



WOMEN'S HEALTH
IN WOMEN'S HANDS
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE
INCREASE • INNOVATE • IGNITE



The mandate of Women's Health in Women's Hands (WHIWH) Community Health Centre is to provide primary healthcare to Black Women and Women of Color from the Caribbean, African, Latin American and South Asian communities in Metropolitan Toronto and surrounding municipalities. We are committed to working from an inclusive feminist, pro-choice, anti-racist, anti-oppression, and multilingual participatory framework in addressing the issue of access to healthcare for our mandated priority populations encompassing gender, race, class, violence, sexual orientation, religion, culture, language, disability, immigration status and socio-economic circumstances.



# Message From the Board Chair: Dr. Natasha Browne

Nearly 20 years after its establishment, Women's Health in Women's Hands Community Health Centre remains a remarkable organization. It continues to be at the forefront of care for Black Women and Women of Colour and has gained notable reputation nationally and both

internationally. While I have been a part of WHIWH's in various capacities through the years, this marks my first as Chair of your Board of Directors. It is a position I hold with great pride, as well as a deep understanding of the challenges that lay ahead.

Only a few months into my term and we have already seen a flurry of activity unfold. WHIWH-CHC has fully embraced the first year of its strategic plan and continues to epitomize the words it set out for itself of ignite, increase, innovate. The groundwork has begun as we enhance our resources by providing increased focus in the area of chronic disease. We are building tremendous momentum as we collaborate with a number of academic and community organizations in various areas of research geared to our priority population, and we embrace innovation as we continue our outreach to Black women and women of Colour. The re-launch of WHIWH's fully redesigned website further attests to our commitment to the promotion and visibility strategy we have set forth, while staying on track with our vision of being leaders in racialized women's healthcare, research and education.

As always, I am inspired by the hard work of WHIWH's staff, students, and volunteers. I know that the activities which have made WHIWH a leader would not have happened without their commitment and support. On behalf of the Board I extend a heartfelt thanks to all who have helped the organization and continue to propel it forward.



# Message From the Executive Director: Notisha Massaguoi

It is once again a time to reflect on our past year's work, share our successes as well as illuminate our vision for the future of our organization. Next year will proudly mark WHIWH's 20th year of providing exemplary healthcare to racialized women. We succeed in being leaders in the care of our priority

population because we strive to make a difference in the success of the communities we serve and come from. I continue to be impressed with the amount of organizational activity that has taken place since our last report. This year alone we hosted Dalton McGuinty, Premier of Ontario and David Caplan, Minister of Health for their announcement of proposed legislation that will expand the role of many health care providers. We were a presence at national and international conferences as well as expert guest speakers at several UN forums and our groundbreaking research continues to be published in a number of respected academic journals and stands alone as definitive statements on the lives of racialized women in Canada.

With the increasing amount of underserved racialized women experiencing barriers to accessing primary healthcare services and their increasing prevalence rates for chronic diseases, community health centre's such as WHIWH remain the backbone of primary healthcare for our communities. Health equity remains a priority for all of us at WHIWH and the need to improve quality services for racialized women reminds us that the work that we do has never been more important as we enter our 20th year.

With a renewed focus generated through our strategic plan, we will continue to build on our legacy of success and significantly expand our outreach to and programs for the communities we serve. We will accomplish our strategic objectives set for the next three years through leveraging our significant expertise, partnerships and experience. All of our initiatives will continue to be supported by our highly skilled and engaged Board of Directors, our expertly trained and motivated professional staff, and a growing number of health care placement students and volunteers.

Providing exemplary care for our priority population is what we do. Through our collaborate efforts, we will continue to make strides towards reducing barriers to accessing healthcare for women from our priority groups. It is our mission. We will not waiver. And I'm thankful that all of you are here to support us each step of the way.



## WHIWH LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE

WHIWH unveiled its thoroughly redesigned Website, http://www.whiwh.com earlier this year. Our new Website showcases a cleaner look, a colour coded, easily navigable interface, and a host of added features. The site provides visitors with a more user-friendly experience and allows WHIWH to build added awareness of our inclusive multidisciplinary services.. The objective of the redesign was to simplify and create a more focused and direct communication with our clients and others who visit the Website. The new look will be augmented by social networking tools which will assist in enhancing the profile and visibility of Women's Health in Women's Hands Community Health Center both at home and abroad.

#### PREMIER'S VISIT



WHIWH was delighted to host Ontario's Premier, Dalton McGuinty, and the Minister of Health, David Kaplan on May 11th, 2009. It was on this morning, that the provincial

government announced proposed changes to the scope of practice for many in the health care field. After touring the facilities at WHIWH, the Premier held a news conference in which he announced proposed legislation that would provide health care professionals with the capacity to provide more services and in turn improve patient access and safety. By expanding the role of health care professionals, the province is taking one small step in addressing the shortage and lack of access many women face.

As an organization committed to working from an inclusive feminist, pro-choice, anti-racist, anti-oppression, and multilingual participatory framework in addressing the issue of access to healthcare for our mandated priority populations, WHIWH was proud to be a part of the slow but steady progress that the Premier and the Minister of Health are making to improve the health of Black Women and Women of Colour.





#### **ACCREDITATION MILESTONES**

Women's Health in Women's Hands Accreditation Recognition for Excellence and Innovation.

Women's Health in Women's Hands CHC has participated in fostering learning, quality improvement and accreditation through Community Organizational Health's Building Healthier Organizations accreditation process. This process aims to strengthen organizational infrastructure and operations and to continually improve responsiveness and effectiveness.

Women's Health has been recognized for performance of Excellence and Innovation in the following areas

### Accessibility

Women's Health in Women's Hands prizes accessibility and works to constantly monitor and address barriers to access for its priority populations. The design of the centre's physical space, hours of opening, practices which respect women's privacy, and providers who reflect the community the centre serves, have helped to foster access. The centre has systems in place to ensure clients who need immediate service receive it, including daily scheduling that enables a provider to respond to clients with urgent needs.

## **Board Establishment and Operations**

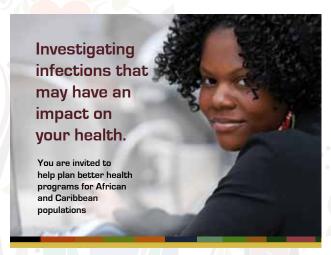
Women's Health in Women's Hands brings its beliefs and values to life at all levels of the organization. Values include diversity and access and clearly guide how staff and board work with each other, with community members and with their clients. Black women and women of Colour are actively recruited to become members of the centre and the board. Opportunities are discussed with clients and community members at every turn, including at intake and during community activities. As a result, corporate membership, board membership and employees reflect the centre's priority populations, namely African, Caribbean, Latin American and South Asian women.

#### Research

Research is central to Women's Health in Women's Hands and its work. Research projects are inclusive, built around partnerships, and thoroughly designed and thought through. Results are used and disseminated in ways that are appropriate and tailored to different audiences – whether for the international research or inter-governmental community, to advocate to Canadian policy makers, to educate and build projects with other service providers, or to apply changes to the centre's own practices in order to benefit clients.

## **Continuity and Coordination**

Women's Health in Women's Hands brings to its work a clear, strong, broad view of the determinants of health. The centre has developed and employs an anti-oppression framework that looks at the whole person and recognizes and addresses its clients' unique situations and how these impact their access to health care and their health care needs. The centre's model of culturally competent counseling is scheduled for publication.



## WHAT'S NEW IN RESEARCH

WHIWH in collaboration with York University will be conducting a Vitamin D study entitled "The Role of Vitamin D and Calcium Supplementation in Modulating the Pathogenesis of Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus." The study will be carried out by researchers: Mazen J. Hamadeh (York University), and Vivia McCalla (Women's Health in Women's Hands Community Health Centre)

The purpose of the research is to examine the effects of vitamin D and calcium supplements on type 2 diabetes. Researchers will look at the effect of vitamin D and calcium supplementation on markers such as blood sugar and insulin levels, and insulin resistance.

Researchers believe that people who take supplements of vitamin D and calcium will have lower levels of blood glucose and insulin, and lower insulin resistance. The results of this study could give people living with type 2 diabetes important information to help reduce the risk of long term complications.

#### **NEW PUBLICATIONS**

As health inequalities blur borders and common health concerns transcend boundaries, the field of inclusive multidisciplinary multicultural health is emerging to capture a greater portion of the public health spotlight. The field and study of health is constantly reinventing itself. With research come new techniques, modes of study and approaches. WHIWH is pleased to be published in a number of journals, various publications and conference proceedings which assist in expanding knowledge of and approach to health care for Racialized Women.

Curling, D., Chatterjee, S., & Massaquoi, N. (2009). Women's Transnational Locations as a Determinant of Mental Health: Results from a Participatory Action Research Project with New Immigrant Women of Colour in Toronto, Canada. In J. Gullivan and S. Cooper (Ed.), Pathways, Bridges and Havens – The Psychosocial Determinants of Women's Health (pp. 81-98). CAPE BRETON UNIVERSITY PRESS.

## **SELECTED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

- Toronto Central LIHN Health Connections Symposium. Presentation: Health Equity: From Challenges to Solutions, Ryerson University.
- National African Canadian Policy Conference.
   Presentation: Gender and Healthcare Policy for African Canadian Communities, Ottawa.
- Ontario Institute for Studies in Education Healthy Queer Communities Conference. Presentation: Access to Primary Health Care for Queer Women of Color, Toronto.
- Elizabeth Bruyere Institute Psychosocial, Spiritual and Multiculturalism issues in Healthcare conference. Presentation: Beyond the isms – Anti-oppression practice in Health Care, Ottawa.
- Canadian Association for HIV Research. Presentation: Missed HIV Prevention Opportunities: African and Caribbean Women and HIV Testing during pregnancy. Vancouver. (Award Winner for Best Abstract in the Social Science Track).
- The American Psychological Association Annual Meeting: Presentation. The Intersection of Migration with HIV Risk in Vulnerable Populations and Their Families in Canada. Toronto.
- Ontario AIDS Network 2nd Annual PHA Leadership Development Alumni Event. Presentation: From Subject

to Leaders: Building Research Literacy from Research Experience. Toronto.

- African Caribbean Council on HIV/AIDS in Ontario PHA Summit. Presentation: Parents, Youth and Disclosure, Toronto
- OHTN Research Conference. Presentation: GIPA panel: GIPA, HIV, Care and Research, Toronto.

## WHIWH WORK WITH THE UNITED NATIONS



As an official NGO of the UN Economic and Social Council ( ECOSOC) WHIWH was invited to participate in several UN events over the past year. Dr Natasha Browne, Lori-Green Walker, Ann Linda Cornwell and Michelle Osbourne attended the Fiftythird session of the Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations Headquarters New York from 2 to 13 March 2009. The

Commission on the Status of Women considered the theme: "The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including care giving in the context of HIV/AIDS" at its 53rd session.

The Commission on the Status of Women is a functional commission of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), dedicated exclusively to gender equality and advancement of women. It is the principal global policymaking body. Every year, representatives of Member States gather at United Nations Headquarters in New York to evaluate progress on gender equality, identify challenges, set global standards and formulate concrete policies to promote gender equality and advancement of women worldwide.

### **UNAIDS**

WHIWH Programs and Research Manger Wangari Tharao was invited to participate as an expert resource person and panel rapporteur at the 2009 UNAIDS Program Coordinating Board meeting in Geneva Switzerland. The meeting theme was "People on the move – forced displacement and migrant populations".

The meeting also featured WHIWH's documentary "The Woman I Have Become". The intent of the meeting was to discuss how effective, culturally and accessible services could be provided for diverse migrant and refugee (mobile) populations to ensure universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, support and care within an environment where mobile populations continue to experience stigma based on multiple dimensions including race, gender, sexual orientation, dis(ability), culture, etc and where migrants are often accused of bringing problems, including HIV.

## **UN Civil Society Development Forum**

Executive Director Notisha Massaquoi was invited to be a guest speaker at the 2009 United Nations Civil Society Development Forum (CSDF) in Geneva, Switzerland. The Forum theme was "Threats to the Health and Sustainable Development of Nations (Civil Society Proposals on Global Public Health in the Context of the Global Economic Crisis)". The Forum addressed six topics:

- Responding to health inequities at local and international levels
- 2. Dealing with the shortage of health care workers
- Addressing the increase in non-communicable/chronic disease
- 4. Financing global access to health, including health technologies
- Ensuring the right to health for women throughout the life-cycle
- 6. Promoting prevention and treatment of HIV-AIDS.

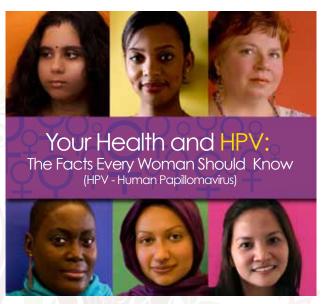
The CSDF's substantive and advocacy goal was to highlight the crucial role of the Internationally Agreed Development Goals and Millennium Development Goals in the pursuit of a results-oriented strategy for global development that is just, participatory and sustainable.

## **NEW RESOURCE**

WHIWH has developed a new resource entitled: "Your Health and HPV". The resource is geared towards young racialized women aged 16-25. Funded by the Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion, the resource will be launched at an upcoming Young Women's Reproductive Health Forum.

The need for this resource emerged from a five year CIHR study which is currently in progress in partnership with the University of Toronto and the Maple Leaf Health Clinic.

The five year study aims to define how STI co-infections drive HIV susceptibility. The study is coordinated by Lisungu Chieza. Principle investigators are Dr. Rupert Kaul of University Health network and Dr. Mona Loutfy of Women's College Hospital/Maple Leaf Clinic.



"Thank you very much for encouraging me to participate in the study, this was God send, He loves me you know! I did not realize that I had this other problem which I am now being treated for. If it wasn't for this study I wouldn't have known about it, you know. The doctor at the WHIWH was very kind to me."

"Over the weekend I was sharing with 2 of my colleagues about this problem that was flagged by the study. I met the study physician this other day & she explained to me what that meant. I later had an appointment with my Gyno & was able to have a meaningful discussion with him & asked a lot of questions. My friend says she also wants to come & participate in the study so that she can get checked, just in case she may also be having other problems, you never know."

## **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

#### **Pre/postnatal Programs**

We offer interdisciplinary pre and postnatal programs to prepare mothers for the birth of their new baby and to help provide the best possible beginning for new born children including practical tips for healthy birthing, labour and delivery, relaxation, exercise, nutrition, baby care, baby blues and breast feeding. Our services also include prenatal assessment, education and counseling on parenting, substance abuse, STI's and HIV/AIDS, and the care of mothers and infants post delivery.

Supportive care and counseling is provided on a one to one basis and through weekly support groups for expecting

mothers and mothers of new born babies up to 6 months. The programs offer participants the opportunity to meet with other



mothers and share experiences related to pregnancy, birth and caring for newborns. Through counseling and support participants are provided information regarding reproductive choices, which take into account their individual needs. Coordinated by Cherrise Solomon, Community Health Nurse, Sharon Khoo, Dietitian and Cindy Tsai, Dietitian.

"WHIWH has many helpful programs. In my case for example, counseling for times when I needed someone to talk to and trust. When I was pregnant I learned a lot just by attending the prenatal classes."

## **World Dance Workshops**

WHIWH offered a six week series of dance classes throughout the year to promote healthy activity, exercise, the opportunity to build community and explore cultures. Teachers from different parts of the world were recruited to teach Egyptian belly dance, ballet, tap, Bollywood dance, Salsa, and West African dance. Coordinated by our MSW placement student Stephanie Cressman.



"What do I like about it? The laughter, the togetherness. The dance and exercise was good too!"

"Refreshing, Good exercise, great fun – you should try!"

### **Re-drawing Resistance**



Public discussion and media attention on violence against women in the South Asian communities is not new. It is however, rare for women to get a chance to speak out in a powerful way. WHIWH-CHC recently hosted an art exhibit by women from India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and the United States who used painting, hand sewn clothes, ceramics, clay and bead products, video installations, collage, photographs and story boards to share their stories of resisting and surviving violence in their lives.

Re-Drawing Resistance was originally developed in 2005 by Serena Chaudhry, a public health social worker, counselor and advocate for social justice based in the U.S. and Prasanna Poornachandra from the International Foundation for Crime Prevention and Victim Care in India. It was formally launched in the fall of 2007, at The Queens Museum of Art in N.Y.C. The exhibit came to Toronto through the initiatives of Rupaleem Bhuyan, Assistant Professor in the University of Toronto, Faculty of Social Work. In early 2009, Rupaleem connected with WHIWH-CHC for hosting support as an ideal venue for displaying the art.

This year, the participating organizations were Sanctuary for Families: New York City, The International Foundation for Crime Prevention and Victim Care: Chennai (India), Sakhi for South Asian Women: New York City, of ERR: India and Sri Lanka and, Edhi Foundation: Pakistan. We were excited and proud to be part of this cross-border dialogue on violence against women.

The Toronto chapter of the Re-drawing Resistance was very successfully launched on May 7th (May being the South Asian Heritage month in Canada) at WHIWH-CHC with close to 60 people in attendance. The collection remained on display at the Centre throughout the month. As well as showcasing the art collection with a background music score by DJ Amita, the Toronto launch had Kiran Mehndi reading her poems, a short play by actor Zavaré Tengra exploring the life story of a transgendered woman and, Andrea Gunraj reading from her debut novel "The Sudden Disappearance of Seetha".

Re-Drawing Resistance hopefully, will be showcased again with South Asian women from Toronto adding their stories to this travelling art collective.

## STUDENT PLACEMENTS

Enrollment in health professions education continues to rise across the province. Many students who choose to enter the health field value the opportunity gained through related work experiences. WHIWH is pleased to be involved in student placement programs at our facility, which provide individuals the opportunity to work in a multidisciplinary inclusive feminist, pro-choice, anti-racist, anti-oppression, and multilingual participatory framework setting.

We encourage the understanding of health care issues that impact our priority populations that is gained through such an experience. It is our hope that the Centre's continued commitment and investment in the future of students will produce practitioners with a clear understanding of the issues that Women's Health in Women's Hands promotes and will increase access to health care for women from our priority population.

This year we have offered placements to 23 students from the following disciplines:

Medical Electives: Ajanta Sivaharan; Shaista Amin;

Petal Abdoul; Ritika Goel; Christina Lee; Katrina Rodrigues;

Ashna Bowry; Mei-Ling Wiedmeyer Medical Student: Tamar Rubin

Naturopathic Medical Student: Awet Sium

Nursing Students: Kat Frastacky; Jasmine El-Hamzawi

Nurse Practitioner Student: Julie Vandahl

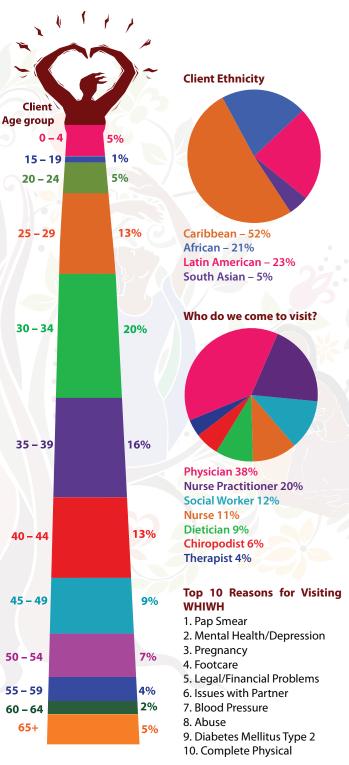
Dietitian Students: Celia Choy, Mandana Amir Shaghaghi;

Yousra Dabbouk

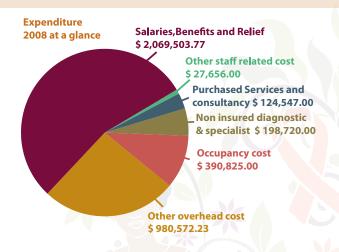
Social Work Students: Maisha Yearwood, Stephanie Cressman,

Irina Kasianik, Dorian King, Lisa Thomas Summer Students: Mira Mehes; Asiatou Barry

# NUMBER OF CLIENT VISITS FOR 2008-09 (6,635)



# **Summarized Financial Statement**



# **Expenditure**

Salaries, Benefits and Relief
Other staff related cost
Purchased Services and consultancy
Non insured diagnostic & specialist
Occupancy cost
Other overhead cost

# **Total Expenditure**

### Revenue

Federal Grants Provincial Grants Municipal Grants Foundations Other

#### **Total Revenue**

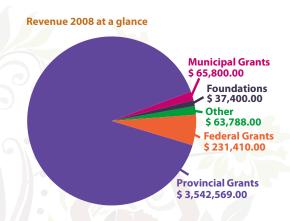
# **Adjustments**

Transfer to Special Project Funds
Due to Central Local Health Integration
Network
Due to Ministry of Health and Long
Term Care

# **Total Revenue minus adjustments**

Complete audited financial statements available upon request from the office of the Executive Director

Women's Health in Women's Hands summarized stament of Revenue and Expenses for the year ended March 31st, 2009 (With Comparative Figures for 2008)



	2009	2008
\$	2,069,503.77	\$ 2,123,980.00
\$	27,656.00	\$ 30,222.00
\$	124,547.00	\$ 166,167.00
\$	198,720.00	\$ 184,802.00
\$	390,825.00	\$ 355,878.00
\$	980,572.23	\$ 546,208.00
\$	3,791,824.00	\$ 3,407,257.00
\$	231,410.00	\$ 85,729.00
\$	3,542,569.00	\$ 3,355,788.00
\$	65,800.00	\$ 45,015.00
\$	37,400.00	\$ 151,725.00
\$	63,788.00	\$ 26,316.00
\$	3,940,967.00	\$ 3,664,573.00
\$	120,241.00	\$ 86,236.00
\$	12,915.00	\$ 31,476.00
\$	15,987.00	\$ 139,604.00
\$	3,791,824.00	\$ 3,407,257.00

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS and STAFF**

### **WHIWH Board of Directors**

Dr. Natasha Browne - Chair Archana Mathew - Vice Chair Rumana Chowdhury - Treasurer Sharon Njobo - Secretary Fouzia Warsame - Member At Large Gabriela Agatiello - Member At Large Lauriana Mandody- Member At Large Novlette Fraser - Member At Large Saira Zuberi - Member At Large Richelle Samuel - Member At Large

## **WHIWH Staff**

Alana Clarke Andrena Mookram Anu Lala Carolina Luengo Cherisse Solomon Cindy Tsai Claire Langevine Claudia Samayoa Corrine McPherson Deone Curling Grace Makhurane Helen Gateri Ishara Jeyachandran Dr. Nalya Jessamy Latoya Maloney Linda Cornwell Lisungu Chieza Lori-Ann Green-Walker Marvelous Muchenje

Dr. Megan Saunders Mercedes Umana Michelle Osbourne Nimo Bokore Notisha Massaquoi Rosa Maria Flores Dr. Sandra Romain Sharon Khoo Shirley Cheung Soma Chatterjee Sumintra Sammy Uitsile Ndlovu Vivia McCalla Vivian Nairimo Wangari Tharao Yogeeta Sharma Dr. Fazia Maieed Dr. Praseedha Janakiram Dr. Sonia Maholtra Shalah Defileh

## **COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND FUNDERS:**

African and Caribbean Council on HIV/AIDS in Ontario
Africans in Partnership Against AIDS
AIDS Bureau, Ontario Ministry of Health
Black Coalition for AIDS Prevention
Canadian Women's Health Network
Committee for Accessible AIDS Treatment
Jamestown Women and Children Services
Mount Sinai Hospital
Mujeres al Frentes
Maple Leaf Health Clinic
University Health Network
Hospital for Sick Children
Ottawa Children's Hospital
Centre for Urban Health
Fred Victor Centre

University of Toronto: Social Work, Nursing, Medicine, Public Health Sciences, Psychology, Behavioral Sciences

York University - Social Work, Nursing

Ryerson University – Midwifery, Nursing/Nurse Practitioner, Internationally Trained Dietitians, Social Work

University of PEI – Nutrition

Dalhousie University – Social Work

Ontario Women's Health Network

South Riverdale Community Health Services

St. Elizabeth Health Care

St. Joseph's Hospital

St.Michael's Hospital

The Daily Bread Food Bank

U-MOVE – United Mothers Opposed to Violence Everywhere

Voices of Positive Women

Women's College Hospital

Women's College Research Institute

### **Funders**

Women's Health in Women's Hands expresses gratitude to our funders, first and foremost, the Central Toronto Local Health Integration Network.

We are also grateful for the funding provided by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, City of Toronto AIDS Prevention Investment Program, City of Toronto Community Safety Investment Program, Canadian Institutes of Health Research, AIDS Bureau, Ontario Diabetes Program of Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, Ontario Trillium Foundation, and the Public Health Agency of Canada.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

### **Address**

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## **General Information:**

Tel: (416) 593-7655 Fax: (416) 593-5867 TTY: (416) 593-5835 E-mail: whiwh@web.net www.whiwh.com

#### **Hours**

Mon, Tues, Thur: 9:00 am to 8:00 pm Wed, Fri: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm 3rd Sat. of the Month: 10:00am to 4:00 pm

# **Location Map**









