

Rise Up!

2022 IMPACT REPORT

MARKHAM-STOUFFVILLE CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTRE





Our Story

THE LEGACY CONTINUES

The Markham-Stouffville Crisis Pregnancy Centre (MSCPC) opened in May, 1991, with the vision of being known in the community as a place of help, hope, and healing to all individuals experiencing an unexpected pregnancy, challenges during pregnancy and early parenting or struggling emotionally after an abortion experience.

The MSCPC is a registered Canadian charity operating through a Christian framework of practice supported by individuals, churches and local groups and businesses. Through that generosity we are able to provide all our services and programs free of charge to clients.

Over our 32-year history, we have become a trusted resource for the Markham-Stouffville-Richmond Hill community. We have developed good relationships with other local organizations to surround clients with exceptional support and avoid duplicating services.

We desire to treat people with kindness, compassion, grace, and truth as Jesus did. We are passionate about providing access to information and resources in order to facilitate informed decision making.

We respect each person's choice for their body and their pregnancy. We provide on-going support for all pregnancy outcomes, and work with clients to develop an individual care plan based on their goals and needs. We feel strongly that anyone hurt from an abortion experience should have a safe place to turn for compassionate, judgment-free support. Our desire is to be there before, during, and after an unintended or challenging pregnancy to provide a full circle of support.

“Thankful” is the word that comes to mind when thinking of the past year at our Centre.

We are thankful that, as we entered a post-pandemic world, our in-person services and groups could resume to help meet the needs of our increased client numbers.

We are thankful for our amazing staff who were able to persevere and pivot when changes were needed, and come up with creative ways to continue to love and support our community.

We are thankful for our supporters who continued to stand by us, donating funds and practical items to ensure that our programs could run without delay.

Above all, we are thankful for God and His blessings over this Centre. He is faithful and will continue to lead and guide us through what the future holds. As we move forward, we are excited to see what we can accomplish as we continue to work together to help support and empower those in need in our community.



Sarah Rytkönen,
Chair of the Board

Since 2020, the Centre has been focused on a growth vision. Our leadership team has been working hard behind the scenes to set the Centre up to successfully meet the growing needs of our community. In 2022, we began to see the fruit of those labours. We saw a 20% increase in new client visits, and a 23% increase in returning client visits. We developed and prepared to launch new client support programs, partnered with local churches and organizations, and changed our name to better reflect the message of hope that we want for our clients and community.

2022 was a year of change, positive change, that will set the Centre up to continue to be a vital part of our community safety net, where clients can find help, hope and healing before, during and after an unexpected or challenging pregnancy.

We are incredibly grateful for the on-going support from our community! From dropping off bags of gently-used clothing, to showing up before care package distribution day with the exact diaper sizes we are missing, to coming out to support the first-ever MSCPC Dessert Night Fundraiser, you have enabled us to care for clients. Thank you for your support, you are a crucial part of the MSCPC team!



Cheryl Lindquist,
Executive Director



When Daisy* discovered she was pregnant she also discovered that her boyfriend wanted nothing to do with being a father. She found herself alone, in a very challenging moment in time, facing a decision she never thought she would have to make.

She connected with the Centre, and with her Client Advocate, was able to talk about her options, gather and understand information, and receive mental support.

With tremendous courage, Daisy followed her heart and continued her pregnancy, even though she had very little support, didn't know what to prepare before the baby arrived and had loads of parenting questions.

Fast forward almost 2 years from that stressful time and you will find Daisy and her little one thriving! Daisy was supported throughout her pregnancy and continues to receive support as she parents. She and her little one come out to Moms and Tots and receive monthly material assistance. Her monthly care package has made easing into motherhood so much less stressful. She was able to take time to enjoy a little maternity leave, recover from delivery and bond with her child because she knows she has support. She also knows that as she returns to working the centre is there to support her and encourage her.

Daisy would like everyone who helped make this possible for her to know, “ You have a big heart! Thank you and thank you!!”

CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS



95% of clients have a yearly household income **lower than the average for our community**



77% of clients have a yearly household income **lower than \$30,000**

CENTRE IMPACT

696
Client appointments

257
Individuals supported

112
Adult clients received support

Our **Practical Support Program (PSP)** is designed to complement the natural developmental stages of child(ren) ages 2 and under, and provides qualifying clients with assistance, otherwise impacted by their ability to provide. This program is fully dependent on the generous donations of our community.

135 Children aged 0-3 years enrolled and receiving a monthly care package of essential items needed for their basic care (i.e., diapers, wipes, clothing, food, formula, etc.)

14,175 Essential items given out

~50 Care packages handed out per month, averaging \$150 per care package

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Our Income

General	\$ 29,303
Other Charities	\$ 75,749
Campaigns	\$ 96,292
Grants	\$ 10,000
Interest Income	\$ 783

\$212,128

Comparison 2022 vs. 2021

	2022	2021
Income	\$212,128	\$171,834
Expenditures	\$153,624	\$133,947
Net Income/ (deficiency) for the period	\$ 58,503	\$ 37,887

MONTHLY BUDGET

\$13,000

Is the monthly minimum we need in order to keep our doors open. Your financial donations ensures that vulnerable women, men, and children in our community can continue to access quality services and programs during their crisis and beyond.

WHAT OUR VOLUNTEERS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT OUR MOMS & TOTS PROGRAM

Why is a moms and tots group important for our MSCPC Clients?

Moms and Tots is important because it provides an opportunity for our clients to create community, and find a sense of belonging. Many of our clients feel alone and anxious about parenting and life's challenges. With Moms and Tots, our MSCPC clients get to meet other moms facing many of the same challenges as they are, build friendships, learn from others' experiences, and provide their babies with a social environment in which to interact with their peer group.

What are the positive impacts from participating in the group for our Clients?

1. Build friendships
2. Find a supportive community to help combat loneliness and isolation, increase in mental health
3. Social interaction for moms
4. Education through workshops
5. Positive social interaction for babies/toddlers
6. Fun seasonal events and activities that may not have been available to them otherwise
7. Better self esteem as they build confidence in parenting in a group setting



Healing from the Past

OUR POST-ABORTION CARE PROGRAM

Not everyone who has had an abortion will have the same post-abortion experience. Some women are able to carry on as they did before, while others struggle. Those that are having a difficult time, either right after their abortion or even years later, should have access to understanding, nonjudgmental, knowledgeable support.

Recently we asked a few of our post-abortion support clients, "Why is post-abortion care important? Here are some of their answers, in their own words, about their own lived experience.

"Post-Abortion Support is important because it addresses the emotional and spiritual impacts of an abortion; impacts that may be ignored in pre-abortion counseling and/or the media portrayal of the "benefits" of an abortion. Acknowledging what happened in a supportive, caring environment that stresses forgiveness and God's love is paramount in healing mentally, emotionally and spiritually from an abortion."

"Abortion clinics do not usually address the possible emotional and psychological impacts of the procedure that often is decided in panic mode and can create PTSD. Without support, women cope in sometimes unhealthy ways. Abortion can impact your whole life. It cannot be reversed."

In the fall of 2022, the Board of Directors voted to change the operating name of the Centre from “The Markham/Stouffville Crisis Pregnancy Centre Inc.” to “RISE Support Centre”. This change came after a time of research, prayer and discernment.

So far the new name has been very well received! One public health nurse responded to the news of the name change by email saying, “I thought I’d reach out to congratulate you on an inspiring and empowering rebranding of your very important agency!”

We are excited for what the future holds, and look forward to seeing what God’s going to do next!

WHY WE CHANGED OUR NAME

To increase access.

The Centre offers pregnancy decision-making support and ongoing support for all pregnancy outcomes, but our legal name makes it seem like support is only available during a pregnancy crisis. For example, people struggling following an abortion experience would not connect with the Centre for support as the word “pregnancy” can be upsetting and not what they would enter into an internet search for “post-abortion support”. The word “pregnancy” in our legal name is a barrier to clients seeking post-abortion, pregnancy loss and parenting support.

To connect clients with a message of hope.

“Crisis” is a very strong word, and is tied to negative emotions; whereas, “rise” is uplifting, encouraging and filled with hope.

To better represent our goal for clients.

We want clients to rise above their challenges on a solid foundation of care and support.

To remove confusion.

Our legal name is too close to the name of the local hospital and this creates confusion within the community when it is assumed that we are part of the Markham-Stouffville Hospital.

To simplify.

Our legal name (The Markham/Stouffville Crisis Pregnancy Centre Inc.) is too long.

WHY RISE SUPPORT CENTRE

While writing descriptions for our activities and programs, the acronym RISE (Respect, Inform, Support, Empower) was originally intended for a mentoring program. However, as the description was being drafted, it became obvious that it wasn’t a description for a program, but a description of the whole philosophy of the Centre:

- We **Respect** clients’ beliefs, values, and goals
- We **Inform** clients of their options without bias
- We **Support** clients’ decision-making process and all pregnancy outcomes
- We **Empower** clients’ self-determination

The definitions of the word “rise” encompass the goal of the Centre for clients and the community:

- To move upward
- To become heartened
- To come into being
- To exert oneself to meet a challenge

OUR NEW LOGO

Considering the original MSCPC logo is quite familiar and recognizable within the community already, the team decided to keep the overall look and feel of the original logo, while updating it with the new name.

As a result, the new logo is a summation of what the Centre’s goal is for our clients and the community:



Each component within the logo has a meaning behind it:

- 1 The four petals represents the philosophy of the Centre: respect, inform, support, empower.
- 2 Nestled within the four petals, the client is surrounded with support and uplifted.
- 3 The “RISE” acronym is coming alongside the client as they are being uplifted.
- 4 The “Support Centre” and tagline represent a solid foundation on which to grow and thrive.



Hope in Crisis

CLIENT STORY: FROM STRIVING TO THRIVING

Melissa* connected with the Centre shortly after finding out she was pregnant for the third time. She had recently left an abusive relationship and was temporarily staying at a shelter.

"It was all really overwhelming. Leaving the relationship was hard. Finding out I was pregnant again was hard. I really wasn't sure how I was going to survive, and even though I never thought I'd even consider abortion, it crossed my mind."

Without secure housing, or full-time work, Melissa felt overwhelmed and stuck.

"I found the Centre online and just called up to see if there was any help available. After my first appointment, I felt so much better! I didn't have all the answers but I knew I at least had a Client Advocate in my corner to help me figure it out. Having someone to just listen and never judge, was so different to what I had experienced from other people in my life. I felt calmer and better able to tackle the tasks and decisions I needed to make."

"The fact that the Centre has supported me in so many ways for so long has been life changing."

Melissa was able to receive help and support as she navigated her pregnancy, searched for new housing, and began rebuilding her self-confidence as a single parent.

WHAT OUR CLIENTS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THE MSCPC



"For me, rather than practical, the moral support and guidance received felt like a family to share burdens with."

.....



"I don't think I would have survived the past four years without your support."

.....



"Even if you think you know everything, there's always more to learn [at their prenatal classes]."

OUR SERVICES & PROGRAMS

All our support services and programs are free, confidential, and provided without judgment.

Pregnancy Decision-Making Support

This service provides timely care, medically accurate information, resources, and support, so clients can make an informed decision about their pregnancy.

Perinatal Loss Support

Support is available if clients self-identify as grieving a perinatal loss — from adoption, miscarriage, stillbirth, or infant loss. Content is tailored to the type of loss, and empowers clients to understand and identify the different stages of grief and loss in a supportive environment.

Post-Abortion Support

Support is available if the client self-identify as grieving a loss from abortion. Content is tailored to the client's needs, and empowers them to understand and identify the different stages of grief and loss in a supportive environment.

Growing Together: Prenatal Education

This course helps clients prepare for childbirth and postpartum experience. Clients will also learn how to prepare for and transition to parenthood.

Flourishing Family: Parenting Education & Support

Expectant clients and parents of little ones aged 0-4 are supported to learn and grow as a parent so the whole family flourishes! Topics include infant care and milestones, toddler care and milestones, health and safety, and more.

Growing & Thriving: Life Skills Education & Support

Clients are supported to learn and improve on essential life skills. Workshops are delivered by trained

staff members or community leaders. Topics include hygiene, finance, nutrition, relationships, and more.

Moms & Tots

Clients meet weekly to enjoy a time of talking with other moms and learning through play with their little one. This program is free and perfect for little ones aged 0-4 years.

Practical Support Program (PSP)

Support is available for clients experiencing a financial hardship which is impacting their ability to afford essential maternal and baby items. This program exists to ease the additional expenses of pregnancy, as well as parenting children aged 0-3 years.

Growing Goodness: Nutrition Support

This in-person and online program provides education and resources to help clients provide nutritious food for themselves and their families.

NEST Mentoring (Nurture, Empower, Support, Transform)

This mentorship program benefits clients in developing parenting or life skills. Clients will work with a mentor to set goals and write action plans that take into consideration all aspects of their holistic wellness to empower them to move their family from surviving to self-sustaining.

Spiritual Support & Mentoring

This client-led mentoring program provides spiritual education, resources, and support in the Christian faith. This is perfect for those who would like one-on-one spiritual support.

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

\$13,000 a month is the minimum we need in order to keep our doors open. Your donation ensures that vulnerable women, men and children in our community can continue to access quality services and programs during their crisis and beyond.

Individual & Group Donations

The RISE Support Centre runs solely on the generous financial gifts of individuals, churches, local groups and businesses within the community. All services and programs are provided to clients completely free of charge.

For more donation information, please visit our website at www.risesupportcentre.ca/2-donate

Partner Churches/Businesses

Wondering how your church or business can support RISE? Contact Cheryl, our Executive Director at exec.director@risesupportcentre.ca.

Become a Sponsor

We are looking for sponsors for:

- Client Programs (i.e. Bright Course, Christmas Gift Card Donation, Helen Baskets, workshops, etc.)
- Our matching campaign – Hand to Hands

SERVING OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteering

You can make a difference in the life of someone who is vulnerable and in need of help, hope and healing. Financial support is important, but here are other ways that you can partner with us:

- Practical Support
- Moms & Tots Helper*
- Snack Provider
- Client Advocate*
- Fundraising Event
- Donation Drive Coordinator
- Workshop/Class Instructor*

*Indicates a higher-level volunteer position for which there is more training (provided) and responsibility.

Training is provided for all volunteer positions, ensuring that our volunteers are well-equipped and prepared.

Leadership Opportunities

Consider joining our Board of Directors and be part of the leadership team. We are currently looking for people with a heart for women and families. We are hoping to fill the following positions:

- Fundraising Support: Someone who enjoys raising funds
- Prayer Lead: Someone who prays for clients, staff, volunteers, events, funds, etc.
- Event Lead: Someone who enjoys event planning
- Medical Representative: Someone who is up-to-date on women's health

Thank You

TO ALL OUR FAITHFUL SUPPORTERS

Our Church Partners

- Blessed Frederic Ozanam Parish
- The Bridge
- Cornerstone Christian Community Church
- Eastridge Evangelical Missionary Church
- Ebenezer United Church
- Hillside Evangelical Missionary Church
- Hope Bible Church Markham
- In2one Community Church
- Langstaff Assembly
- Markham Baptist Church
- Milliken Wesleyan Methodist Church
- Springvale Church
- St. Andrew's United Church
- Unionville Alliance Church

Our Sponsors

- Prayer warriors
- Financial donors
- Volunteers

Our Community Sponsors

Grants

- Alectra
- Apotex
- BTNX

Local Business Partners:

- Willowgrove Farm
- Visconti's No Frills
- Albamar Holding Company Inc.

Groups who organized donation drives:

- Markham Guild of Village Crafts
- Casting Off the Cold
- Stouffville Yankees 11U-AA

respect • inform • support • empower