



ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

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Thrive Counselling presents our 2019 -20 Annual Report to our community and stakeholders. What began as a solid year of progress and strengthening, ended with a global shock that will send reverberations well into the future for our agency and the broader community.

Thrive has long taken pride in our progressiveness and adaptability illustrated in our previous merger and through the strong, renewed and vibrant organization we have become. We have been dramatically reminded of the need to be nimble, innovative, resilient and value-driven in every element of our work.

In these uncertain times, we are particularly grateful to our funders for their support and responsiveness throughout the year. Specifically we would deeply thank, the **Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services** which supports the Violence against Women counselling services for women and their children as well as the work of the Halton Violence Prevention Council, the **Ministry of the Attorney General** which supports the Partner Abuse Response (PAR) program as well as our Supervised Access program which provides family visiting and exchange centres which help keep children connected with their parents and the **United Way of Halton/Hamilton** which supports our Individual, Couple and Family counselling programs as well as group programs such as Caring Dads and DBT which are part of these services. This year, we would also like to thank **the Halton Region Community Investment Fund** for their support of our Walk-In Clinics.

As always, a deep and sincere thank you to our many long-standing individual, corporate and service club donors whose contributions help enrich our services so they can remain accessible to as many people as possible.

Our Vision: STRONG PEOPLE
STRONG FAMILIES, STRONG COMMUNITIES

Our Mission: WE PARTNER WITH YOU TO MANAGE LIFE'S
CHALLENGES

Our Values: CARE AND COMPASSION, RESPECT AND DIGNITY,
PROFESSIONALISM AND QUALITY, INCLUSION AND SAFETY

THRIVE SERVICES

Individual Counselling

Family Counselling

Couple Counselling

Walk-in Clinics



The Safety Zone

Employee Assistance

Partner Abuse Response

Supervised Access

Violence Against Women

**Professional Education
& Training**

Services available in Oakville, Burlington, Milton & Georgetown

New Thrive Initiative

Learn to Code with *Thrive & Codingville.com*



With funding from | Avec un financement de:

Canada

THRIVE
counselling



CANCODE



Thrive was very excited to participate in this new federal partnership to provide in-person groups to children of various ages teach them how to code. Ensuring kids have the future skills they need to succeed is a key part of their ability to thrive.

A special thanks to Seimens who through the United Way donated 12 surplus laptops to support this program

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Thrive knows we are all stronger together and we take our commitment to engage with others as essential. Ranging from our participation in community health fairs, tables for mental health and addictions, human trafficking, violence against women, family and criminal courts, justice and mental health, Ontario health teams, equity and diversity, as well as Community Safety and Well-Being and Family Service Ontario - we work to connect with our community.



EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIP

Every year, Thrive is excited to renew our educational partnerships with an ever expanding variety of schools and programs.

This year we have had placements from Adler, Yorkville and Laurier universities for our clinical programs and have been able to have a robust student team joined by our externs who were completing their post-degree clinical hours.

With these positive experiences, Thrive has expanded our partnership horizons.

For the first time we welcomed a communications post-graduate student from Sheridan College. This unique placement allowed for the creation of some new communication offerings, website enhancements and increased media coverage for events such as last year's AGM.

The Partner Assault Response program is a specialized provincial initiative addressing intimate partner violence and we welcomed a new administrative placement to this program for the first time. The specialized nature of this program means that students are specifically interested in learning more about this work and the high intensity of this program makes additional assistance invaluable.

We have continued to benefit in our intake and Walk-in programs from our McMaster BSW students as well as students from the Assaulted Women's program at George Brown. These students have continued to bring a flexible and open skill set which Thrive finds multiple ways to utilize.

The Halton Violence Prevention Council benefitted in developing our police Sexual Assault training program from a Master's student in Laurier's Community and Justice program.

And finally, for the first time, we added an MBA student from McMaster to assist with operational issues. This was a very successful placement and proved a key component of rolling out our new federal partnership for a children's coding program.

We are so pleased with these partnerships and regularly receive positive feedback from our students. Even better, several placements have stayed on and become employee members of the team. This is surely the best indicator of the benefits and value of these partnerships.

Annual Report to the Community:
HALTON VIOLENCE PREVENTION COUNCIL

The Halton Violence Prevention Council continues to its work to end violence in our Halton community. Our extensive and diverse membership, including survivors of violence, undertake strategies to improve the safety of our community - from awareness initiatives to various collaborative activities.

The Council's newly designed Safety Planning Booklet for those experiencing Intimate Partner Violence has been a tremendous success. Positive feedback and widespread usage required a second round of printing and distribution for our membership and community partners. While available electronically, paper copies proved to be a necessary option for sharing.

The Council has continued to focus attention on the issue of responding to sexual violence through the Sexual Assault Advisory Committee. This collaboration with the Halton Regional Police has continued our review of sexual assault cases, and implemented multiple recommendations. The committee created and began delivering, a second round of training for police services focussing further on consent, rape myths and intersectional barriers.

The survivors group SAFE has continued to be very active in their speaking, programming and advocacy efforts. Their support and sharing of their stories at our awareness event greatly enhanced its impact. The Strategic Planning committee worked diligently behind the scenes supporting our strategic initiatives. We are so pleased to release our new logo to the community and to include it in our new event banner.



Message from the Board Chair:

AL ALBANO

As I reflect on 2019-20, I am proud of what was accomplished and secure in the strengths of the organization to rise to all challenges and maintain focus on serving the needs of the community.

Early in the year, Thrive was highly focused on our newly developed five-year strategic plan. With the merger goals securely accomplished and our agenda to grow and strengthen the agency clearly defined, we were ready to explore promising paths forward and take advantage of key opportunities that were evolving across the province.

The Board has prioritized on-going financial stability, often in the face of frequent externally-driven changes. We have worked to position Thrive to be able to withstand strong headwinds and focus on fiscal stability which often has meant opportunities for growth.

The Board itself has experienced significant changes to our membership this year. We have been extremely pleased by the exceptional level of talented interest that came forth eager to become part of our organization, as well as the quality and commitment of the candidates that were eventually chosen to join on as our Directors.

Given the influx of new membership to the Board, we requested a delegation of staff to join various Board meetings and provide insight into the array of programming offered by the agency. I can confidently speak on behalf of the Board in saying that we were consistently impressed and warmed by the passion and commitment communicated to us by each of the attending staff. It is that dedication to the work that makes us proud and dedicated to support the work of Thrive.

The success of Thrive to overcome the ever changing environment, remain flexible in its approach to deliver services and resolve in dealing with the adversity over the last 6 months, can be attributed to the committed staff of Thrive and the continued leadership of Chondrena. I continue to be confident in the agency's ability to successfully navigate these new waters.

Message from our Executive Director:

CHONDRENA VIEIRA-MARTIN

Every year when it comes time to prepare this report, I feel challenged because it is typically three months after our year-end and so much has occurred it is difficult to place myself mentally into the previous year. For 2019-20, with six months having passed since year-end and events that have shaken every society across the globe, the challenge has seemed almost insurmountable.

I have had to undertake some deep reflection to consider exactly the nature of the year that was 2019-20. I struggled then to be able to pull through that understanding into something that can be shared meaningfully into an environment that is substantially changed from the circumstances in which the majority of 2019-20 occurred.

The year began on a strong and positive note. Thrive had just completed an ambitious five year strategic plan. We were proud to have accomplished the goals from the previous merger-driven plan, eager to set a new path forward and ready to take on new challenges and changes.

The agency was ready to be freed from highly valuable but labour and time intensive initiatives such as major office moves, accreditation and operational system changes. Thrive was pleased to be able to focus on deepening and strengthening structures in order to be well-resourced to respond to opportunities and changes occurring in the provincial environment. These included the creation of the new Ontario Health Teams and the implementation of publicly-funded psychotherapy.

The agency focussed considerable resources on a provincial demonstration project providing evidence of family service organizations' ability to play a key role in the psychotherapy roll-out as well as working to integrate ourselves in the Ontario Health Teams created locally.

2019-20 was also a year for running multiple quality improvement cycles and initiatives. With our recently opened Walk-in Clinics, we were able to gather regular and frequent data on their efficiency and efficacy and made multiple changes including to our staffing model, our outcome indicators, procedures and marketing. This allowed us to run the Walk-in Clinics on a model that was nimble, flexible and effective, an absolute necessity for a program that is inherently fluctuating with unpredictable demands.

The Walk-In clinics closed in the middle of March due to the pandemic. The pain associated with the closure of this valued and successful initiative had me avoidant of talking about them in a normally celebratory report on 2019-20. It was only when I was able to understand that the constant flexibility, nimbleness, innovation and resilience required to operationalize and run the clinics was a key asset in Thrive's ability to pivot in the face of the pandemic, was I able to put their current hold aside and see the gift received then and now.

Another key quality improvement initiative was the strengthening of our administrative, management and clinical functions. One of the important strategies of this initiative is our educational partnerships. Thrive has long engaged in a mutually beneficial experience of welcoming clinical interns and externs into our fold. As outlined elsewhere in this report, this has widened considerably in scope bringing many new gifts and strengths to the agency.

Again, the pandemic severely disrupted our internship and student programs, scuttling carefully drawn-up plans and reducing agency capacity. While always clear around the gifts of this program, pulling the threads of positive continuity through to the present proved difficult in the midst of grieving some of the losses. Yet, beyond the obvious on-going benefits where placements and relationships could continue, other important themes have surfaced.

Thrive's culture of supporting student training creates a culture which supports lifelong learning. Every individual in our agency has had to take crash courses in new behaviours, technologies and ways of doing things including the process of learning. By my estimate, we have been able to complete the equivalent of a graduate degree in change management in the space of six-months. This only proved possible because we have a culture of trying new things, with new people, in new ways and supporting each other to get everyone where they need to go. This is something that in my darkest days has filled me with pride about Thrive.

In closing, I appreciate that this is not the most typical annual report message from the Executive Director. I could not find that inside of me this year. I am able to say that 2019-20 was primarily a good year with important objectives that were unfolding successfully right to nearly the end.

The pandemic has shaken us to our core and yet also unleashed a profound strength, resiliency and understanding of what is valuable and important. I am humbled and proud of how the staff, the Board of Directors and the community has responded and deeply grateful for the support of our funders.

I have full confidence that we will continue to persevere with success through the on-going challenges that face us all and will come through still able to Thrive.

Sincerely Chondrena



A HEARTFELT THANK YOU TO ALL OUR GENEROUS FUNDERS AND DONORS

The Board and staff of Thrive would like to thank our funders for their continued support of the services we have provided to families in Halton.



We would particularly like to thank our generous individual and business donors who have been so committed in their support of our agency.

