



SHEENA'S PLACE

Twenty Five Years of
Support for Eating Disorders

Sheena's Place 2021 Annual Report

25 years of support for Eating Disorders

Letter From The Team

It's been 25 years since Sheena's Place first opened our doors to welcome people to a safer space, where they could find support and some respite in a world inundated by diet culture.

Marking this anniversary lead to a reflective time for our team. We took a look at the truly impressive story of Sheena's Place's evolution and how its creative range of services and programming have expanded over the years. Later in this report, you will get a glimpse of these different types of groups that made their way onto our calendars through the past two and a half decades.

Our founders understood the incredible value of seeking input of many individuals who intersected with the Eating Disorders space. They understood that the greatest impact with limited resources, could be made by creating opportunities for folks to feel understood and gain a sense of hope, when so many institutions were actively (and in most cases unknowingly) making life more difficult for them. Lacking the necessary knowledge to appropriately support those with Eating Disorders, personnel in schools, athletic and dance programs, and even many in the medical, and mental health fields, often were not helpful. Messages and images in the media often made things worse.

The efforts of the SP community over these many years, have earned us a formidable reputation, leading to referrals from throughout the GTA and beyond. We routinely receive requests from across the country and the globe asking that we share our learnings with other organizations eager to effectively provide support to their communities.

When Sheena's Place first opened its doors in 1996, information about Eating Disorders was scarce. Now so much more information is available to us, which informs our provision of group support as well as our outreach. For the past quarter century, the House at 87 Spadina Rd, has welcomed thousands of individuals and their family members, and provided the support and hope they so deeply needed. Sheena's Place's history is filled with stories of our participants getting help in making sense of their situations, and feeling supported to getting on or continuing their recovery journeys. We've been blessed by a long list of significant contributors, staff, facilitators, volunteers, and the participants, who together have formed a resilient community determined to work towards a future, where everyone has an accepting relationship with their bodies and with food.

The past 2+ years have presented countless challenges, and battling eating disorders is even more difficult now than ever. The pandemic has created conditions allowing for sharp increases in the prevalence of Eating Disorders and increased intensity of symptoms for those struggling. Diet culture continues to root itself further into our collective consciousness and has reached new heights of pervasiveness.

Looking ahead, we will strive to continue providing high quality, accessible support to those in our community. We will aim to innovate so we can leverage our resources even further to have greater impacts for more people. We will need your support, so please do consider joining us, as a donor, volunteer, or participant. To all of you, who are already engaged, we sincerely thank you.

A Look Back at Sheena's Place Offerings

1996



Group Highlight

Expressive Arts Course - Ten week session for those with eating disorders or those close to someone with an Eating Disorder. Experience the value of reconstructing lives, relationships and attitudes using shape as metaphor.

1997



Group Highlight

For Men with Troubled Eating - For the first time at Sheena's Place, a group for men who experience troubled eating: dieting, restricting, overeating, bingeing and/or purging. Through education and experiential exercise, develop strategies to trust and accept one's body and oneself.

1998



Group Highlights

Race*Culture*Body - For women of colour. Explore the connections between body image, eating patterns, race and culture by using informative videos, articles and experiential exercises.

Food, Body Image and Sexuality for Lesbians - Discuss issues surrounding sexuality, body image and appetite. Begin to explore the ways in which eating difficulties, weight preoccupation and body shame affects sexuality.

1999



Group Highlight

Hungry for love - Connection between love and EDs: Explore the longing for love that underlies many eating issues. Reclaim positive feelings of unconditional love and self-acceptance. Topics for the group include nurturing yourself, letting the body feel loved, receiving love and support from others. Work with creative visualizations, writing, stories and other mind/body techniques.

2000



Group Highlights

Gay and bisexual men's support group - Share your experience of dealing with an Eating Disorder and related issues. Exchange support with other men in a safe setting.

Yoga for Round Bodies - Join yoga classes based on Scaravelli yoga designed specifically for people with round bodies.

2001



Group Highlight

Music at Play - Use drums and easy to play instruments to express yourself. Through this musical play, discover safe, non-verbal ways of communicating.

2002



Group Highlight

Pets as Healers - Pets provide unconditional love, acceptance and support. Explore the relationship between bonding with your pet and your inner child, how a healthy relationship with your pet can develop new inner child relations, and understand how pets can help us through the healing process.

2003



Group Highlights

New Day - Get involved in an internet magazine for linking and supporting young people affected by Eating Disorders around the world. Learn the tasks involved and lend your ideas and creativity. No prior experience needed.

The Dinner Table - Look at family influences that may have affected your body image and relationship to food. Deconstruct what you learned through art making and other creative approaches, and take steps towards re-creating the story.

2004



Group Highlights

Art of Anger - Do you shut yourself down when you feel anger or experience someone else's anger? Join us in a group where all feelings are welcome and where anger is not shamed.

Making Mistakes - Explore the experience of making a mistake within the context of a group that may have a different view than you. Use mistakes for learning about yourself and others.

Finding a therapist workshop - Using the Clients Rights in Psychology and Counseling Handbook, explore how to find a therapist and get the most out of therapy.

A Look Back at Sheena's Place Offerings



2005

Group Highlight

Practitioners (and students) in Health Care Professions: An Eating Disorder support group for healthcare professionals (and students) (e.e. Medicine, nursing, social work, OR, physiotherapy, etc).



2006 10 year anniversary!

Group Highlights

Dance our way home: Through gentle dance, relaxation and imagery, safely come home to your own body's wisdom and expressions. No experience necessary.

Stitch 'n' Bitch: - For knitters new and old, join in this form of self-care.



2007

Group Highlight

Chanting for well-being - Learn various chants and healing sounds from around the world for healing, protection, relationships, and relaxation.



2008

Group Highlights

Sculpting the real me - Using clay, model what is really there without distortions. No previous experience required. Pieces not fired.

Bollywood Dancing with Zahra Dhanani - Bollywood moves are very inclusive and can be learned by anyone. Have fun and let go a bit of the need for control, self-consciousness and stress.



2009

Group Highlight

Singing Your Way - Become acquainted with your natural voice. Songs are provided and your own songs are welcome.

Getting Ready for Recovery - Explore mixed feelings regarding making the changes needed for recovery and the pros and cons of the eating disorder. Examine how your personal goals and values fit with having an Eating Disorder and discuss choosing valued directions for your life.



2010

Group Highlight

Drumming for wellness and strength - Express your natural rhythms in a drumming circle, while learning basic techniques.



2011

Group Highlight

Fabulous 40s, 50s, and Forward - Share your feelings and experience of having an Eating Disorder at midlife."



2013

Group Highlight

NIA Movement Group - Designed for all body types, NIA combines gentle martial arts, dance and body movement using healing music.



2014

Group highlight

Eating Disorders & Anxiety - Are you looking for ways to tame anxiety and Eating Disorders at the same time? This group offers support, insight and coping strategies for problems with EDs and anxiety.

EDs & Addictions - Connect with others as you increase your understanding about the links between Eating Disorders & addictions, Learn skills to manage triggers and practice alternate ways of coping. Get some support to identify goals and resources for change.

A Look Back at Sheena's Place Offerings

2015



Group Highlights

Mothers living w EDs - This group is a safe space for mothers with Eating Disorders to have their voices heard. Members will meet to offer one another support, share personal insights and strategies and nourish an overall sense of hope.

Sheena's Camp - Join us at Sheena's Place first ever summer day camp! Together, we'll explore a variety of camp-inspired activities, focusing on team and friendship building, body image, self-esteem, self-compassion and most importantly, fun!

2016 20 year anniversary!



Group and Workshop Highlights

Applying CBT to ED & Addiction - Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is a practical, goal-oriented therapy that can be used to develop strategies for recovery and relapse prevention. As a group, we will discuss the complexities of living with Eating Disorders and an addiction while learning CBT-based skills to problem-solve and manage everyday life challenges in an effective, healthy manner.

Breaking Through Binging - A supportive environment for those wanting to talk about the challenges of living with bingeing symptoms. Group members gain the opportunity to give and receive support in a facilitated discussion that encourages the sharing of solutions and strategies.

2017



Group Highlight

Support while we wait for treatment - The experience of being on a waiting list for hospital treatment can be one that creates anxiety and can activate Eating Disorder symptoms. Together, let's use this space to support one another during this frustrating waiting process, and share coping strategies to continue moving toward recovery while we wait for treatment.

Practicing Self-Compassion - In this group, we practice embracing our strengths and our struggles, and empower ourselves through practicing self-compassion.

2018



Group Highlights

Trans, Non-Binary, Gender Questioning Support - This group offers a safe space for folk to discuss the complexities and interconnectedness of gender identity and body image. Providing a supportive environment to explore topics and share insights/strategies related to navigating the world as a Trans individual with an Eating Disorder.

2019



Group Highlight

LGBTQ Monthly Support Group - This group offers a supportive environment for LGBTQ identified folk to give and receive support while discussing the challenges of living with an Eating Disorder and share insights, strategies and accomplishments.

Support for BED - A supportive environment for those wanting to talk about the challenges of living with Binge Eating Disorder (BED) symptoms. Through a safe and facilitated discussion, group members will gain the opportunity to give and receive support, share insights/strategies, learn varying perspectives, and hold space for difficult emotions.

Disabled and Chronically Ill Support Group - This group is designed to provide a safe space for those in the disability community to explore their unique experiences of body image and disordered eating in an ableist society that is often preoccupied with a narrow definition of "health."

2020



Group Highlight

BIPOC Support - This group is designed to hold space for those who want to discuss how racism and shadeism impact our relationships with our bodies. We aim to foster a supportive environment where people can feel safe navigating the intersection between identity and their Eating Disorder experiences.

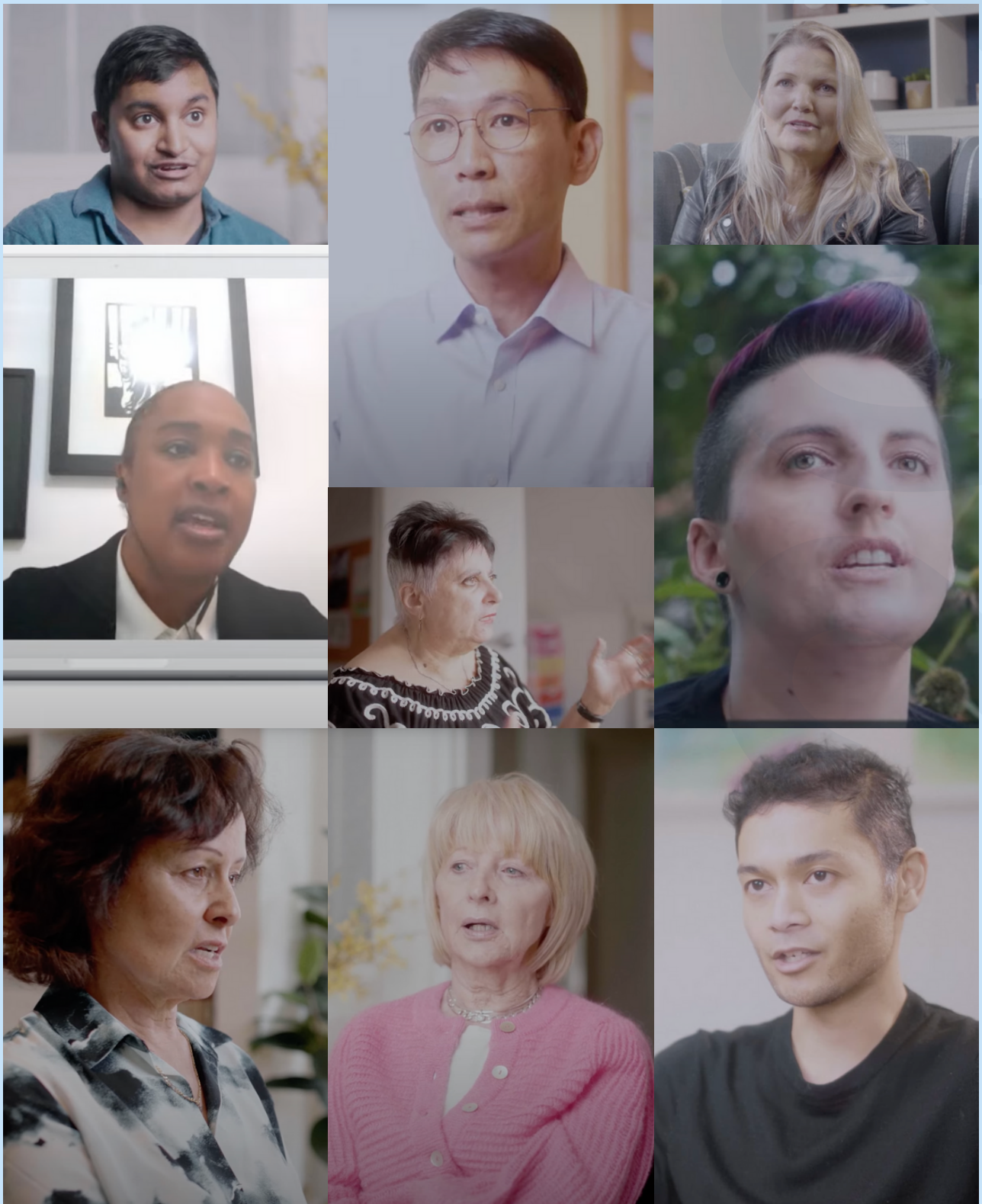
2021 Present day

Group Highlights

Exercise?! A Space to Unpack Challenging Relationships With Movement - Diet culture encourages us to relate to movement in some deeply problematic ways, leading to injury and self-harm, and making it difficult to access a movement practice that feels good! This group will provide a supportive, Body Liberation-centred space where we can unpack our challenging relationship with exercise - including the ways in which this challenging relationship often coexists with and reinforces distressed and disordered eating - to explore more joyful and functional movement-centred alternatives.

Big Time Body Liberation: A Space to Talk About Resisting Weight Stigma For Folks In Bigger Bodies - This group provides a safer space for folks in fat, larger, plus-size, thick, voluptuous, rotund, corpulent, monarch-sized, zaftig, chubby and fluffy bodies (or any other language you might use to describe your embodied experience moving through the world in a bigger body) to explore topics and experiences related to living life in the fat lane. Topics may include (but are not limited to) experiences with distressed and disordered eating, weight-based discrimination, addressing internalized fatphobia/sizeism, strategies for self-advocacy in relationships and in healthcare settings, and resisting diet culture through Body Liberation.

Highlight: 25 Anniversary Video Series



Our Mission & Values

We provide accessible, timely support and education to increase awareness and understanding of Eating Disorders, while fostering a sense of community and connection.

We value:

- Compassion**
- Inclusivity**
- Community**
- Integrity**
- Innovation**



Why is this important?

- An estimated 2.7 million people in Canada have an eating disorder.
- Eating disorders affect at least 9% of the population worldwide.
- Eating disorders are among the deadliest mental illnesses, second only to opioid overdose.
- Approximately 26% of people with eating disorders attempt suicide.
- In Canada, 70% of doctors receive 5 hours or less of eating disorder-specific training while in medical school.

Eating disorders do not discriminate; they affect people of all demographics.

- **People who identify as 2SLGBTQ+ and those who experience food insecurity are at a heightened risk of developing an eating disorder.**
- **BIPOC folks are less likely than white folks to be diagnosed with an eating disorder and to access treatment, despite similar prevalence rates.**

MEET

THE

TEAM

Aglaia Gurevich
Registrar & Program
Administrator/Group Facilitator



Alexandra Hanania
Program Manager & Group
Facilitator



John Choi
Executive Director



Julia Shierlaw
Manager of Operations



John Paul McMillan
Director of Development



Kaitlyn Axelrod
Manager of Outreach &
Education/Group Facilitator

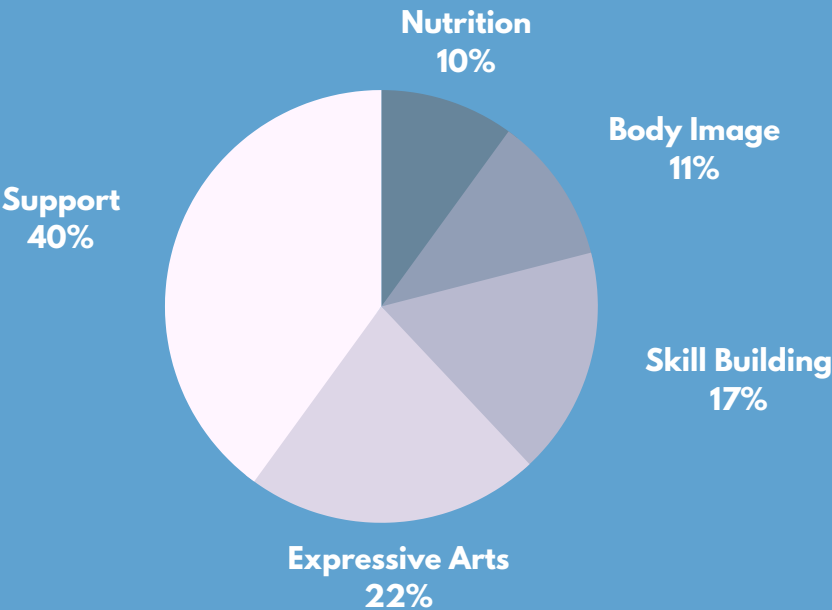


Steven Bowa
Communications Specialist &
Program Administrator

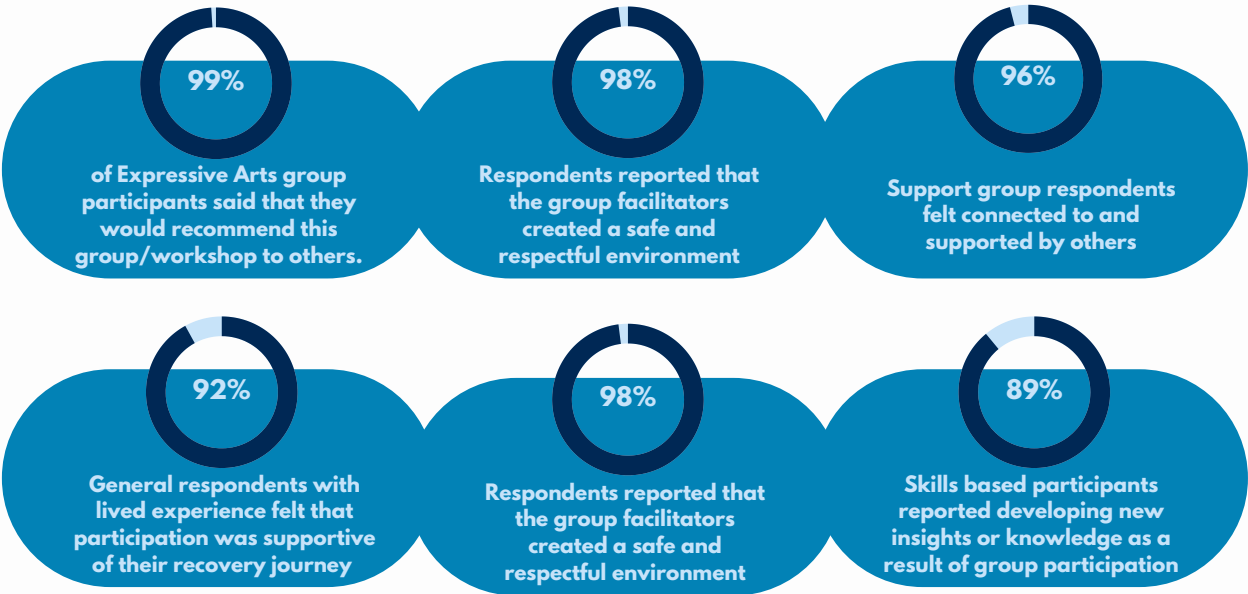


OUR REACH

in 2021 we had:



WHAT DID OUR PARTICIPANTS HAVE TO SAY?



WHAT DID OUR PARTICIPANTS HAVE TO SAY?

Improv: "I'm very impressed with this program and how it incorporated improv with recovery so indirectly by using play. I found this program very inspiring for my own journey of healing. It seemed to affect all areas of my life using being present, acceptance +++. Thank you so much, I'd definitely recommend this program and would take it again."

"I am so grateful for the work Sheena's Place does. Adult recovery resources are so scarce, even more so adult recovery resources that are not harmful, retraumatizing to access or just down right fat stigma based. I am so glad Sheena's Place exists to provide adult support that is not stigmatizing and which takes a HAES approach. I feel immensely more optimistic about ED recovery after two rounds of support groups."

Trans, Non-Binary & Gender Questioning Support: "Having a Queer space, where when talking about ED experiences, struggles & specifics, it was more relatable to my own Queer perspective which was super important. Many of our narratives/ lived experiences are not included in the dominant narrative of the archetypal ED patient (straight, cis-gender, white, female)."

"As a recent immigrant, accessing care while navigating a new healthcare system has been challenging, but the drop-in group at Sheena's Place was SO straightforward, easy to join, welcoming, and helped me find my footing by providing a consistent supportive environment. The group and seeing the other participants every week has provided me some stability."

Family, Friends & Partners Support: "This was the first time I have joined a group that is specific to parents/partners who have children with an eating disorder. I found it helpful to listen, to share and to learn. The facilitators were wonderful, experienced, respectful and supportive. The participants brought so much of their own lived experiences to the group in such an honest way, allowing us to all feel a connection and to empathize, knowing that this group is providing a much-needed place to voice their love, their frustrations and their challenges. Thank you, thank you, thank you."

"I found this group to be a super helpful, informative and supportive/safe space to talk about particular issues that pertain specifically to having an ED in a larger body. There is a persistent myth in both the mainstream media and medical community that only those with thin privilege/small bodies have EDs which can be very damaging for all people, but especially those in large bodies with EDs, as often their ED is not taken seriously/they struggle with a whole other set of issues and often experience fatphobia."

"I think chatting with other folks who navigate recovery with additional challenges like mental and physical illness was invaluable. As a human, dealing with an ED on top of neurodivergence on top of trauma on top of body differences; This was one of the first times I did not feel alone or too much in those identities...respecting my fellow group members, I did feel more capable of facing my challenges knowing other folks were dealing with as many or more issues than me and continued to show up for themselves and access care."

Participant Story

Lindsey O'Hearn

For Lindsey O'Hearn, a 20-year-old living in Alliston, Ontario – just outside of the Greater Toronto Area - COVID-19 was both challenging and illuminating. Like many others, Lindsey felt isolated, lost work, and was afraid of getting COVID. At the same time, Lindsey says that it was the first time she had taken the time to reflect on her life. She first accessed Sheena's Place groups in the winter/spring of 2021 in the midst of a lockdown. She wasn't working, she was going to school online and since all she could do was stay at home, she had the freedom to attend groups for the first time.



“I don't know if I would have ended up seeking help if I didn't have all of that time at home to think about my life.”

She had done 1-on-1 therapy before, but never actually disclosed her Eating Disorder to any of her therapists. **“For a long time, I was unaware of the fact that it was an issue. I was kind of in denial and I was scared because of comments from other people about Eating Disorders.”** She never trusted a therapist with that information and had never been able to find a practitioner that specialized in Eating Disorders. So, when she started seeking support, her first search led to the National Eating Disorder Information Center (NEDIC), who told her about Sheena's Place. She saw that all groups were online, which was perfect because she lived far from Toronto. She was also drawn to how low barrier Sheena's Place was, compared to other supports she had found.

It was only when Lindsey came to her first group that she was able to recognize that she had a problem. She didn't want to live her life that way,

“I didn't want my ED to control me. I wanted to reach out and be proactive about it.”

The first group Lindsey attended was the Drop-In Adult Support group. She thought that it might be nice to connect with others who had similar experiences to herself. Even though she felt ready to attend, she was still quite nervous because this was the first time she was ever going to talk about her Eating Disorder. She was particularly nervous to see and hear other people in the space, while also being vulnerable in that way. Lindsey says that being a virtual group helped take some of the pressure off. She recalls feeling relieved to be in a space where it felt safe to talk about her Eating Disorder. It was the first time she had met so many people who also shared her experience. She reflected on how lonely and isolating it had been - but now she didn't feel so alone; she felt seen and included.

While surprised at first by the Sheena's Place language guidelines - for instance that folks were discouraged from naming specific symptoms and diagnoses, she ended up finding them quite helpful, **"The language guidelines challenged me to expand my thinking and the ways in which I talked about my ED. To look at different aspects rather than just the ED itself."** While having a community that understood her was one of the most impactful aspects of group, Lindsey also felt that the facilitators were integral in creating this environment. She felt that they were very accommodating and made her feel like they genuinely cared.

She also said that, **"Having a good relationship with facilitators makes the group flow and also makes you want to share."** Lindsey found that group helped her accept her ED and has taught her how to become more resilient when it comes to not engaging in ED symptoms. She has developed a more positive outlook about herself and is learning about the ways in which diet culture impacts how folks view themselves. She also found that talking about her experience in group has helped her open up to more people in her life.

As a result, this has helped her friends open up about their own struggles. One friend told her, **"I genuinely don't know if I would have been able to come to terms with my ED if Lindsey didn't speak openly about hers."** Through Sheena's Place, Lindsey has found community which has been integral to her recovery. She hopes that she can continue to employ the skills she has learned from group. Whenever she is struggling, she thinks about something a facilitator told her:

"Just know that whatever you do and wherever you go, the spirit of group goes with you."

While Lindsey mostly participated in Drop-In support groups, she is signed up for Express Yourself: Creative Writing for Self-Expression and Healing (Mini-Series) this spring and is excited to see how it compares to support groups.

Lindsey hopes that people come to understand that more funding and education is needed surrounding EDs. She believes that more ED-informed healthcare professionals and supports are needed across the country. Lindsey says, **"Society needs to put less emphasis on bodily appearance. So many compliments are body image based and we need to move towards complimenting people on other things."** Lindsey also believes that social media plays a role.

"Social media can be very harmful and we are moving more and more into a social media dominated world. I've deleted it, but another way to combat this could be to make a curated feed." She also says that, **"it's not our job as people with Eating Disorders to educate people who don't know anything about Eating Disorders. One of the best ways you can help us is by educating yourself."**

Participant Story

Megan Crowell

Megan Crowell is a 38-year-old stay at home mom from Sault Ste. Marie. In high school, she was a competitive wrestler and as a result of what was expected of athletes, many harmful behaviours were encouraged and reinforced as being “part of the sport.” This is where she believes her Eating Disorder developed. These behaviours continued into her college years, but at the time, she never flagged them as an eating disorder.

About 2 years ago, Megan decided to speak with a doctor about her struggles with body image among other things. She believed she was going to be treated for depression; however, her doctor quickly recognized her challenges as a possible Eating Disorder. Megan had not considered that recovery from her behaviours was possible. For instance, she thought that everyone lived in their heads about what they ate, and she witnessed similar disordered eating patterns in many others around her. She also believed that her body was too big to have an Eating Disorder. Upon hearing her doctor’s concerns, she felt heard and relieved to know there were steps she could take to recover.

Megan is someone who likes to do her research about any organization or program she accesses. She knew that if she was going to engage in recovery, she needed a non-diet culture space that could understand what she was going through. Living in rural Ontario, there were not many options available, but after a bit of googling, she found the National Eating Disorder Information Center (NEDIC). They told her about Sheena’s Place and after looking into the program options, she decided that it would be a good place to jump in.



When Megan got a spot off the waitlist for the Wednesday evening Adult Support group, she felt panicked. She remembers the pep talk her husband gave her before first attending group. He said,

“Go and even if you just listen, hearing that other people are experiencing what you’re experiencing is going to be more beneficial than anything you’ve had so far.”

Participant Story

Megan Crowell

After speaking about her own experiences, she found that all of the other group members were supportive and helpful in their responses. Experiencing universal compassion and an acknowledgement of a shared experience felt new and incredible. Megan had also been worried that group members would go into great detail about their eating disorder symptoms as this could be triggering. As such, she was very grateful to hear the language guidelines stated by facilitators at the beginning of the session.

Megan also told her husband that Sheena's Place had a group specifically for family, friends and partners, which she thought he could benefit from. She hoped that he would find this a safe space to unpack his feelings, connect with others, and receive advice and resources. She says that since he started attending group, their relationship has benefited greatly. He has shared that the group has helped him alleviate some of the guilt that he had been plagued with for so long. Many caregivers tend to place blame on themselves for not knowing what to do, and this group has helped him move towards forgiveness and understanding within himself. Megan feels like she can open up to him more now that he has a better understanding of her experience. She believes that having a partner, family or friends who are ED-informed makes navigating recovery and interpersonal relationships so much easier.

Megan sees Sheena's Place as a great first step for people who may be struggling.

"I wouldn't be where I am without Sheena's Place. There have been moments where I wanted to give up on my recovery and knowing that I have made the commitment to come to group has really helped. In my worst moments, group has kept me going and in my best moments, the skills and groups have been there to support me."



What Happened in 2021

Sheena's Place fills gaps in eating disorders care by providing free, professionally facilitated group support for people affected by Eating Disorders at any stage of recovery without requiring a referral or diagnosis.

During 2021, we continued to run all of our groups online. We ran, on average, 27 online groups each season.

We introduced a total of 12 new groups throughout 2021.

We piloted support groups with modified language guidelines. Here folks are able to discuss topics that we had previously avoided in a safe environment.

GROUP SPOTLIGHT!

TRAUMA INFORMED YOGA

We are constantly updating our program offerings to reflect new innovations in the field, and to respond to emerging needs in our community. We consistently seek feedback from our community in an effort to provide programs that centre the community's current and emerging needs.

This trauma sensitive yoga Asana class emphasizes choice making, while providing different options of forms and bringing our awareness to the present moment. There is invitational language for each person to decide how they would like to move throughout the class, so each person can decide what feels useful for them. There will also be some discussion around the five elements of trauma sensitive yoga: choice making, invitational language, non-coercion, authenticity and interoception. No experience is needed to participate in this group!

Facilitator Highlight

Nicole D'Souza

Nicole first became connected to Sheena's Place in 2021. Through her experience in youth outreach work and group therapy, she had developed a **trauma-sensitive yoga program** and was looking for opportunities to expand this group to other settings. When another Sheena's Place facilitator told Nicole about Sheena's Place, she thought it would be a great match.

Nicole consulted with colleagues, peers, and other community members to learn about existing needs for folks with eating disorders, and adapted her program to meet these needs.



Her intention was to create a space that understood how trauma shows up in group settings, and to facilitate yoga in a space that is gentle, while recognizing how difficult it can be for folks to connect with their bodies. Many folks who experience trauma also experience eating disorders, and feeling a lack of control is a common challenge. In facilitating Trauma-Sensitive Yoga, a guiding question for Nicole is,

“How do we increase choice to make people feel like they have agency around what’s going on?”

Nicole provides modifications regarding what shapes look like and encourages group members to share their own shapes, as these might resonate with others. Nicole acknowledges differences in where folks are at and what they need, and she encourages group members to take away whatever feels right for them. Nicole ensures that movement is accessible and works with props that people have at home. She consistently reflects on what movement looks like in different bodies and adds modifications.

Facilitator Highlight

Nicole D'Souza

When reflecting on the difference between in-person and virtual programs, Nicole says,

“Virtual trauma-sensitive yoga has created more inclusivity. Some folks don’t feel comfortable doing movement in-person – they might feel pressured to do what others are doing and doubt can arise. In virtual groups, cameras can be off, creating a safer space where people can move at their own pace without anyone watching.”

While facilitating her group, Nicole validates different emotions that come into the space. She also strongly believes in collective wisdom and community-building.

“Groups remind folks that they are not alone.” Nicole believes that participants return to Sheena’s Place season after season due to this sense of community, as well as the variety of groups offered, which allows for the exploration and meeting of individual needs in a holistic way.

Nicole is dedicated to supporting folks with limited access to resources and providing a place where people can learn, ask questions, and start conversations, **“It’s always nice to hear about what folks are taking from the program into their lives”**. At the same time, Nicole believes that self-care is an important part of the job. She engages in self-care by spending downtime in nature, connecting with friends, and debriefing challenges that come up.

When asked about what she wish others knew about eating disorders, Nicole shared that she wants people to recognize how entrenched diet culture and fatphobia are in our society. She also sees sharing different eating disorder narratives as vital in order to break down stigma and counter stereotypes about who is affected. Specifically, she wishes more people understood how eating disorder impact racialized communities and the links between eating disorders and poverty. Lastly, she wants others to know that healing can happen in a variety of different ways and that recovery is possible.

New groups that have made an impact!

EXERCISE?! A SPACE TO UNPACK CHALLENGING RELATIONSHIPS WITH MOVEMENT

Diet culture encourages us to relate to movement in some deeply problematic ways, leading to injury and self-harm, and making it difficult to access a movement practice that feels good! This group will provide a supportive, Body Liberation-centred space where we can unpack our challenging relationship with exercise - including the ways in which this challenging relationship often coexists with and reinforces distressed and disordered eating – to explore more joyful and functional movement-centred alternatives.

BIG TIME BODY LIBERATION: A SPACE TO TALK ABOUT RESISTING WEIGHT STIGMA FOR FOLKS IN BIGGER BODIES

This group provides a safer space for folks in fat, larger, plus-size, thick, voluptuous, rotund, corpulent, monarch-sized, zaftig, chubby and fluffy bodies (or any other language you might use to describe your embodied experience moving through the world in a bigger body) to explore topics and experiences related to living life in the fat lane. Topics may include (but are not limited to) experiences with distressed and disordered eating, weight-based discrimination, addressing internalized fatphobia/sizeism, strategies for self-advocacy in relationships and in healthcare settings, and resisting diet culture through Body Liberation.

RADICALLY OPEN DBT SKILLS: LETTING GO OF PERFECTIONISM AND OVER CONTROL

This skill-building group draws on a recent adaptation of Dialectical Behaviour Therapy – Radically Open DBT. These skills are designed to support people struggling with overcontrol and perfectionism, which can contribute to eating disorder behaviours. Participants will learn skills to “chill out” and not be so hard on ourselves!

NUTRITION EDUCATION WITH BINGE EATING DISORDER

This group will allow participants to learn about basic nutrition and what our bodies need to function. Facilitators will demonstrate how to prepare basic recipes that can become part of a meal plan. This group operates from a Health at Every Size, non-dieting mentality!

EXPLORING EMBODIMENT

In this group, participants will have the opportunity to safely explore embodied experience and expression through the arts. Together, we will examine the root causes of disembodiment, unpack the relationship between disembodiment and EDs, and articulate the role of embodiment in healing justice (recovery) work; embracing the potential of embodiment as a practice through which transformation can occur. Experiential and arts-based work will be gentle and trauma-informed; no previous artistic experience required!

Outreach

Sheena's Place is committed to increasing awareness and reducing the stigma associated with eating disorders. In addition to providing clinical support to our group participants, we provide community education and outreach through presentations, workshops, and training opportunities.

Number of outreach attendees (live)

2128

Number of recording views

3914

Number of outreach initiatives

59

Radio & Print Interviews

CBC Radio
Global News
Radio Humber
Toronto Star
The Financial Post
Healthy Debate

Organizations We Collaborated With



Qualitative Outreach Feedback

“The content was excellent and so evidence-based and informed. It was good to learn about the socioeconomic and racial factors of eating disorders and disorder eating. It was also helpful to focus on what to say and the impacts of what we say and how we respond.”

“As a person who struggles with body image and healthy food relationships, I found this presentation helpful when discussing all topics, specifically ways to foster healthy body image and food relationships.”

“Content was provided and flowed in a very straightforward way. Content was also provided in accessible language and was well explained. The facilitator was very warm and engaging, and made it comfortable regardless of how much information people were coming in with.”



“I may have discovered that I have been [navigating] disordered eating most of my life, which was something I did not expect, as a result, it was an emotional presentation for me. Thank you for the sensitivity you brought to the topic and communities involved, and the intersectional/ anti-oppression approach was noted, and appreciated. An overall very well done presentation that was very informative and brought together some pieces that I can use to expand my practice.”

“I found it very helpful that it was a safe space and I could talk without being judged. I also really liked how everyone was getting chances to talk and how I learned a lot from the presenter as well as the students.”

“I found they talked about body image without making you feel uncomfortable. It was a really safe environment where you could learn about things that others and yourself are going through.”


“I found this presentation to be helpful as it was very engaging, well organized, and the facilitator was very knowledgeable about all topics presented. I also appreciate the awareness of the language to use in a support setting.”

What did Our Outreach Participants Say?




99 %

99% of outreach presentation respondents agreed that the facilitators created safe and respectful environments



97 %

97% of outreach presentation respondents agreed that the facilitator(s) had sufficient knowledge and expertise to run the presentations




96 %

96% of outreach presentation respondents agreed that the presentations was helpful




91 %

91% of outreach presentation respondents would recommend the presentations to others like them



88 %

88% of outreach presentation respondents agreed that the presentations helped them feel better equipped to identify disordered eating



80 %

80% of outreach presentation respondents agreed that the presentations helped them feel better equipped to support others who experience disordered eating

What's Next?

At the end of each season, we collect feedback about each group and about preference in online versus in-person groups for the future.

Our most recent survey indicated that 20% of our group members would prefer to return to in-person when possible. As a result, we will be aiming to have roughly 20% of groups return to in-person in 2022.

In the summer of 2022, a partial return to in-person groups is expected, in line with current Ontario health guidelines.

MANAGING CRAVINGS AND EMOTIONAL EATING (NUTRITION/SKILL BUILDING GROUP)

UNDERSTANDING BED (NUTRITION SUPPORT GROUP)

PRACTICING MINDFULNESS (SKILL BUILDING GROUP)

EMBRACING EMOTION (EXPRESSIVE ARTS GROUP)

CREATIVE WRITING: EXPLORING BEYOND THE EATING DISORDER VOICE

JOURNEY TO SELF (EXPRESSIVE ARTS GROUP)

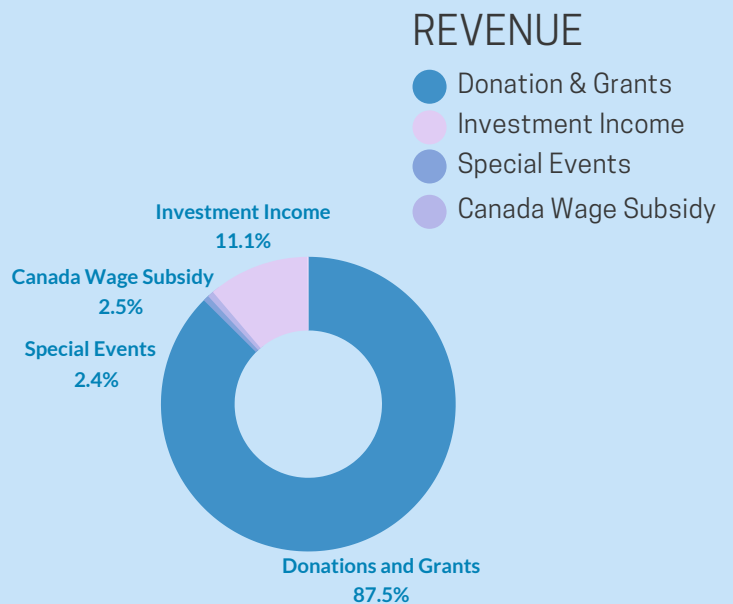
DROP-IN RECOVERY THROUGH THE ARTS

EXPLORING BODY IMAGE

FINANCIAL RECAP

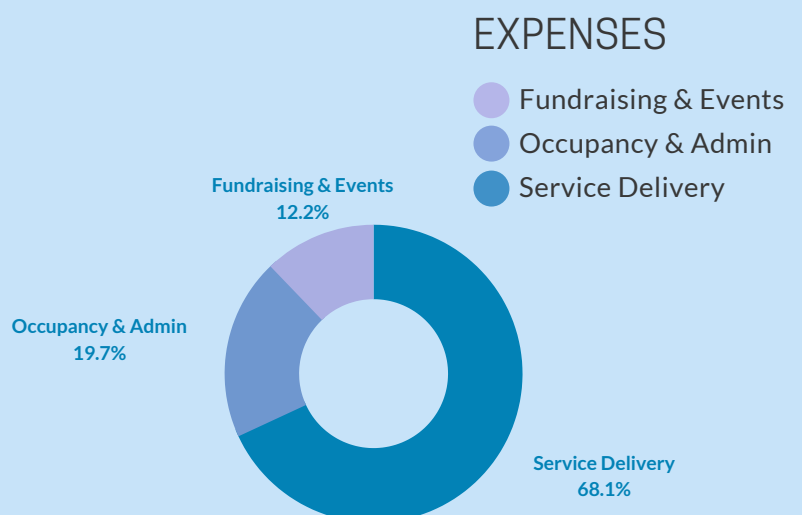
REVENUE

DONATIONS & FUNDRAISING	\$3,828,998
INVESTMENT INCOME	\$489,370
GRANTS	\$20,401
CANADA WAGE SUBSIDY	\$28,454
TOTAL REVENUE	\$4,370,619



EXPENSES

SERVICE DELIVERY	\$790,655
OCCUPANCY & ADMIN	\$119,378
FUNDRAISING	\$119,870
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,029,874



NET INCOME **\$3,349,745**

2021

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