



Fear**IsNot****Love**

IMPACT REPORT

2024 – 2025



INTRODUCTION

FearIsNotLove supports individuals, families, and communities to live free from fear, neglect, violence, and abuse through a comprehensive range of innovative programs and services; from prevention and education, to counselling and emergency supports.

The face of domestic violence and abuse has evolved dramatically over the last few years. We understand this issue to be much more complex than we did when the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter was founded more than 50 years ago. The experience of domestic abuse cuts across, gender, economic and social boundaries in ways that have demanded our agency to work better and smarter to care for all involved.

The agency plays an important role in the daily lives of individuals and families living with fear in their close relationships: whether they are a victim, someone who uses abuse, or someone who knows another person being abused—FearIsNotLove is here to help.

As needs change and the complexity of the issue increases, FearIsNotLove continues to adapt and look at different ways to provide services and reach out to the community, as well as engage with partners to help prevent domestic violence and abuse.

Everyone has the right to feel safe, respected, supported and loved.

FRAMEWORK OF PRACTICE IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ABUSE

The programs and services provided by FearIsNotLove have their foundations in a framework of practice that is informed by the tenets of Response-Based approach (Wade, 2007) and Feedback Informed treatment (Miller, 2019)¹.

The following are some of the key beliefs and assumptions FearIsNotLove has developed, based on its extensive experience working with clients who have experienced domestic violence and abuse, and based on the work of Dr. Allan Wade, Dr. Shelly Dean, and their colleagues at the Centre for Response Based Practice:

Holistic and Systemic View	Violence is profoundly harmful to individuals, families, and whole communities. FearIsNotLove is committed to working to end violence and promoting safe and socially just communities for everyone.
Safety as Priority	FearIsNotLove prioritizes the importance of client safety, from the provision of comfortable environments to providing safe, non-judgemental, respectful, and dignified services in all program areas.
Understanding Clients' Responses to Violence	FearIsNotLove understands its clients' complex responses to violence or reactions to trauma as normal, given the nature of violence and trauma. Their responses are not seen as pathological, nor indicative of a "disorder".
Client Competencies	Our clients have many abilities and competencies. FearIsNotLove helps highlight and amplify these competencies.
Client Resistance	People who have experienced domestic violence and abuse do not passively accept the violence and abuse. They resist, respond, oppose, and stand up against the violence and abuse, even though sometimes it may be in private, unseen ways as it is often not safe to openly resist the violence. FearIsNotLove helps to highlight these acts of resistance.
Perpetrator's Capacity to Change	People who perpetrate violence have the ability to change at any point in time.
Language Implications	It is recognized that when it comes to domestic violence, it is important to use accurate language, to ensure there is absolutely no implication that people who experience violence are in any way responsible for the violence. FearIsNotLove uses words that accurately describe the violence and make it clear "who does what to whom".
Client-centricity	FearIsNotLove continually seeks feedback from its clients, to make sure that it is working together on the matters that are important to the clients. This feedback guides and directs the work with them.

¹ Special thanks to Allan Wade as many of the core aspects of our framework of practice at FearIsNotLove come from his body of work. There is a significant amount of evidence for the effectiveness of the practice framework used at FearIsNotLove: Response-Based practice and Feedback Informed Treatment. The core tenets of Response Based Practice are supported by scholarship and research, practice-based writing, and other literary forms (Wade, Practice-Based evidence for Response-Based Practice, 2020). Feedback Informed Treatment is considered an evidence-based practice by the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (Miller, 2019).

ASSESSING THE IMPACT

While the longer-term goal for FearIsNotLove is to end domestic violence and abuse, FearIsNotLove's programs aim to provide effective, client-centered services. As part of this goal, the focus of the programs is to increase immediate safety and to help to increase the social and emotional well-being of all clients. The goal remains the same when FearIsNotLove is working with people who flee or perpetrate violence, i.e., to increase the safety and well-being of all family members.

To understand and strengthen the impact of our work, FearIsNotLove uses a structured, multi-layered approach to program evaluation. At the foundation is a Performance Measurement Strategy for each program. This includes a Program Profile that outlines the purpose, target populations, and services; a Logic Model that visually maps the connection between activities and intended outcomes; a Performance Measurement Framework that identifies specific indicators of success; and an Evaluation Framework that offers a high-level analysis of the program's alignment with organizational goals, sustainability, and effectiveness.

This framework is supported by semi-annual reviews, where Team Leads, Program Managers, the Director of Client Services, and the Chief Programs & Impact Officer come together with the Research & Evaluation team to reflect on how the program is performing. These reviews are rooted in data analysis but go beyond the numbers. They include discussions about what is working, what is challenging, and where we see trends or emerging needs.

Insights from these reviews include both strategic and practical recommendations, which are captured in a centralized Quality Improvement Plan. The plan allows us to track changes, evaluate the results of our adjustments over time, and ensure ongoing accountability. If readers are interested in a summary of program-specific updates made over the past year, a detailed overview can be found in the appendix (Appendix: Continuous Improvement on page 22).

Our evaluation approach emphasizes the importance of drawing from multiple sources and types of data to build a more complete picture of program effectiveness. This includes quantitative data from standardized tools, qualitative insights from staff and clients, and administrative data on service delivery. By integrating these different perspectives, we are better able to assess the real-world impact of our work and make informed decisions about where to adapt and improve.

FearIsNotLove also works to bring about change in the social context, as it is recognized as a key factor in influencing individuals' social and emotional well-being. One of the strategies in the community, for instance, is to promote and encourage informal and formal supporters to provide positive social responses to people who have experienced domestic violence and abuse, and to avoid pathologizing and inadvertently blaming them for the violence. To this end, we have created an online toolkit which is available on our website, entitled "Take A Stand", which provides this information to supporters of victims.

If FearIsNotLove can help clients to be safe, uphold their dignity, help to increase their well-being, and to help bring about positive changes in their social and material conditions, FearIsNotLove will be helping the agency and the sector to achieve the longer-term vision of ending domestic violence and abuse (see end note ii). The outcomes FearIsNotLove is aiming to achieve for clients include many aspects of social and emotional well-being. These include safety, as well as decreased distress; increased knowledge; increased skills; strengthened sense of self; and increased access to community resources.

This report highlights evaluation data collected across FearIsNotLove programs during Fiscal Year 2024–2025 (April 2024 to March 2025), providing evidence that our programs are contributing to important client outcomes such as increased safety, reduced distress, greater knowledge and skills, a stronger sense of self, and improved access to community supports.

CALGARY WOMEN'S EMERGENCY SHELTER

The Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter Program plays a vital role in addressing the urgent and immediate needs of individuals who are not safe in their own homes or communities due to domestic violence and abuse.

In addition to secure temporary residence, the program offers essential services such as safety planning and access to critical resources to help strengthen and support these individuals to begin their healing journey.

This year we served 376 people through this program.



The gender breakdown of the children and youth is as follows:



Outcomes

Clients' immediate safety increases.	100% agree that they feel safe from their abuser while in shelter.
Clients experience an increase in dignity and safety.	92% agree that the shelter staff treated them as an expert on their wants and needs.
Clients report receiving high quality services that are accountable, effective, and responsive to their needs.	On average 97% of the clients served reported that <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The shelter staff treated them with dignity and respect.• Their values, beliefs, and practices, were taken into consideration in their case planning.• The shelter staff treated them as the expert on what they needed and wanted.
Increased awareness of resources and increased access to services through referrals.	88% agree the services helped them better understand what other resources are available to them.
Clients have increased hope for the future.	91% agree that they have a plan that will meet their needs after they finish their stay.

CLIENT INTERVIEWS AND PROGRESS TOWARD LONG-TERM OUTCOME

Client Testimonial:

“The best support I received (other) than the basic needs is mental and emotional support. They made me strong enough to live with respect and move forward. That is the best support I received. The day I arrived here; I was like how I will move further. But with the support of the staff, I am a strong lady with dignity today.”

The Calgary Women’s Emergency Shelter Program’s long-term outcome is that clients achieve safety and empowerment, enabling them to live with increased dignity, independence, and freedom from violence and abuse. The follow-up interviews with our former clients showed how this outcome is gradually being realized in different ways. While victims’ paths looked different, most participants described gradual movement toward greater independence. Of the eight interviewed clients, five had secured housing, and three had found employment. Several also shared that they had rebuilt routines for themselves and their children and shared a sense of renewed confidence. One client reflected, *“I left my partner, I’m independent, I’m working on my mental health, and my kids are in school. That’s because of the help I received.”* Another described how even in moments of struggle, progress was possible: *“I’ve been in my place for a year. I have my job. We’re just going so much further away than a year ago. Things just keep getting a little bit better little by little. I’m happy with that because that just shows, like, steady progress.”*

Clients emphasized how the shelter created a foundation, through resource navigation and emotional space, which made change feel possible. One client shared, *“I was...with no*

money, with no job, with my baby in my arms, suffering abuse. I was alone, and I can rest there and have a break and then start studying then working. They will help me in that process.”

For one participant, returning to her partner was part of what safety and stability looked like for her at that time. She shared, *“I am better after shelter. Even back with my husband now...the family is back together, and we have our paper.”* In her words, *“I feel better with him now, safer.”* Her story shows that victims define safety for themselves and make choices based on the full complexity of their circumstances.

Across the interviews, clients expressed that their healing was not immediate or complete, but it was happening. As one client put it: *“We’re like, this is just a bump in the road and we are working on it, and we’ll keep working on it to move past it... Take it day by day. Slow and steady. But I feel we are capable even if we are slow.”* These insights show that the shelter’s support laid groundwork for victims to move toward safety, dignity, and freedom, step by step.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight former clients discharged between January and May 2024, selected from those who had previously consented to follow-up. Participants were contacted by email and phone, interviewed by phone or in person, and asked open-ended questions about their post-shelter experiences.

Protecting Lives Through Crisis Response Innovation

FearIsNotLove is committed to reducing the risk of serious harm and death due to domestic violence. This led us to develop:

- **ShelterLink App:** The ShelterLink App is a real-time tool that shows shelter bed availability across the region, reducing the burden on women fleeing violence by eliminating the need to call multiple agencies during a crisis.
- **Shared Intake with YW Calgary:** A shared intake process with the YW Calgary so that victims fleeing violence have easier and quicker access to domestic violence services.
- **Imminent Risk Initiative:** A crisis-oriented response that provides alternative emergency accommodations (most often through hotel placements) when all domestic violence shelter beds are full.

In the Fiscal Year 2024-25, the Emergency Shelter operated at or near capacity, with an average bedroom occupancy of **94%** and full capacity for **170** days of the year.

As a result, we provided **282** nights of hotel accommodation to individuals at imminent risk—primarily to single women, for whom space in the shelter system is often limited.

Clients supported through the Imminent Risk Initiative were often fleeing recent, severe violence:

52%

reported receiving death threats

27%

disclosed that their abuser had access to weapons

50%

experienced recent strangulation, a strong predictor of future homicide

Many also experienced stalking, digital surveillance, financial control, and physical assault

Most clients sought help within 24 hours of a violent incident, emphasizing the urgency of the support needed. The ability to respond in real time with safety has been essential to preventing further harm and stabilizing individuals in life-threatening situations.

This initiative also gives us insight into unmet needs in the community by documenting cases that would previously have been diverted or gone unrecorded. By tracking these cases, we can better understand patterns of risk, advocate for resources, and design more inclusive and responsive systems of care.

In partnership with YW Calgary, we are also working to expand this response into a comprehensive system of care that connects clients not only to emergency shelter but also to supports related to their experience of abuse, such as mental health care, income support, and legal services.

By combining innovation, collaboration, and a deep commitment to safety, FearIsNotLove is helping to close critical gaps in the domestic violence response system.



CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY CENTRE

Client Testimonial:

"I liked the way the childcare can stay with the kids while your appointment outside. I just love it—so helpful. I liked how they cared for my kids how I care for them."

The Children's Activity Centre at the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter provides a safe and nurturing environment for the children of our residents. Staffed by trained professionals, it provides a secure environment where children can heal and play without fear. It enables our clients to attend court, counselling, pursue

employment or housing, or even attend to their personal needs while their children are cared for. This service alleviates barriers and ensures our clients can access the support they need while their children are engaged in age-appropriate activities.

This year, 148 children were served through the Children's Activity Centre.

Of these children:

97%

are under the age of 12

Outcomes

Clients trust their children are in safe care, enabling them to pursue personal or family related goals

92% of clients who utilized the day care while at shelter, agree that childcare staff were able to provide them the information and resources they need to better support their family.

Clients trust their children are in safe care, enabling them to pursue personal or family related goals

95% of clients who utilized the day care while at shelter, were satisfied with the care and support provided by the Child Care program.



CONNECT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ABUSE HELPLINE

The Connect Domestic Violence and Abuse Helpline is an essential service that provides crisis counselling, safety planning, information, and referrals for anyone needing support with domestic violence and abuse. Trained counsellors answer the phone 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Multilingual support as well as online chat and email support are available.

**This year, the Helpline answered
15,933 contact requests.**

14%

**of calls were for
crisis support**

**Relevant information on critical
resources was provided to 35% of callers**

20%

**of the calls, a referral to
a FearIsNotLove Program
was completed**

**4% of the calls were referrals to our
Emergency Shelter program**

A qualitative review of call notes revealed needs such as safety, emotional support, and access to resources. Many callers were in immediate crisis: fleeing abuse, facing eviction, or seeking emergency shelter. Helpline staff provided safety planning, referrals, and guidance on protective measures. Emotional support was also a frequent need, with callers expressing fear, isolation, or grief. Staff provided validation, active listening, and mental health referrals. Disclosures of domestic violence and abuse were common, including physical, emotional, and financial abuse, with callers unsure if their experiences qualified as abuse.

Many also needed help navigating legal processes, including protection and parenting orders, or accessing legal aid. Resources and referral needs were one of the most recurring themes in the analysis. Many callers required guidance in accessing essential supports such as counseling and community programs. The complexity of each caller's situation required staff to explore tailored resource options to ensure the referrals were relevant and aligned with the caller's specific needs. Overall, the Helpline served as a key access point for critical support and referrals.

COMMUNITY SERVICES COUNSELLING PROGRAM

The Community Services Counselling Program offers counselling to any person in the community experiencing abuse, violence, or neglect in their relationships. Counselling is offered in-person at a safe location, through virtual technology, and over the phone. Through individual counseling, safety planning, guidance during transitions, and resource connections, we empower individuals to heal, overcome challenges, and to live free of domestic violence and abuse.

Under the Community Services Counselling Program, we served 755 people.



Outcomes

Clients recognize resistance and enhance personal safety.	98% of clients served, report they are able to make changes to their safety plan as needed.
Clients gain knowledge about available community resources and options.	100% of clients served, report that their counselor provided them with the information and resources that they asked for.
Clients recognize and enhance their knowledge and awareness of parenting strategies regarding domestic violence and abuse.	85% of clients served, report that they now have the parenting strategies they need to support their children.
Clients recognize resistance and enhance personal safety.	97% agree they don't feel responsible for the domestic violence and abuse they have experienced.
Clients report improvements in their child's attitude, communication, demeanor, and behavior.	87% agree that their child's well being has improved.
Clients strengthen their emotional health, well-being, and resiliency.	94% agree that they are more confident to make changes for themselves and their families.

Client Testimonials:

"I could not have done it without FearsNotLove and my counsellor. Things got worse, I was losing hope and felt alone. I was unsure how your program could help me and did not feel comfortable talking about my situation with anyone I could not trust. My counsellor created a good trusting relationship with me, and I could talk about the abuse. He blamed me for the way he treated me and convinced our older child that I was a difficult person. Now I know I am not to blame for the abuse. I am more aware of the ways I have responded to the abuse and know I deserve respect in marriage. I still need to work on leaving my situation and I am ok with my plan. I will reach out to this program again for support at that time. Thank you for all you do to people like me."

"Reflecting on my journey, the Community Services Counselling Program has been nothing short of a lifeline for me. In moments when I felt lost and powerless, it was (my counsellor)'s honesty and understanding that truly brought me solace. Her kindness made it possible for me to open up in ways I never thought I could. She listened with such compassion, offering not just advice but genuine care and reassurance when I needed it most. What touched me deeply was her unwavering belief in my strength and how far I've come in my healing journey, even when I doubted it myself. She gave me the courage to face my pain and the hope that healing, no matter how far away it seemed, was possible. The tools and emotional support (my counsellor) provided have helped me slowly piece myself back together, reminding me that my story doesn't end with the hurt but begins anew with the choices I make for a better, safer future."

Client-centered case planning is a core part of the Community Services Counselling Program's approach to supporting individual goals and measuring progress. Counsellors work collaboratively with clients to identify personal goals shortly after intake and revisit these goals periodically and at discharge to assess change over time.

This year, **229** case plans were reviewed. Clients most frequently selected goals related to emotional regulation, safety, life skills, and building connections. Across all goal areas, clients reported meaningful progress: on a 5-point scale (from 1 = "I have not started" to 5 = "Done!"), the average improvement was over 1.6 points from intake to discharge. The most notable gains were seen in emotional regulation (+1.85), connections (+1.90), and legal navigation (+1.70), highlighting the impact of tailored, client-led support in promoting safety, stability, and personal growth.

MEN'S COUNSELLING SERVICE

The Men's Counselling Service at FearIsNotLove provides individual and group counselling for people interested in creating or enhancing safety in their close relationships. The program aims to help individuals to consistently treat their loved ones with respect. By offering a supportive and non-judgemental space, we encourage self-reflection and personal growth, empowering participants to take responsibility for their actions and make positive changes in their behavior.

The program counsellors also connect with the current or ex-partners of the service users, to understand and support with their safety concerns, and to monitor progress in counselling.

This year, we served a total of 312 clients through the Men's Counselling Service.

99% identified as male

1% identified as female

Additionally, approximately 106 individuals received partner support, and 17 individuals participated in men's group counselling services.

Client Testimonial:

"The most beneficial aspect of Men's Counselling Service Program is the safe and supportive environment it provided for me to express my emotions, process my thoughts, as well work through challenges. This program offered a non-judgemental space where I could explore my feelings, gain valuable insights, and learn coping mechanisms."



Outcomes

Clients begin to create safety for others.	<p>89% agreed to strongly agreed that their partner/ex-partner feels physically safe with them, as a result of the counselling they have participated in.</p> <p>64% agreed to strongly agreed that their partner/ex-partner feels emotionally safe with them, as a result of the counselling they have participated in.</p>
Clients develop the skills they need to have safe and respectful relationships	<p>95% agreed to strongly agreed that they do not use physical aggression when they are angry.</p>
Clients increase internal locus of control, awareness of impact of actions on others.	<p>93% agreed to strongly agreed they understand the impact of their actions on others.</p> <p>78% agreed to strongly agreed that they are able to handle conflict and stress in a way that is respectful towards their partner/ex-partner.</p>
Clients report improvement in key elements of interpersonal relationships.	<p>92% agreed to strongly agreed that their children are satisfied with their relationship as a result of the counselling they have participated in.</p>
Clients' partners report an improved sense of safety.	<p>75% agreed to strongly agreed that they felt physically safe with their partner since their partner had participated in therapy.</p> <p>35% agreed to strongly agreed that they felt emotionally safe with their partner since their partner had participated in therapy.</p> <p>42% agreed to strongly agreed that they now feel safe from control and intimidation since their partner had participated in therapy.</p>

By helping clients to improve emotional regulation, communication skills, and accountability, our program promotes values of respect, equity, and inclusion. While many programs in Calgary rightly focus on supporting victims of domestic violence, addressing the behavior of perpetrators can have a profound long-term impact and has the potential to stop the violence and abuse from occurring in the future, with the current partner or future partners. This preventative and non-mandated approach not only promotes safety and well-being within families but also fosters healthier communities and prevents the intergenerational transmission of violence.

At the start of their engagement, clients work with counsellors to develop individualized case plans tailored to their unique needs and goals. Progress is tracked using a 5-point self-assessment scale, from 1 ("I have not started") to 5 ("Done!"), allowing clients to reflect on their growth and the program's impact over time.

Analysis of **182** case plans this year showed consistent and meaningful improvement, particularly in areas related to anger management, communication, and emotional regulation. On average, clients reported an improvement of over 1.6 points across all goal areas, with the most frequently selected goals being anger (30% of plans, +1.8), communication (18%, +1.7), and emotional regulation (16%, +1.4). Clients expressed a strong commitment to personal growth, emphasizing how the program supported them in managing emotions, navigating relationships, and building healthier coping strategies.

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS PROGRAM

The Healthy Relationships Program provides individual and group counselling for youth who have concerns about their relationships. It provides a safe therapeutic space for participants to develop self-awareness, empathy, and the skills necessary for building positive connections. The program aims to empower youth to recognize early warning signs of unhealthy relationships and promote a culture of respect.

The program provided services to **409** people.



The gender breakdown of clients is as follows:



Additionally, approximately **534** people attended the **21** Healthy Relationships presentations.

Outcomes

Youth increase their knowledge of healthy relationships.	94% report they have increased their knowledge of healthy relationships.
Youth learn skills to help them build healthy relationships.	91% report they have learned skills to help them build healthy relationships.
Youth learn to be in control of their actions.	90% report that they feel they are in control of their own actions.
Youth identify support networks they can go to for help.	96% reported that they were able identify support networks they can go to for help.
Youth report they have healthier relationships.	86% report they now feel they have healthier relationships.



Client Testimonial:

“Participating has helped me control my anger and improve my relationship with my parents. I’ve learned to manage my emotions and communicate more effectively, leading to a more harmonious and understanding relationship.”

CHILD, YOUTH AND FAMILY THERAPY PROGRAM

Client Testimonial:

“The counselling I received helped me to build confidence in my ability to say and do what’s best for my child when dealing with difficult situations and emotions. My fear of her father and his impact on her childhood has greatly reduced. I feel she will be Okay! Our relationship and quality time together has improved.”

The Child, Youth, and Family Therapy Program provides counselling for children and their parents, when there has been domestic violence and abuse in the home. Our trained therapists create a safe and supportive environment where children and youth can express their emotions, process their experiences, recognize their resistance to violence, and further enhance healthy coping mechanisms.

A total of 85 individuals were served through the Child, Youth, and Family Program.

51%

were adults

49%

were children and youth

Outcomes

Clients have increased articulation of emotions.

86% of parents report that their child knows who to talk to when they feel scared.

Clients observe use of coping strategies.

71% of parents report that their child has the tools and strategies they need to cope with challenges as a result of the supports they received from the Child, Youth and Family Therapy Program.

Clients experience an increased sense of safety.

100% of parents report that their child’s sense of safety has increased as a result of the services.

Families are better connected to community resources and supports.

93% of parents accessing the Child, Youth and Family Therapy Program, report that they now know what community resources they can access to meet their family needs.

Clients have stronger relationships within families.

71% of parents reported feeling more confident about their connection with their child.

CLIENT INTERVIEWS AND PROGRESS TOWARD LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

The Child, Youth and Family Therapy Program aims to support sustained safety and empowerment for clients, creating space for families to heal and move forward together after experiencing domestic violence and abuse. Follow up interviews with seven parents conducted within a year of discharge affirmed this long-term outcome in meaningful ways. Many parents described a shift in their children's ability to express emotions, set boundaries and advocate for themselves, as well as their own renewed capacity to support their families. One parent shared, *"It's been really fantastic, eye-opening for myself and my children. It made us aware of where we were missing in communicating with one another... Both have become very empowered, and their communication skills, especially in articulating how they feel, have improved tremendously."*

What emerged most strongly from the interviews was a renewed closeness between parents and children. Several parents described how their children began to open up more, express difficult feelings safely, and re-establish trust at home. One mother shared, *"Before, my daughter didn't talk to me much. Now she shares everything. She even started writing cards and drawing pictures for me."*

Parents described a visible shift not only in their children's confidence and coping, but in the overall sense of connection and direction within the family. As one participant put it, *"I believe it's improved both my children's well-being and me as well... I've seen a positive shift in how we approach things as a family. It's like we're all better equipped to move forward together, despite everything that's happened."*

Several parents described how the program helped them feel more grounded in their role as caregivers, especially during difficult moments. One mother reflected, *"It made me feel very not alone in the needs of my children... some days I was so scared that I wasn't enough... it helped me stay, kept pulling me out of just numbing out."*

Children were visibly more confident as well, according to parents. One mother said, *"My son learned to give himself positive affirmations, which improved his mood and helped us communicate better."* Another noted, *"They can't control how they feel all the time, but they can control their behavior. And that's very empowering for them."*

Semi-structured phone interviews were conducted in 2024 with seven parents who had completed the Child Youth Family Therapy Program between June 2023 and May 2024. Participants had previously provided consent for follow-up and were invited by email and phone. Interviews were recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed thematically to understand how families were doing after discharge.



INDIGENOUS INITIATIVES

Client Testimonial:

“I thank them all for understanding for what I’ve been going through and letting me be open minded about my struggles. The most helpful thing about the program is rebuilding my mindset and letting me know that my actions affect others.”

FAMILY HEALING

Family Healing is a 12-week program that takes place on a local First Nation, using a cultural approach to helping its participants take responsibility for their actions and acknowledge the harm they have caused. This program places a focus on the impacts of generational trauma and the effects of residential schools. The program offers resources and activities such as sweat lodge ceremonies, smudges, access to guidance from Elders, and more. Family Healing brings an awareness to the damage domestic violence brings to both the individual and the family, and the community.

Family Healing Program served a total of 33 individuals.

Of those,

21%

identified as female

79%

identified as male

Outcomes

Clients develop the skills to have safe and respectful relationships.

100% report they keep their behavior in-check, so their family members feel safe around them.

100% report they don’t use physical aggression when they are angry.

Clients Increase understanding of consequences of their actions.

100% report they understand the impact of their actions on others.

Clients increase respectful communication.

100% reported that they were able to handle conflict and stress in a way that is respectful to their partner/ex-partner.

CULTURAL HELPERS

With respect to the unique experience of our Indigenous population, this program was created with their cultural practices and history in mind. It was developed in partnership with an Indigenous Advisory Council, with the goal of establishing restorative and Land-Based programming to augment and offer alternatives to mainstream therapeutic support.

The Cultural Helpers program aims to help men understand their traditional role as provider for the family within modern times. It uses a community-based approach to focus on helping men to rediscover a sense of community, and reclaim the roles of Father, Husband, Brother, Partner, and Son in a positive and healthy way.

The Cultural Helpers Program held 29 events, including sweat lodge ceremonies, with about 270 participants in total.



Outcomes

Participants increase knowledge, awareness, and appreciation of cultures.	92% report that they have gained a better appreciation for their own cultural values related to respect, kindness, and humility for their family.
Participants understand their traditional role as a provider or helper in the family context.	85% report that their participation in this group activity has given them greater respect for how to be helpers in my community.
Participants develop healthy connections to traditional practices and ceremonies.	38% report that they have gained better insight into how to assist in providing support for a community-based ceremony.

COURT PROGRAM

Client Testimonial:

“First of all, the support, confidence you helped me with was what I needed. There are no words to explain it, as you helped me with so many things that were helpful. I felt at home with (court coordinator), she helped me feel supported, protected, and experienced with information all necessary for my legal matters. I could not have done it without you, (court coordinator).”



The Court Program is a vital service that provides information and support to individuals experiencing domestic violence and abuse who require assistance with navigating the court processes. Through this program, a dedicated Court Case Coordinator offers information, referrals, safety planning, and decision-making support, and empowers clients to navigate the legal system with confidence and make choices that are best for their well-being and the well-being of their families.

The Court Program served 353 clients.

215

received brief services

138

were longer term clients, and 100% identified as female

Additionally, 253 children were served indirectly through this program.

Outcomes

Clients understand their rights within the court system.	97% report that they have a better understanding of the Legal options.
Clients increase knowledge of legal information and resources.	93% agree they were connected to appropriate legal resources.
Clients increase knowledge of safety planning for themselves and their family.	97% report that they received the support they needed to keep themselves and their family safer.
Clients are supported while accessing the legal system.	97% report that they were supported while navigating the court system.
Clients gained ability to access the legal system independently.	97% report that they gained the ability to access the legal system.

CONCLUSION

FearIsNotLove understands the profound and layered complexity of domestic violence and abuse. Our work is grounded in the knowledge that violence is shaped by social context and requires not only direct support for individuals and families, but also system-wide and cultural changes. One of the most consistent themes across our programs is the importance of promoting positive social responses: responses that avoid blame, uphold the dignity of those experiencing violence, and recognize their resistance and strength. By helping clients feel safer, seen, and supported, we contribute to the broader vision of building communities free from violence and abuse.

We are guided by a clear Vision: freedom from domestic violence and abuse for everyone. Our Mission is to inspire and build a dignity-driven movement cultivating communities that are free from domestic violence and abuse. Whether we are supporting individuals who are fleeing violence or those who have used it, our focus remains on ensuring the safety and well-being of all family members through effective, evidence-informed, and client-centered services.

A key pillar of our work is a commitment to learning and continuous improvement. Over the past year, we have strengthened our evaluation strategies to better understand the impact of our programs and to make data-informed decisions. We have revised program tools and surveys to align more closely with updated logic models, developed clearer and more inclusive documentation practices, and introduced stronger mechanisms for tracking outcomes and client progress.

These changes were not made in isolation. They were informed by what we learned through our semi-annual program reviews, ongoing data monitoring, and most importantly, from the voices of those we serve.

Listening to our community is central to everything we do. Across all programs, we have built more intentional feedback loops with both staff and clients, ensuring their insights guide our planning and decision-making. We recognize that those most impacted by violence are the experts in their own lives, and we are committed to centering their experiences in shaping how we work and where we grow. From revising assessment to refining call log forms, each improvement is grounded in a desire to be more responsive, inclusive, and effective.

We are proud of the progress made, but we are also aware that the landscape of domestic violence and abuse is continually evolving. That is why we remain committed to ongoing learning, reflection, and action. Guided by our values of respect, courage, collaboration, and learning, we will continue to adapt our services, advocate for systemic change, and build partnerships that strengthen our collective impact.

As this report reflects, we are not only responding to the needs of today, but we are also building a future where every individual has the opportunity to live free from violence and abuse.

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APPENDIX:

Continuous Improvement

FearIsNotLove is committed to continuous improvement, grounded in the belief that high-quality, responsive services require ongoing reflection, feedback, and adaptation. We view evaluation not just as a tool for accountability, but as a foundation for growth. Guided by client feedback, staff insight, and data analysis, we continuously review and improve how we deliver services, track impact, and meet the evolving needs of our community.

Across the organization, we introduced several improvements to strengthen evaluation practices and promote equity in data collection. These included:

- Updating gender identity options in data systems to better reflect and affirm the diverse experiences of clients.
- Implementing a structured staff feedback process to ensure team insights inform program design and quality improvements.
- Launching automated reminder systems to support timely, consistent, and accurate data entry across all programs.
- Refining program-specific evaluation tools, such as assessments and surveys, to ensure alignment with program goals and logic models.
- In addition to these system-wide enhancements, individual programs introduced targeted updates:
- **Emergency Shelter Program:** We strengthened how client goals are documented and expanded access to multilingual client feedback surveys, helping ensure that the voices of all residents are captured and valued.
- **Connect Helpline:** Working closely with Helpline staff, we redesigned the call log form to improve usability and data consistency. Updates included simplifying categories (e.g., call types, outcomes, referral activities), adding clearer prompts and definitions, and improving conditional form logic to reduce incomplete entries. A training video was developed to support staff adoption. The revised form also introduced new options to differentiate between requests related to domestic violence and homelessness - an important change that revealed that 16% of Helpline calls in the first three months came from individuals experiencing homelessness. Most of these callers were referred to housing shelters, crisis counselling, or other relevant supports.
- **Community Counselling Program:** We revised the exit survey to better reflect program goals and enhance the relevance of client feedback. This change ensures we are collecting outcome data that can meaningfully guide program development.
- **Men's Counselling Services (MCS) Program:** A series of substantial updates were implemented to improve how client progress is measured and how partner involvement is supported.
- The original self- and partner-assessments were replaced with a new retrospective "Before vs Now" assessment format. This approach invites clients and their (ex)partners to reflect on changes in attitudes and behaviors over the course of the program, rather than relying solely on initial self-perceptions at intake. Early findings have been encouraging:
- Retrospective pre-treatment scores were consistently lower than original pre-treatment scores, suggesting that clients reassessed their initial behavior more critically after developing increased self-awareness - a positive outcome.
- Post-treatment scores were consistently higher than both initial and retrospective pre-treatment scores, indicating meaningful growth. The most significant gains were observed in emotional regulation, respectful conflict management, and creating safety for others. On average, 67% of clients reported positive change, with 83% reporting improvement in their ability to stay calm and keep others safe during conflict.
- In addition to this tool revision, the partner contact consent process was strengthened by requiring clients to provide permission to contact partners or ex-partners, standardizing the practice across the program.
- These updates ensure stronger alignment with the program's updated logic model, improve outcome measurement, and enhance the program's responsiveness to both clients and their partners.
- **Healthy Relationships Program:** A dedicated Program Logic Model was developed to reflect the unique goals of this program. This new model enhances internal clarity and improves the alignment of evaluation tools. The exit survey was revised to ensure it captures outcomes that are most relevant to the program's impact.

As an organization committed to listening, learning, and evolving, we know that meaningful impact requires more than good intentions. It requires disciplined reflection, courageous change, and ongoing engagement with those we serve. We will continue to strengthen our evaluation strategy and improve our services to ensure that every action we take moves us closer to a future free from domestic violence and abuse.



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IMPACT REPORT

2024 – 2025