



# Women's Initiatives for Safer Environments

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

2018 – 2019



Working with the community to create safer physical and social environments

# WOMEN'S INITIATIVES FOR SAFER ENVIRONMENTS

## 2018-2019 ANNUAL REPORT

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**Welcome to the annual report for Women's Initiatives for Safer Environments. We focus here on highlights of our work in the community during the past year. It wouldn't be possible without the wonderful support from the community. Thank you!**

## **Mission Statement**

Women's Initiatives for Safer Environments (WISE) is a community based bilingual organization established in 1992. We work directly with individuals, diverse communities, local government and agencies to create safer physical and social environments in our neighbourhoods, parks, workplaces, recreational pathways, and schools. We believe that if we make the community safer for women and other vulnerable groups, it will be safer for everyone.

## **Mandate**

- To act as a catalyst to foster the creation and sustainability of safe social and physical environments.
- To organize and conduct public safety audits from a feminist perspective, including the perspective of the full diversity of women and other vulnerable people in society.
- A safety audit includes attending a site; assessing safety issues; creating an action plan to - address deficiencies and then follow up with stakeholders to monitor and encourage implementation of recommendations.
- We work to accomplish this mission by working with local government, communities, agencies and those seeking to create safer environments.

## **Operating Principles**

- We believe that violence against women is linked to women's inequality.
- Solutions to violence against women must be based in women's experience.
- We will work to make our organization and services completely bilingual.
- We recognize and respect the diversity of women's experiences, and will work to make our organization and services reflect this diversity.
- All of our work is developed in consultation with the community.
- We support other women's and anti-violence organizations.
- We will not duplicate the work of other organizations.

## **Organization History**

In May 1990, a group of women met to talk about safety for women in the streets of Ottawa-Carleton. From the work of this small group came the Women and Urban Safety Committee. After a two-year community process, involving more than 200 women and men from across the region, the Women and Urban Safety Committee were granted core funding by the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton. These funds were to establish and operate a local organization that would work to create a community that was safer for women. The original grant was for an 18-month period. We now receive funding from the City, to be approved periodically, and project funding from other bodies.

Choosing a name under which to incorporate the organization in 1992 was difficult. Our choice, the Women's Action Centre Against Violence (Ottawa-Carleton), named the issue as violence, clearly stated our focus on women's experience and our desire to create change. Keeping with that objective, and evolving with the changing community needs, the organization adopted a new name, to allow the community to more quickly grasp our mandate and purpose. We felt that this was best accomplished with a strong focus on the concept of promoting safety for women and everyone in our community. Hence, in 2002, the new name WISE, Women's Initiatives for Safer Environments. Along with the new name has come the development of many new initiatives from our organization to provide direct interaction throughout the city on all issues of safety.

Over the past 27 years, WISE has been very creative and productive. Staff, with input from volunteers and a dedicated working Board, has been producing quality work. The WISE organization has been able to give women and communities tangible solutions to combat the problem of violence and will continue to do so in the years to come.

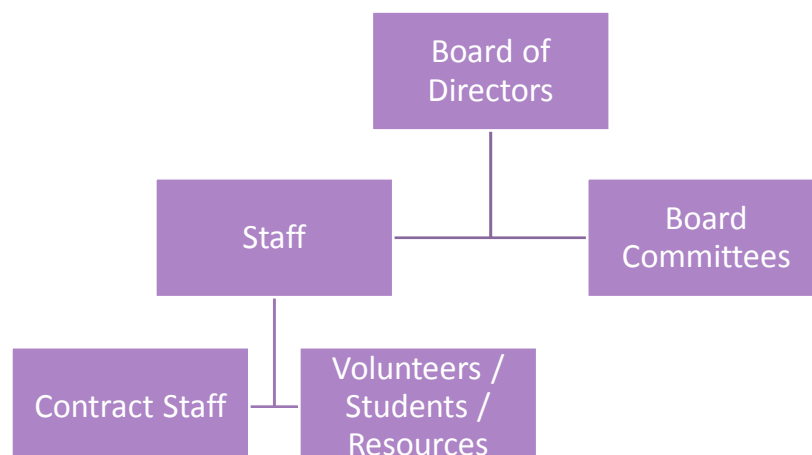
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## Organization Structure



## Board of Directors

WISE has been fortunate during 2018-2019 to have a wonderful board that has dedicated itself to offering policy direction and focus on celebration. Thank you all for your dedication and effort.

Marleen Redhead, Past Chair  
Arwa Kassamali, Past Vice-Chair  
Danielle Jeddore, Past Treasurer  
Chloe Watt, Chair  
Christine Johnson, Vice-Chair  
Katherine LaPlante, Treasurer

Kristy-Lu Desrosiers, Director  
Nasreen Rajani, Director  
Rachael Quick, Director  
Kewei Xiao, Director  
Sarah Speight, Director



*WISE Board of Directors, 2018*

*"We're all active and busy in our daily work and family, but volunteering is a wonderful way to learn, grow in a different space, build skills, and give back to the community. I valued my time on the WISE board of directors, because I was able to directly bring new ideas, concepts and implement those to reality. In addition to volunteering and growing the organization with a parallel group of leaders, I got the opportunity to volunteer with the community, participate in programming and make a better environment for women and families. Build your experiences by volunteering, giving back and making connections! Get involved with WISE, learn about how a small non-profit functions, and make impactful decisions."*

*-Arwa Kassamali, Past Vice-Chair*

*“As a former WISE Chair, I am very proud to say that I have served on the Board of Directors for a total of 5 years; and in those 5 years, I have seen this 26-year old organization try new things in order to expand its portfolio and increase its funding. For example, WISE members and guests took part in its first ever 2k run during the Ottawa Race weekend as a fundraising effort. The venture went so well that it took part in it again the following year! Also, it grew its core programming beyond the community audits and personal safety workshops by adding projects such as Heroes of Tomorrow and Women on Wheels.*

*WISE ensures that it truly is a catalyst to foster the creation and sustainability of safe, social and physical environments. Its programs are organized from a feminist perspective, which includes the perspective of the full diversity of women and other vulnerable people in society. WISE works very hard to accomplish its mission of working directly with individuals, diverse communities, local government and agencies, in order to create safer physical and social environments. WISE stands on the belief that if a community is safer for women and other vulnerable groups, it will be safer for everyone!”*

*-Marleen Redhead, Past Chair*



*Elsy and Katherine drawing raffle prizes, WISE fundraiser, 2018*

## Message from the Chair

Dear Partners and Supporters,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am very pleased to present WISE's annual report for 2018-19. This year marks a great cornerstone of progress and accomplishments thus far for the organization: WISE is constantly working together with our sister organizations, community members and funders in order to contribute to the ongoing vision of keeping communities safer for everyone. We are growing as an organization with all the new programs (i.e. Building women Up, Heroes for Tomorrow, Women on wheels) and fundraising initiatives (i.e. PICK-A-PRIZE Raffle) that we have undertaken over the past year. We have plans to grow in this area and look forward to connecting with many more of our supporters in future.



*Chloe Watt at WISE fundraiser, 2018*

We were very pleased this year to be part of the #NowWhat organizing committee for the debate for candidates in the centretown area for the Ontario provincial election. We supported other agencies on crafting relevant messaging for constituents to inquire of municipal candidates as they vied for your vote so we could get a read as to whether they had a good understanding about ending gender-based violence. But, it was not all hard work this year. We had a team from WISE in the Lipsync battle (an OCTEVAW) fund raiser who came in third with aspirations to finish on top next year.

I would like to personally thank the staff, board members and volunteers who have given their time and energy in making WISE an invaluable asset to the community. I have enjoyed working with all of you and look forward to seeing WISE achieve even more accomplishments in the coming year!

Sincerely,  
Chloe Watt  
Chair

## Volunteers



*Heroes for Tomorrow at WISE fundraiser, 2018*

WISE worked with a number of great volunteers this past year:

|                           |                        |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Megan Macdonald           | Joy Morgan             |
| Nadia Awata               | Zoe McPeake            |
| Jason McLinton            | Luke Prior             |
| Devon Rupnarain           | Dena Kaplan            |
| Sarah Patrick             | Jody Doyle             |
| Steve Fischer             | Peter Johnson          |
| Holly Campbell            | Tori Semple            |
| Elizabeth David           | Mehdi Jeeroburkhan     |
| Jill and Andrew Collicott | Ivi Iliriani           |
| Arwa kassamali            | Mol Damian             |
| Theresa Jamone            | Lauren Deperron        |
| Rob Wilkinson             | <u>Helena Escallon</u> |
| Raiden Gosslett           | <u>Grace Haddad</u>    |
| Don Hall                  | <u>Jolly Johnson</u>   |
| Alexandra Skutovich       | Tariq Anwar            |
| Dena Kaplan               | Lena Kaplan            |
| Kayla Spagnoli            | Catalina Cy            |
| Sandra Milton             | Nadia Awata            |
| Ashlee Riedler            | Jody Doyle             |
| Richard Altavista         | Jenna Spagnoli         |
| Alison Platt              | Krisandra Iving        |
| Lauren Touchant           | Katie Oppen            |
| Mireille Brownhill        | Nicole Renolds         |
| Adam Wojcicki             | Amarah Humayun         |
| Zoe Mcpeake               | Riyaz Bosi             |
| Heather Lusk              | Terri Biggs            |



Volunteers took on various projects and programming responsibilities from conducting Safety Audits, supporting Personal safety Workshops, researching and designing new exciting interactive workshop modules, redesigning and updating social media platforms, helping organize community events and fund raisers, performing in WISE videos, to promoting WISE programming.

Thank you to all these wonderful volunteers.



*Danielle J. honouring volunteers at WISE AGM, 2018*

*"Working as a volunteer has been such an enriching experience. I got the chance to participate in initiatives such as Building Women Up, which give women tools to improve their home environment by themselves, and Heroes for Tomorrow, which sensitize young men to violence against women. Above all, I've had the opportunity to meet two dedicated ladies who care about the wellbeing of women and their communities. Wise is such an important organization, I'm very grateful to have been a part of."*

*-Kim G.*

Here are some of the ways you can contribute when you become a WISE volunteer:

- Join our Board of Directors
- Sign up for a Community Safety Audit in your neighbourhood
- Sign up for a Personal Safety Workshop
- Help spread the word about booking a Heroes for Tomorrow Workshop for boys
- Help advertise to book a Legal Education workshop for women
- Represent WISE at community meetings, fairs, displays, and public events
- Make a personal financial contribution
- Donate to WISE through the United Way plan as your recipient of choice or on our website through Canada Helps
- Help produce the WISE newsletter
- Perform administrative tasks

Fill out a [volunteer application](#) from our website or call us to arrange YOUR opportunity! Once you sign up as a volunteer, you are eligible to vote at the Annual General meeting.

*"My time at WISE started off as a school placement and turned into a volunteer position. I learned so much with WISE about safety, women's rights, and inequality but most importantly what I can do as an individual to help and what organizations, such as WISE, are doing to help. Elsy and Valerie were great to work with and taught me a lot about how non-profit organizations run and allowed me the independence to run programs by myself and help out as much or as little as I could while I was in school. I would recommend volunteering with WISE if you are looking to learn, and be involved in an important part of our community."*

*-Nicole D.*

## Programs and Initiatives at WISE

### HEROES FOR TOMORROW

A dynamic interactive workshop designed for boys between the ages of 8 – 12. Discussions, interactive games, and exercises teach the boys about violence against women and about how to react as a hero when they recognize forms of violence. The workshops are led by male facilitators and have received rave reviews as the pilot has been rolled out. We are taking bookings at this time and you can learn more on Facebook or wiseottawa.ca

The boys reported that their first reaction to incidents might be to walk away; following the workshop, they reported that they could be good bystanders – meaning that by acting or reporting, they could have an impact; that by doing nothing, incidents would go up and up.

Boys were surprised to learn that one woman dies every day from violence. “*We didn’t know that 300 women get turned away from those safe houses,*” on boy said.

After taking the workshop, they were asked, **Do you know what consent means?** They said, “*Yes, it means that if you don’t have consent, you don’t have permission.*”

### WOMEN ON WHEELS

Have you ever had a 2nd-hand vehicle? Not had 100% confidence in its reliability? Been driving around kids to appointments, pets for care, getting yourself to work or school and not quite sure when and if this thing is going to make it? Well, this workshop is for you! It’s all about women learning some practical maintenance tips to prevent their vehicles from becoming disabled and stranding you in an isolated area and making you vulnerable on your own. Learn some practical tips to help keep your vehicle in working order. Become aware of some of the features that enhance security for your vehicle and wouldn’t you enjoy picking up some negotiating tips on buying a new car or negotiating a new lease? Many women who have experienced violence will often have reduced confidence and may not make as good a deal as they can. Let’s practice together. Let’s keep rolling!

WISE conducted two workshop series this past summer and wow, were we ever pleased with the reaction from women. They loved it and can’t wait for sessions to begin this summer. Thanks to our facilitator Kathy Ewen, a woman mechanic whose enthusiasm brought so much to these workshops.

Maybe you don’t have an automobile. Then, get the bike out of the garage and let’s tune it up for the season with our partners from Safer Roads Ottawa. You can do this for your own bike and teach your kids good maintenance tips to keep their bicycles in working order. We offered this workshop last summer and it was also very well received.

*“Kathy was a fabulous teacher. This collaboration between Kathy and WISE is single-handedly empowering women IN OTTAWA to approach life on a more equal footing. Suddenly, there is nothing scary, intimidating or inherently male about car care. I learned a lot and feel much more confident about my car. Every woman should take this class as this made me an informed consumer and gave me the know-how to properly maintain my own vehicle. Thanks, WISE!”*  
-Roopika M.

## Legal Education Workshop

One of our workshops series offered to partner organizations and women experiencing violence in Ottawa is the Legal Education Workshop. WISE is offering the workshop to any groups who wish to book with WISE. It is designed to help women know their rights with reference to a number of scenarios if you are caught up in the Justice system.

## Collaborative Initiatives

In May of 2018, WISE was, in partnership with other organizations, involved with planning for the national conference on crime Prevention through environmental Design. WISE presented a workshop on safety for women with respect to transit. Well received and well attended WISE presented real-life scenarios of passengers from the local transit system and their challenges.

WISE collaborated with OCTEVAW, CAWI, IWSO and Because Wilno on the organization of a debate for candidates in the Ontario provincial election on May 16 2018 on the topics of ending Gender-Based violence and women's poverty. Centretown candidates addressed questions on a range of topics on GBV and poverty put to them by representatives from many women's organizations. (Photo to go here)

WISE was part of the larger initiative #NowWhatOtt which was a campaign designed to provide background on the issues of gender-based violence and meant to provide resources to citizens wishing to hold candidates accountable running for both provincial election and municipal government.

Ottawa Community Housing forum: WISE participated in the one-day community forum organize by Ottawa Housing. We shared our mandate and purpose and how we work with citizens who are not feeling safe. This partnership has been ongoing and we look forward to sharing our expertise with Ottawa Housing personnel and tenants.

## Women's Events Network

WISE is proud to continue to be part of the public education events organized by Women's Events Network (WEN) including: the ClothesLine Project, Take Back the Night and the December 6 Vigil. Each event is designed to heighten public awareness about the issue of violence against women and how we all can work together to stop it.

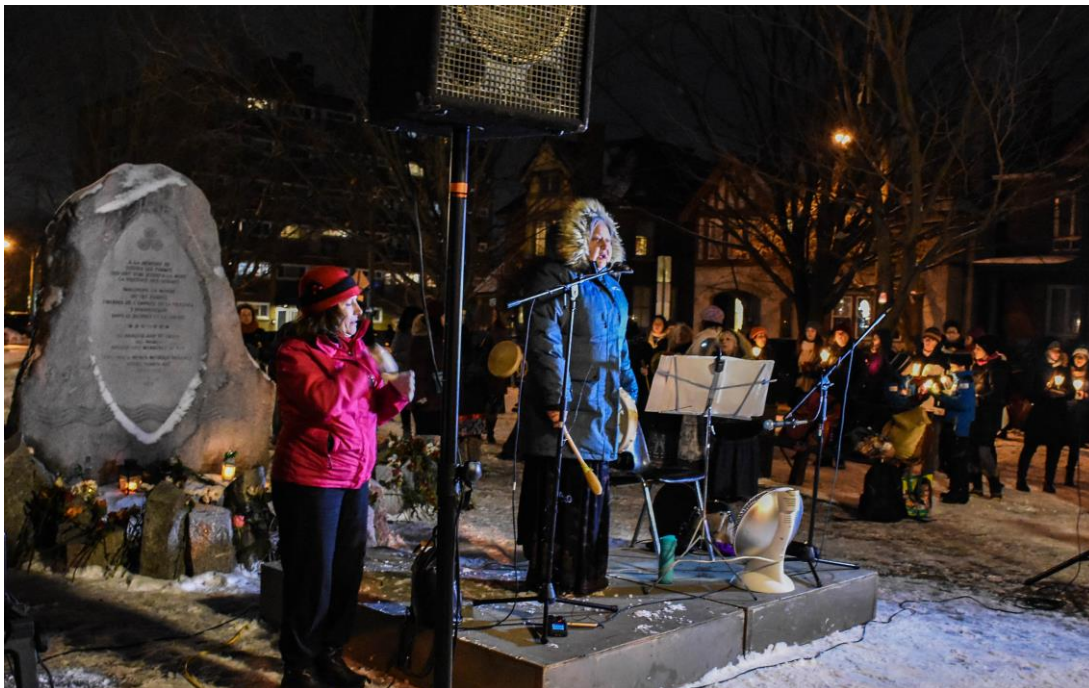


*Clothesline Project in Minto Park, 2018*

**The ClothesLine Project** is carried on during the month of May (Sexual Assault Awareness Month) and is designed to bring attention to the issue of intimate partner violence. Last year you would have found us; hanging t-shirts and other items on clotheslines in Minto Park to highlight the fact that violence against women and children is a societal problem; not a private family matter! It was a joy to combine our event with the ever-popular Ravenswing Fair. Stay tuned for more details about the 2018 ClothesLine Project.

**Take Back the Night** is a long-standing event 40 years in Ottawa, where women raise their voices to demand that they be safe on the streets, at work, in their communities and in their homes. We invite some inspiring speakers and share information with women where help can be acquired if they are experiencing violence. “I feel so pumped! I FEEL EMPOWERED AND RENEWED; READY TO TAKE THIS ON,” says one participant.

**The Vigil in December** is organized so that we can remember all the women from our communities who have lost their lives due to senseless violence by the men in their lives. We also remember the women from the *École Polytechnique* – Montreal massacre.



*A Minwaashin Lodge drummer addresses the December 6 vigil, 2018*

### **Ottawa Coalition To End Violence Against Women (OCTEVAW)**

WISE is a member of the Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women (OCTEVAW) as a member of the Public Engagement Committee/Advocacy collaborating with other agencies on initiatives to raise awareness on violence against women. This past year, WISE entered a team in the “Lipsync Battle” fund raiser for OCTEVAW and we came in third. We’re getting ready to do it again this coming year and lookout this time! See the WISE team here. (photo)

Wise has been party to a number of conferences and presentations throughout the year with Crime Prevention Ottawa at the various Public Speaker Series, and with other women’s agencies to share tips on engaging media.

Meeting the new Women’s Liaison representative at Ottawa City Hall:

WISE was thrilled to join CAWI, OCTEVAW, IWSO and other organizations to introduce ourselves and our work to the new women’s Liaison, newly elected Councillor Theresa Kavanagh; (insert photo here). We took the opportunity to advocate for gender equity on city

committees and boards and to voice our support for city Council to find \$12,000,000 in the budget for housing initiatives. We are also happy to support Councillor Catherine McKenney in her role on this new council as Liaison for the Homeless.

## WISE Programming

### Community Safety Audits 2018-2019:

One of our marquis programs at WISE for over 26 years is our Community Safety Audits. We have worked with numerous groups from neighbourhoods all across the city and in the rural areas, addressing safety concerns identified as we go through the walkabout, the primary piece of the Safety Audit process.



*Community Safety Audit*

Our audits have been conducted in various kinds of environments from large neighbourhood sectors, to small alleys, to apartment building interiors and exteriors, to underground garages or recreational pathways. We've audited the bus stops on local streets and major stations along the transit way and the O-Train stations. Find the results from these audits in a series of reports on women's safety at transit stations. Call our office to secure copies.

If you're wondering where we do these Safety Audits and how you go about getting one done, it's pretty easy! Anywhere someone may be feeling unsafe in a public area is fair game. Simply call us and we'll work with you and any other residents or stakeholders to make the space feel safer to use. The following are some of the audits that WISE worked on over the past year:

### Community Safety Audit Summaries – 2018

#### Carleton University

A campus wide safety audit was conducted at Carleton University to assess ways of improving security for students, staff, and faculty members. The audit was a pre-emptive measure to analyse campus safety ten years following an earlier audit conducted by METRAC.

Several improvements to lighting were made in response to the original audit carried out ten years ago. However, some additional safety concerns were brought to light during WISE's audit this past year.

Accessibility was one of the areas of focus during our audit. Carleton University will be working to improve sidewalk access and access to building entrances for people using mobility devices.

The audit also identified areas where visibility is obstructed due to corners, recessed alcoves, or overgrown landscaping. These areas that can pose as potential assault sites will be evaluated for safety improvements.

This audit was made possible with the participation of the Carleton University Security Department, students, staff, faculty, and administration. We can look forward to several new safety improvements to the campus through this partnership.



*Carleton University safety audit locations, 2018*

### **Nepean Rideau Community Centre (NRCC)**

The NRCC runs community programs and supports its residents through counselling and referrals. The centre expressed safety concerns this past year with respect to safety for its staff members.

WISE conducted a community safety audit of the office environments and developed a report with strategies for mitigating the level of risk to staff that meet with high risk clients at the centre.

The office reception area was slated to be redesigned to ensure that the receptionist has full peripheral vision of her surroundings. Staff schedules were suggested to be posted using an electronic application instead of a written board that is posted on the wall.

Panic buttons, and cue words were also recommended for staff to alert each other of escalating situations in private offices.

Options for lock down or secure and hold measures were also discussed for implementation within written safety protocols for the centre.

WISE believes in the need for supporting social service workers who often face high risks to their own safety as they perform their jobs caring for others.

### **Bayview O-Train Station**

WISE worked with staff from Infrastructure Canada to perform an audit of Bayview O-Train Station. During the audit, participants expressed concern for their safety while travelling to and from the O-train platform. Pathways laden with overgrown shrubs and isolated from neighbourhood view made women uncomfortable to use the station during non-peak hours. Signage was also observed to be sparse, confusing transit users who were seeking a main road to or from the station. Though emergency call boxes are present, they were found to not be accessible to those with a visual impairment.

Bayview Station is under construction at the present time. However, in the interim, as the train still operates, it is recommended that safety improvements be made to ensure that all users feel secure.

### **Meadowvale Community Audit**

The Meadowvale community located in the Carlington District, requested a neighbourhood audit to improve safety.

The main areas of concern for this very proactive and conscientious community were, the speed of traffic on local residential street intersections, the lack of visibility for pedestrians walking during the evening hours, and the safety of the community park.

The Carlington Community Association is comprised of a safety committee that works tirelessly to ensure that their community remains safe. Their residents and community stakeholders and support services participate enthusiastically to voice their concerns and advocate for the recommendations put forward through WISE's community safety audit report.

### **Carlington at Raven Park**

Once again, the community association of Carlington conducted a safety audit of the neighbourhood surrounding Raven Park.

The majority of the issues surrounding this audit concern visibility and accessibility. The Visibility on neighbourhood streets is largely compromised by long, overgrown trees and shrubs that limit lighting and access to sidewalks.

Additionally, there are several roads that do not have sidewalks, or do not have accessible sidewalks because of uneven grading or narrowness. Lack of sidewalks creates several dangers for pedestrians walking through the neighbourhood, particularly children. This is exacerbated in the winter months when walking areas become more narrow and unsafe due to snow accumulation.

The crucial concern identified in this audit is the presence of an elementary school that does not have a safe drop off zone for students. Children are crossing the road to access the school amidst heavy traffic caused by both cars and buses that are speeding.

This is a community which is home to many families who walk through the neighbourhood streets. Walk-ability is an important colour in the community thread that characterizes this neighbourhood. Widened sidewalks, trimmed trees and bushes, consistent bright lighting, all create safer walking conditions for residents and increase the number of people on the streets. When there are more people enjoying the streets, the streets become safer.

### **Confederation Court**

Confederation Court is a community that provides housing to individuals and families with a limited income. The attached community house is a hub for homework clubs, sports programs, support services, and information for the community.

This neighbourhood requested an audit to improve safety around the neighbourhood parks and pathways. The majority of participants in this audit were comprised of youth.

Lighting was one of the most common concerns on paths and in park areas. The lack of lighting often impeded residents, particularly children and youth from walking home alone after programming at the community house.

WISE recommended improved pedestrian lighting along key areas in the neighbourhood to improve walking conditions.

Overgrown Tree branches/bushes were another common observation that prevented residents from travelling along certain paths in the neighbourhood. Lack of visibility and shadows created by foliage, made residents feel that they cannot see or be seen.

Trimming back tree branches, ensuring branches do not create low lying canopies and trimming bushes to a maximum height of two feet, will improve visibility and create more consistent light.

Accessibility to the community house was also identified as a high safety priority. The community house is the hub for information, resources, safety and assistance. Therefore, creating an accessible ramp will ensure that all members of the community can access this space.

Signage was another area that was considered a high safety risk for residents. Present signage identifying the address is not visible from all angles of the street. Residents report numerous instances of visitors, service companies, and emergency services not being able to find their way into the community. This is of particular concern in emergency situations. A community wayfinding map outlining the community house, and the layout of units, and park areas, will greatly help to orient everyone entering Confederation Court.

### **Presland Street Audit – Youville Centre**

Youville Centre provides programming and educational opportunities to young mothers with children. The clients of Youville Centre are often survivors of violence and are at high risk of repeated violence.

WISE often works with Youville Centre to provide safety audits for clients who are living in unsafe homes and in danger of being located.



The client at this location experienced a break and enter. In the interest of preventing future break-ins at this location, an alarm system was recommended. Motion sensor lights were also recommended as an effective tool in alerting the client and or neighbours to activity around the home at night.

During the audit, it was also found that the location of this unit is adjacent to the park grounds of a group home which is isolated at night. When residents of the group home are in the park, they are usually inebriated, and their behaviour is uncontrolled. This provides further safety concerns for the client.

Ensuring that women survivors of violence who are at high risk be placed in living environments that foster their security and do not compromise their safety is a paramount consideration during the rebuilding phase, to prevent repetitive victimization.

### **Montreal Road Revitalization Audit**

The Montreal Road revitalization project is underway to revamp and build increased community integration in the Vanier district.

WISE audited the community area over the summer of 2018 to ensure that residents' safety concerns were taken into account in the new plans for re-development of the area.

The primary issues that face this community concern behavioural problems arising from drug trade and prostitution. The local businesses in the area are often sites for parking lot transactions, or illegal business dealings. These problems have resulted in extremely unsafe conditions for children, families and seniors.

Through the audit, WISE identified the need for more open, visible, spaces devoid of alleys, secluded parking lots, and dark alcoves. Many areas require trimming of bushes and shrubs that are currently being used as hiding spots. Businesses that invite illegal activity require monitoring and enforcement on a regular basis. In addition, the installation of new bike paths in the community, require consideration of the above mentioned factors to ensure that bikers and pedestrians are safe and in open view when travelling through the neighbourhood.

### **Laurier at Bay Street**

The majority of the safety concerns identified in this audit were lighting and maintenance within the designated area. The lighting issues involved the lack of lighting and/or dim lights in parks, streets, and building parking lots. This limits one's ability to see and be seen by others should they encounter an emergency situation. It would also encourage deviant behavior as it would become easier to commit criminal activity without being seen. In the recent weeks, a resident had their car broken into within their building's parking lot. The recommendation for this concern is to improve lighting in certain areas and add lights to places lacking lighting.

The other main safety concern identified in this audit is the existence of possible entrapment sites created by sharp corners in parking lots. This creates hiding spots behind these corners, which become a potential assault sight. The recommendations for this issue are to add security mirrors along sharp corners and an emergency box on adjacent concrete pillars.

### **Overbrook Community**

The Overbrook Community Association initiated a community safety audit to address several safety concerns.

From the tabular results collected during the audit of this community, the predominant safety issues identified were drug use, personal assaults in the form of stabbings, risk of vehicle related accidents, and poor visibility.

Many of the environmental factors that can contribute to the creation of environments that experience criminal activity are poor lighting, and visibility. The majority of safety concerns identified in this audit report involved areas of the community where over grown trees and bushes were creating dark shadows, blocking light, or creating hiding spaces. These factors resulted in making people in the community fearful of walking, particularly at night. Consequently, less people walking the streets create streets that become more isolated. This makes the environment feel unsafe and also invite those who commit crimes to own these spaces.

One of the main recommendations of this report is that a project be undertaken to examine the foliage in the neighbourhoods and to trim back tree canopies and cut down bushes to a 2 inch level to promote visibility, increase light, and provide cleaner sightlines.

Traffic regulation was also an important area of concern for the safety of residents in the community and came up frequently during the walkabout. Many children, in particular, walk the neighbourhood streets to get home from school, access the parks, etc. Many vehicles are speeding down streets in the neighbourhood, cutting through stop signs, or simply not seeing traffic signs because they are covered by branches and bushes.

It is recommended that a traffic monitoring initiative be conducted in this neighbourhood. Increased monitoring of traffic violations and enforcement of traffic regulations will be successful in reducing dangerous driving habits in the community, and help to ensure pedestrian safety. The community will also benefit from digital speed monitors on several roads so that drivers can be alerted to the speeds at which they are driving.

If your neighbourhood requires a Safety Audit, contact the WISE office.

## **Personal Safety Workshops**

WISE offers an interactive workshop on personal safety that is tailored to the specific group accessing our service. In the workshop you will learn about Safety Awareness, Assertiveness, and Strategies about safety at home, on the street and while using public transit. We offer workshops to groups of all ages from youth to seniors.



*Building Women Up workshop at Baseline Home Depot, 2018*

WISE has conducted the following list of Personal Safety and specialized Workshops aimed at giving women confidence and feeling empowerment during the past year:

- Building Women Up – Home Renovation workshop - Baseline
- Building Women Up – Home Renovation workshop - Gloucester
- Heroes for Tomorrow - Caldwell Community House
- Heroes for Tomorrow Walkley Community House
- Heroes for Tomorrow Banff Community House
- Women on Wheels – Series 1
- Women on Wheels – Series 2
- Personal Safety Workshop – Immigrant Women Services Ottawa
- Personal Safety Youth workshop - Youth Services Bureau
- Personal Safety Workshop – Interval House Ottawa
- Personal Safety Workshop – Youville Centre
- Personal Safety Workshop – 800 St. Laurent
- Personal Safety Workshop –Notre Dame School
- Personal Safety Workshop –Ottawa Community Housing (OCH) 160 charlotte
- Personal Safety Workshop –1455 Clementine
- Women on Wheels - Bike Repair Workshop– Series 3
- Two Legal Education workshops: - Emily Murphy – Non-Profit Housing
- Legal Education workshop- Southeast Ottawa Community resource Centre (SEOHC)

To book a Personal Safety Workshop or any of our specialized workshops, check out our Facebook for announcements, call us (613) 230-6700 or check our website: [www.wiseottawa.ca](http://www.wiseottawa.ca). Our workshops are comprehensive and adaptable in delivery. We would be pleased to work with you and your group.

## WISE Committees

### Communications Committee

**Committee Mandate:** To raise awareness of WISE with community and partners; work on communication tools i.e. WISE Brochure, logo, foundation documents, and website and social media platforms; and establish effective connections with community and Institutional partners such as Ottawa Police.

*Nasreen Rajani, Committee Chair*

### Program Development Committee

The Program Committee provides program support and advice to WISE by:

- Recommending innovative and sustainable programs to the Board that are in line with the strategic direction of WISE;

- Aiming to increase the public profile of WISE by strengthening and creating sustainable partnerships;
- Developing monitoring and performance indicators for programs to ensure efficient and effective program delivery; and
- Supporting the Communications Committee with regard to program outreach and advocacy.

*Danielle Jeddore –Committee Chair*

## **Finance and Fund raising Committee**

This year, we looked to increase our fundraising efforts by exploring new methods to increase donations and cultivate relationships and with local businesses, organizations and close supporters of WISE.

We did this by engaging supporters in our first public event. In December, we held a fundraiser, the ‘Pick-a-Prize Fundraiser’, where we secured over \$1,700 in in-kind donations for prizes from businesses located in Centretown and we raised nearly \$1,000 from attendees for the organization.

Not only did the event raise vital funds for WISE and important programs, but it also raised the profile of the organization. By engaging with others in our local community, we were able to directly educate and inform them of WISE’s mission and work. We look forward to continuing to increase awareness by welcoming guests to our second ‘Pick-a-Prize Fundraiser’ in the fall.

This year, we also aimed to build the number of monthly donors by engaging the board of directors. We aspire to grow the number of monthly donors, increase funds through WISE’s ‘Pick-a-Prize Fundraiser’, and encourage our community to support us.

In whatever way you have supported our organization throughout the past year, we thank you.

*Katherine Laplante, Committee Chair*

## **Thank You to Funders**



*Valerie Collicott accepting a donation from Occasional Teachers of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, 2018*

WISE is fortunate to have some core funding from the City of Ottawa. We are very pleased to work with all councillors and the Mayor to assist with anyone in the city who is feeling unsafe in public areas. We count on Councillors to spread the word that WISE is here and ready to assist. We thank as well our funding consultant Colleen Jones who has given us some valuable

advice and is ready to answer our questions.

Ms. Victoria Guerra  
 Mr. William Wong  
 Ms. Mary Macies  
 Mr. William Wong

Mr. Jules Sigler  
 Ms. Erin Berry  
 Mr. Daniel Jeddore  
 Mayor Jim Watson

**Other sources of funding came from:**

- Generous private donation from a local management company Goss Gilroy Inc.
- Supporters who came out to our fund raiser at Pressed Café (PICK-A-PRIZE RAFFLE);
- The elementary Occasional teachers Association of Ottawa-Carleton
- All of those who donated through Canada Helps and designated WISE through the work place campaign for United Way.

**Thank you to Partners**

WISE is fortunate to work with many partners in the community. Partners range from interested individuals, to institutions such as the Police, OC Transpo, Ottawa Housing, etc.

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| Because Wilno                             | Interval House Women's Shelter                           | AIDS Committee of Ottawa   |
| CALAC-Service for Francophone women       | Sexual Assault Network (SAN)                             | The Sexual Assault Support Center (SASC)                                     |
| Eastern Ottawa Woman Abuse Program        | Harmony House - Women's Second-Stage Shelter             | Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women (OCTEVAW)                     |
| Fem'aide                                  | Maison d'amitié shelter                                  | Nelson House Women's Shelter, Individual women from the community            |
| Immigrant Women Services Ottawa (IWSO)    | Catholic Family Services Ottawa (CFSO)                   | Eastern Ottawa Resource Center (EORC), Children Who Witness Violence Program |
| Ottawa-Carleton Separate School Board     | Community Associations                                   | Minwaashin Lodge   |
| Wabano Community Center                   | ODAWA Friendship Center                                  | Blair Court Community House  |
| Crime Prevention Ottawa                   | City for All Women Initiative (CAWI)                     | Planned Parenthood Ottawa  |
| The Youville Center                       | Youth Network on Safety with Youth Services Bureau (YSB) | CHEO YouthNet  |
| City of Ottawa employees: Parks, Lighting | Ottawa Police  | Hollaback Ottawa   |

|   |                                    |  |
|---|------------------------------------|--|
| Ottawa University Women's Center              | Carleton University Women's Center | Ottawa Fire Department                               |
| Safer Roads Ottawa Program, City of Ottawa    | City of Ottawa Mayor & Councillors | Southeast Ottawa Healthier Communities               |
| Canadian Hearing Society                      | Manifest Change Program (OCTEVAW)  | City of Ottawa Councillors                           |
| Various Community Resource and Health Centers | Carty House                        | Girl Guides Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) |
| Algonquin College                             | Public Service Alliance of Canada  | Ottawa Tool Lending Library                          |
| Pressed Café                                  | Home Depot Stores                  | Emily Murphy   |
| Pure Kitchen                                  | CFIA                               | Overbrooke-Forbes Community Centre                   |
| Avo Webworks                                  |                                    |  |



*WISE Director's Nasreen and Kristy-lu setting up the generous donations from local Ottawa business, WISE fundraiser, 2018*