

**Dear Friends and Supporters,**

Warm weather, sunny days, and new possibilities are finally around the corner! It's a new fiscal year for True North and alongside the welcome change of weather, we're feeling brand new!



April 1st marks a fresh start to reach new goals & milestones, review our strategic goals, reflect on the year's growth, and carry over our successes into the new year. On June 24th, we will be reviewing the year in full at our Annual General Meeting – you're invited! Keep your eyes peeled on our socials for more information.

In the meantime, take this season's opportunity to get regrouped – literally! Getting outside and gardening can be a powerful tool for reconnecting with nature. Longer days, increased sunlight, and the warmth of the season can support mental wellness and reduce feelings of stress & anxiety.

So, dig in! Even the most beautiful flowers go through dirt & manure – it's your turn to bloom!

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## Our Impact

This past year, True North has served 89 adults and 90 children just in our Emergency Shelter program. Length of shelter stay continues to rise as many of the individuals served continue to experience the impact of the housing crisis and inability to access safe, affordable housing. This difficulty increases feelings of stress and uncertainty, as many survivors are stuck thinking, "what's next?"

The relationship between housing insecurity and violence is bidirectional: lack of safe, affordable housing increases the risk of violence, and experiences of violence often lead to housing instability. This creates a dangerous cycle that is difficult to break without intervention. This is why True North has been working hard developing "[Finding Your True North](#):" an innovative approach to reducing domestic and family violence by aiming to offer at-risk individuals and survivors of violence a full continuum of care to heal and rebuild: increasing prevention, bolstering intervention, and creating greater long-term stability.

As we step into our new fiscal year, we continue to reflect on the needs of our community, learn from our challenges and successes, and work towards our goal of creating a safer environment for all.

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### **Waking with Survivors through Legal Systems: The Impact of Court Support Programs**

She left her home in the middle of night - with her toddler in one arm and a backpack in the other - to find safety in a place full of strangers.



In the days after she left, she received frantic texts from her partner: *"You have no job, no money, you're worthless. You can't raise him, you don't even have a place to live. The judge will grant me full custody. I hired the best lawyer money can buy, and I will bury you in court fees. You will never see him again. I will win."* She left three days ago after years of jealousy, being called worthless, stupid, and lazy. The final straw came after a day at the pool with her son. Her partner had called 30 times in an hour and flew into a rage when she did not pick up. She was swimming and had forgot to tell him where she was going. When they got home, he yelled at her, accused her, threw a heavy picture frame at her, and destroyed their home.

So, now she is here, at the True North shelter, more stressed than she has ever been and scared about what will happen if she goes back. What will happen if she *doesn't* go back? Her family is supportive, but they live across the country and certainly do not have any extra money to be able to help her. She's stay at home mom. Her car needs new tires. She wonders if he's already cancelled the credit card. He's right... she has no place to live and no money to get a lawyer. What if he takes her to court for full custody? She will do anything to keep her son safe, but what can she do?

Many shelters, including True North, offer Court Support or Legal Resource Navigation services. This programming allows for a True North staff member to help a survivor understand court processes, orders, safeguards, and the legal resources available to survivors. If someone needs to attend court, a trained TN staff member will safety plan and attend court with them. Walking alongside a survivor as they enter, what can be a very scary and overwhelming building, can help build survivor confidence and support overall safety. Court Support staff will ask questions, advocate for the survivor, and assist in helping the survivor know where to go, who to talk to, and what steps are next. Lastly, but most importantly, Court Support workers listen, do not judge, and believe survivors.

At True North, are humbled by stories like these everyday and are grateful that our team is able to offer Court Support, but more help is needed. Access to Legal Aid Lawyers can take months and often only helps with very basic needs. When separations are contentious and abuse is involved, survivors can find themselves tied up in the court process for years. Even when orders are breached by those who abuse, there is often not much a survivor can do but "live with it" because they can not afford to go back to court. Shelter staff are knowledgeable, skilled, and helpful, but they are not lawyers and cannot provide legal advice, which remains the number one request and barrier to support of those we serve.

True North continues to advocate for affordable and accessible legal services for those fleeing abuse. This comes by way of discussion with government representatives at multiple levels and advocacy in partner and stakeholder meetings. We collect, analyze, and report on data and client feedback around the importance of this work, bringing awareness and understanding of survivor needs and barriers to legal access.

True North is actively seeking the partnership of a legal professional to be able to offer weekly or monthly sessions for those we serve to help gain access to legal expertise. If you or someone you know has a legal background and is interested in supporting survivors, please reach out to us at [general@truenorthab.com](mailto:general@truenorthab.com)! Thank you, Carly.



**Spring 2026** *Wishlist*

**Children's Clothing**

- girl's & boy's clothing (sizes 3T and larger)
- underwear
- spring coats of all sizes!

**Women's Clothing**

- women's pajamas (pants or sets, size S, M, L)
- women's leggings (size S, M, L)
- women's underwear & sport bras (size M, L)

**Basic Needs:** deodorant, body wash, hair brushes/combs, tampons, lotion, shampoo & conditioner. Travel sized: mouthwash, q-tips, floss

*Other Ways to Support*

**Next-Steps Support:** gas or grocery gift cards for survivors starting over

**Job Seeker Support:** new & unopened makeup: mascara, lip balm, eyeliner

**Program Support:** journals, adult colouring books, fine-tip markers

**Shelter Kitchen Pantry Support:** dry goods & lunch snacks

**Phone Chargers & Blocks, Old Phones** (sign out of Apple ID, please!)

**USBs:** (secure data storage)

**Join a fundraiser:** Learn more at [truenorthab.com](http://truenorthab.com), under News > Events

If you would like to support our clients with any of these items, please email [general@truenorthab.com](mailto:general@truenorthab.com) or call 403-934-6634 ext 0!

Thank you!

[Check out our website](#) for all the different ways you can donate.

**FAQ: What kind of clothes are best to donate?**

A: Versatile items like black leggings and sport bras are *very* helpful! Leggings & sport bras are some of the most in-demand items due to their comfort and ability to fit various body types without needing exact measurements.

**FAQ: Do you take used clothing?**

A: At True North, we have **BIG** hearts but *very little* storage space! At this time, we don't have the capacity to sort, clean, and store drop offs of used items. However, we are able to offer

**FAQ: I'm not able to donate but I want to support... what can I do?**

There are lots of ways you can help! You can host a donation drive, participate in an event, or volunteer. One of the easiest and most impactful things you can do is to just share our content on social media! Promoting our fundraisers, sharing information about how to stay safe in a relationship, and just getting the word out about who we are and how we can help makes a big difference!

**truenorth**

5TH ANNUAL  
**DRIVE FOR A DIFFERENCE**  
CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT  
FRIDAY JUNE 19<sup>TH</sup>

STRATHMORE GOLF CLUB  
80 WHEATLAND TRAIL  
STRATHMORE

4-PERSON TEAM SCRAMBLE  
1:30PM SHOTGUN START

**BP PROPERTIES LTD**

EARLY BIRD PRICING  
+ For more information +  
[ROCHELLE@TRUENORTHAB.COM](mailto:ROCHELLE@TRUENORTHAB.COM)

**Drive For a Difference!**

This year we're offering more games, challenges, and sponsor opportunities to make 2026 the most FUN and impactful yet! Whether you're looking to grab your clubs, engage with your community, or give to a worthy cause, [Drive for a Difference](#) welcomes you!

True North Society is proud to welcome **BP Properties Ltd** as our Hole-in-One Sponsor!

Owners Shawn and Cathy Palendat and Dylan & Priscilla Briggs share, "As a family-owned company in Strathmore, we do more than build and sell commercial spaces—we strengthen communities. True North Society's work providing shelter, crisis support, and hope to domestic violence survivors inspires us deeply.

Sponsoring the Hole-in-One contest lets us support this vital cause while bringing excitement to the tournament. It's our way of investing in safer homes and brighter futures right here in our community."

Thank you, Shawn, Cathy, Dylan, Priscilla, and the entire **BP Properties Ltd** team, for driving the difference. We can't wait to celebrate with you on the course!

This year's Hole-in-One contest features a \$10,000 cash prize!



A Ride Can Save a Life: Transporting Survivors in Rural Alberta to Safety and Healing explores the transportation challenges faced by survivors in rural communities, shares insights from shelters across Alberta, and outlines practical solutions to ensure survivors can safely access the services they need.

[Read the ACWS Report](#)



In honour of International Women's Day, True North was invited to participate in a celebration & discussion about Giving to Gain, hosted by the honourable Strathmore-Chestermere MLA Chantelle de Jonge. The afternoon brought together leaders across the communities, to celebrate successes, create stronger partnerships, and get thinking about what we have to give to the next generation of women to gain a more equitable world. [Give to Gain is a worldwide call to contribute](#): investing time, resources, knowledge, and voice to help foster a more inclusive and resilient future.



## March was National Social Work Month!

Sit down with our Executive Director, Courtney Helfrich, and Manger of Programs, Carly Cole, for an insightful discussion about [Social Work in the Domestic Violence sector](#).



We brought the vibes back on March 26 for a totally tubular evening of 80s Music Bingo!

HUGE thanks to Origin Malting & Brewing and all of our rad supporters for a gnarly evening of fun and fundraising. We, like, totally appreciate you!

## Teen Dating Violence

Did you know 45% of Canadian teens (aged 15-17) report experiencing some form of dating violence? Together, we can reduce teen dating violence by promoting awareness, bolstering education, supporting self-advocacy, and breaking harmful cycles.

This year, we chatted with the experts at Sagesse about what we can do as individuals, friends, and mentors to support youth dating relationships.

[Check it out on our website!](#)



On February 6th, we had our 5th Annual Charity Drag Event celebrating women, friendship, and a great cause at the Strathmore Station. Our #LoveaShelter campaign received a ton of heartfelt messages and together, we met our fundraising goal!

A heartfelt thank you MaxSPL Music and all our Galentines!



## **Thank you EPCOR; Supporting Strong Healthy Communities!**

*For EPCOR, supporting strong, healthy communities is at the heart of who we are. Our giving approach focuses on partnering with organizations that deliver essential services, strengthen community resilience and make a meaningful difference in people's lives. That's why EPCOR is proud to support True North Society and the vital work they do for women and children across Strathmore and surrounding communities.*

*Our partnership is grounded in shared values and the belief that everyone deserves access to the supports they need during life's most challenging moments. True North's emergency shelter and outreach programs provide not only immediate safety, but also long-term pathways to stability, aligning directly with EPCOR's commitment to enhancing community well-being.*

*We continue to be inspired by True North's impact and the compassion their team brings to every interaction. Through our sponsorship, we're honoured to help extend that support to more families when they need it most. Together, we're building stronger, safer communities — one connection at a time.*

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**May** – Sexual Assault Awareness Month in Canada. The month of May calls attention to the fact that sexual violence is widespread and impacts every person in our communities. Change starts with us. [STAND Against Sexual Assault](#).

**May 1-8** - Youth Week, hosted by Strathmore FCSS and the Town of Strathmore! This week-long event will provide an exciting opportunity for local youth to engage with the community through various programs and activities.

**May 4-10** Mental Health Week: supporting healthy mental practices with the [Canadian Mental Health Association](#).

**May 9** - Mental Health Community BBQ! Hosted by Addiction Resource Coalition (ARC) and Wheatland FCSS in support of National Mental Health Week. This event will take place on Saturday, May 9th from 11:30am-2pm at Kinsmen Park.

**May 5** - National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+. The Town of Strathmore and Kickstand invite you to a collaborative event observing Red Dress Day, at Kinsmen Park, 6:00 - 8:00 pm.

**June** – Canadian Men's Health Month. "During the month of June men and boys are encouraged to take charge of their health. Get screened, eat a healthy meal, exercise, get outdoors and check in with a friend. Use this month to set good habits in motion and carry them throughout the year."

**June 19** – True North's 5th Annual **Drive for a Difference** charity golf tournament! Register your team at [truenorthab.com](http://truenorthab.com)!

**June 24** - True North's Annual General Meeting & Report to the Community. We review a year of change, development, and growth as we work together to make our programming more efficient, respond to regional trends and community needs, and work continuously in our efforts to help create a future where all are free from violence. You're invited! More details will be posted on our socials soon! View the [Report to the Community 2024-2025](#).

**June 1-7** – Seniors' Week is a time for the community to get together, celebrate, and recognize the contributions our Seniors have made to our lives and community.

**June 15** – World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, established by the World Health Organization, is designated to the prevention of elder abuse.

**July 24** – International Self-Care Day is designated to the promotion of healthy lifestyle choices that support your mental, physical, and spiritual health.



In January, True North attended the 2025 SWCC Business Excellence Awards! We are so grateful to have been one of the Top 5 Non-Profits operating in Strathmore & Wheatland County! Congratulations, **Community Futures Wild Rose**, for your well-deserved win! 🏆🏆 We are honoured to work with and alongside so many impactful organizations.

**Follow us for more updates!**



**Our mailing address is:**

PO BOX 2162, Strathmore, AB, T1P 1K2

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