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Healing begins with being heard: FTP?s services foster recovery and hope

When people think of Family Transition Place (FTP), many immediately think of an emergency shelter and crisis support. While these services remain a vital part of our work, they represent just one piece of the comprehensive care available to individuals and families throughout Dufferin County and Caledon.

At the heart of FTP is a team of compassionate, trauma-informed counsellors who help individuals navigate some of life's most difficult experiences. Whether someone is living with the impacts of gender-based violence, sexual violence, trauma, addiction, mental health concerns or family challenges, FTP offers free, confidential counselling services designed to meet people where they are and support them on their path toward healing.

Every person's story is unique, which is why our counselling programs are flexible, accessible and tailored to individual needs. Services are available in person, virtually or by telephone, helping reduce barriers to accessing support.

Crisis counselling: Support when it matters most

Reaching out for help can be one of the hardest steps to take. FTP's Crisis Counselling services are available to anyone experiencing abuse, violence, trauma or an immediate crisis.

Our trained crisis counsellors provide compassionate, non-judgmental support, helping individuals understand their options, develop safety plans, access emergency shelter if needed and connect with additional community resources. Whether someone needs immediate intervention or simply someone to listen, every call is met with respect, empathy and understanding.

No referral is required,, and support is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Clinical counselling supports ongoing healing

Healing doesn't happen overnight. For many survivors, recovery is a journey that takes time, patience and ongoing support.

FTP's Clinical Counselling program offers trauma-informed therapeutic support for individuals who have experienced gender-based violence, intimate partner violence, family violence, sexual violence or other traumatic life experiences. Counsellors work collaboratively with clients to help them process their experiences, develop healthy coping strategies, strengthen resilience and move toward their personal goals.

Sessions are individualized and client-centred, recognizing that healing looks different for everyone. Counselling is offered in a safe, confidential environment where clients can explore their experiences without fear of judgment.

Rural Response program brings support closer to home

Living in a rural community can sometimes make accessing services more challenging. Transportation barriers, isolation and limited local resources can leave individuals feeling alone.

FTP's Rural Response Program was created specifically to address these challenges by bringing counselling, advocacy and outreach services to women living in North Dufferin and surrounding rural communities.

This program offers crisis intervention, counselling, safety planning, emotional support, system navigation and connections to community resources, ensuring geography is never a barrier to receiving help.

By meeting clients within their own communities whenever possible, Rural Response helps increase access to vital supports while

reducing the isolation many survivors experience.

Addictions Counselling: Compassionate support without judgment

Substance use is often closely connected with experiences of trauma and violence. FTP recognizes that many individuals may be coping with these experiences while also navigating challenges related to alcohol or drug use.

Our Addictions Counselling program provides specialized support for women through a trauma-informed, harm reduction approach. Rather than focusing solely on substance use, counsellors work alongside clients to understand the underlying factors contributing to addiction while supporting healthier coping strategies and personal wellness goals.

Whether someone is seeking recovery, reducing harm or simply exploring their relationship with substance use, FTP provides compassionate, individualized care in a supportive environment.

Parent and Child Counselling helps families heal together

Children are deeply affected by conflict, abuse and trauma, even when they are not the direct target. Early intervention can make a meaningful difference in helping young people process their experiences and build healthy emotional skills.

FTP's Parent & Child Counselling program supports both children and caregivers by providing age-appropriate therapeutic interventions that strengthen relationships, improve communication and foster resilience.

Through counselling, children are given opportunities to safely express emotions, better understand their experiences and develop healthy coping strategies while caregivers receive support in strengthening family relationships and promoting healing within the home.

Mobile Crisis: Meeting people where they are

Sometimes support cannot wait for an office appointment.

FTP's Mobile Crisis Counsellor works alongside community partners, such as the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), Dufferin Child and Family Services (DCAFS), Services and Housing in the Province (SHIP), Headwaters Health Care Centre, Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), Peel Addiction Assessment and Referral Centre (PAARC) and EveryMind, to respond directly to individuals experiencing domestic and sexual violence crisis. Support is available throughout Dufferin County and Caledon.

By providing immediate assessment, crisis intervention, emotional support, safety planning and referrals, the Mobile Crisis program helps ensure individuals receive timely assistance while connecting them to longer-term supports when needed.

This collaborative approach strengthens community response and helps individuals access care during some of their most vulnerable moments.

Sexual Violence Community Engagement: Prevention through education

Supporting survivors is only one part of creating safer communities. Preventing violence through education is equally important.

FTP's Sexual Violence Community Engagement program works throughout Dufferin County and Caledon to increase awareness, reduce stigma and promote conversations around consent, healthy relationships, boundaries and bystander intervention.

Through presentations, workshops and community partnerships with schools, sports organizations, businesses and community groups, the program empowers individuals with knowledge while helping challenge the myths and misconceptions that contribute to

sexual violence.

Education creates opportunities for prevention, understanding and positive changes.

At FTP, healing happens every day. Counselling is more than providing therapy?it is about creating a safe space where individuals feel heard, believed, respected and supported. Whether someone is reaching out during a crisis or beginning a longer healing journey, our counsellors walk alongside clients every step of the way.

All counselling services at FTP are confidential and provided free of charge. No one should have to face abuse, violence, trauma or life's challenges alone.

If you or someone you know could benefit from counselling or support, our caring staff are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

This week's Community Voice submission was written by FTP. To access the organization's 24-Hour Support & Information Line, call 519-941-HELP (4357), 905-584-HELP (4357) or 1-800-265-9178. Anyone in need of support from FTP can also email support@familytransitionplace.ca or text 519-278-5410.