



Sherrie Botten, Executive Director

Rowan House Society

Theme: Wrap-Around Supportive Responses for Women

The mission at the Rowan House Emergency Shelter is to provide crisis intervention, long-term support and education for those affected by family violence in rural communities. Rowan House Trauma Informed services take into account an understanding of trauma in all aspects of service delivery. Safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration and empowerment are the core values at Rowan House.

Critical Elements

- Rowan House staff worked with an outside consultant to plan the steps that needed to be done in order to become trauma informed. To become a truly trauma informed organization takes time and commitment from all layers of the organization; everyone must buy -in from the front line level to the board level. Every aspect of Rowan House is trauma informed including all paper work, all services for women and children, the physical setting. The main goal is all individuals accessing the services of Rowan House are not to be retraumatized.
- Being trauma informed also means a commitment to staff well-being- including 12 wellness days, supervision, solution circles (team problem solving), spiritual room available for staff use, open door policy for debriefing and consultation for staff with management and ongoing training.
- Work with the client where she is at; recognizes that she is the most knowledgeable about her life, listen to her, empower her, provide her with choices and lots of information
- Everyone is respected; there is no judgement; focus is “what happened to you not what is wrong with you”
- Training of staff is important- in the areas of trauma, cultural diversity and aboriginal issues
- Five core values guide all the work of Rowan House: Safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration and empowerment Healing Circles for residents – four topics: Mask making circle, Creating safety circle, Intergenerational focus circle, Self-compassion circle
- Outreach Program provides services to women in the Foothills region including one-on-One healthy relationship and domestic abuse education; and 6 week closed groups. The Outreach workers also provide weekly support on the Eden Valley reserve. The outreach workers supply lunch and facilitate a peer support group. The outreach workers look for women in the community that have skills to share with the other women including beading, making shawls and the necessary supplies are contributed by Rowan House. The workers are there to listen and be available for support.