

SPRING 2018

YOUR REDWOOD

your gifts at work for women and children

HAPPINESS IS...
SUMMER FUN!

YOU CAN MAKE SUMMER FUN FOR
MOMS AND KIDS AT THE REDWOOD!



For most of you, summer fun means a break from the daily routine. A chance to go on an adventure, visit someplace new, be carefree for a few precious, sunny days!

Just like you, the 25 to 30 moms who will spend summer time in the safe haven of The Redwood, long for a break — and for some summer fun for their children and themselves.

The Redwood moms need a day off from the pressures of frightening custody battles, from the search for safe, affordable housing in a city in which none seems to exist, and from the stress of poverty that many of them face.

The Redwood children want to be like other kids and have stories to share when they're asked, "What did you do this summer?" They make wish lists of things they'd like to do and places they'd like to see — activities that sadly, their moms won't be able to provide for them.

AND SO WE ARE TURNING TO YOU FOR HELP!

Last year, The Redwood's community of kind donors came to the rescue with generous gifts to the SUMMER FUN program. Families roller-coastered at Canada's Wonderland, braved the bat cave at the ROM, and competed in three-legged races at the High Park picnic!

This year, will **YOU** make summer fun for mothers and their children with a special gift?

The goal is \$15,000 and here are some of the highlights of the impact you can make! **THANK YOU** for your support!

\$50 Thrill a mom and her teen with a night at the movies, including cold drinks and yummy popcorn!

\$100 Amaze a family with the curious creatures at Ripley's Aquarium!

\$200 Celebrate a child marking her birthday at the shelter with a party to remember!

\$550 Build a teen's confidence with a week at the Y's overnight camp!

\$1,500 Delight all the families with a trip to the Toronto Islands, including a ferry ride, lunch, and tickets to Centreville Theme Park for swan rides, mini golf, and bumper boats!

HAPPINESS IS... HELPING KIDS BE HAPPY!

YOU CAN SUPPORT PROGRAMS TO HELP KIDS HEAL

"Fun activities take kids' minds off of the really hard stuff they are going through." And that is why Sara Ng has been volunteering in The Redwood's child and youth program for over a year, playing, laughing, and talking with the kids as they heal from the trauma of witnessing or experiencing violence.

Last year, Sara accompanied families on Summer Fun days that **YOU**. The Redwood's donors, provided for mothers and children fleeing abuse.

"Days in the park, swimming, barbecues, a trip to Canada's Wonderland! The kids were so excited, they talked about their experiences for weeks afterward."

Sara hopes this summer will be just as full of happy memories. "I want the kids to be happy. I want them to experience the fun and adventure of summertime."

You can visit our online Safe Haven Store for more ways to provide Summer Fun for moms and kids this summer! <https://app.etapestry.com/cart/TheRedwood/default/index.php>



"The children and youth at the shelter love summer vacation at The Redwood! They get to experience things they have always wanted to do, that have been out of reach for them. Thank you for supporting the **SUMMER FUN PROGRAM!**"

- Natasha, The Redwood Child and Youth Counsellor



THE REDWOOD'S WOMEN ARE "ON THE MOVE"!

Thanks to YOU, women not only survive, they thrive

The Redwood's year-long "Women on the Move" is a leadership program for women who have experienced violence. It is designed to support personal growth and goal development. It encourages women to become advocates in the community, working to end the kind of abuse they've survived.

Women participate in self-assessment to uncover their strengths. They acknowledge the trauma they continue to experience as the result of violence. And they develop communication skills including public speaking, presentation delivery, and group facilitation, all of which enhance their opportunities for employment.

This year, The Redwood celebrated the graduation of the 9th "Women on the Move" class! Congratulations to the graduates!

Our deepest gratitude goes to our generous friends at the Lillian Meighen and Don Wright Foundation and the Bras Family Foundation for their faithful support of a program that not only improves the lives of participants — it makes our entire community a better place to live.



(Above, left to right) Leah Bras of The Bras Family Foundation, The Redwood's Executive Director Abi Ajibolade, Priscilla Wright of The Lillian Meighen and Don Wright Foundation and The Redwood's Community Outreach Manager Avon Harris were on hand to congratulate the Class of 2018.

"Community" was the theme for Women on The Move 2018 and it could not be more fitting — you at The Redwood and these women have created a community that is powerful. The stories are what sit with me the most — the words I heard were confidence, empowerment, goals, positivity, strength, family, pride, faith and courage. You are doing great things and we are fortunate to be a part of it.

– Leah Bras, The Bras Family Foundation

HELP WOMEN TRADE POVERTY FOR...

Trades and Tech! For many women, fleeing abuse means facing poverty. The Redwood's **Women in Trades and Technology Conference** aims to help women access jobs that will lift them, and their children, above the poverty line. All women are invited to attend.

**Sat. June 16, 2018 at Metro Hall, 55 John St.
Free Admission, Free Childcare, Free Lunch.
Register at www.theredwood.com/join-us**



Dear Friends,

This year marks the 25th anniversary since The Redwood opened its doors to serve women and children fleeing abuse. The occasion is bittersweet. I would have hoped that after 25 years, our community would be further along on the journey to end gender-based violence. Perhaps, The Redwood would have to shut down due to lack of "business"! But we are not there — yet. In fact, in just the first 11 weeks of 2018, 10 women in the GTA were lost to femicide, along with 5 family members.

Still, even in the face of such heart-breaking tragedy, we will not be discouraged! I certainly know from your support that YOU are not discouraged! And so, as we enter the second 25 years of The Redwood's journey, I believe it is important to acknowledge the incredible efforts that so many of you have put into supporting vulnerable women and children, since 1993.

I am humbled by the **resolve of the community:** the founders and friends who literally built The Redwood shelter with their own hands, and the board members and volunteers who have kept its services growing.

I am grateful for the **kindness of donors:** the thousands of individuals, businesses, faith groups, schools, service clubs, foundations, and corporations that have contributed financial gifts to support the women and children who seek refuge at The Redwood.

I am inspired by the **passion of our staff** who bear witness to terrible pain and work so hard to help women and children heal.

"We are so happy to help further the *Women On The Move* program, which only gets better and better, enabling these special women to reach their full potential!"

– Priscilla Wright, The Lillian Meighen and Don Wright Foundation

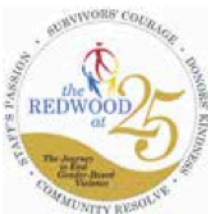
I am in awe of the **courage of women** who risk so much to come to The Redwood, hoping to build better lives for themselves and their children.

Thank you all for the critical roles you take in ending violence against women and children.

I hope to meet you and thank you in person this year! We are planning several events to celebrate The Redwood's 25th and hope you will keep an eye out for invitations that will be coming your way soon!

Warm regards,

Abi Ajibolade
Executive Director



P.O. Box 16023, Toronto, ON M6J 3W2 t 416.533.9372 Charitable #: 89172 8867 RR0001
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