

The logo for SACHA Sexual Assault Centre. The word "SACHA" is written in a large, bold, green sans-serif font. To its right, the words "SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE" are stacked in a smaller, green, all-caps sans-serif font. A green wavy line is positioned below the "SACHA" text.

**SACHA** SEXUAL  
ASSAULT  
CENTRE

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ANNUAL  
REPORT

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2023/2024



# SACHA

SEXUAL  
ASSAULT  
CENTRE

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24 HOUR SUPPORT LINE:

905 525 4162



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## A MESSAGE FROM PEGGY MCGILLICUDDY, CHAIR OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE & JESSICA BONILLA-DAMPTEY, DIRECTOR

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Dear friends, supporters and community members,

Our 2023-2024 year marks 48 years of SACHA support, advocacy & organizing alongside survivors of sexual violence and allies in the City of Hamilton! Over these 48 years we have been at the forefront of direct service provision for survivors of sexualized violence and working towards a Hamilton that is free from Sexual Violence.

In May, Sexual Violence Prevention Month, we hosted our first annual Community Conference. This one-day conference brought over 50 service users, service providers, leaders and community members across the City of Hamilton to talk about what it means to build a safer Hamilton – a Hamilton that is free from sexual violence. The conference provided an opportunity for all members of our community to come together and talk about what it means to support survivors and what it would look like for us as a city to move towards building cultures of consent and safer spaces.

With these ideas of building a safer Hamilton we work in collaboration with various community organizations and tables. As members of the Woman Abuse Working Group (WAWG) for which Jessica is the co-chair, we successfully advocated to the City of Hamilton to Declare Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) an epidemic in Hamilton. We know sexual violence plays a role in both and to end sexual violence we must work to end all forms of violence. In declaring this epidemic, the city committed to closer ongoing work with WAWG, one-time funding for WAWG, and ongoing consultations to address IPV and GBV together. We continue our advocacy to the provincial government to declare IPV an epidemic in Ontario. With hopes that it will bring increased investments to our sector so that survivors can receive timely supports and services.



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## A MESSAGE FROM PEGGY MCGILLICUDDY, CHAIR OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE & JESSICA BONILLA-DAMPTEY, DIRECTOR

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We work towards a safer Hamilton, Ontario and ultimately a world free of violence. As such, we work collaboratively with our sibling sexual assault centers provincially through the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres (OCRCC). We were privileged to host the OCRCC's Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Hamilton in the fall. We welcomed them with a dinner that brought together SACHA's former and current directors, staff, management committee members, and volunteers; with greetings provided on behalf of the City of Hamilton from Ward 2 Councillor Kroetsch and Ward 3 Councillor Nann and on behalf of WAWG from Co-Chair Erin Griver. Together with 23 fellow Sexual Assault Centres we discussed many items such as public education programming through the "Draw the Line Campaign", advocating for increased permanent funding for the sector, crisis support lines and advocacy with and for survivors.

SACHA was also excited & thankful to be the recipient of the Hamilton District Labour Council's "Friends of Labour" award! What an honour! Thank you to our friends & siblings at the HDLC for your leadership, friendship and ongoing support of SACHA and Survivors.

It was another incredible and successful year and we couldn't have done it without the support and efforts of our Management Committee. We are thankful to Caitlin Craven for her years of work as a Management Committee member and as Management Committee Chair. Thank you, Caitlin! We wish you all the best in future projects.

Thank you to our volunteers, community partners and donors. Thank you to community for always showing up! We all have a role to play in ending sexual violence and as a community we will get there.

You are not Alone!

We Believe Survivors!

We are pleased to offer you the following highlights of SACHA's work with survivors and within the community for 2023/2024:



This year the 24-Hour Support Line continued to support survivors. The WebChat & Text Support Service operated until October, as funding provided to do this additional work came to an end. We thank the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres for creating the platform and providing technical support, and Sophia Topper, who set up and coordinated the service.

In total, the Support Line and the WebChat & Text Support Service had 2042 contacts from survivors, ages 16 and over, of all genders, and their allies. Thirty six dedicated, active volunteers, as well as staff members during work hours, provided support, information, referrals, and phone accompaniment to people who had experienced sexualized violence at any point in their lives. We are grateful to these exceptional individuals, without whose volunteer work, skill and caring we would not be able to operate this service. SACHA volunteers also provided indispensable help in two rounds of 16-week crisis support training programs for new volunteers, helped to improve the Program by participating in the Volunteer Consulting Committee, and supported each other in their important work.

## CALLER FEEDBACK

"Thanks for listening to me, I can't talk to my friends about this."

"Thank you for taking the time to help me understand that it was not my fault and this is not who I am, it is something that happened to me, and that it's okay to hate the person who did it to me."

"You saved my life last week."

In 2023/2024 we said farewell to Rand Clayton (they/them), and welcomed Dianna Walder (she/her) to our counselling team which also consists of Robin Lacambra (she/they), and Amy Pellarin (she/her).

Our waitlist is ongoing and has fluctuated from 4-7 months.

The advocacy that we provide is with the individuals we see in our counselling sessions and is not a stand-alone program. Advocacy is an integral part of the work we do at SACHA as it supports survivors to understand the intersectional institutional barriers in our society and allows the service user to know that someone will stand with them in solidarity. A few examples of the advocacy we have provided include, but is not limited to: calling other resources for access/referral, advocacy letters for housing, advocacy letters for doctors and other medical professionals.

We do not believe in a one size fits all model of counselling. Our counselling framework meets the service user where they are at in their journey to healing from the experience of sexual violence. This can be to support the survivor in understanding the impacts that the sexual violence has had on their life, coping skills, exploring boundaries, identifying and accessing emotions, building trust, and recognizing that the accountability belongs to the perpetrator, to name a few pathways for counselling. Group supports survivors in sharing experiences and their own internal resources, build community and connection. One group run in 2023 was our You are Not Alone Group; it was a closed group, was open to all genders of folks 30 + years old, and consisted of 6 sessions. Our counselling groups are run by two facilitators, this one was co-facilitated by Amy and Dianna. Group sessions were themed: Building Connections and Safety, Building Awareness and Connection to Emotions, Emotions and Nurturing the Self, Emotions and Inner Child, Relationships and Disclosing, Celebrating your Healing.



We are providing individual counselling to survivors of sex-trafficking.

We have one counsellor who works part time (three days a week).

This year, we provided 360 hours of counselling (an 80% increase over last year) for 38 people.

Who are our service users?

**92% are age 25 or older**

**92% are women**

**16% are Indigenous**

Our Service Users include a wide range of people, including Indigenous people, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ folks. Our service users range in age from their late teens to 60s.

We were thankful to have some funding this year to buy essential oil rollers in lavender and peppermint. Some service users have found these a helpful coping tool. Lavender helps to calm people when they feel overwhelmed and peppermint helps them to focus when they're feeling fuzzy.



This year our Diverse Communities Outreach Program provided a multitude of services to individuals and the community. DCOP provided individual services in the form of accompaniment to women to women's services, doctor's appointments, shelter's and to victims of domestic abuse at the police station. DCOP also assisted with telephone support for referrals to services such as shelters around Hamilton, the Immigrants Working Centre, Legal AID clinics, Centre de Santé, YWCA Immigrant Women Centre, Wesley, OCASI, Welcome Inn Community Centre, and Good Shepherd. DCOP was able to provide support to women from the Latin American Community, as well as outreach to the Immigrant Working Centre for Arabic and Spanish speaking individuals and in French for individuals accessing the services at Centre de Santé.

DCOP's Community participation was far spread this year, including events at

Mohawk College

IWD Women's Weekly Meetings

IWD Latin Women's Centre

Hamilton Child and Families Meetings

Hamilton Public Library Weekly Meetings

Annual Anti-Human Trafficking Conference

Hamilton Black Community Events

HIPC'S Community Forum

Native Women's Centre IWD Event

Immigrant working Centre SACHA Presentation

Hamilton Health Sciences Community Café Partnering for Health Equity



DCOP supported the celebration of the Latin American Community Newcomers' Christmas night. 150 families and 372 children between the ages of 6 months and 14 years attended. There was a Christmas dinner, gifts and also information from SACHA about our services.

The DCOP program represented SACHA on the International Women's Day Committee in Hamilton on March 15, 2024. We were happy to work with various community partners in organizing the event that took place at the Native Women's Centre Honouring the Circle.



On March 9, 2024 SACHA continued to take a leading role in the organization and celebration of the Latin American Women International Women's Day at Sacha with over 80 in attendance, the day was filled with reflections on violence against women, newcomer's experiences in Hamilton, music, giveaways, and delicious variety of Latin American cuisine.

The multicultural Women Sewing Circle, where women not only learned how to sew, but also learned about community services, their rights and responsibilities' in the community, as well as the dynamics of family violence, sexual assault. One woman facilitated the sewing circle this year, offering two 15 week sessions with 38 participants throughout the sessions, 22 of which graduated the program.

#### **Latin American Community Women Cake Decoration.**

DCOP started a new initiative this year, offering a Spanish speaking group helping women specifically to provide information and learning on Gender Based Violence while learning to decorate cakes. One group of 10 Spanish speaking women together not only learned cake decorating techniques but also learned about domestic abuse, sexual abuse, and women's empowerment in today's society.





The Public Education Program has been busy this year! With a total of 48 workshops and trainings with participants we have had some great conversations! We continue to be asked to do many workshops at conferences that range from one's focusing on social justices to health care to workplace issues. We have also taken on some new types of projects this year that allow for creative programing that can engage a wider range of audiences. This includes doing more art and activity-based education sessions. For example SACHA partnered with Speqtrum to host a Consent 101 workshop where we invited participants to visualize what a safe place looks like for them and then paint their visualization onto a bird house that they can then bring home to remind them of the consent conversations we had. We also partnered with Spectrum later in the year to host a Mother Tongue Community Kitchen event where we taught participants to cook a traditional Slavic meal from our Public Education Coordinator's family while we could also demystify topics around sexual violence and bring awareness to the services offered at SACHA. Another type of activity based event that we are really proud to have been a part of is through our ongoing partnership agreement with McMaster University and their Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office (SVPRO). For one semester we lead a team of SVPRO Peer Educators in creating an education zine that continues to distribute to McMaster students with great feedback. The zine is called "Let's Talk About Sex: A Student's Guide to Healthy Sexy Times" and covers topics including healthy relationship dynamics, handling rejection, and more! We had such a great time working with the peer educators that we also lead a second group of peer educators in a project to create a sexual and gender-based violence awareness event through a poetry night called "Sharing Our Truths". Poets from the McMaster community, SACHA, and Monday Press helped to destigmatize talking about sexual violence while we also incorporate educational sections between performances. It was a great way to encourage new students to get involved in conversations around prevention and support while also getting to get involved in a creative outlet. Working with McMaster has also been a big part of our year through training the McMaster University Welcome Week Representatives in Bystander Intervention and Support Skills. Speaking to hundreds of students a day we worked alongside McMaster SVPRO and EIO to create and facilities these trainings and interactive case study discussions. Another new project that were we proud to be a part of was Visible – Hamilton's Trans Day of Visibility Event. We worked alongside other community organizations and community members to create a full day of programming including exclusive spaces for the trans community to explore gender expression and a gala for trans folks and allies to celebrate trans identities and community. We had around 80 participants throughout the day and hope to work on another similar event next year as we heard a lot of feedback from community that safer spaces for trans folks are needed in our city. Lastly we were able to take on a big project with Mohawk College this year where we ran a weekly survivor support space to do psychoeducation and have facilitated discussions with students. We look forward to planning more collaborations with Mohawk College and hope to offer a similar space in 2024. Overall it has been a very busy, productive, and fulfilling year in the Public Education Program!



# Survivor Support Space

You Are Not Alone

A weekly support space for people of any gender who have experienced sexual violence at any point in their lifetime. In these sessions, survivors can connect with sexual violence professionals in a safer space to learn, share, and listen.

### DATES & TIMES

- Wednesday February 14th 5:00-7:00pm
- - Break for Reading Week
- Monday February 28th 2:00-4:00pm
- Wednesday March 8th 5:00-7:00pm
- Monday March 17th 2:00-4:00pm
- Wednesday March 20th 5:00-7:00pm
- Monday March 25th 2:00-4:00pm
- Wednesday April 3rd 5:00-7:00pm
- Monday April 8th 2:00-4:00pm

### LOCATION

McMaster College FT140 (Student Board Room). You can access the board room through FT114 (Student Hub) or privately by door FT115.

COLLABORATION WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH, QUEEN'S & HOPEWELL TECHNOLOGICAL AND SACHA



#ConsentIsEverything  
Consent Education

SACHA



On September 21st 2023, SACHA hosted the 42nd Annual Take Back the Night (TBTN) in Hamilton. The theme was Community Power through Collective Resistance to recognize that we all have a role to play in ending violence and we have more power when we gather as a community to confront oppression and injustice. Together we are a powerful force for change. Ending sexual violence, gender based violence and street harassment are intersectional issues. All forms of oppression need to be eradicated collectively and all people must have the ability to thrive without oppression in order to truly create a world free of violence. TBTN starts with a community gathering where over 40 organizations including non-profits, educational departments, grassroots organizations, and unions decorate tables and welcome community members to learn more about their services. We are so thankful to the organizations who show up year after year for TBTN and greet participants with smiles, free swag, and opportunities to learn and engage with important work.

During this time of gathering we also held the second annual TBTN Indigenous Market to center Indigenous community members and support Indigenous art and creations. This year included beaded earrings, stone carvings, moccasins and more! TBTN is also proudly supported by the Red Skirt Project where Indigenous men and Two-Spirit people created and cared for a sacred fire to honour missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, trans, and Two-Spirit peoples. We laid cedar and tobacco around the perimeter as offerings and TBTN participants visited the fire to learn more from the firekeepers and participate in honouring MMIWG2S. While participants engaged with community tables, the Indigenous Market and other activities during the gathering portion of the night we were also fortunate to be able to hear from Two-Spirit and LGBTQIA+ musicians. Four musicians took to the stage to play powerful songs that spoke to themes of community, resistance, revolution, love, and empowerment. Kylee Philipa, Luiz Grante, Jupiter Alan, and Lydia Elsewhere played and sang covers and original songs that created a welcoming atmosphere for participants and with nuance and care brought attention to the reason why gather at take back the night, to build community and oppose violence and oppression.

We also had activities where participants of TBTN could make signs for the march, decorate their own TBTN colouring pages, and more! Some of the messages on these beautiful signs included "We Believe Survivors" and "My Body, My Choice", "No One Should Fear the Night" and so many more phrases to build solidarity and our collective purpose. A new addition to the activities participants can be involved in was a TBTN Drag Storytime. Children gathered to listen to local drag artist, Unita Assk, read and facilitate discussions on what TBTN means, why we gather, and learn about topics such as consent. This very first Drag Storytime was a great success and we hope to continue to have more opportunities for youth to feel a part of TBTN going forward.

After the community gathering, we rallied and heard from speakers who were invited to speak about the theme of the night and how it relates to their activism work. Jelena of SWAP Hamilton, and Momo, Coco and Status of Butterfly spoke about what it means to be in solidarity with sex workers and especially sex workers facing other forms of oppression like transphobia, xenophobia and racism. This highlighted issues such as the need for the decriminalization of sex work and status for all. We also heard from Vic of CUPE 3906 who spoke about worker and class solidarity and the power people have when mobilizing together. These powerful activists got the crowd excited to take to the streets and demand a world that is free of violence for all.

When the march began we had hundreds of people in the streets, walking together and riding in DARTS buses with signs, megaphones, banners, and hearts full of passion for safer communities and uplifting survivors. Some community members participated in the "You Can March With Me" program where folks who came alone could pair up with others to have a friendly face and marching buddy with them as we made our way through the route. With music blaring, including the first ever marching band bringing up the rear of the march we took up space and made voice so that we can show survivors and the community at large that we will not tolerate sexual violence, gender based violence and street harassment and that together we are building a better world. Chant books were given out so participants can follow along with powerful choruses like "Survivors Unite, Take Back the Night" and "Who Keeps Us Safe? We Do"! The march, starting at City Hall, travelled down some of the busiest streets in Hamilton. As we marched we heard cheers from the sidewalks and buildings lining the streets where viewers recognized the messages of love and solidarity. When we approached Hess Village we stopped marching for a short while to chant in front of restaurants and bars in the area to reiterate that no place should be unsafe, including places where people go to drink and party and that there is never an excuse for violence. After a short journey back to City Hall we ended the march with one more gathering where participants shared how they felt about being a part of this year's TBTN. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive with folks sharing that they felt cared for and empowered by the event.

We are so excited to organize Take Back the Night 2024 for September and would like to take a moment to thank all of the people who made this year possible. From everyone who had a table, spoke, performed, led the sacred fire, participated, sponsored the event, provided donations, and especially to all of the amazing volunteers who worked so hard on the day of and on the committee for many months leading up to the event, thank you. TBTN is truly a community lead event and a labour of love that could not be accomplished without people who care so deeply and show up for community.



## STAFF

Amy Pellarin	Counselling & Advocacy Program Coordinator
Dianna Waldner	Counselling & Advocacy Program Coordinator
Htee, Naw Pa Saw	Financial Coordinator
Jessica Bonilla-Dampney	Director
Julie Buffett	Sex Trafficking Survivor Counselling Coordinator
Mirand Jurilj	Public Education Coordinator
Miriam Sager	Crisis Support Program Coordinator
Rand Clayton*	Counselling & Advocacy Program Coordinator
Robin Lacambra	Counselling & Advocacy Program Coordinator
Sabreina Dahab*	Diverse Communities Outreach Program Coordinator
Sandra Penagos	Diverse Communities Outreach Program Coordinator
Sonia Renwick	Office Coordinator
Sophia Topper*	Program Support Worker - Crisis Support Program

\*Resigned during the year

CONTRACT  
POSITIONS

Judy Thorne	Bookkeeper
Rocco Gizarelli	Consultant, Services for Male Survivors
Suad Badrid	Facilitator: Arabic Speaking Multicultural Sewing Circle
Argelia Navarro	Facilitator: Spanish Speaking Women's Cake decoration
Rosa Maria Arauz	Child Minder
Liliana Maria Arauz	Child Minder

MANAGEMENT  
COMMITTEE

Ashley Wilson	Secretary
Caitlin Craven*	Chair
Candace Oghide	Member
Elisa Grunwald*	Member
Harjot Atwal*	Member
jaqs gallos aquines	Member
Jennifer Gal	Member
Linda O'Brien	Member
Maria Felix Miller	Member
Mariam Georgis*	Member
Peggy McGillicuddy	Chair
Sherly Kyorkis	Treasurer

\*Resigned during the year

### FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

Amy Pellarin (staff)  
Harjot Atwal (chair)\*  
Htee, Naw Pa Saw (staff)  
Jennifer Gal

Jessica Bonilla-Dampney (staff)  
Mirand Jurilj (staff)  
Sonia Renwick (staff)

\*Resigned during the year

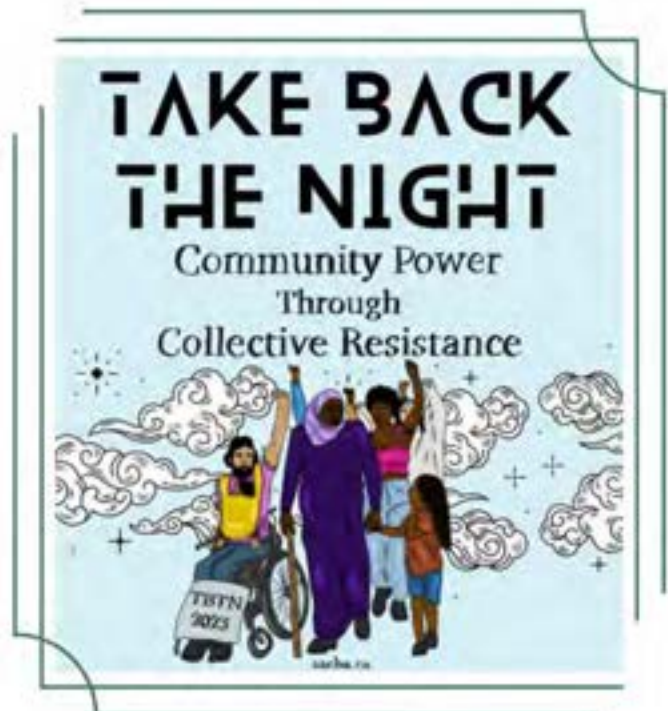
### FINANCE COMMITTEE

Htee, Naw Pa Saw (staff)  
Jessica Bonilla-Dampney (staff)  
Maria Felix Miller  
Peggy McGillicuddy (chair)\*  
Sherly Kyorkis (chair)

\*Resigned during the year

### TAKE BACK THE NIGHT COMMITTEE

Ali Ruheel  
Amber Harembski  
Amy Pellarin (staff)  
Deanna Allain  
Jay Edington  
Mirand Jurilj (staff)  
Natalie Gonsalves  
Natalie Snow  
Niki Brideau  
Nina Tran  
Noura Afify  
Rachel Dass  
Rand Clayton (staff)  
Sonia Renwick (staff)  
Stephanie Trepanier  
Wil Fujarczuk



### DCOP VOLUNTEERS

Alexandra Morales  
Angela Castaño  
Beatriz Olarte  
Carmen Guevara

Carolina Marin  
John Restrepo  
Sara Guerrero Navarro  
Yaneth Pedreros

# CRISIS SUPPORT PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS

Alina Z  
 Alyssa DeAngelis \*  
 Andie Rexdiemer  
 Annie  
 B.C.  
 Candice Chiu \*  
 Danielle Robinson  
 C.L.D.  
 E.S.  
 Inaya Tariq  
 Ingrid Waisgluss \*  
 Jessica Merolli  
 Jo Arnott  
 Kailey C.  
 Kaitlynn  
 Karen Herrera Vargas  
 Karishma M.  
 Kate D.  
 Kavisha Barran  
 Kelsie Lau

K.S.  
 Kowsiga Aravinthan \*  
 Kristen R  
 Liah Rahman  
 Lisa Hammond  
 Rachel Dass  
 Rozhin Garousi  
 Samia Anwar  
 San  
 Sarah Sharifi  
 Sayna Salehzadeh  
 Selena M.  
 Sohnia Sansanwal  
 Sophia Topper \*  
 Syd  
 Tere M.  
 T.J. Andersson \*  
 Torin Ong \*  
 Vicki L.  
 Vidhi Patel

\*Resigned during the year



5 YEAR  
VOLUNTEER  
RECOGNITION

B.C.  
Rachel Dass  
Jessica M.  
Selena M.  
Syd

Thank  
you



# THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS



Thank you to the team at  
Jane for your ongoing support!

A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR  
DONORS & COMMUNITY MEMBERS  
WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO SACHA IN  
2023-2024!

**SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE (HAMILTON & AREA)**  
**Statement of Financial Position**  
**March 31, 2024**

	2024	2023
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT</b>		
Cash	\$ 46,739	\$ 84,023
Term deposits	41,681	40,427
Accounts receivable	19,498	5,421
Harmonized sales tax recoverable	6,978	12,576
Prepaid expenses	9,672	1,895
	124,568	144,142
<b>RESTRICTED FUNDS PROPERTY</b>	<b>11,792</b>	<b>11,422</b>
<b>AND EQUIPMENT</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,102</b>
	<b>\$ 136,360</b>	<b>\$ 156,666</b>
 <b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 13,475	\$ 21,398
Employee deductions payable	15,048	19,390
Deferred contributions	10,000	27,000
	38,523	67,788
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>97,837</b>	<b>88,878</b>
	<b>\$ 136,360</b>	<b>\$ 156,666</b>

**SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE (HAMILTON & AREA)****Statement of Revenues and Expenditures****Year Ended March 31, 2024**

	2024	2023
<b>REVENUE</b>		
Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services		
- Victim Services	\$ 492,180	\$ 468,743
- Anti-Human Trafficking	45,700	45,700
City of Hamilton	110,600	53,913
United Way of Halton & Hamilton	59,242	58,096
Donations	58,336	64,583
Other income	47,660	18,653
Canadian Women's Foundation	22,000	118,440
Funding for Male Survivors Program	10,504	10,929
Fundraising	3,651	1,140
	<u>849,873</u>	<u>840,197</u>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Salaries & benefits	644,589	627,747
Program expenses	52,717	61,327
Rent	49,524	48,082
Consulting fees	16,153	26,414
Equipment & services	16,142	23,022
Grounds & maintenance	10,843	9,525
Insurance	9,815	9,051
Telephone	7,302	9,054
Staff development	5,696	1,246
Professional fees	4,975	5,000
Travel & meetings	4,705	4,926
Publicity expenses	4,357	2,158
Non-recoverable HST	3,037	2,649
Fundraising expenses	2,507	358
Office supplies	2,472	1,564
Other administrative expense	2,177	2,591
Membership	2,000	2,000
Amortization	1,102	1,102
Other wages	801	3,664
	<u>840,914</u>	<u>841,480</u>
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 8,959</b>	<b>\$ (1,283)</b>

Both financial statements include financial information extracted from Statements audited by CBM Chartered Professional Accountants.

Completed audited financial statements are available upon request.



WE

BELIEVE

SURVIVORS

**SACHA** SEXUAL  
ASSAULT  
CENTRE