

THREE OAKS FOUNDATION

Three Oaks Foundation P.O. Box 22162 Belleville, ON	Crisis Line 613-966-3074 800-267-0533 Business Phone: 613-967-1416 Fax: 613-966-6008 TTY:
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Hours of Operation:

**Crisis intervention and shelter services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
 Community Counselling Monday to Friday 9-5 after hours by arrangement.**

Introduction

Three Oaks Foundation is a 16-bed shelter mandated to provide emergency temporary shelter, non-judgmental supportive counseling from a feminist perspective, information and resources, referrals, and practical support to abused women and their children. All services are confidential, are accessed on a voluntary basis, and are provided at no cost. TOF is committed to inclusivity and shall not refuse any woman or their child solely on the basis of race, religion, citizenship/immigration status, refugee status, nationality, ethnicity, language spoken, sexual orientation/preference, class or disability.

More specifically, Three Oaks Foundation provides:

- telephone crisis support, information, and referrals to women living with and/or recovering from partner or familial abuse.
- safe, temporary shelter for women and their children experiencing partner, familiar, or sexual assault.
- practical assistance to women, such as transportation to the shelter, assistance organizing school enrolment and transportation, and safety alarms for women living in the community in high-risk situations
- emotional support, information, advocacy, and referrals to appropriate services for women and children. Support for women in their efforts to understand and clarify their options and increasing women's understanding of issues relating to their children such as parenting, non-violent discipline, custody and access, and impact issues for children exposed to partner abuse is provided.
- access to legal information and counselling through two-hour legal forms, Legal Aid.
- individual and group counselling to women living at the shelter and in the community

- accompaniment to legal or medical appointments, court, or social services in accordance with available resources, and
- emotional support, age-appropriate recreational and educational activities, and individual and group counselling for children exposed to partner abuse living at the shelter and in the community.

Three Oaks Foundation accepts self-referrals as well as referrals from other organizations. In those instances when an agency contacts TOF on behalf of a woman, it is common practice for shelter staff to ask to speak directly to the abused woman in order to obtain and provide information firsthand and to reinforce the voluntary nature of services provided by the shelter. Women may seek shelter and/or use the other services available through TOF, such as the crisis line, as often as necessary. There are no restrictions on the number of times a woman may call or stay at TOF.

TOF staff also organizes and/or participate in a wide variety of prevention and public education initiatives designed to increase public awareness and understanding of issues relating to violence against women and children.

Overview of Specific Procedures and Services

1. CRISIS RESPONSE SERVICES

When a woman contacts TOF, the counsellor directs priority attention to her safety and any immediate medical needs.

Questions pertaining to the woman's location, the assailant's location, possible physical injuries, and the need for immediate medical and/or police intervention are used to determine if emergency assistance is required. If so, the woman is encouraged to call 911 or, alternately, the counsellor will contact 911 on behalf of the woman.

If there is no immediate emergency, the counsellor will offer emotional support, information, and referrals in accordance with the concerns and needs of the woman and with attention to the range of options and choices available to her, including but not limited to the option to come to TOF for additional information and support and/or to stay. If the woman expresses an interest in coming to the shelter, any necessary transportation arrangements will be made.

2. SHELTER SERVICES

TOF provides secure, temporary shelter to abused women and their children; length of stay may range from less than 24 hours to six (6) weeks or longer depending on the specific needs of the woman and her children. TOF currently has one wheelchair accessible bedroom.

In the event that TOF is unable to accommodate a woman who has been abused for any reason, such as lack of space, every effort will be made to arrange for alternate secure

shelter at another organization, such as Lennox & Addington Interval House (Napanee). TOF will arrange and pay for transportation to the alternate shelter if necessary.

Women living at TOF are expected to comply with a variety of house rules and guidelines designed to support non-violent cooperative living; these rules and guidelines are explained during the intake process and as necessary throughout the woman's stay.

While residing at TOF, women have access to crisis intervention, supportive counselling, and information services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Counsellors work cooperatively with residents to help them identify, understand, and address their specific needs with attention to their safety and to recognizing their strengths, skills, and internal resources. TOF has a protocol agreement with the Quinte Humane Society for the provision of free temporary shelter for a family's pets for the duration of the woman's stay at TOF.

TOF has a **confidentiality policy** that prohibits disclosure of client information (including whether or not someone is a Three Oaks Service user) except under specific circumstances. These include:

- Duty to report under the Child and Family Services Act (see Appendix 10);
- When a threat of harm to self or other is judged to exist;
- Court ordered disclosure of information;
- Where a consent has been signed by the client.

As part of its responsibility to client and staff safety, TOF has established an **identification verification procedure** for community service providers who come to the shelter or are inquiring about individuals who they believe may be using the TOF services. This procedure is designed to ensure the safety of clients and staff and to accommodate work with other community agencies support of victims.

- a. Three Oaks staff will inform staff responsible for security of any community member(s) who will be coming to TOF for scheduled meetings so that these individuals are admitted to the office.
- b. Community service providers who need to come to TOF office unscheduled must call ahead. The staff will take the name of the service provider, the organizations name and phone number and make a return identity verification call. After this verification arrangement will be made for the service provider to come to the TOF office consistent with THF confidentiality policy.
- c. TOF is committed to making this procedure work smoothly.
- d. Information about clients of TOF can only be provided to other service providers consistent with the agency confidentiality policy.

3. CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Children's Services Workers provide emotional support and information to children living at TOF. Children may participate in a support group and a variety of age-appropriate recreational and educational activities during their stay.

A Children's Outreach Worker provides individual and group counseling for children in the community who have witnessed violence in their homes. TOF as part of the Community Group Treatment Program for Child Witnesses of Woman Abuse co-facilitate groups for children with various community agencies such as Children's Mental Health and Hastings Children's Aid Society.

4. FOLLOW-UP AND OUTREACH SERVICES

TOF offers short-term goal oriented counseling to women in the community and former residents who have experienced abuse. This service is offered in Belleville, Trenton, Centre Hastings and South Hastings. Both individual and group counselling is available to women with attention to safety planning, dynamics of power and control and other issues relating to partner abuse, and transition to a violence-free life. Outreach services also include support, information and resources, referrals, advocacy and accompaniments to family and criminal court proceedings.

TOF has a service agreement with Hastings County Housing to facilitate smooth transition from the shelter to housing when appropriate.

Accessibility

TOF has TTY services. All staff has received training in deaf culture. A number of staff has some basic ASL training. Some funding is available for language interpreters. The building is currently not accessible to those with a physical disability due to operational problems with the lift.

Accountability and Complaints

Complaints or concerns regarding the quality or nature of services received or not received through TOF should be addressed with frontline staff whenever possible. In the event that the client does not wish to speak with frontline staff or is not satisfied with the action taken or resolution suggested by frontline staff, she may register a formal complaint with the Executive Director within one year of the incident or identified concern. The service user may submit the complaint in writing or in person with or without an advocate present to Executive Director. The Executive Director will undergo an investigation into the complaint consistent with the agency policies. A formal written response by the Executive Director to the complainants will be provided within three months of receipt of the complaint.

Three Oaks maintains representation on the QCCAV and the Domestic Violence Court Advisory Committee.