



Design for a New Tomorrow

40th Annual General Meeting

Report 2019-2020

Mission Statement

Design for a New Tomorrow supports individuals who have experienced abuse in intimate adult relationship in their journey towards healthy self-directed lives and respectful relationships.

Design helped me build independence; empowerment is key to enriching one's life.

Anonymous

WOMEN'S PROGRAM

DFNT is a community based program funded by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services. DFNT provides Individual and group counselling to women 16 years of age or older; available in St. Catharines, Welland, Port Colborne, West Lincoln, Niagara Falls and Fort Erie. One on one counselling is designed to empower women to lead a life free of violence, and/or physical or mental abuse. Supporting them on their journey towards healthy self-directed lives. DFNT provides group counselling which gives women the opportunity to gain education on abuse and related issues, develop skills and to build a support network. In turn, building confidence, self-esteem, and help to recognize that gender based violence shatters the sense of well-being that allows people to thrive.

PARTNER ASSAULT RESPONSE (PAR)

The PAR Program, funded by the Ministry of the Attorney General, is a 12 week program, led by an experienced male and female counselling team. The program is for individuals who have been ordered by the court system as part of their probation. The primary focus is to teach participants to understand, take responsibility for and change their controlling, abusive behaviour. The program strives to enhance the safety of victims of gender based violence by providing information, support, safety planning and community referrals. Design for a New Tomorrow offers PAR in Niagara Falls, Welland and Fort Erie.

Message from the Board President and Executive Director

It is difficult to look back and remember that only seven months ago our world look a lot different, less complicated. COVID-19 has changed people and society in general. It put a huge stress on gender-based violence, trapping many women at home with abusers. The rate and kind of gender-based violence spiked and families suffered as a result. For staff at Design, it was a catalyst to be pro-active and innovative. Creating problem-solving options to connect virtually with clients any way possible to be able to remain a support, a voice, an ear and to provide evidence based practices and trauma informed counselling. Virtual counselling is difficult, done void of colleague every day connections however Design staff persevered. The Partner Assault Response program saw its challenges as well during this time. Designs PAR Coordinator maintained relations with Probation and Parole, Family Counselling Centre and with other service providers in the Province to make certain clients were not only served but also held accountable.

In this past year, both staff and Board members engaged in strategic planning sessions that not only provided us with a 5-year plan but a creative avenue to increase our reach. One of our staff tackled a strategic goal, which was to develop a board game that would demonstrate to women and youth how easy it is to find yourself in an abusive relationship and how very difficult it is to get out of it. We all applaud her and are excited to get this out in our community.

Design is fortunate to have both a Board and staff who are committed to the cause, the agency and the hard work needed to support clients.