



News Release

July 20, 2016

## **Women's Resources of Kawartha Lakes to Receive Funding to Assist in Launch of new Bridges Hub in Lindsay**

A new violence against women service hub is coming to the City of Kawartha Lakes!

Women's Resources of Kawartha Lakes, a non-profit organization which assists women and their children to lead lives free of abuse and violence, is very pleased to announce that it has received funding from two separate sources in support of its Violence Against Women Rural Realities Fund proposal entitled: Bridges of Kawartha Lakes. The proposal was developed by Women's Resources in association with a number of community partners.

The goal of Bridges of Kawartha Lakes is to reduce barriers to services for women who have experienced abuse and violence by providing them with access to a network of collaborating services. The project will focus on the development of both a physical and virtual 'one door, one stop' service model, or hub, in which a collaborative of agencies will come together and/or be linked at one location on one day to provide wrap-around, seamless services to victims of intimate partner violence, intimate partner sexual violence and sexual assault.

The Bridges Hub will take a woman-centered approach in a supportive and respectful manner, within each woman's pace of change. The Hub will have careful, limited information sharing and service providers will work collaboratively and within their individual mandates to best meet the needs of each client. What will make the Bridges Hub unique will be its focus on outreach to women in rural areas. The Hub will establish virtual/satellite sites for women in the more rural parts of the City of Kawartha Lakes to enable them to access the hub services remotely.

Violence Against Women (VAW) service hubs have been in operation in Ontario for the past 15 years. One such hub, START, is located in Peterborough. These hubs have proven to be a highly efficient and effective way to provide services to victims who typically have to navigate a complex service system.

The Bridges of Kawartha Lakes hub concept is the result of a collaborative initiative of Women's Resources of Kawartha Lakes and the Kawartha-Haliburton Children's Aid Society. The concept evolved during a meeting between Lori Watson, Executive Director of Women's Resources, and Jennifer Wilson, Executive Director of KHCAS, and was introduced to service partners in the City of Kawartha Lakes in the fall of 2015. The concept has since received significant community support from a large number of service providers including the Kawartha-Haliburton Children's Aid Society, Kawartha Lakes Police Service, OPP, Victim Witness Assistance Program, Kawartha Haliburton Victims Services, the Ross Memorial Hospital, Women's Health Care, Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre, Legal Aid, Curve Lake First Nation, and Women's Resources and City of Kawartha Lakes Housing.

The Ministry of Community and Social Services will provide funding to the project in the amounts of \$30,000 for 2016-17 and an additional \$30,000 in 2017-18. The project supports the government's Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan and is aligned to the Ministry's mandate to provide services and supports for all women and their children fleeing violence. It will also help to mitigate some of the unique challenges being faced in Violence Against Women (VAW) service delivery to those in rural areas.

Funding for the Bridges Hub will also be received from the Trillium Foundation in the form of an eleven month Seed Grant of \$69,800.

"We are very grateful for the generous support of this important initiative from both the Ministry and the Trillium Foundation. This Hub will be a vital community resource for women, especially those in rural areas, who are at risk", commented Jennifer Wilson.

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For more information please contact:

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