

Brighter Futures

Winter 2023

One Mother's Story

Written by a former resident at Marillac Place

In November of 2022, I was experiencing homelessness and was pregnant. I needed a place to stay and Marillac Place welcomed me right away. When I arrived, I was scared and nervous to be in a new environment and not know anyone, but I was so thankful for a safe place to stay. I was shy for the first few months, but soon became more comfortable. For the most part I kept to myself while focusing on my goals and working.

The staff at Marillac Place are amazing people! They are super friendly and were always there when I needed them. I really loved how they were not judgmental but rather understanding and always there to support me. I appreciated how staff didn't treat me like a child and always gave me space to do what I needed to do. I loved the Praise with a Raise program that allowed me to earn points each month and redeem them for things I needed for myself and my baby. Marillac Place also helped me connect to a counsellor free of charge through their counselling program. I have learned so much about being a mom with the help from the staff and programs. All I had to do was be willing to ask for help, ask questions, and be willing to learn. Whenever I needed help, they were right beside me. When it was time, they also helped me to find my own place to live and I received many items through donations made to Marillac Place to get me started.

To other moms out there - my advice would be to seek help if you really need it. Though it may be difficult to ask, it's an important step in your journey. Also, don't be embarrassed to live in a shelter. Think of it as the next stage toward a better, brighter future for you and your baby!



What's Happening at Marillac Place

In September we joined many local organizations at the Belonging Expo. Hosted by CYPT at the Kitchener Public Library, we discussed belonging across the Region.



In November Marillac Place underwent much needed repairs to our heritage home. Thanks to Ontario Trillium Foundation and the Government of Ontario for supporting this work.

We were selected to participate in **Creative Day for Social Good (CD4SG)** hosted by **Capacity Canada** in partnership with **Intertek Catalyst**. CD4SG brings together creative professionals and Conestoga College students to provide creative services to NFPs around Canada. Stay tuned for the results of this collaboration...

Good Family Farm contributed pumpkins to our Speakers Corner event for October 26th. The families at Marillac Place got into the Halloween Spirit by carving their own pumpkin.

Meet the New Members of our Executive Team



Message from Board President Samantha Feener

I have been honoured to be a part of the life-changing work that Marillac Place does in our community for the last several years. I am inspired by the overwhelming resiliency shown by the program participants and the valuable staff team who have adapted programs and services in many ways to the constantly changing needs of our community. I look forward to continuing to be one of the many volunteers who help ensure the organization's success as the Board's President.

Get to Know our New Executive Director - Julie Walder

I am so grateful to have the opportunity to serve as the next ED for Marillac Place.

My lifelong passion for Social Purpose Organizations has naturally steered me towards positions in the not-for-profit sector. I have been blessed with progressive leadership opportunities and incredible mentors along the way. Throughout my career, I've had the privilege of holding senior management roles that have allowed me to develop a deep understanding of organizational management, program development, and community engagement. My post-secondary education in psychology and project management has provided me with a solid foundation to work effectively in the not-for-profit sector, where my primary goal is to bring about positive change for marginalized individuals.

I'm a firm believer in the power of fostering relationships, inspiring teams, supporting change initiatives, collaboration, and promoting community engagement.

These elements are at the heart of my approach to leadership and have been instrumental in my career. My aim is to contribute to building a society that values equal opportunities and social well-being for everyone. By dedicating myself to this cause, I hope to inspire positive change, generate awareness, and collaborate with others who share the same vision. Together, we can build a more inclusive and supportive society, where every woman and her family has the opportunity to reclaim their dignity, security, and hope for a brighter future.



Holiday Campaign 2023

Please help celebrate the season with us by giving to Marillac Place during our Holiday Campaign. Your donation will go where it is most needed to support Marillac Place.

To donate today, return the pledge form, scan the QR code with your smartphone camera, or visit www.marillacplace.ca/donate to give today.

For more information about our Holiday Campaign, please contact us at:
admin@marillacplace.ca or (519) 571-0722 x2



Period Poverty and the UW Period Purse Program

One in six Canadian menstruators experience period poverty, which describes a lack of access to a steady and safe supply of menstrual products. Not only does this pose health hazards for those facing period poverty, but it can also have psychological impacts on menstruators by causing them to feel anxiety, shame, and diminished self worth.



Unfortunately, these access barriers are further exacerbated by taboo and societal stigma surrounding menstruation. This hesitancy to talk about menstruation is part of the problem, as it prevents productive discussions surrounding the status quo which, in turn, hinders progress and change.

UW Period Purse is a club at the University of Waterloo dedicated to education, advocacy, and fundraising in support of those facing period poverty. Our goal is to increase access to menstrual products at UW as well as providing support to local organizations.

Through fundraising efforts and generous donations from sponsors, we were able to purchase an assortment of menstrual products including pads, tampons, and liners. After discovering Marillac Place and all the wonderful work they do to support young mothers and mothers to be, we were inspired to create menstrual care packages for current and past clients.

Over 20 members of the club gathered together for a “packing party,” to assemble 99 packages containing pads, tampons, liners, and wipes. In addition to providing tangible support, we also included uplifting, positive, and motivational messages in each box.

We are so grateful for the opportunity to support such an incredible organization. Thank you to the Marillac Place team for helping us coordinate this initiative!

A big thanks to Ontario Seed Company Limited for their generous annual donation!



We have an Amazon Wish List!



Selections are updated throughout the year, according to the needs of women and babies at Marillac Place. Items are delivered directly to us!

It's easy!

Visit marillacplace.ca and select Donate Items | Gifts in Kind under Ways to Give OR scan the QR code to donate today!

Select our registry address at checkout so the items will be sent directly to our door.

Our Office Team Welcomes...

Office Administrator - Hilary Zorgdrager

My name is Hilary, and I joined Marillac Place in late September as an Office Administrator. I came to Marillac Place from another local non-profit organization dealing with homelessness, substance abuse, and employment – where I worked in a number of roles in a book-keeping and front-line capacity. I'm so excited to have joined the team here and to learn about the unique challenges facing mothers in Waterloo Region. In my free time, you can find me out on the ice playing hockey or curled up at home with my cat and crochet hook. I look forward to playing a role behind the scenes to help mothers and children get the support they need for a brighter future!



Communications & Development Officer - Alix Crawley


Hi there! My name is Alix and I'm excited to join the team at Marillac Place as Communications and Development Officer. Prior to joining Marillac Place I worked on content development for marketing communications teams in small and large businesses. I'm looking forward to bringing the skills and experience I have gained as a marketer over the years to help with Marillac Place initiatives for women. Outside of work I love to relax with a good book, go paddleboarding, or walk with my dog, Charlie.



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