 50.5% compared to 75.5% for people without disabilities. The unemployment rate for people with disabilities is 8%, compared to 6.3% for persons without disabilities

Income:

In 2006, Ontarians with disabilities, age 15 and over, reported an average income of \$31,668, compared to \$39,951 for the non-disabled population, a difference of over \$8,000. Ontarians who have disabilities have an average income that is 79.3% of the average income of persons without disabilities. Ten per cent (9.9%) of adults with disabilities have a total income of \$60,000 or more, compared to 19.3% of the non-disabled population.

6.0 MENTAL HEALTH

“It can be very difficult to figure out how to access mental health assistance as you may also need a referral through your GP.”

Inspirations participant

Over one-third (46 or 37%) of participants have had personal contact with the mental health system, compared to 62% (77) who have not. One percent (1) preferred not to respond to this question. Table 14 highlights the types of services that women have accessed within the mental health system:

Table 14: Survey Respondents by Type of Contact with Mental Health System

Type of Contact	Number	Percent
Multiple services	22 ³⁵	48%
Psychologist	8	17%
Psychiatrist	5	11%
Counsellor	4	9%
Hospitalization	3	7%
Faith-based leader/organization	2	4%
Preferred not to answer	2	4%
Total	46	100%

Highlights:

- Among those who have had contact with the mental health system (single response), 17% have accessed a psychologist, followed by a psychiatrist (11%), counsellor (9%), hospitalization (7%) and a faith-based leader/organization (4%).
- Nearly half of respondents (48%) have accessed a combination of mental health services: crisis intervention, counsellor, day programs, electric shock therapy, family doctor, nun, psychologist, psychiatrist and social worker. Four percent of respondents preferred not to indicate what type of contact they have had with the mental health system.

Statistics about Mental Illness³⁶

- 20% of Canadians will personally experience a mental illness in their lifetime. Mental illness indirectly affects all Canadians at some time through a family member, friend or colleague.
- Mental illness affects people of all ages, educational and income levels, and cultures.
- A complex interplay of genetic, biological, personality and environmental factors causes mental illnesses.
- Approximately 8% of adults will experience major depression at some time in their lives. About 1% of Canadians will experience bipolar disorder (or “manic depression”). Schizophrenia affects 1% of the Canadian population. Anxiety disorders affect 5% of the household population, causing mild to severe impairment.
- Almost one half (49%) of those who feel they have suffered from depression or anxiety have never gone to see a doctor about this problem.
- Stigma or discrimination attached to mental illnesses presents a serious barrier, not only to diagnosis and treatment but also to acceptance in the community.
- Mental illnesses can be treated effectively.

6.1 EMOTIONAL SUPPORT AND COUNSELLING

Thirty-one percent (39) of the women in the survey reported accessing emotional support and counselling services (outside of Sistering). Sixty-six percent (82) have not and two percent (3) preferred not to respond to this question. Table 15 provides an overview of the types of emotional support and counselling services that participants have participated in:

Table 15: Survey Respondents by Type of Emotional Support and Counselling

Type of Support	Number	Percent
Other women’s agencies	15	38%
Other agencies	14	36%
Other women’s services <i>and</i> other agencies	3	8%
Family doctor	2	5%
Faith leader, organization	2	4%
Court system	1	4%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>	2	5%
Total	39	100%

Highlights:

- Thirty-eight percent of respondents (single response) have received emotional support and counselling from other women's services, followed by other agencies (36%), , their family doctor (5%), a faith-based leader/organization and the court system (4% each).
- Over one-third of participants have accessed other women's services and agencies (8%).



7.0 SUBSTANCE USE

In the thirty days prior to participating in the survey, 34% (42) of respondents reported substance use, compared to 56% (69) who stated that had not used any substances (13 or 10% did not respond to this question). Table 16A highlights the types of substances that survey respondents had used:

Table 16A: Survey Respondents by Type of Substance Used in Last 30 Days

Type of Substance	Number	Percent
Medication for physical health issues	15	36%
Multiple substances	9 ³⁷	21%
Over-the-counter medications (not taken as prescribed)	6	14%
Medication for mental health issues	4	10%
Alcohol	3	7%
Marijuana	2	5%
Morphine (not taken as prescribed)	1	2%
Other sedatives, hypnotics or tranquilizers (e.g., sleeping pills, Seconal, Librium, Valium, benzodiazepines, Special K or Ketamine, GHB)	1	2%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>	1	2%
Total	42	99%

Table 16B: Survey Respondents by Type of Substance Use Support

Type of support	Number	Percent
Family doctor	18	43%
Multiple supports	8 ³⁸	19%
Support groups (e.g. Alcoholics Anonymous)	2	5%
Detox program	1	2%
Drop-in centre	1	2%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>	12	29%
Total	42	100%

Highlights:

- Among those who used substance regularly (single response) in the 30 days prior to participating in the survey, the largest proportion have used medications for physical health issues (36%), followed by over-the-counter medications (14%), medication for mental health issues (10%), alcohol (7%), marijuana (5%), morphine and other sedatives, hypnotics or tranquilizers (2% respectively). (See Section 5 for details regarding the specific physical and mental health issues that survey respondents experience).
- Twenty-one percent of respondents used a combination of substances on a regular basis (bolded substances represent the most commonly used): **alcohol**, anti-depressants, anti-psychotic medication, **cocaine**, **crack**, **marijuana**, medication for diabetes, thyroid, **cholesterol**, high blood pressure and diabetes, methadone, Oxycontin, other opiates, over-the-counter and **sedatives**.
- 30 out of the 42 (71%) respondents who regularly used substances indicated that they needed the following substance-related supports:
 - » 43% need support from their family doctor, followed by support groups (5%), detox programs and Sistering's Bloor Street West Drop-in (2% each);
 - » 19% require a combination of supports (bolded supports were the most commonly reported): detox, **family doctor**, drop-in centre, **harm reduction**, information, long-term treatment, occupational therapist, prescription for marijuana, **psychiatrist** and short-term treatment;
 - » 29% indicated that do not need any supports.
- According to the Statistics Canada's Canadian Community Health Survey: Mental Health and Well-being (2003), "1 in 10 Canadians 15 years of age and over report symptoms consistent with alcohol or illicit drug dependence."³⁹



8.0 CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

“The police operate like the Gestapo!”

Parkdale Drop-in / Outreach participant

In the twelve months prior to the survey, 13% (16) of respondents had personal contact with the criminal justice system, or had contact that was related to someone they know (e.g. family member, friend or neighbour). Eight-five percent (106) of the sample did not have contact with the criminal justice system and two percent (2) did not respond to this question. Of the 16 women who had contact with the criminal justice system, 10 (62.5%) experienced challenges with this system (five did not and one preferred not to respond to this question):

- 8 out of 10 women reported issues with criminal justice staff, specifically the police, who respondents described as:
 - » Assault by an employee of the criminal justice system (including security staff at a hospital)
 - » destroying their personal identification
 - » exhibiting aggressive behaviour towards respondents, thereby instilling general fear for police;
 - » not addressing, or taking seriously, their accounts of sexual or verbal assault;
 - » over-reacting to situations of domestic violence.
- 2 out of 10 noted that they had issues with their lawyer.

Excerpt from *Women in Conflict with the Law: Some Facts*, Elizabeth Fry Society of Toronto:

- For many women in conflict with the law, arrest, conviction and imprisonment, are the culmination of poverty, neglect, physical and sexual abuse, racial discrimination, family breakdown, limited education, unemployment, and drug/alcohol difficulties.⁴⁰
- Correctional Service Canada reported that as of September 2007 of all crimes that women were serving federal time for, 18.1% were drug-related. Many of these charges were for drug trafficking brought about most often due to severe financial hardship.
- Statistics Canada reports that women account for approximately 16% of those charged with violent offences.
- The same source states that approximately 44% of all property related charges against women are for shoplifting.

9.0 CHILD AND ADULT ABUSE

9.1 CHILD ABUSE

“It is a lifetime of hurt...”

Parkdale Drop-in / Outreach participant

Table 18: Survey Respondents by Childhood Experience(s) of Physical, Emotional, Verbal and Sexual Abuse

Type of Abuse	No		Yes		Preferred not to answer	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Pushed, slapped, hit, kicked or threatened with harm	67	54%	52	42%	5	4%
Saw parent or guardian being pushed, slapped, hit, kicked or threatened with harm	86	69%	32	26%	6	5%
Was afraid for personal safety, called hurtful names, made to feel ashamed or not good enough	75	60%	39	31%	10	8%
Forced or pressured into any sexual	100	81%	16	13%	7	6%

Highlights:

- As a child:
 - » 42% of women in the survey were pushed, slapped, hit, kicked or threatened with harm (4% preferred not to answer this question);
 - » 26% of respondents saw a parent or guardian being pushed, slapped, hit, kicked or threatened with harm (5% preferred not to answer this question);
 - » 31% of the sample were afraid for their personal safety, called hurtful names, made to feel ashamed or not good enough (8% preferred not to answer this question);
 - » 13% of women were forced pressured into a sexual act (one percent did not know if they had been forced or pressured into a sexual act, and 6% preferred not to answer this question).
- Among the women who experienced childhood physical, emotional, verbal and/or sexual abuse (between 12 to 52 women), 39 women indicated whether they received support for the abuse (data not shown):
 - » The vast majority (22) did not receive any support
 - » 17 women did receive support: six from a service agency; three from their community, two from family members, two accessed support groups and one from their family doctor
 - » Four received a combination of supports from community, family, friends and service agencies.



Excerpts from *Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile*:

- For every 100,000 young persons, 334 were victims of physical or sexual violence by a friend or an acquaintance, 187 experienced violence by a family member, and 101 were victimized by a stranger.
- When children and youth are victims of family violence, parents are the most commonly identified perpetrators. In 2006, 107 per 100,000 children and youth were physically or sexually assaulted by a parent.
- Girls (under the age of 18) experienced somewhat higher rates of physical assault by family members than boys (133 compared with 116 incidents per 100,000 population). The rate of sexual assault committed by family members was 4 times higher for girls compared to boys (102 vs. 25 incidents per 100,000 population).⁴¹

9.2 ADULT ABUSE

“I had an abusive husband and there wasn’t much I could do as he was paying the rent. Eventually I left and now I’m on my own. Half of your life is wasted because you have no where to go, and you have children. I’m not putting up with this.”

Parkdale Drop-in / Outreach participant

Table 19: Survey Respondents by Adult Experiences of Physical, Emotional and Verbal Abuse

Type of Abuse	No		Yes		Preferred not to answer	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Pushed, slapped, hit, kicked or threatened with harm	75	60%	47	38%	2	2%
Punched or things thrown at them	75	60%	41	33%	8	6%
Was afraid for personal safety, called hurtful names, made to feel ashamed or not good enough	64	52%	52	42%	8	6%



Highlights:

- As an adult:
 - » 38% of survey respondents were pushed, slapped, hit, kicked or threatened with harm;
 - » 33% were punched or things were thrown at them;
 - » 42% were afraid for their personal safety, called hurtful names, made to feel ashamed or not good enough.
- Among the women who experienced physical, verbal and/or emotional abuse as an adult (between 41 to 52 altogether), 49 women disclosed the perpetrator of abuse (data not shown):
 - » The majority (18) were abused by former spouse/partner
 - » 11 by multiple abusers;
 - » Seven by a family member;
 - » Three by strangers;
 - » Four by their current spouse/partner;
 - » Two by another participant of a drop-in, shelter or hostel;
 - » Two by an employer; and,
 - » Two by a professional within a system.
- Fifty-two women indicated whether they received support in relation to their adult experience of physical, emotional, verbal and/or sexual abuse (data not shown): The vast majority (30) did not receive any support, while some drew upon family (4), service agencies (4) and friends (1). Thirteen women received multiple supports via family, friends and service agencies. One woman indicated that she is currently waiting to receive support regarding the abuse that she has experienced.

Excerpts from *Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile:*

- In 2006, over 38,000 incidents of spousal violence were reported to police across Canada. This represents approximately 15% of all police-reported violent incidents.
- There has been a steady decline in police-reported spousal violence over the most recent 9-year period (1998 to 2006).
- Females continue to be the most likely victims of police-reported spousal violence, accounting for 83% of victims compared to 17% males. This holds true for every province and territory across Canada.
- Incidents of spousal violence were more common between current partners than former partners (69% vs. 31%).
- Common assault (61%) was the most frequently reported violent offence committed by a current or ex-spouse, followed by major assault (14%), uttering threats (11%) and criminal harassment (8%).
- Senior victims of family violence were most likely to report being victimized by an adult child (14 per 100,000) or current or former spouse (13 per 100,000).⁴²



9.3 ADULT SEXUAL ASSAULT

Table 20: Survey Respondents by Adult Experience of Sexual Assault

	No		Yes		Preferred not to answer	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Forced or pressured into a sexual act against their will	102	82%	19	15%	3	2%

Highlights:

- Fifteen percent of respondents have been forced or pressured into a sexual act against their will. Overall, the number of respondents who experienced sexual assault in childhood (13%) increased by 2% in adulthood.
- Among the 19 women who indicated that they experienced sexual assault as an adult (data not shown);
 - » Almost half (47% or 9) were abused by a former spouse/partner;
 - » 16% (3) by male strangers;
 - » 5% (1) by their current spouse/partner;
 - » 5% (1) by a family member;
 - » 5% (1) were abused by multiple assailants (former spouse/partner and johns);
 - » 21% (4) preferred not to identify the abuser(s).
- Of the 19 women that reported an experience of adult sexual assault (data not shown):
 - » 85% (16) did not receive any support;
 - » 5% (1) received support from friends;
 - » 11% (2) preferred not to respond to this question.

Excerpt from *Sexual Violence in Ontario: Background Report*:⁴³

“According to the July 25, 2003, issue of The Daily (a Statistics Canada publication), 8,877 sexual assaults were reported to the police in Ontario in 2002. 98% of the offenders were male, 85% of the victims were female. Only 6% of sexual assaults are reported to the police (Ontario Women’s Directorate). This means that, in Ontario, there were more than 133,295 sexual assaults committed against females during 2002 – more than 2,563 per week, 366 per day, 15 per hour, 1 every 4 minutes.”



10.0 MAIN SOURCES OF SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

“I need support to move forward, leave past trauma and get emotional support for the violence lived.”

Drop-in participant

Table 21: Survey Respondents by Type of Social and Emotional Support

Type of Social & Emotional Support	Number	Percent
Multiple sources of support	43 ⁴⁴	35%
Community services	27	22%
Family	27	22%
Friends	11	9%
No sources of support	7	6%
Recreational activities (e.g., art, relaxation, TV, music, exercise, venting)	6	5
Faith	1	1%
Prefer not to answer	2	2%
Total	124	102%

Highlights:

- Single response: Community services and family (22% each) were the main sources of social and emotional support reported by survey respondents, followed by friends (9%), recreational activities (3%) and faith (2%). Six percent of respondents indicated that they have no source of social or emotional support.
- Thirty-five percent of women in this survey have *multiple* sources of social and emotional support such as community services, exercise, faith, family doctor, family, friends, medication and psychotherapy.



Although it was not a part of the survey, some respondents indicated which community services have provided them with support:

- Assertive Community Treatment Teams (ACTT)
- Anishnawbe Health Toronto
- Carefirst Seniors and Community Services Association
- Fred Victor Centre
- Christie Ossington Neighbourhood Centre
- Parkdale Community Health Centre
- Sistering
- South Asian Women's Centre
- St. Michael's Hospital
- St. Stephen's Community House
- Toronto Chinese Community Services Association
- Women's Habitat in Toronto



11.0 SISTERING

“I come to Sistering out of loneliness...due to the recession and poverty”

Drop-in participant

Table 22A: Survey Respondents by How They Heard about Sistering

Source	Number	Percentage
Friends	65	52%
Other agencies	23	19%
Other Sistering participants	20	16%
Self-referred	6	5%
Family	3	2%
Advertisement	3	2%
Multiple sources	3 ⁴⁵	2%
Could not recall	1	1%
Total	124	100%

Table 22B: Survey Respondents by Length of Time Accessing Sistering’s Services

Length of Time	Number	Percentage
One to two years	41	33%
Six to 10 years	18	15%
Less than six months	16	13%
Six months to one year	16	13%
More than 10 years	14	11%
Two to four years	11	9%
Four to six years	7	6%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>	1	1%
Total	124	101%



Table 22C: Survey Respondents by Why They Access Sistering

Reason	Number	Percentage
Information/referral	49	40%
Social recreation programs	40	32%
Workshops	16	13%
Inspirations	10	8%
Practical help (e.g. hot meals, laundry, showers, clothing, mailing address)	8	6%
Advocacy/support	1	1%
Total	124	100%

Highlights:

- The majority of survey respondents (52%) heard about Sistering through friends in their community, followed by other agencies (19%) and other participants at Sistering (16%).
- The largest proportion of women in this survey (59%) has been coming to Sistering for less than two years. Twenty-six percent of respondents have been coming for more than six years and 15% between two to six years.
- Forty percent of survey respondents indicated that they come to Sistering to access information and referral services, followed by social recreation programs (32%) and workshops (13%).



12.0 ACCESSING COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

12.1 HELPFUL FACTORS

“There’s a lot to share and learn from each other all of the time.”

Sistering participant

Table 23: Helpful Factors to Accessing Community Support Services

Helpful Factors	Number	Percent
TTC tokens	77	63%
Hot meals	72	59%
Services in languages other than English	40	33%
Non-judgmental attitude	41	33%
Extended hours	37	30%
Other	35	28%
Social/recreational programming	22	18%
Culturally-appropriate programming	20	16%
Supportive staff	17	14%
Donations (e.g., toiletries, clothing)	12	10%
Practical help	5	4%
Childcare	5	4%
Learning opportunities	1	1%

Highlights:

- The majority of women in this survey (63%) indicated that the provision of transportation fare was helpful when accessing community support services.
- Over half of respondents (59%) reported that serving hot meals was also helpful.
- One-third of respondents found the following useful: services in languages other than English (33%), non-judgmental attitude of service providers (33%) and extended hours (30%).
- Thirty-five women (28%) in the survey suggested other helpful factors (that were not listed in the options for this question): Among these respondents:
 - » 28% cited practical help (e.g. haircuts, laundry facilities, access to computers and phones, clothing, legal aid, counseling)
 - » Peer support (e.g. monthly women’s meetings, seniors groups) [28%]
 - » Opportunities for personal growth (e.g. being productive, feelings of accomplishment) [19%]
 - » Exercise and self-care (e.g. massage) (9%)



- » Cultural and language-specific programs and services (e.g. translation, Chinese meals) [9%]
- » Confidentiality and equal treatment of participants (6%).

12.2 OBSTACLES

Table 24: Obstacles to Accessing Community Support Services

Obstacles	Number	Percent
Language barriers	60	51%
No TTC fare or money for transportation	35	30%
Don't know where to go	28	24%
Cultural barriers	23	20%
The wait for an appointment is too long	21	18%
New to Toronto	17	15%
Other	17	15%
Service hours are inconvenient	15	13%
Have had negative experiences in the past	14	12%
Don't have a telephone number	11	9%
Issues with other participants (e.g., racism, aggression from peers)	11	9%
Too busy finding shelter, food & other necessities	7	6%
Don't have identification	3	3%
Inclement weather	4	3%
Issues with staff (e.g. feeling judged by staff)	3	3%
Refused	3	3%
Do not know	4	3%
Not living close by	1	1%

Highlights:

- Just over half of survey respondents (51%) indicated that language barriers presented an obstacle when accessing community support services.
- Thirty percent said that not having transportation fare was a challenge, followed by not knowing which services to access (24%), cultural barriers (20%), long waits for appointments (18%) and being new to Toronto (15%).
- Seventeen women in the survey indicated other obstacles to accessing community support services (not listed as options for this question). Among these:
 - » 38% reported issues with service providers such as lack of staff, resources (e.g. laundry facilities, pottery wheel, peer support groups) and information (regarding training programs)
 - » 25% said poverty is an obstacle

- » 13% reported that there is confusion around TTC fare distribution among service providers
- » 6% (each) cited the following obstacles:
 - i. chronic pain
 - ii. fear of people in the neighbourhoods where service providers are located
 - iii. lack of services in the east end
 - iv. long wait lists for affordable housing.



13.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

Throughout the implementation of the 2009 Demographic Survey, participants at all three of Sistering’s locations were engaged in identifying recommendations for moving forward on the many issues noted in the process. The following table provides an overview of participants’ recommendations:

Table 25: Participant Recommendations

At a personal level:	At the organizational level:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get to know your local politicians and let them know what the barriers are for women. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase programming for women between 25 to 35 years of age to help them build a life e.g. access to education, skills building and job search training • Offer employment training for middle-aged women to increase their income. Match their skills with the jobs that are currently available on the job market.
At the community/municipal level:	At the provincial/national level:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build communities that are not just a place to live but a place to be with people. • Develop more affordable housing • Organize social action at City Hall. Hold politicians accountable for what is happening in the city e.g., not enough affordable housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase OW, ODSP, OAS etc. payment rates.



OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the key findings of the 2009 Demographic Survey, the following steps are recommended:

Findings	Recommendations
<p>Sixty-three percent of the women in this survey indicated that TTC fare was the most helpful service that community-based organizations offer. Furthermore, 30% of participants reported that <i>not</i> having access to public transportation was an obstacle to accessing community support services.</p>	<p>1. Sistering, in collaboration with program participants, the broader drop-in network and other partner sectors (e.g. anti-poverty organizations), should develop and implement a strategy to lobby the municipal, provincial and federal governments for access to public transportation for populations that experience low income.</p>
<p>Sixty percent of survey respondents reported that their preferred spoken language was one other than English. The most prevalent languages reported by participants were Mandarin, Spanish, Cantonese and Portuguese. Additionally, 51% of survey participants reported that they experience language barriers when accessing community support services.</p>	<p>2. Sistering should continue to provide programs and staff in the most prevalent languages spoken by participants, noting that language needs of populations served will change over time.</p>
<p>Fifty-eight percent of survey respondents worked a <i>minimum</i> of six years ago.</p>	<p>3. Sistering should continue to provide programs that build the employment capacity of participants (e.g. On the Path Pre-Employment program, Inspirations Studio).</p>
<p>Forty-eight percent of the women in this survey currently receive a government transfer as their main source of income. These transfers provided participants with an estimated annual income that ranges from \$5,874 to \$19,356. It is important to note that the after-tax low income cut-off (LICO) for unattached individuals in the City of Toronto was \$18,373 in 2008.⁴⁶</p>	<p>4. The Street Health Report 2007 <i>Research Bulletin #2 on Women and Homelessness</i> recommends that, “The Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services should raise benefit levels for Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program by at least 40% (to reinstate the 23% cut made in the 1990s and adjusted to reflect a current minimum standard of living), then index and adjust rates annually to meet this minimum standard of living.”⁴⁷</p>



Findings	Recommendations
<p>Thirty-nine percent of women in this survey had been homeless or under-housed in the past (in the thirty days prior to participating in the survey)</p>	<p>5. Street Health's <i>Research Bulletin on Women and Homelessness</i> also recommends that, "The City of Toronto, with adequate funding from the Governments of Canada and Ontario, should increase the availability of affordable and adequate housing in Toronto. This should include the construction of new affordable homes, improvements to sub-standard existing social housing to make it safer for women, and rent supplements that follow the individual rather than the housing unit."⁴⁸</p> <p>Sistering should continue to provide housing support for participants that experience or are at risk of becoming homeless.</p>
<p>Thirty-seven percent of survey participants have had personal contact with the mental health system, and 25% currently experience physical health issues.</p>	<p>6. Sistering should continue to offer on-site, comprehensive and non-judgmental primary health care services through its partnership with Inner City Health Associates. These services should include referrals to addiction, mental health and counselling supports, as well as care for HIV-positive and transitioning individuals.</p>
<p>Between childhood and adulthood, experiences of sexual assault increased by 2% (13% to 15%) among survey respondents. The majority of participants, who experienced violence as children or adults, did not receive support for this trauma.</p>	<p>7. In the broader context, Sistering should continue to participate in campaigns, coalitions etc that advocate for the end of violence against women (including transgendered women). Internally, Sistering should continue to support participants who experience or are at risk of experiencing violence.</p>
<p>The majority of survey participants (80%) were born in a country outside of Canada. Fifteen percent indicated non-permanent resident status.</p>	<p>8. Sistering should continue to offer immigration support on-site and with partner agencies. Externally, Sistering should continue to work with coalitions and campaigns that advocate for the end of deportations and detentions and the implementation of a full inclusive regularization program for all non-status people.</p>
<p>Two percent of survey participants identified as First Nations.</p>	<p>9. Sistering should connect with First Nations women, agencies, coalitions and groups to increase our knowledge of issues, programming needs and advocacy initiatives specific to the needs and issues of First Nations women.</p>



GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

CPP	Canada Pension Plan
CPPD	Canada Pension Plan Disability
GIS	Guaranteed Income Supplement
GP	General Practitioner (also referred to as family or medical doctor)
GST Credit	Good and Services Tax Credit
GTA	Greater Toronto Area
ODSP	Ontario Disability Support Plan
OW	Ontario Works
PNA	Personal Needs Allowance



DEFINITIONS

Bisexual

Someone who is attracted, physically and emotionally, to persons of all genders. Bisexuals are not necessarily attracted equally to both men and women at the same time. Bisexuality is often thought of as a 'phase' on the way to coming out as gay or lesbian, but for many people, being bisexual is a life-long sexual identity.⁴⁹

Gender Identity

A person's self-identified sense of being male or female.⁵⁰

Government Transfer Payments

Refers to all cash benefits received from federal, provincial, territorial or municipal governments during 2005.⁵¹

Heterosexual

Someone who is physically and emotionally attracted to people of the opposite sex; also referred to as straight.⁵²

Homelessness

The City of Toronto defines homelessness as a condition of people who live outside, stay in emergency shelters, spend most of their income on rent, or live in overcrowded, sub-standard conditions and are therefore at serious risk of becoming homeless.⁵³

Homosexual

Someone who is physically and emotionally attracted to people of the same sex. Because this term is associated historically with a medical model that diagnosed it as a disorder, the terms lesbian, gay and bisexual are more appropriate and useful.⁵⁴

Immigrant population

Immigrants are persons who are, or have ever been, landed immigrants in Canada. A landed immigrant is a person who has been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities. Some immigrants have resided in Canada for a number of years, while others are more recent arrivals. Most immigrants are born outside Canada, but a small number were born in Canada. Recent immigrants are defined as foreign born persons landing in Canada as permanent residents or protected persons (refugees) in the five years since the last census (2001-2006).⁵⁵

Intersex

Refers to people who were born with a combination of male and female anatomy. The term 'hermaphrodite' used to be used, but is not considered inappropriate and offensive.⁵⁶

Labour Force

Refers to persons who were either employed or unemployed during the week (Sunday to Saturday) prior to Census Day (May 16, 2006).

Labour force = Employed + Unemployed.⁵⁷

Lesbian

A woman who forms physical and emotional relationships with other women; also referred to as dyke.⁵⁸

Mother Tongue

Refers to the first language learned at home in childhood and still understood by the individual at the time of the census.⁵⁹

Non-immigrant population

Non-immigrants are persons who are Canadian citizens by birth. Although most Canadian citizens by birth were born in Canada, a small number were born outside Canada to Canadian parents.⁶⁰

Non-permanent resident

Non-permanent residents are persons from another country who, at the time of the census, held a Work or Study Permit, or who were refugee claimants, as well as family members living with them in Canada.⁶¹

Participation Rate

Refers to the labour force in the week (Sunday to Saturday) prior to Census Day (May 16, 2006), expressed as a percentage of the population 15 years of age and over.⁶²

Queer

An umbrella term for a social/political/intellectual movement that seeks to encompass a broad range of sexual identities, behaviours and expressions. It is also a personal identity. Queer includes political and cultural statements and attitudes. Sometimes it is used as a short form for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transsexual/transgendered. Queer is often used as reclaimed language, because queer has historically been used as a vicious insult.⁶³

Sexual Orientation

The physical and emotional attraction of someone to persons of different, same, or all genders. How a person identifies sexually. Sexual orientation and sexual behaviour are not necessarily the same things, since not everyone acts on their attractions. Gender identity and sexual orientation are also independent of each other.⁶⁴

Transsexual (TS)

Someone whose gender identity is different from the biological sex that they were assigned to at birth. A transsexual person might change their gender by having surgery (known as gender re-assignment surgery), taking hormones,



doing electrolysis, and dressing as their chosen gender. This process of change is known as transitioning. Transsexuals can be transwomen: male-to-female (mtf) or transmen: female-to-male (ftm) Depending on the direction they are transitioning in, the appropriate pronouns should be used. A transwoman should be referred to using female pronouns and a transman with male pronouns. Transpeople may identify as gay, lesbian, straight or bisexual.⁶⁵

Transgender (TG)

A self-identifying term for someone whose gender identity or expression differs from traditional gender roles. Transgender is also a political umbrella term in English-speaking North America to refer to everyone who crosses gender roles in one way or another including transsexuals, drag queen, transvestites etc.⁶⁶

Two-Spirited

A term for First Nations people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered or transsexual. Refers particularly to gender. Two-Spirited people had positive and elevated status among many Aboriginal nations prior to the arrival of Europeans.⁶⁷

Unemployment Rate

Refers to the unemployed expressed as a percentage of the labour force in the week (Sunday to Saturday) prior to Census Day (May 16, 2006).⁶⁸

Visible Minority population

The Employment Equity Act defines visible minorities as 'persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.'⁶⁹

Endnotes

- 1 Statistics Canada (2009). *Low Income Cut-Offs (1992 base) After Tax*. Retrieved on December 28, 2009 from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75f0002m/2009002/tbl/tbl-2-eng.htm>
- 2 Street Health (2007). Research Bulletin #2: Women & Homelessness. Retrieved on December 28, 2009 from <http://www.streethealth.ca/Downloads/SHResearchBulletin-2.pdf>. (p. 8).
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 City of Toronto, Social Policy Analysis & Research (2007). *Backgrounder: Release of 2006 Census Results, Age and Sex Population Counts*. Retrieved on July 9, 2009 from http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/pdf/2006_age_and_sex_backgrounder_with_maps.pdf.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 City of Toronto, Policy and Research, City Planning Division. Social Policy Analysis & Research (2007). *Backgrounder: Release of 2006 Census Results, Marital Status, Families, Households and Dwelling Characteristics*. Retrieved on July 9, 2009 from http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/pdf/2006_families-households_backgrounder.pdf
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Six percent of survey respondents indicated that they were of mixed heritage. This population includes: Black, African Canadian/First Nations, Black, African Canadian/Jamaican, Black, African Canadian/don't know, East Asian/Southeast Asian and White, Caucasian/Hispanic, Latin American,*:
- 10 City of Toronto, Social Policy Analysis and Research Section, Social Development Finance & Administration Division (2008). *Backgrounder: Release of the 2006 Census on Ethnic Origin and Visible Minorities*. Retrieved on July 9, 2009 from http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/pdf/2006_ethnic_origin_visible_minorities_backgrounder.pdf
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 Meisner, A. (2008). *Census Highlights: Release of the 2006 Census on Persons of Aboriginal Identity*. Retrieved on July 9, 2009 from http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/pdf/2006_aboriginal_identity_backgrounder.pdf
- 13 City of Toronto, Social Policy Analysis and Research Section/Social Development Finance and Administration Division, Policy and Research Section/City Planning Division and Toronto Public Health (2007). *Backgrounder: Release of the 2006 Census on Language, Immigration, Citizenship, Mobility/Migration*. Retrieved on July 9, 2009 from http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/pdf/2006_lang_imm_citizenship_mobility_backgrounder.pdf
- 14 English and Korean; English and French; Hindi and Gujarati; Punjabi and Urdu; English and Spanish; English and Portuguese.



- 15 Cantonese, Mandarin and Malaysian; English, Hindi and Urdu; English, Punjabi, Urdu and Marachi; French and Hebrew; French and Italian; German and Croatian; Cantonese and English; English and Mandarin; English and Cakchiquel; English and Italian; English and Polish; French and Spanish; French, Portuguese and Spanish; Russian, Czech and Slovak; Spanish and Ojibwe.
- 16 City of Toronto, Social Policy Analysis and Research Section/Social Development Finance and Administration Division, Policy and Research Section/City Planning Division and Toronto Public Health (2007). *Backgrounder: Release of the 2006 Census on Language, Immigration, Citizenship, Mobility/Migration*. Retrieved on July 9, 2009 from http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/pdf/2006_lang_imm_citizenship_mobility_backgrounder.pdf
- 17 Statistics Canada. (2004). *The Daily: Canadian Community Health Survey 2003*. Retrieved July 13, 2009 from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/040615/dq040615b-eng.htm>
- 18 Buddhist and Eastern religions.
- 19 Statistics Canada. (2002). *The Daily: Who's Religious (2 May 2006)*. Retrieved on July 13, 2009 from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/060502/dq060502a-eng.htm>
- 20 Clark W. and Schellenberg. G. (2006). *Who's Religious*. Retrieved on July 13, 2009 from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2006001/9181-eng.htm>
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 City of Toronto, Economic Development and the Social Development Finance & Administration Divisions. (2008). Retrieved on July 13, 2009 from http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/pdf/2006_labour_force_backgrounder.pdf
- 23 Administration, business, culture, education, government services, health care, management, recreation, religion, sales, selling drugs, service industry, sex work, social sciences, sport and trades.
- 24 City of Toronto, Economic Development and the Social Development Finance & Administration Divisions. (2008). Retrieved on July 13, 2009 from http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/pdf/2006_labour_force_backgrounder.pdf
- 25 Alimony/child support, CPP, CPPD, family/friends, GIS, GST credit, private pension, OAS, ODSP, OW, panhandling, sponsorship, stipends, wages (full-time work), wages (part-time work), wages (piece work).
- 26 Income Security Advocacy Centre. (November 2008). *Fact Sheet: 2% Rate Increase*. Retrieved on July 13, 2009 from <http://www.incomesecurity.org/documents/2percentIncrease-November2008.doc>
- 27 Ibid.
- 28 Service Canada. (2009). Old Age Security (OAS) Payment Rates. Retrieved on July 13, 2009 from <http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/isp/oas/oasrates.shtml>
- 29 Partner and adult, young or grandchildren.



- 30 Source: City of Toronto (2003). *The Toronto Report Card on Housing and Homeless*. Retrieved on July 13, 2009 from <http://www.toronto.ca/homelessness/pdf/reportcard2003.pdf>. pp. 14.15.
- 31 Adjusting to life in Canada, emotional challenges, housing issues, lack of employment, educational and training opportunities, learning challenges, literacy in English (English is second language), loneliness, mental health, poverty, relationship challenges, weight gain.
- 32 Housing issues, loneliness, mental health issues, physical assault, poverty, relationship challenges and sleep difficulties.
- 33 A combination of hearing, vision, mobility, mental health, physical health and learning issues.
- 34 Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services. (2009). *Statistics on People with Disabilities in Canada and Ontario*. Retrieved on July 13, 2009 from http://www.mcscs.gov.on.ca/mcss/english/topics/pop_ado_stats.htm
- 35 Crisis intervention, day programs, electric shock therapy, family doctor, hospitalization, psychiatrist psychologist and social worker.
- 36 Health Canada Editorial Board Mental Illnesses in Canada. (October 2002). *A Report on Mental Illness in Canada*. Retrieved on July 13, 2009 from http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/miic-mmacc/pdf/men_ill_e.pdf
- 37 Alcohol, anti-psychotics, breathing machine, cholesterol medication, cocaine, crack, heroin, thyroid medication, methadone, morphine, Oxycontin, other opiates, sedatives and over-the-counter medication.
- 38 Detox program, drop-in centre, family doctor, harm reduction, occupational therapist, prescription, psychiatrist, short- and long-term treatment and staying busy.
- 39 Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. (2009). *Mental Health and Addictions Statistics*. Retrieved on July 13, 2009 from http://www.camh.net/News_events/Key_CAMH_facts_for_media/addictionmentalhealthstatistics.html
- 40 Elizabeth Fry Society of Toronto. (October 2007). *Women in Conflict with the Law: Some Facts*. Retrieved on July 13, 2009 from <http://www.efrytoronto.org/publications/factsheet/Women%20In%20Conflict%20With%20the%20Law%20Some%20Facts.pdf>
- 41 Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. (2008). *Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile*. Retrieved on July 13, 2009 from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-224-x/85-224-x2008000-eng.pdf>
- 42 Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. (2008). *Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile*. Retrieved on July 13, 2009 from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-224-x/85-224-x2008000-eng.pdf>
- 43 Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres. (2009). *Sexual Violence in Ontario: Background Report*. Retrieved on July 13, 2009 from <http://www.occcc.ca/OCRCCbackgrounder.pdf>



- 44 Community services, faith, family, family doctor, friends, medication, psychotherapy physical activity, recreation and venting.
- 45 Friends and other participants.
- 46 Statistics Canada (2009). *Low Income Cut-Offs (1992 base) After Tax*. Retrieved on December 28, 2009 from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75f0002m/2009002/tbl/tbl-2-eng.htm>
- 47 Street Health (2007). Research Bulletin #2: Women & Homelessness. Retrieved on December 28, 2009 from <http://www.streethealth.ca/Downloads/SHResearchBulletin-2.pdf>. (p. 8).
- 48 Ibid.
- 49 Planned Parenthood of Toronto. (2008). *Speak Up, Reach Out: A Service Provider Workbook for Challenging Homophobia*. Toronto: Planned Parenthood of Toronto. pp. 21.
- 50 Ibid, pp. 22.
- 51 Statistics Canada. (2009). *2006 Census Dictionary*. Retrieved on July 14, 2009 <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/reference/dictionary/pop037.cfm>
- 52 Planned Parenthood of Toronto, pp. 21.
- 53 City of Toronto. (2003). *The Toronto Report Card on Housing and Homelessness*. Retrieved on July 14, 2009 from <http://www.toronto.ca/homelessness/pdf/reportcard2003.pdf>
- 54 Planned Parenthood of Toronto, pp. 21.
- 55 Statistics Canada. (2008). Retrieved on July 14, 2009 from <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/reference/dictionary/pop047.cfm>
- 56 Planned Parenthood of Toronto, pp. 22.
- 57 Statistics Canada (2008). Retrieved on July 14, 2009 from <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/reference/dictionary/pop056.cfm>
- 58 Planned Parenthood of Toronto, pp. 21.
- 59 Statistics Canada (2008). Retrieved on July 14, 2009 from <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/reference/dictionary/pop095.cfm>
- 60 Ibid. Retrieved on July 14, 2009 from <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/reference/dictionary/pop099.cfm>
- 61 Statistics Canada (2008). *2006 Census Dictionary*. Retrieved on July 14, 2009 from <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/reference/dictionary/pop100.cfm>
- 62 Ibid. Retrieved on July 14, 2009 from <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/reference/dictionary/pop108.cfm>
- 63 Planned Parenthood of Toronto, pp. 22.
- 64 Ibid, pp. 21.
- 65 Ibid, pp. 22.
- 66 Ibid.



- 67 Planned Parenthood of Toronto, pp.22.
- 68 Statistics Canada (2008). Retrieved on July 14, 2009 from <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/reference/dictionary/pop125.cfm>
- 69 Ibid. Retrieved on July 14, 2009 from <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/reference/dictionary/pop127.cfm>



Appendix A

Sites:

- Inspirations
- Parkdale Drop-in/Outreach (Parkdale)
- Main Drop-in (Bloor)

I. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

A. AGE

Table 1: Survey Respondents by Age Range

Age Range	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
-20 years					1	1%	1	1%
21 to 30 years					4	4%	4	3%
31 to 45 years	4	40%	3	12%	15	17%	22	18%
46 to 60 years	4	40%	11	44%	27	30%	42	34%
61 to 74 years	2	20%	9	36%	27	30%	38	31%
75+ years			2	8%	14	16%	16	13%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>					1	1%	1	1%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	100%	124	100%

B. FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS

Table 2: Survey Respondents by Family Characteristics

Family Characteristics	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Single	7	70%	10	40%	17	35%	34	27%
Partnered	2	20%	9	36%	23	26%	34	27%
Widowed	1	10%	6	24%	29	17%	36	29%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>					20	22%	20	16%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	100%	124	99%



C. RACIAL/CULTURAL GROUP

Table 3: Survey Respondents by Racial/Cultural Group

Racial / Cultural Group	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Black, African Canadian	4	40%	1	4%	4	4%	9	7%
Caribbean Canadian					1	1%	1	0.6%
Don't know					2	2%	2	2%
East Asian	3	30%	3	12%	33	37%	39	31%
Eastern European			2	8%	2	2%	4	3%
First Nations					2	2%	2	2%
French Canadian	1	10%					1	0.6%
Hispanic, Latin American					19	21%	19	15%
Mixed Heritage					7 ¹	8%	7	6%
Northern European					1	1%	1	0.6%
South Asian			9	36%			9	7%
Southeast Asian			1	4%			1	1%
West Asian			1	4%			1	1%
Western European			3	12%	3	3%	6	5%
White, Caucasian	2	20%	5	20%	15	17%	22	18%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	100%	124	100%



D. COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Table 4: Survey Respondents by Country of Origin

Country	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Antigua					1	1%	1	1%
Australia					1	1%	1	1%
Botswana					2	2%	2	2%
Brazil					1	1%	1	1%
Canada	4	40%	5	20%	13	15%	22	18%
Chile					2	2%	2	2%
China					33	37%	33	27%
Colombia					2	2%	2	2%
Croatia			1	4%			1	1%
Cuba					1	1%	1	1%
Czech Republic			1	4%			1	1%
Ecuador					2	2%	2	2%
El Salvador					1	1%	1	1%
England			1	4%	1	1%	2	2%
Guatemala					4	4%	4	3%
Guyana			2	8%			2	2%
India			6	24%			6	5%
Ireland					1	1%	1	1%
Italy			1	4%			1	1%
Jamaica	1	10%			2	2%	3	2%
Malaysia	1	10%					1	1%
Mexico					7	8%	7	6%
Pakistan			2	8%			2	2%
The Philippines			4	16%			4	3%
Portugal					8	9%	8	6%
Slovakia					1	1%	1	1%
South Africa	1	10%					1	1%
South Korea	1	10%					1	1%
Sri Lanka			1	4%			1	1%
Taiwan					1	1%	1	1%
Trinidad	1	10%					1	1%
United Kingdom	1	10%					1	1%
United States			1	4%			1	1%
Venezuela					2	2%	2	2%
<i>Prefer not to answer</i>					3	3%	3	2%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	100%	124	100%

G. CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION STATUS

Table 5: Survey Respondents by Citizenship and Immigration Status

Citizenship / Immigration Status	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Canadian citizen	9	90%	22	88%	42	47%	73	59%
Immigrant	1	10%	3	12%	28	31%	32	26%
Non-permanent resident					19	21%	19	15%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	99	124	100%

H. LANGUAGE

Table 6A: Survey Respondents by Preferred Spoken Language

Language	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Cantonese					10	11%	10	8%
English	8	80%	14	56%	27	30%	49	40%
French					1	1%	1	1%
German					1	1%	1	1%
Gujarati			1	4%			1	1%
Italian			1	4%			1	1%
Mandarin					25	28%	25	20%
One+ language	2 ²	20%	3 ³	12%	3 ⁴	3%	8	6%
Portuguese					7	8%	7	6%
Punjabi			3	12%			3	2%
Setswana					1	1%	1	1%
Spanish					14	16%	14	11%
Tagalog			2	8%			2	2%
Urdu			1	4%			1	1%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	100%	124	101%

Table 6B: Survey Respondents by Other Spoken Language(s)

Language	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Cantonese			1	6%			1	1%
Czech			1	6%			1	1.4%
English			3	18%	18	40%	21	31%
French	1	20%	1	6%	3	7%	5	7%
German			1	6%			1	1%
Hindi			1	6%			1	1%
Italian					1	2%	1	1%
Korean	1	20%					1	1%
Mandarin					2	4%	2	3%
Two+ languages	2 ⁵	40%	4 ⁶	24%	11 ⁷	24%	17	25%
Ojibwe					1	2%	1	1.4%
Portuguese					2	4%	2	3%
Punjabi			1	6%			1	1%
Setswana					1	2%	1	1.4%
Spanish					6	13%	6	9%
Tagalog			1	6%			1	1%
Tamil			1	6%			1	1.4%
Tongues	1	20%					1	1.4%
Urdu			2	12%			2	3%
TOTAL	5	100%	17	100%	45	98%	67	95%

J. SEXUAL IDENTITY/ORIENTATION

Table 7A: Survey Respondents by Sexual Identity/Orientation

Sexual Identity / Orientation	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Bisexual			1	4%	1	1%	2	2%
Celibate					4	4%	4	3%
Don't know					1	1%	1	1%
Heterosexual / straight	10	100%	21	84%	76	85%	107	90%
Lesbian / gay			1	4%	1	1%	2	2%
Preferred not to answer			2	8%	6	7%	8	7%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	99%	124	105%

Table 7B: Survey Respondents by Experience of Discrimination/Harassment Connected to Gender Identity or Sexual Identity/Orientation

	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Discrimination	4	40%	8	32%	6	8%	18	15%
Harassment	1	10%			3	4%	4	3%
Discrimination & Harassment	2	20%			2	3%	2	1.6%
Judgmental Attitudes					1	1%	2	2%
Violence	1	10%	1	4%	5	7%	3	2%
Discrimination, Harassment, Judgmental Attitudes & Violence							5	4%
Domination & Control			1	4%			1	1%
None of the above	2	20%	15	60%	54	76%	89	72%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	100%	124	101%

L. RELIGION AND FAITH

Table 8: Survey Respondents by Religion and Faith

Religious Preference	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Aboriginal traditions					1	1%	1	1%
Agnostic	1	10%	1	4%			2	2%
Buddhist	1	10%			16	19%	17	14%
Christian	5	50%	10	40%	51	61%	66	53%
Eastern religions					2	2%	2	2%
Hindu			4	16%			4	3%
Jewish			1	4%			1	1%
Multiple religions					1 ⁸	1%	1	1%
Muslim			4	16%			4	3%
No religious affiliation	2	20%	3	12%	9	11%	14	11%
Sikh			1	4%			1	1%
Spiritual	1	10%	1	4%	1	1%	3	2%
Prefer not to answer					8	10%	8	6%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	100%	124	100%



II. SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

A. EDUCATION

Table 9: Survey Respondents by Highest Level of Formal Education

Highest Level of Education	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No formal education	1	10%	2	8%	8	9%	11	9%
Some primary/ elementary school			1	4%			1	1%
Primary/elementary school	1	10%	2	8%	32	36%	35	28%
Some high school			4	16%			4	3%
High school	3	30%	8	32%	18	20%	29	23%
Apprenticeship or trades					5	6%	5	4%
Some college	3	30%					3	2%
College	1	10%	4	16%	14	16%	19	15%
University	1	10%	2	8%	12	13%	15	12%
English as a Second Language			1	4%			1	1%
Preferred not to answer			1	4%			1	1%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	100%	124	99%

B. EMPLOYMENT

Table 10A: Survey Respondents by Past Employment

Past Employment	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No			8	32%	27	30%	35	28%
Yes	10	100%	17	68%	61	69%	88	71%
Preferred not to answer					1	1%	1	1%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	100%	124	100%

Table 10B: Survey Respondents by Their Recollection of Last Time Worked

Length of Time	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
-1 year					8	16%	8	13%
1 to 5 years			5	63%	12	24%	17	28%
6 to 9 years			1	13%	4	8%	5	8%
10 to 15 years					10	20%	10	17%
16 to 20 years	2	100%	1	13%	6	12%	9	15%
21+ years			1	13%	10	20%	11	18%
TOTAL	2	100%	8	102%	50	100%	60	99%

Table 10C: Survey Respondents by Type of Work Done in the Past

Type of Work	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Administration	1	10%	1	6%			2	2%
Culture	1	10%			1	2%	2	2%
Education			1	6%	3	5%	4	5%
Factory work	4	40%	3	18%	5	8%	12	14%
Government services			1	6%	2	3%	3	3%
Health care					3	5%	3	3%
Industry	1	10%			6	10%	7	8%
Management					1	2%	1	1%
Multiple fields	1 ⁹	10%			20 ¹⁰	33%	21	24%
Service industry	1	10%	5	29%	4	7%	10	11%
Social sciences	1	10%	3	18%	1	2%	5	6%
Trades			2	12%	2	3%	4	5%
Preferred not to answer			1	6%	13	21%	14	16%
TOTAL	10	100%	17	101%	61	101%	88	100%

D. INCOME

Table 11: Survey Respondents by Main Source(s) of Income

Income Source	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No income					1	1%	1	1%
CPP			3	12%	2	2%	5	4%
Child Tax Benefit					1	1%	1	1%
Family members / friends			2	8%	7	8%	9	7%
Layoff benefits					1	1%	1	1%
Multiple sources of income	2 ¹¹	20%	2 ¹²	8%	24 ¹³	27%	28	23%
OAS			1	4%	11	13%	12	10%
ODSP	5	50%	11	44%	8	9%	24	19%
OW	2	20%	3	12%	12	14%	17	14%
PNA					3	3%	3	2%
Private pension			1	4%			1	1%
Sponsorship			1	4%	5	6%	6	5%
Wages: Casual work					4	5%	4	3%
Wages: Full-time work					2	2%	2	2%
Wages: Part-time work					6	7%	6	5%
Workers Compensation	1	10%			1	1%	2	2%
Preferred not to answer			1	4%	1	1%	2	2%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	100%	124	102%



F. HOUSING

Table 12A: Survey Respondents by Current Living Situation

Living Situations	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
An apartment	9	90%	14	56%	45	51%	68	55%
A house	1	10%	10	40%	23	26%	34	27%
Homeless or under-housed (includes anywhere outside, in a shelter or hostel, crowded living conditions and group homes)			1	4%	20	22%	21	18%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>					1	1%	1	1%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	100%	124	101%

Table 12B: Survey Respondents by Past Living Situation

Living Situations	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
An apartment	5	50%	11	44%	34	38%	50	40%
A house	1	10%	8	32%	17	19%	26	21%
Homeless or under-housed	4	40%	6	24%	38	43%	48	39%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	100%	124	100%

Table 12C: Survey Respondents by Living Companion

Living Arrangements	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Adult children	2	20%	5	20%	8	9%	15	12%
Adult children and grandchildren					8	9%	8	6%
Friends			1	4%	5	6%	6	5%
Multiple responses			2 ¹⁴	8%	6 ¹⁵	7%	8	6%
On my own	6	60%	8	32%	38	43%	52	42%
Other relatives	1	10%	1	4%	4	4%	6	5%
Partner	1	10%	5	20%	10	11%	16	13%
Roommates, strangers			2	8%	3	3%	5	4%
Young children			1	4%	7	8%	8	6%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	100%	124	99%



III. DAILY ISSUES

Table 13A: Survey Respondents by Issues Affecting Their Daily Lives

Issues	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
No issues	2	20%	4	16%	5	6%	11	9%
Emotional challenges	4	40%	2	8%	8	9%	14	11%
Lack of educational opportunities					1	1%	1	1%
Lack of training opportunities					1	1%	1	1%
Learning challenges					11	12%	11	9%
Literacy in English (English is second language)			1	4%	22	25%	23	19%
Multiple issues			9 ¹⁶	36%	38 ¹⁷	42%	47	38%
Other	4 ¹⁸	40%	9 ¹⁹	36%			13	11%
Preferred not to answer					3	3%	3	2%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	99%	124	101%

Table 13B: Survey Respondents by Issues Affecting Their Daily Lives, Disabilities

Issues	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No issues			6	24%	31	35	37	30%
Learning					10	11	10	8%
Physical health	8	80%	13	52%	10	11	31	25%
Trouble getting around (mobility)					3	3	3	2%
Vision	2	20%	5	20%	5	6	12	10%
Multiple disability issues					27 ²⁰	30	27	22%
Preferred not to answer			1	4%	3	3	4	3%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	99%	124	100%



**Table 13C: Physical and Mental Health Disabilities Identified
by Survey Respondents by Location**

Inspirations	Parkdale	Bloor
Physical health issues		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • broken or sprained bones/joints • diabetes • high blood pressure • varicose veins • high cholesterol • osteoarthritis • osteoporosis • thyroid problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • arthritis • diabetes • heart problems • high blood pressure • paralysis • injuries due to accidents • osteoarthritis • recent surgery • sciatica 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • back and knee problems injuries due to falls arthritis • chronic pain • diabetes • heart problems • Leukemia • memory decline • thyroid problems
Mental health issues		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bipolar disorder • depression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • anxiety • depression • Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • depression • paranoid schizophrenia • bipolar disorder • Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)



IV. MENTAL HEALTH

Table 14A: Survey Respondents by Contact with Mental Health System

Contact with Mental Health System	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No	3	30%	15	60%	59	66%	77	62%
Yes	7	70%	10	40%	29	33%	46	37%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>					1	1%	1	1%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	100%	124	100%

Table 14B: Survey Respondents by Type of Contact with Mental Health System

Type of Contact	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Counsellor	2	29%	2	20%			4	9%
Faith-based leader, organization			1	10%	1	3%	2	4%
Hospitalization			1	10%	2	7%	3	7%
Psychiatrist			1	10%	4	14%	5	11%
Psychologist	1	14%	1	10%	6	21%	8	17%
Multiple interactions	4 ²¹	57%	4 ²²	40%	14 ²³	48%	22	48%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>					2	7%	2	4%
TOTAL	7	100%	10	100%	29	100%	46	100%

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT AND COUNSELLING

Table 15A: Survey Respondents by Participation in Emotional Support and Counselling

Participation in Emotional Support & Counselling	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No	5	50%	17	68%	60	67%	82	66%
Yes	5	50%	8	32%	26	29%	39	31%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>					3	3%	3	2%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	99%	124	99%



Table 15B: Survey Respondents by Type of Emotional Support and Counselling

Type of Support	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Court system					1	4%	1	4%
Faith leader, organization	1	20%			1	4%	2	5%
Family doctor	1	20%	1	13%			2	4%
Other agencies	2	40%	6	75%	6	23%	14	36%
Other women's agencies	1	20%	1	13%	13	50%	15	38%
Other women's services and other agencies					3	12%	3	8%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>					2	8%	2	5%
TOTAL	5	100%	8	101%	26	101%	39	100%



V. SUBSTANCE USE

Table 16A: Survey Respondents by Substance Use in Last 30 Days

Regular Substance Use in the last 30 days	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No	3	30%	6	24%	60	67%	69	56%
Yes	7	70%	19	76%	16	18%	42	34%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>					13	15%	13	10%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	100%	124	100%

Table 16B: Survey Respondents by Type of Substance Used in Last 30 Days

Type of Substance	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Alcohol					3	19%	3	7%
Marijuana			1	5%	1	6%	2	5%
Medication for mental health issues	2	29%	2	11%			4	10%
Medication for physical health issues	3	43%	12	63%			15	36%
Morphine (not taken as prescribed)	1	14%					1	2%
Other sedatives, hypnotics or tranquilizers (e.g., sleeping pills, Seconal, Librium, Valium, benzodiazepines, Special K or Ketamine, GHB)					1	6%	1	2%
Over-the-counter medications (e.g., cough syrup, Gravol, Sudafed, Tylenol 3s) not take as prescribed			1	5%	5	31%	6	14%
Multiple substances	1 ²⁴	14%	3 ²⁵	16%	5 ²⁶	31%	9	21%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>					1	6%	1	2%
TOTAL	7	100%	19	100%	16	99%	42	99%

Table 16C: Survey Respondents by Type of Substance Use Support

Type of Support	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Detox program					1	6%	1	2%
Drop-in centre					1	6%	1	2%
Family doctor	4	57%	14	74%			18	43%
Support groups	1	14%			1	6%	2	5%
Multiple supports			4 ²⁷	21%	4 ²⁸	25%	8	19%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>	2	29%	1	5%	9	56%	12	29%
TOTAL	7	100%	19	100%	16	99%	42	100%



VI. CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

**Table 17A: Survey Respondents by Interactions
with the Criminal Justice System within Last 12 Months**

Interaction with Criminal Justice System in Last Year	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No	9	90%	19	76%	78	88%	106	85%
Yes	1	10%	6	24%	9	10%	16	13%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>					2	2%	2	2%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	100%	124	100%

**Table 17B: Survey Respondents by Challenges
with the Criminal Justice System within Last 12 Months**

Challenges with Criminal Justice System in Last Year	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No			1	17%	4	44%	5	31%
Yes	1	100%	5	83%	4	44%	10	63%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>					1	11%	1	1%
TOTAL	1	100%	6	100%	9	99%	16	95%

Table 17C: Types of Challenges Experienced by Survey Respondents

Type of Challenge	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Issues with criminal justice staff			5	100%	3	75%	8	80%
Issues with lawyer	1	100%			1	25%	2	20%
TOTAL	1	100%	5	100%	4	100%	10	100%

VII. CHILD AND ADULT ABUSE

A. CHILD ABUSE

Tables 18A-E: Survey Respondents by Childhood Experience of Physical, Emotional, Verbal and Sexual Abuse

Table 18A

Pushed, slapped, hit, kicked or threatened with harm	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No	2	20%	20	80%	45	51%	67	54%
Yes	6	60%	5	20%	41	46%	52	42%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>	2	20%			3	3%	5	4%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	100%	124	100%

Table 18B

Saw parent or guardian being pushed, slapped, hit, kicked or threatened with harm	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No	2	20%	20	80%	64	72%	86	69%
Yes	6	60%	5	20%	21	24%	32	26%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>	2	20%			4	4%	6	5%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	100%	124	100%

Table 18C

Was afraid for personal safety, called hurtful names, made to feel ashamed or not good enough	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No	2	20%	21	84%	52	58%	75	60%
Yes	6	60%	4	16%	29	33%	39	31%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>	2	20%			8	9%	10	8%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	100%	124	100%



Table 18D

Forced or pressured into any sexual	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No	6	60%	23	92%	71	80%	100	81%
Yes	2	20%	2	8%	12	13%	16	13%
Don't know					1	1%	1	1%
Preferred not to answer	2	20%			5	6%	7	6%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	100%	124	101%

Table 18E: Types of Support received regarding Experience(s) of Abuse as a Child

Type of Support	Inspirations	Parkdale	Bloor	Total
	Number	Number	Number	Number
Community			3	3
Family			2	2
Service agency	1	1	4	6
Support group	1	1		2
Multiple sources of support			4 ²⁹	4
Did not receive any support		2	20	22
TOTAL	2	4	33	39

B. ADULT ABUSE

Tables 19A-E: Survey Respondents by Childhood Experience of Physical, Emotional, Verbal and Sexual Abuse

Table 19A

Pushed, slapped, hit, kicked or threatened with harm	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No	3	30%	19	76%	53	60%	75	60%
Yes	5	50%	6	24%	36	40%	47	38%
Preferred not to answer	2	20%					2	2%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	100%	124	100%

Table 19B

Punched or things thrown at them	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No	3	30%	19	76%	53	60%	75	60%
Yes	5	50%	6	24%	30	34%	41	33%
Preferred not to answer	2	20%			6	7%	8	6%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	101%	124	99%



Table 19C

Was afraid for personal safety, called hurtful names, made to feel ashamed or not good enough	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No	2	20%	18	72%	44	49%	64	52%
Yes	6	60%	7	28%	39	44%	52	42%
Don't know	2	20%			6	7%	8	6%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	100%	124	100%

Table 19D: Survey Respondents by Perpetrators of Physical, Emotional and Verbal Abuse

Abuser	Inspirations	Parkdale	Bloor	Total
	Number	Number	Number	Number
Another participant of a drop-in, shelter or hostel		1	1	2
Current spouse/partner		1	3	4
Employer	1		1	2
Family		3	4	7
Former spouse/partner	3	3	12	18
Professional within a system (e.g., police, military, doctor, teacher)			2	2
Strangers			3	3
Multiple abusers	2 ³⁰		9 ³¹	11
TOTAL	6	8	35	49

Table 19E: Survey Respondents by Types of Support Received regarding Experience of Abuse as an Adult

Type of Support	Inspirations	Parkdale	Bloor	Total
	Number	Number	Number	Number
Agency			4	4
Family		1	3	4
Friends			1	1
Multiple sources of support			13	13
Did not receive any support	6	6	18 ³²	30
TOTAL	6	7	39	52



C. ADULT SEXUAL ASSAULT

Table 20A: Survey Respondents by Experience of Adult Sexual Assault

Forced or pressured into any sexual	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No	3	30%	24	96%	75	84%	102	82%
Yes	6	60%	1	4%	12	13%	19	15%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>	1	10%			2	2%	3	2%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	99%	124	99%

Table 20B: Survey Respondents by Perpetrators of Sexual Assault

Abuser	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Current spouse/partner					1	8%	1	5%
Family	1	17%					1	5%
Former spouse/partner	4	67%	1	100%	4	33%	9	47%
Strangers					3	25%	3	16%
Multiple abusers	1 ³³	17%					1	5%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>					4	33%	4	21%
TOTAL	6	101%	1	100%	12	99%	19	99%

Table 20C: Type of Support received for Sexual Assault

Type of Support	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Friends					1	8%	1	5%
Did not receive support	5	83%	1	100%	10	83%	16	85%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>	1	17%			1	8%	2	11%
TOTAL	6	100%	1	100%	12	99%	19	101%

VIII. MAIN SOURCES OF SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Table 21: Survey Respondents by Main Source of Social and Emotional Support

Type of Social & Emotional Support	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Community services	3	30%	4	16%	20	22%	27	22%
Faith					1	1%	1	1%
Family	2	20%	4	16%	21	24%	27	22%
Friends	2	20%	1	4%	8	9%	11	9%
Recreation (i.e., art, relaxation, TV, music, exercise, venting)	2	20%	4	16%			6	5%
Multiple sources of support			8 ³⁴	32%	35 ³⁵	39%	43	35%
No sources of support	1	10%	4	16%	2	2%	7	6%
<i>Preferred not to answer</i>					2	2%	2	2%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	100%	124	102%



IX. SISTERING

Table 22A: Survey Respondents by How They Heard About Sistering

Source	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Advertisement			2	8%	1	1%	3	2%
Can not recall			1	4%			1	1%
Family			2	8%	1	1%	3	2%
Friends	1	10%	14	56%	50	56%	65	52%
Other organizations	7	70%	5	20%	11	12%	23	19%
Other women who go to Sistering					20	22%	20	16%
Self-referred	2	20%	1	4%	3	3%	6	5%
Multiple sources					3 ³⁶	3%	3	2%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	98%	124	99%

Table 22B: Survey Respondents by Length of Time at Sistering

Length of Time	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than 6 months			2	8%	14	16%	16	13%
Six months to one year	1	10%	2	8%	13	15%	16	13%
One to two years	2	20%	5	20%	34	38%	41	33%
Two to four years	2	20%	2	8%	7	8%	11	9%
Four to six years			3	12%	4	4%	7	6%
Six to ten years	3	30%	6	24%	9	10%	18	15%
More than 10 years	2	20%	5	20%	7	8%	14	11%
Preferred not to answer					1	1%	1	1%
TOTAL	10	100%	25	100%	89	100%	124	101%



**Table 22C: Survey Respondents by Programs Accessed
at Sistering's Parkdale Location**

Programs & Services Accessed at Sistering	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Advocacy/ support	1	10%	1	4%	4	4%
Information/ referral	1	10%	1	4%	8	9%
Practical help			11	44%	8	9%
Social/ recreational programming			22	88%	7	8%
Transportation					3	3%
Other			6 ³⁷	24%		

**Table 22D: Survey Respondents by Programs Accessed
at Sistering's Bloor Street Location**

Programs & Services Accessed at Sistering	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Advocacy/ support					21	24%
Crisis intervention/ prevention					7	8%
Information/ referral					48	54%
On the Path Pre-Employment Program					67	75%
Practical help	1	10%			6	7%
Social/ recreational programming			6	24%	58	65%
Workshops/ programs			1	4%	43	48%



X. ACCESSING COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

A. HELPFUL FACTORS

Table 23: Helpful Factors to Accessing Community Support Services

Helpful Factors	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Childcare					5	6%	5	4%
Culturally-appropriate programming					20	23%	20	16%
Donations (e.g., toiletries, clothing)			4	16%	8	9%	12	10%
Extended hours	2	20%			35	40%	37	30%
Hot meals			8	32%	64	73%	72	59%
Learning opportunities	1	10%					1	1%
Non-judgmental attitude			1	4%	40	45%	41	33%
Practical help			3	12%	2	2%	5	4%
Services in languages other than English					40	45%	40	45%
Social/recreational programming	1	10%	19	76%	2	2%	22	18%
Supportive staff	6	60%	7	28%	4	5%	17	14%
TTC tokens			6	24%	71	81%	77	63%
Other	9 ³⁸	90%	15 ³⁹	60%	11 ⁴⁰	13%	35	28%

B. OBSTACLES

Table 24: Obstacles to Accessing Community Support Services

Obstacles	Inspirations		Parkdale		Bloor		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Cultural barriers			1	5%	22	25%	23	20%
Don't have a telephone number					11	13%	11	9%
Don't have identification					3	3%	3	3%
Don't know where to go					28	32%	28	24%
Have had negative experiences in the past			1	5%	13	15%	14	12%
Inclement weather			4	20%			4	3%
Issues with participants (e.g., racism, aggression from peers)	5	50%	6	30%			11	9%
Issues with staff			2	10%	1	1%	3	3%
Language barriers			3	15%	57	66%	60	51%
New to Toronto	1	10%	1	5%	15	17%	17	15%
No TTC fare or money for transportation					35	40%	35	30%
Not living close by			1	5%			1	1%
Refused					3	3%	3	3%
Service hours are inconvenient					15	17%	15	13%
The wait for an appointment is too long			1	5%	20	23%	21	18%
Too busy finding shelter, food and other necessities					7	8%	7	6%
Other	3 ⁴¹	30%	4 ⁴²	20%	10 ⁴³	11%	17	15%



Appendix A: Endnotes

- 1 Black, African Canadian/First Nations, Black, African Canadian/Jamaican, Black, African Canadian/don't know, East Asian/Southeast Asian and White, Caucasian/Hispanic, Latin American.
- 2 English and Korean; English and French.
- 3 Hindi and Gujarati; Hindi and Punjabi; Punjabi and Urdu.
- 4 English and Spanish (2); English and Portuguese.
- 5 French and Italian; Cantonese, Mandarin and Malaysian.
- 6 French and Hebrew; German and Croatian; English, Hindi and Urdu; English, Punjabi, Urdu and Marachi.
- 7 Cantonese and English; English and Mandarin; English and Cakchiquel; English and Italian; English and Polish; French and Spanish; French, Portuguese and Spanish; Russian, Czech and Slovak; Spanish and Ojibwe.
- 8 Buddhist and Eastern religions.
- 9 Education and culture.
- 10 Administration, business, culture, education, government services, health care, management, recreation, religion, sales, selling drugs, service industry, sex work, social sciences, sport and trades.
- 11 CPP, CPPD, ODSP, stipends and wages (piece work).
- 12 CPP, GST credit and OAS.
- 13 Alimony/child support, CPP, CPPD, family/friends, GIS, GST credit, private pension, ODSP, OW, panhandling, sponsorship, wages (full-time work), wages (part-time work), wages (piece work).
- 14 Partner and adult or young children.
- 15 Partner and adult, young or grandchildren.
- 16 Relationship challenges, poverty, lack of employment, loneliness, mental health, adjusting to life in Canada, literacy in English (English is second language) and weight gain.
- 17 Emotional challenges, lack of educational opportunities, lack of training opportunities, learning challenges, lack of employment, poverty, housing issues, literacy in English (English is second language).
- 18 Homelessness, poverty and relationship challenges.
- 19 Loneliness, mental health issues, relationship challenges and sleep difficulties.
- 20 A combination of hearing, vision, mobility, mental health, physical health and learning issues.
- 21 Hospitalization, crisis intervention, psychologist, counsellor, psychiatrist, day program and family doctor.
- 22 Psychologist, counsellor, psychiatrist, social worker, hospitalization and family doctor.

- 23 Hospitalization, crisis intervention, psychologist, psychiatrist, electric shock, day program and social worker.
- 24 Sedatives, anti-psychotics, thyroid and cholesterol medication.
- 25 Sedatives, medication for mental and physical health issues, breathing machine and over-the-counter medication.
- 26 Alcohol, cocaine, crack, heroin, methadone, morphine, Oxycontin, other opiates, sedatives and over-the-counter medication.
- 27 Family doctor and occupational therapist; family doctor and psychiatrist (3).
- 28 Detox program, drop-in centre, harm reduction, prescription, short- and long-term treatment and staying busy.
- 29 Community, family, friends and service agencies.
- 30 Former spouse/partner and pimp.
- 31 Family, another participant, former spouse/partner and friends.
- 32 Family, friends and service agencies.
- 33 Former spouse/partner and pimp.
- 34 Physical activity and venting.
- 35 Community services, faith, family, family doctor, friends, medication, psychotherapy and recreation.
- 36 Friends and other participants (3).
- 37 Volunteer opportunities and donations.
- 38 Opportunities for personal growth.
- 39 Comfortable environment, confidentiality, haircuts, massage and proximity to amenities.
- 40 Counsellors, donations, legal aid and peer support.
- 41 Pain, limited time at the pottery wheel, poverty.
- 42 Long-term staff on leave, unclear TTC distribution, fear of people in their neighbourhood, inclement weather.
- 43 Poverty, limited services in the east end, inadequate laundry facilities, long wait to social housing, inability to work.



Appendix B

1.0 HIGHLIGHTS

Compared to the findings for the organization as a whole, the results of Sistering's 2009 Transgender Survey revealed higher proportions of

- Participants aged 21 to 45 years
- Individuals who identify as Hispanic, Latin American and White, Caucasian; were born in Canada and Venezuela, and are Canadian citizens
- Persons whose preferred spoken language is English
- Respondents who have experienced discrimination, harassment, judgmental attitudes and violence directly connected to their gender identity or sexual identity/orientation.
- Individuals whose main source of income includes ODSP, sex work, boosting/theft, GST credit, Ontario Works, Personal Needs Allowance, selling/running drugs, and/or Workers' Compensation.
- Homelessness, both currently and in the past.
- Daily issues such as emotional and learning challenges, lack of educational and training opportunities, and literacy in English (English is their second language)
- Physical health challenges
- Substance use
- Contact with the mental health and criminal systems
- Accessing emotional support and counselling services
- Child and adult abuse (physical, emotional, verbal and sexual)

And lower proportions of

- Persons with immigrant status
- Individuals who have a post-secondary education
- People who have worked in the past

2.0 SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Age Range		Family Status	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31 to 45 years • 21 to 30 years • 46 to 60 years 	60% 20% 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single • Partnered 	60% 40%
Racial/Cultural Group		Country of Origin	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hispanic, Latin American • White, Caucasian • Mixed heritage¹ 	40% 40% 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canada • Venezuela 	60% 40%
Citizenship and Immigration Status		Preferred Spoken Language(s)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canadian citizen • Immigrant 	80% 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English • Spanish² 	100% 20%
Other Spoken Language(s)		Sexual Identity/ Orientation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • French • Spanish • Italian 	60% 40% 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preferred not to answer • Heterosexual/ straight • Queer • None of the above 	40% 20% 20% 20%
Religion and Faith		Highest Level of Education	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No religious affiliation • Spiritual • Christian 	40% 40% 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High school certificate or equivalent • Primary/elementary school 	60% 40%

1 Respondent defined their mixed heritage as being “a mutt.”

2 One survey respondent prefers to speak English and Spanish.



Past Employment		Past Type of Employment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • Preferred not to answer 	60% 20% 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boosting/theft • Sales • Selling/running drugs • Service industry (e.g., retail, hair styling) • Sex work • Transport 	25% 25% 50% 50% 75% 25%
Current Living Situation		Past Living Situation(s)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeless (i.e., hotel or motel, shelter or hostel) • Apartment 	80% 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeless (i.e., shelter or hostel, crowded living conditions, moving frequently) • Apartment or house 	100% 40%
Current Living Companion		Main Source(s) of Income	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On their own • With strangers 	80% 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ODSP • Sex work • Boosting/theft • GST credit • OW • PNA • Selling/running drugs • Workers' Compensation 	60% 60% 20% 20% 20% 20% 20% 20%

Highlights:

- The majority of respondents (60%) indicated that they're between the ages of 31 and 45 years, followed by 21 to 30 years (20%) and 46 to 60 years (20%).
- Sixty percent of participants who participated in the Transgender Survey were single compared to 40% that were partnered.
- Forty percent of respondents identified as Hispanic, Latin American; White, Caucasian (40%) and mixed heritage (20%).
- The majority of participants (60%) were born in Canada followed by Venezuela (40%). Eighty percent of respondents were Canadian citizens and 20% reported immigrant status.
- All of the respondents indicated that English was their preferred spoken language, among whom 20% also preferred speaking Spanish. All of the participants spoke languages in addition to English: French (60%), Spanish (40%) and Italian (20%).
- Twenty percent of participants who participated in the Transgender Survey



identified as queer, heterosexual (20%) or none of the above (20%). Forty percent of respondents preferred not to respond to this question. The entire sample experienced discrimination, harassment, judgmental attitudes and violence directly connected to their gender identity or sexual identity/orientation (data not shown).

- Sixty percent of respondents have worked in the past (20% have not and 20% preferred not to answer). Among those who have worked in the past, 67% worked less than 6 months ago, and 33% worked 1 to 5 years ago (data not shown). The bulk of participants have been employed in sex work (75%), selling/running drugs (50%) and the service industry (50%).
- The vast majority of participants are currently homeless (80%) or were homeless in the past (100%). One respondent indicated that the harassment they experience at shelters/hostels is stressful for a transgendered person.
- The main sources of income were from ODSP (60%) and sex work (60%).



3.0 DAILY ISSUES

Daily Issues		Disabilities & Physical Health Challenges	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emotional challenges Lack of training opportunities Lack of educational opportunities Literacy in English (English is the second language) Learning challenges 	80% 60% 40% 40% 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical health (e.g., pain, HIV-positive) Hearing No disability or physical health challenges 	60% 20% 20%
Contact with Mental Health System		Type of Contact with Mental Health System	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes Preferred not to answer 	80% 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Counsellor Psychiatrist Psychologist Hospitalization Preferred not to answer 	60% 60% 40% 20% 20%
Contact with Criminal Justice System		Challenges with Criminal Justice System	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes No 	80% 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes No 	50% 50%
Types of Challenges with Criminal Justice System			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Racism, sexism, homophobia etc., by an employee of criminal justice system Assault by an employee of criminal justice system Poor medical care at correctional institution 	40% 20% 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Racism, sexism, homophobia etc., by a non-employee of criminal justice system Assault by someone not employed by criminal justice system 	20% 20%
Regular Substance Use (within the last 30 days)		Types of Substance Used	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes No 	80% 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marijuana Cocaine Crack Alcohol Female hormones Other sedatives, hypnotics or tranquilizers 	60% 40% 40% 20% 20% 20%
Supports needed for Substance Use			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harm reduction (e.g., clean needles, safe crack kits) Detoxification Long-term drug treatment (more than 28 days) No supports needed 			60% 20% 20% 20%
Contact with Emotional Support and Counselling		Type of Contact with Emotional Support and Counselling	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes No Preferred not to answer 	60% 20% 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other agencies Other women's agencies 	75% 25%



Main Sources of Support	
• Community services	60%
• Family	40%
• Friends	40%
• Self	20%

Highlights:

- The daily issues facing respondents include: emotional challenges (80%), lack of training opportunities (60%), lack of educational opportunities (40%), literacy in English [English is second language] (40%) and learning challenges (20%). Although it was not a part of this question, 20% of respondents indicated that lack of employment is a daily issue for them [data not shown]. One respondent, in particular, reported that they are unable to find a job in the field in which they have been trained.
- Sixty percent of respondents reported physical health challenges: HIV-positive status and pain from multiple surgeries. Twenty percent of participants indicated that they have a hearing disability; 20% stated that they do not have any disability or physical health challenges.
- Eighty percent of respondents who participated in the Transgender Survey have had contact with the mental health system (20% preferred not to respond to this question). The majority of participants have accessed a counsellor (60%) and/or psychiatrist (60%).
- Eighty percent of respondents have interacted with the criminal justice system (within the year prior to participating in the survey), half of whom have experienced the following challenges: racism, sexism or homophobia etc., by an employee of the criminal justice system (40%), racism, sexism, homophobia etc., by a non-employee (20%), assault by an employee of the criminal justice system (20%), assault by a non-employee (20%) and poor medical care at a correctional institution (20%).
- Eighty percent of participants have regularly used substances within the 30 days prior to completing the survey. The largest proportion of respondents used marijuana (60%), cocaine (40%) and crack (40%). Sixty percent of those who regularly used substances need harm reduction services/supplies.
- Over half the survey respondents (60%) have accessed emotional support and counselling services through agencies such as Sherbourne Health Centre and the 519 Church Street Community Centre's Trans Programs. Sixty percent of participants indicated that community services are their main source of support.



4.0 CHILD AND ADULT ABUSE

Child Abuse (Physical, Emotional, Verbal and Sexual)

- As a child, the entire sample (100%) has:
 - » Been pushed, slapped, hit, kicked or threatened with harm
 - » Saw a parent or guardian being pushed, slapped, kicked or threatened with harm
 - » Was afraid for their safety, called hurtful names, made to feel ashamed or not good enough
- Eighty percent of respondents were forced or pressured into any sexual act
- Eighty percent of the participants who completed the Transgender Survey did not receive any support for their experiences of physical, emotional, verbal and/or sexual abuse; 20% received support from family and/or friends.

Adult Abuse (Physical, Emotional and Verbal)

- As an adult, the entire sample (100%) has:
 - » Been pushed, slapped, hit, kicked or threatened with harm
 - » Been punched or had things thrown at them
 - » Was afraid for their safety, called hurtful names, been made to feel ashamed or not good enough
- Sixty percent of respondents were abused by a professional within a system (e.g., police, military, doctor, teacher), another participant of a drop-in, shelter or hostel (40%), employer (40%), family (40%), former spouse/partner (40%) and/or current spouse/partner (20%).
- Sixty percent of participants received support from friends, community agencies (40%), community (40%) and/or family (40%). Twenty percent did not receive any support.

Adult Sexual Assault

- Eighty percent of respondents have experienced sexual assault as an adult (20% preferred not to answer this question).
- Forty percent of participants were sexually assaulted by a stranger, another participant of a drop-in, shelter or hostel (20%) and/or a professional within a system (20%). Twenty percent preferred not to identify the perpetrator.
- Forty percent of respondents who completed the Transgender Survey did not receive any support; 40% received support from friends and 20% preferred not to answer.

5.0 ACCESSING SUPPORT SERVICES

How respondents found out about Sistering	
• Friends in their community	40%
• Other women who come to Sistering	40%
• Staff at another agency	40%
How long respondents have been coming to Sistering	
• Less than 6 months	60%
• 2 to 4 years	20%
• 6 to 10 years	20%
Why respondents come to Sistering	
• Practical help	100%
• Information/referral	80%
• Workshops/programs	20%
• Social/recreational programming	20%
• Crisis intervention/ prevention	20%
• On-the-Path Pre-Employment Program	20%
What respondents find helpful when accessing support services such as housing, health care, legal or other services (including Sistering)	
• Non-judgmental attitude	100%
• TTC tokens	100%
• Hot meals	80%
• Extended hours	40%
• Child care	20%
• Culturally-appropriate programming	20%
• Services in languages other than English	20%
What obstacles respondents find when trying to access support services	
• Being refused service	60%
• Not having a telephone number	40%
• Not knowing where to go	40%
• Language barriers	40%
• Cultural barriers	20%
• Discrimination against trans populations	20%
• Having negative experiences in the past	20%
• Being new to Toronto	20%
• Not having TTC fare or money for transportation	20%

Highlights:

- Participants found out about Sistering via friends in their community (40%), other women who go to Sistering (40%) and/or staff at other agencies (40%).
- Most of the sample (60%) has been coming to Sistering for less than 6 months followed by 2 to 4 years (20%) and 6 to 10 years (20%).



- The majority of respondents access the Drop-in Centre for practical help (100%) and information/referral (80%). Twenty percent of participants also access the Parkdale Outreach Drop-in Centre for practical help.
- The top three factors that respondents find helpful when accessing support services such as Sistering include a non-judgmental attitude, TTC tokens and hot meals.
- The three main obstacles are: being refused service, not having a telephone, not knowing where to go and language barriers.

