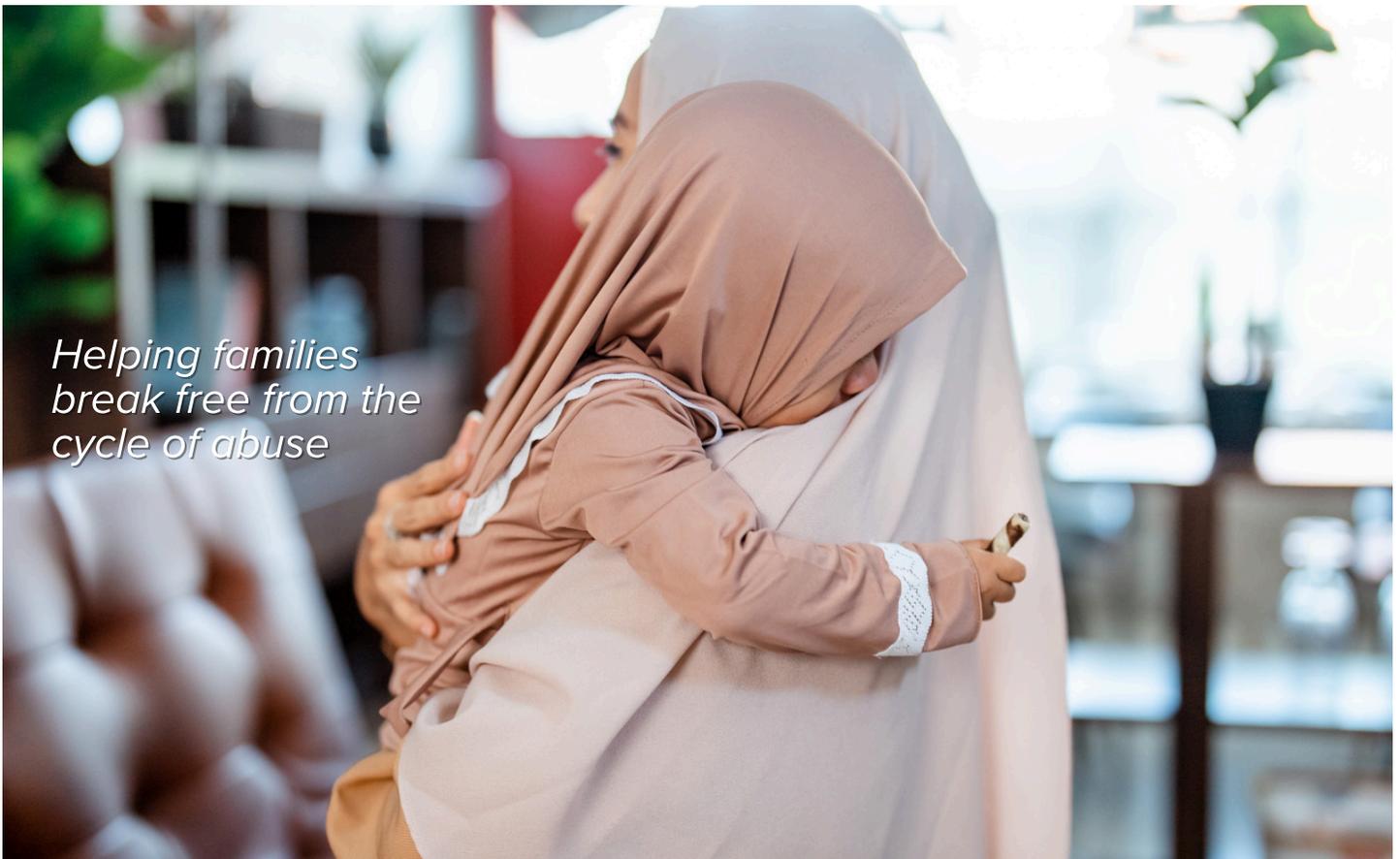


# Annual Report



## 2024/2025

April 1st, 2024 - March 31st, 2025



***Grande Prairie Women's Residence Association***



[www.odysseyhouse.ca](http://www.odysseyhouse.ca)



780-538-1332



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# Treaty 8 Land Acknowledgment

We acknowledge Treaty 8 territory—the traditional and ancestral territory of the Cree and Dene. We acknowledge that this territory is home to the Métis Settlements and the Métis Nation of Alberta, Regions 1, 4, 5 and 6 within the historical Northwest Métis Homeland. We acknowledge the many First Nations, Métis and Inuit who have lived in and cared for these lands for generations. We are grateful for the traditional Knowledge Keepers and Elders who are still with us today and those who have gone before us. We make this acknowledgement as an act of reconciliation and gratitude to those whose territory we reside on or are visiting.

# Director's & Board President Statement

Each year we compile the Odyssey House Annual Report to reflect on and share the many incredible accomplishments we achieved the previous year. In the 2024/2025 fiscal year, Odyssey House's community impact was the result of our efforts to enhance collaboration, build partnerships, and innovate.

This fiscal year we completed renovation of our emergency shelter main floor, increasing access to safe emergency housing from 47 beds to 51. While our dedicated and resilient staff successfully navigated ongoing crisis support in a condensed workspace, we are saddened by the ongoing need to increase housing capacity for those fleeing domestic abuse.

To support ongoing development and reduce the occurrence and impact of domestic abuse, we need community collaboration—our employees must have the resources to serve the clients in this incredibly complex and challenging work. That's why we are investing in the Hope Grande Prairie Initiative, powered by Restore Hope, and establishing a collective database for improved community response to crisis. Our Board of Directors, staff, and management have invested in ensuring that our purpose is clear and focused on empowering the individuals we support to move toward healing and into thriving, stable lives.

The 2025/2026 fiscal year will focus on a collective impact model and ensure that prevention is equally prioritized alongside Odyssey House's well-established intervention-based services.

Our team believe in our purpose and are confident that we have found a pathway that will help move us toward living in a community free from crisis and abuse. With the ongoing support from the Grande Prairie community and surrounding areas, we are moving closer creating safety, justice, and equitable treatment for all people. On behalf of our Board, Executive Director, and staff, thank you for supporting those in need and empowering them to know they are worthy of hope.

**Jenna Canavan**  
Board President

**Mikaela Benson**  
Executive Director

# Board of Directors



**Jenna Canavan**  
President



**Amy Diaz**  
Vice President



**Shawn Penney**  
Treasurer



**Shanda Berns**  
Secretary



**Jenny Weaver**  
Director



**Jason Smith**  
Director

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**Raylene Browne**  
Director

# Values & Purpose Statement

## Values

### **Safety**

Ensuring emotional and physical safety

### **Choice**

Everyone has ability to influence their environment

### **Collaboration**

Making decisions together and sharing power

### **Empowerment**

Continuing to grow trust in self

### **Professionalism**

Task clarity, consistency, and interpersonal relationships

*Committed to trauma-informed practices.*

## Purpose Statement

WE SUPPORT INDIVIDUALS IMPACTED BY DOMESTIC ABUSE.

Through:

1. Safe secure living options and services.
2. Education and resources to end the cycle of abuse.
3. Targeted advocacy, collaboration, and guidance.



# Organizational Health Pillars



The organizational pillars help Odyssey House balance strategy and actions and ultimately reflect the most critical aspects of our organization's ongoing health and sustainability. Our annual planning and intentional work throughout the organization encompass these pillars and the desired outcomes.

# Emergency Shelter

Odyssey House supports a 51-bed private, secure, welcoming facility for women and children needing short-term emergency accommodation.

**236 women**

supported by the emergency shelter program

**182 children**

supported by the emergency shelter program

**2,622 calls**

received on the crisis line for support & services.

## The Emergency Shelter Offers:

- 14 bedrooms (51 beds)
- Staff specialized in crisis intervention and safety planning
- Free on-site laundry
- Hot meals and snacks
- Clothing
- Recreational and private spaces
- Support groups
- Respite Childcare and After School programs
- Accessible facility
- Pets welcome



# Emergency Shelter Highlights



## Positive Outcomes & Personal Goals Met

Over the past year, 21 Danger Assessments were completed and 84 women were discharged from the emergency shelter with safety plans in place, ensuring that they were better prepared for their next steps toward safety and stability.



## Forming Community-Based Partnerships

The shelter actively maintains strong, community-based partnerships with organizations such as The Friendship Centre, Native Counselling Services, Metis Housing GPACOS, and Northwest Aboriginal Services. These partnerships are vital in supporting Indigenous women and their families by offering services grounded in Indigenous worldviews and helping to reduce systemic barriers to safety, healing, and stability.

A new partnership with Mission Thrift was established to reduce financial barriers for women. Through a pre-paid voucher system, women now have access to subsidized clothing and household goods during their shelter stay and in preparation for transitioning into safe, independent housing.

## Breaking Barriers Between Newcomers



Due to an increased number of women staying in shelter who are newcomers, our partnership with the Centre for Newcomers has increased. They have worked in collaboration with shelter Client Support Workers to assist women with achievement of goals, ESL classes, community connection and navigating form filling and processes related to immigration.

# Serenity Place, Second Stage Shelter

**13 women**

**18 children**

supported by the second-stage shelter program

Freedom from violence is a long road. A few weeks in a shelter isn't enough to heal the scars of abuse or to lay a foundation for an independent life. With that in mind, we built a Transitional Supportive Second-Stage Shelter, Serenity Place, a new 14-unit apartment building to meet that more significant need. We offer 1, 2, 3, and 4 bedroom apartments with the help of our 'flex units.' Each apartment is fully furnished with all the necessities, from furniture, bedding, dishes, etc. Power, heat, and water are included in the rent, and pets are allowed. Rent is based on the Alberta Works Core Funding for Shelter or 30% of their income. We have two highly trained, caring support workers to assist with attaining personal goals and client support.



# Second Stage Shelter Highlights



## Fostering Growth and Independence



At Serenity Place, residents continue to demonstrate strength and commitment to building brighter futures for themselves and their children. With the support of Client Support Workers, all residents are now engaged in workforce readiness programs, post-secondary education, or employment. The monthly community supper has further strengthened the sense of connection, with residents supporting one another through childminding and mutual care. Pride in their homes is evident, with residents actively maintaining both their apartments and shared spaces. Despite the ongoing housing crisis, CSWs have focused on equipping clients with essential skills such as financial literacy, credit building, and self-advocacy. These efforts have directly supported successful housing transitions, with two Serenity Place residents achieving the remarkable milestone of homeownership this year.

## Partnerships



Our partnerships with community agencies and Indigenous organizations have continued to grow, ensuring clients have access to affordable housing, food security, childcare, parenting support, employment, and cultural resources. Strong working relationships with lawyers have deepened staff knowledge of the legal system, enabling us to better prepare clients for court processes and advocate on their behalf.

# Community Support & Outreach

<b>648 people</b>	<b>14 people</b>
<p>were supported by the community support program. (<b>451</b> women, <b>197</b> children)</p>	<p>living outside of Grande Prairie were supported by the community support program. (<b>6</b> from Beaverlodge, <b>8</b> from Valleyview)</p>

Odyssey House is more than just a bed; accessing our services does not only mean accessing the emergency shelter program. Our Community Support Team provides 1:1 support to all, regardless of identified gender, background, or socioeconomic status, who have already left, need assistance navigating resources, or are still struggling with an unhealthy or abusive relationship. A Community Support worker can assist with danger assessments, safety planning, housing, court support, income support, and walks with individuals to achieve set goals and move forward in their healing journey. Support groups are also provided.

<b>53 support groups</b>	<b>281 hours</b>
<p>facilitated with <b>51</b> unique attendees</p>	<p>of trauma counseling for a total of <b>194</b> sessions</p>

# Community Support & Outreach Highlights



## Partnerships

Partnerships with Safe Psychology and Bear Creek Counseling now provide no-cost trauma counseling for clients, ensuring they receive the support needed to heal from complex trauma and improve outcomes. Additionally, Community Supports has teamed up with Sagesse, a domestic violence prevention network in Calgary, to transform weekly support groups into a workshop series using Sagesse's materials. A successful collaboration between Community Supports and the Family Education Society has also been developed, allowing for joint referrals.

Community Support: Successfully restructured its group offerings by introducing a series of targeted psychoeducational workshops, including Boundaries, Navigating Trauma & Finding Healing, Exploring the Power & Control Wheel, A Journey to Self-Discovery: Building the Life You Want, and Grounding Through Movement: Healing for Body and Mind. These workshops are designed to empower clients by boosting self-esteem, encouraging self-love and compassion, and providing practical tools to support their healing and personal growth.

## Legal Aid



The Community Support team have established working relationships with Lawyers, enhancing staff knowledge of legal processes and systems, enabling them to better prepare and empower clients for court and legal challenges.

# Childcare Support

<b>68 children</b>	<b>15,390 hours</b>
supported by the childcare programs	of trauma informed programming to children accessing our programs

**Child care** is available to individuals staying at the Emergency Shelter or Second-Stage shelter, accessing groups, other programming, or seeking support from the Outreach team. We are also here to support all parents. We are available to listen and work with parents regarding any concerns or questions you may have. We will work with you and your family to help you strengthen bonds and create structure and routines within a positive and supportive environment. We provide respite care for mothers so they can attend appointments and meetings or those who need a break.

**Out-of-School Care Program** has been developed for school-aged children (5 to 18). The program is open to those staying in the shelter, those who have stayed in the shelter in the past, or accessing the outreach team.



# Childcare Program Highlights



## Delivering for unique needs

Childcare and parenting support are delivered professionally, nonjudgmentally, and sensitively while considering diverse cultures. Every child has the right to live and play in a safe, protected environment that fosters optimum physical, cognitive, emotional, spiritual, and social growth. We endeavor to provide the best possible information and support for all families in our program. This may include, but is not limited to, advocacy, referrals, resources, and case conferences. We recognize the unique and individual needs of each child and their family. Therefore, the services are delivered case-by-case, allowing for unique and specific family needs.



## Development of Strategies



In April 2023, we partnered with ASAP (Access, Supports, Participation) to implement the Pyramid Model and strategies. We have a coach come into our program weekly to observe our childcare support workers in direct supervision with the children and provide feedback on how we are implementing the pyramid strategies. This has greatly supported our ability to reflect on our individual practices and grow our skills thus resulting in a truly trauma informed, inclusive, high-quality program.

# Public Education

Our Public Education Program is rooted in community connection and collaboration. We aim to raise awareness about the social impacts of family and gender-based violence through inclusive education, compassionate support, meaningful referrals, and strong advocacy.

We're proud to offer tailored presentations for a wide range of audiences including schools, colleges, community groups, summer camps, local businesses, and non-profit organizations ensuring our messaging meets the unique needs of each group we engage with.

Odyssey House maintains a strong presence in the City and County of Grande Prairie, as well as in surrounding rural communities. Our team actively works with students from elementary through junior and senior high schools, fostering open conversations and building a culture of respect, safety, and understanding. These partnerships reflect our commitment to empowering the next generation and supporting a community where everyone can thrive free from violence.

A few examples of our presentations are:

School	Community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being Kind &amp; Calm</li> <li>• Emotions and Self Esteem</li> <li>• Bullying and Healthy Friendships</li> <li>• Healthy Relationships</li> <li>• Safe Relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe Relationships</li> <li>• Odyssey House Services</li> <li>• Understanding Family Violence</li> <li>• How To Help</li> </ul>

*This year we provided **156** presentations and public engagement sessions to over **9,000** individuals.*

# Public Education Highlights

57	107	25
New partnerships formed	Existing partnerships engaged with	Public engagement events attended

## Turning Events into Impact



Throughout the year, we team up with incredible community partners to host and support fundraising events that make a real difference. From the heartfelt Royal LePage Night Light Walk and high-energy Purse Bingo, to the collaborative Sunrise House/Odyssey House Annual Golf Tournament, these events do more than raise funds, they build solidarity. We also host GrandeCon, our own celebration of creativity and community that brings thousands together for a great cause.



## Forming Community-Based Partnerships

Odyssey House understands that true healing from domestic abuse and gender-based violence begins with strong, connected communities. Hope Grande Prairie was born from the Re-imagining the Family Justice System pilot project, bringing together local organizations to tackle systemic service gaps through collaboration.

The HopeHub platform supports this work by enabling informed consent and secure data sharing between service providers. It streamlines care coordination, enhances trauma-informed wraparound services, and uses real-time dashboards to give a clear view of Grande Prairie's evolving social landscape. This helps agencies align efforts, track outcomes, and respond more effectively to complex community needs.

**131 school**

presentations given with a total of **2169** participants.

**25 community**

presentations given with a total of **98** participants

# Success Stories

## Emergency Shelter

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### Odyssey House's Hotel Partnership

The hotel partnership was established to address significant gaps in resources within Grande Prairie. Specifically, the city lacks safe spaces for men experiencing domestic abuse and has no shelters dedicated to women and children facing homelessness. Recognizing these needs, Odyssey House formed a partnership with the **Sandman Hotel and Motel 6**, both of which agreed to provide discounted rates and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with our agency to offer safe accommodations when needed. The hotel partnership has primarily been utilized to support men experiencing domestic abuse. In these cases:

- **Emergency Shelter Staff:** Conduct the client intake into our database and collaborate with the Community Supports team to coordinate ongoing assistance.
- **Community Supports Team:** Provide transportation, emotional support, and practical resources such as food, toiletries, and gift cards for meals.
- **Extended Collaboration:** In one case, Odyssey House worked with Wapiti House to secure funding, enabling a male client and his children to stay in a hotel for an extended period while accessing safe, affordable housing in the community.

Odyssey House has successfully supported these clients within the emergency shelter, connecting them to necessary resources to transition back into stable housing.

This partnership demonstrates Odyssey House's commitment to filling critical service gaps in the community by offering creative and compassionate solutions. By ensuring access to safe accommodations and wraparound support, the organization continues to empower individuals and families during their time of need.

# Success Stories

## Second-Stage Shelter

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*“Dear Odyssey House and Serenity Place Team,*

*As I prepare to move into my new home this November, I find myself reflecting on the journey that brought me here and the invaluable support I received during my time with you. I am writing this letter to express my deepest gratitude to Odyssey House and the Serenity Place Second Stage Shelter for the role you have played in my life and in my daughter’s life over the past two years.*

*In the midst of a difficult period, Serenity Place provided us with a safe and nurturing environment, truly becoming the family, we needed. I am profoundly grateful for the care, compassion, and strength that you extended to us during this time. The security, warmth, and support you offered became the foundation on which I could rebuild my confidence and regain my independence.*

*Today, as I step forward with a full-time position as a Business Manager at \*\*\*\*\* , I am proud to say that every step I take is a reflection of your achievements as an organization. Your commitment to creating a community free of violence is not only evident in your work but in the lives you change. Every milestone I reach in my path is a testament to the strength and compassion rooted in Odyssey House's values and morals. I am especially grateful to every employee, past and present, who have devoted their time and heart to make Odyssey House a place of refuge and hope for people like me.*

*Thank you for holding us close, for providing a safe haven, and for empowering me to become the independent individual I am today. My journey forward is possible because of the work you do and the steadfast support to provide to all those you serve.*

*With heartfelt appreciation and admiration,”*

# Success Stories

## Public Education

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At a community event, one attendee approached our information booth to share, "I want to be a part of your team. After one of your presentations at a local school, our students were so interested in the content that they were talking about it on the playground during recess. This never happens after a presentation. They were practicing consent for the rest of the day. If your programming is that impactful, I want to join your team."

## Community Support & Outreach

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Community Support completed a record number of Danger Assessments with clients this year, an all-time high. One of our most significant accomplishments was restructuring our group format to better meet client needs. In September 2024, we piloted a new 4-week psycho-educational workshop series, which has since become a permanent offering. Client engagement has grown significantly, with overwhelmingly positive feedback. These workshops have empowered participants to build self-esteem, practice self-compassion, set healthy boundaries, and take meaningful steps toward safer, more stable futures.

In addition, monthly Self-Care Evenings have provided women with opportunities to relax and recharge through activities like painting, journaling, and creative expression. Participants have shared how these evenings helped them build friendships, foster resilience, and find comfort in the support of others who share similar experiences.

## Community Support & Outreach

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The Community Support Program began the year with high hopes for its new peer support groups, Finding Our Voices and Growth Circle, developed in partnership with a sister shelter. However, the transition proved difficult. Long-time participants struggled with the changes, and a complex registration process deterred many. Attendance dwindled until the groups were no longer sustainable.

Recognizing the need for a fresh approach, the team came together for a brainstorming session. With guidance from a clinical supervisor and drawing on their collective expertise, they reflected on what had worked in the past and what hadn't. This led to a pivotal decision: transitioning from drop-in groups to structured, four-week psycho-educational workshops. By requiring pre-registration and offering closed sessions, they aimed to create a more committed and supportive environment.

The first workshop, Boundaries, exceeded expectations, sparking strong interest and fostering meaningful engagement among participants. Building on this success, the second workshop, Navigating Trauma & Finding Healing, drew even more registrations and overwhelmingly positive feedback. The team realized they had found a model that resonated deeply with their community.

Despite a challenging start, the Community Support Program's creativity and collaboration transformed the initiative. The workshops not only revitalized the program but also provided a renewed sense of hope and connection for participants. This successful shift has laid a strong foundation for continued growth, empowering participants and the team alike.

## Childcare Support

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At The Family Resource Centre/Serenity Place Daycare, we follow the Circle of Courage model, focusing on Belonging, Mastery, Independence, and Generosity. A key challenge, especially with toddlers, is developing expressive language skills. We've found success using ASL/sign language, helping children who struggle to communicate.

### **Key Successes & Milestones:**

**Expansion of Childcare Services:** The approval of the Alberta Childcare Space Creation Daycare Grant enabled us to renovate and expand our licensed childcare facility from 11 spaces to 33. This expansion allows us to serve more children, offer more inclusive opportunities, and provide the care and support families need to thrive.

**Collaboration with ARCQE's GRASP Pilot Program:** Our ongoing partnership with ARCQE (Alberta Resource Centre for Quality Enhancement) through the GRASP (Guiding Responsive Approaches to Strengthening Practice) pilot program has been invaluable. This program provides tailored mentoring, coaching, and support for our staff, helping us use ASQ-3 and ASQ-SE-2 screenings more intentionally. These screenings are crucial in assessing developmental progress and identifying early interventions for children who may need additional support. By using these tools with greater purpose, we've been able to create even more responsive and developmentally stimulating environments for the children in our care.

In addition to the above, we have also been able to access RIRO (Reach In Reach Out) training for our childcare support workers. This resiliency skills training program for adults working with young children has greatly enhanced our ability to provide high-quality supports, not just to the children and families in our care, but to each other as colleagues. The training has helped foster a stronger, more supportive team, enabling us to create an environment that prioritizes growth, resilience, and emotional well-being for all.

# Empowerment Through Community

## DONATION SUMMARY

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**325** total monetary donations made this year. 122 from businesses/organizations & 203 from Individuals.

**217** people donated money to Odyssey House this year.

**7 %** contribution of our annual budget.

## TOP ORGANIZATION CONTRIBUTORS OF THE YEAR

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We are incredibly grateful for the generosity of **ALL** of our contributors this year. Every dollar, whether from businesses or individuals, makes a significant impact and provides the crucial funding needed to keep our operations running. Your support directly helps us continue offering essential services to those who need them most. Our top organization **monetary** contributors this year are:

- Shoppers Foundation Women's Health
- Royal LePage Shelter Foundation
- Pembina Pipeline Construction
- Grande Prairie Petroleum Association
- ARC Resources
- Peace Diagnostic Imaging
- Canadian Natural Resources Limited
- Key to Safety
- Aypical Forestry Consulting
- Advantage Energy Ltd.
- Secure Energy
- KMSC Law LLP
- Taqa North Ltd.

Individual contributions are just as important. We are continually amazed by the generosity of our community and will continue to recognize your support throughout the year.

At Odyssey House, we are deeply grateful for the physical donations we receive. These contributions help us replenish essential supplies and lower costs, allowing us to dedicate more resources to supporting those we serve. Some of the most impactful items include toiletries, clothing, non-perishable food, baby supplies, and household essentials. Each thoughtful donation directly enhances the care and support we can offer to individuals and families as they rebuild their lives. This year, our top non-monetary organizational contributors are:

- Costco
- Cobbs
- Giant Tiger
- Winners
- Marshalls
- Home Sense
- Bootlegger
- Warehouse One
- Pennington's

Gift-in-kind contributions from individuals are incredibly valuable. We are constantly inspired by the generosity of our community and remain committed to showing our gratitude for your support all year long.

## FUNDRAISERS

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During the 2024/2025 period, we hosted 2 impactful fundraising events to support our programs and raise awareness for domestic violence prevention. :



### ODYSSEY SUNRISE GOLF TOURNAMENT 2024

Huge thank you to our title sponsor **Hansen Ford**.



### GRANDE CON 2024

Huge thank you to our title sponsor **Stringam LLP**.

## TOP THIRD-PARTY FUNDRAISERS

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We were fortunate to have local companies host third-party fundraisers on our behalf. Below are some of the major fundraising initiatives that were held during the 2024/2025 period:



### GRANDE PRAIRIE PETROLEUM ASSOCIATION

**Grande Prairie Petroleum Association** organized a Golf Tournament where all proceeds went to Odyssey House

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### SHOPPERS FOUNDATION WOMEN'S WEALTH

**Shoppers Foundation Women's Health** supported Odyssey House through their Giving Shelter and Spring Beauty Mingle campaigns

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### RONA FOUNDATION HOME SWEET HOME CAMPAIGN

**RONA** Grande Prairie as part of their Home Sweet Home Campaign hosted a silent auction and yard sale where all proceeds went to Odyssey House.

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### COATS FOR KIDS

**BNI Northern Connections** in partnership with **Richmond Dry Cleaners** collected, cleaned and donated winter coats for our residents!

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### AUCTION FOR SHELTER

100% of all money raised, through our shelter foundation will stay local and go to Odyssey house here in Grande Prairie

FOR SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES, OR DONATIONS YOU MAY CONTACT ROYAL LEPAGE THE REALTY GROUP AT COMMUNITY@ROYALLEPAGE.CA



### ROYAL LEPAGE AUCTION FOR SHELTER

**Royal LePage Realty Group** hosted an online auction, Purse Bingo and the Night Light Walk in support of Odyssey House.

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# Thank You



780-538-1332



[www.odysseyhouse.ca](http://www.odysseyhouse.ca)



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