

CORNERSTONE SUMMER NEWSLETTER



June 2025

Kara's Canvas

My Journey Through Art, Healing,
and Connection

Hi! My name is Kara and I live at Cornerstone's Eccles Residence. Thank you for taking the time to read our Summer Newsletter.

The theme of this issue is something that brings us all together: art. From our upcoming Princeton art sale to paintings from St. Pius X high school students of our shelter beds, art can inspire and heal. I know it has for me.

I am an **Indigenous woman** and a member of the LGBTQ2S+ community.

I am also a **survivor of the Sixties Scoop** and the **residential school system**. When I was young, I was taken from my family and placed in foster care. Later, I was sent to a residential school.

Those early experiences shaped so much of who I am, sometimes in painful ways. They tore me from my roots and left me searching for safety, for belonging.

For years, I lived through trauma, displacement, and silence. I didn't always have a voice.

But something changed when I came to **Cornerstone Housing for Women**.



"The polar bears represent survival.

They're strong.

They take care of each other.

The northern lights are hope." - Kara

Newsletter at a Glance:

- ☀ Kara's Canvas
- ☀ Art Sale at the Shelter
- ☀ Student Art Sale at St. Pius X
- ☀ A Better Place to Sleep Campaign
- ☀ IKEA Partnership & Room Launch
- ☀ Donations
- ☀ Garden Party Success
- ☀ Meet our new Executive Director
- ☀ Coming Soon: Princeton Art Sale



With safety came something I didn't expect – **healing**, and a return to something I had forgotten I loved: **creating art**.

I started painting again.

I completed two pieces that mean so much to me. They show polar bears under the northern lights.

The polar bears represent survival. They're strong. They take care of each other. The northern lights are hope. And a connection to the land, and to who I am.

Painting is more than just a creative outlet for me.

"For the first time in a long time, I felt safe.

I felt like I could finally breathe.

It's the first place I've been able to just be myself."

– Kara

It's how I tell my story. It helps me make sense of the past and find peace in the present. Every brushstroke is an act of healing, of reclaiming my voice and my identity.

I dedicate these paintings to the children who never made it home. To the families broken by the Sixties Scoop. To the communities that still carry this pain. My art is for them and for all of us who are still finding our way back.

Healing takes time. It takes community. It takes spaces like Cornerstone, where women like me are seen, heard, and supported, not just for what we've been through, but **for who we are and who we are becoming**.

Thank you so much for supporting Cornerstone. In these next few pages, I'll walk you through some of the latest updates and hopefully show you how you're making a difference in the lives of women like me.

Donate Today

Shelter Art Market

Our shelter was abuzz this summer with colour, creativity, and community spirit as we hosted our first **Community Canvas: Shelter Art Market**.

The event brought residents, local artists, and neighbours together for an uplifting afternoon of **music, handmade art, and connection**, all in support of Cornerstone.

Every piece of art for sale was created by the residents and, like my art, each had a story behind it.



“As someone who started out at the shelter, before moving into supportive housing, I know how important art is to me. It is a form of liberation.” – Kara



Art with Heart

In May, we saw the power of art once again. **Young artists from St. Pius X High School** organized a breathtaking Art Show to support us here at Cornerstone and showcase their work. They did this with support from Pébéo and with the guidance of their incredible art teacher Julie Gant.

They raised an inspiring \$4,635.61, including over \$2,300 worth of donated hygiene supplies and food.

Their contributions went beyond money too. See how their art is helping buy new shelter beds on the next page!



“Art gave me a voice when I didn’t have one. Knowing that students used their art to support women like me is powerful. That’s healing.” – Kara

A Better Place to Sleep

It's been one year since we moved into a larger shelter.

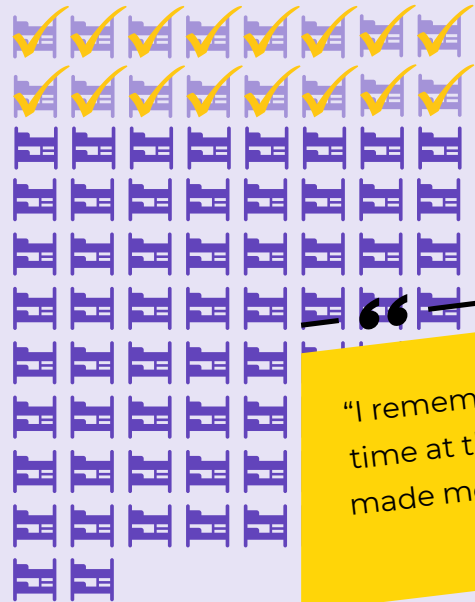
Cornerstone now supports 165 women every night, but many of our beds are worn out and no longer comfortable.

That's why we are launching **"A Better Place to Sleep"**, a campaign to raise \$125,000 for 82 new, durable bunk beds.

So far, we have raised \$30,000 (the equivalent of 20 beds!) and we know these beds are an investment in safety, dignity, and healing.

Consider donating today. With a \$5,000 donation, you get a shelter bed painting by a St. Pius X Student.

DONATE ❤️



"I remember my first time at the shelter, it made me feel seen." - Kara

"This space inspires me to paint again. I've never had anything like this." - Kara

IKEA and Cornerstone Build Comfort

We celebrated the launch of our newly transformed 3rd Floor Communal Room and 1st Floor Quiet Room, designed and furnished by IKEA.

"I love IKEA. From the moment I moved into Eccles, the bedspreads, the towels, even the little plant in my room, all made me feel like this is finally my home." - Kara

Thanks to IKEA's continued partnership, we have access to spaces that are more than just safe but also beautiful, healing, and filled with dignity.



Before

After

A Taste of Ireland Garden Party

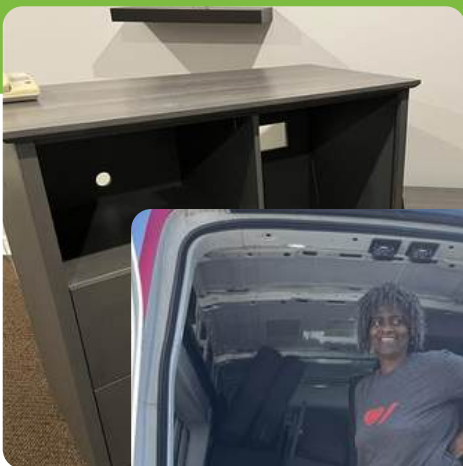
We had our second annual Garden Party, A Taste of Ireland, at the official residence of the Irish Ambassador. Presented by RBC Wealth Management, this event helps ensure that women like me get the chance to feel safe, supported, and seen.

It wasn't just a party. It was a celebration of over 40 years of helping women find their footing. Between those celebrating with us at the lovely Residence, to those who supported us from afar, **your generosity raised over \$53,000 for Cornerstone!**

It is so amazing to see what we can accomplish together. A big thank you to RBC for matching donations up to \$8,000, and a huge hank you to everyone who took the time and energy to support us. You are making a difference for the women at Cornerstone.



Furniture from Carleton Place Ford



This summer, Cornerstone received furniture donation from Carleton Place Ford, helping us make our spaces feel more like home.

Valued at \$24,860, this donation includes coffee tables, table lamps, dining tables and chairs, 2-seat sofas, bath towels, face towels, mat towels, hand towels, duvets, blankets, pillows, and bedsheets, microwaves, kettles, and travel-sized toiletries and more.

Thank you so much to Carleton Place Ford!

Our New Executive Director

We are excited to welcome **Anne Marie Hopkins** as **Cornerstone's new Executive Director!**

With more than 16 years in community healthcare, including her recent role as Director of Operations at Ottawa Inner City Health, Anne Marie brings deep expertise in supporting vulnerable populations, along with a grounded, frontline perspective shaped by years of direct service work.

Anne Marie's leadership blends strategy, compassion, and commitment to serve people just like me.



“When leaders have walked with people, you feel it. You trust it.” - Kara

Save the Date!

Purple Tie Gala 2025

Saturday October 4th, 2025

Princeton Art Market

Saturday July 19th, 2025

**Sponsored by the
Westboro Village BIA!**

Thank You!



Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter. Cornerstone has changed my life, and you are a big part of that. Your donations go a long way to providing safe and supportive housing for people like me.

Sincerely,
Kara

DONATE 

