

Elizabeth Fry Society Mainland Nova Scotia



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Member Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies

www.efrynovascotia.com
www.ourthymecafe.biz

Mission Statement & Philosophy

Elizabeth Fry Society

Our Society continues to work with, and on behalf of, women involved in and those at risk of becoming involved in the criminal justice by:

- ♦ **Responding** to the needs of women in prison.
- ♦ **Developing** programs and services in the community for women who have been charged with offences and women at risk of becoming involved in the criminal justice system
- ♦ **Encouraging** public awareness and understanding of issues related to women involved in the criminal justice system.
- ♦ **Improving** the quality of life of the children by improving the quality of life of the mother.
- ♦ **Lobbying** for the improvement of conditions for women in local penal institutions and for changes in the criminal justice system.

The Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia:

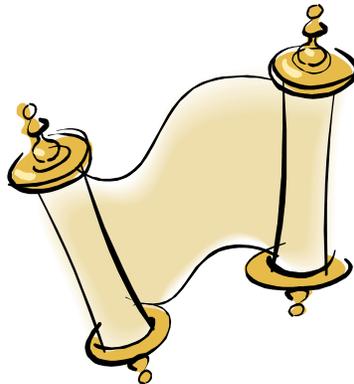
- ♦ Is a community based organization funded in the premise that the community has an important role to play in the criminal justice process.
- ♦ Exists in order to monitor and review the government's role in the delivery of the criminal justice system.
- ♦ Believes in the principles of fairness and justice for all people under the criminal justice act.
- ♦ Recognizes that the contributing factors to women being involved in the criminal justice system can be directly attributed to social economic conditions.
- ♦ Supports alternatives to incarceration.
- ♦ Is committed to listening to the concerns of women in conflict with the law and responding to their expressed needs.

The purpose of the Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia is to work towards achieving fairness and equality for women in conflict or at risk of coming into conflict with the law by:

- ♦ Assuming a supportive role.
- ♦ Facilitating the implementation of services.
- ♦ Promoting public awareness of the Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia.

Code of Ethics

- ♦ Treat each individual with respect and accept that all individuals have worth;
- ♦ Maintain the confidentiality of information acquired through my employment and only disclose this information when authorized or legally obligated to do so;
- ♦ Follow policies and procedures as developed by my agency;
- ♦ Ensure that my personal activities do not interfere with my judgment and competence;
- ♦ Fulfill my obligations and responsibilities in a dependable and honorable manner;
- ♦ Provide client – centered care by encouraging the client to make her own decisions;
- ♦ Promote client involvement in her own affairs, including appropriate family and community involvement;
- ♦ Encourage the client to contribute to her own welfare by doing tasks of which she is capable;
- ♦ Contribute to the safety and security of the client, her personal property and physical environment.



The Origins of Elizabeth Fry



Elizabeth Fry (Gurney) was born in 1780 in England into a family of 18th century English Quakers. She believed in the equality of women and dedicated her life to advocating and supporting women living in atrocious conditions, both in the community and in the prison system. Upon visiting Britain's Newgate prison in 1813, Elizabeth discovered "300 women and their children, huddled together in two wards and two cells". She witnessed women and children crammed in filthy cells where the stench of filth and unwashed bodies was overwhelming. The women slept on the floor, "each with a space of about six feet by two to herself" with no bedding and were left to cook, feed and wash themselves all in this one cell. Appalled by the conditions at the Newgate prison, Elizabeth initiated programs for the women inside the prison to prepare them for their release, as well; she lobbied the British government to enforce changes to the penal system.

After her discoveries at the Newgate prison Elizabeth created a list of recommendations to bring forward to the House of Commons in 1817 for the humane treatment of women in conflict with the law. The recommendations that Elizabeth brought forth included:

- The sexes are separated.
- Women are supervised by women.
- Inmates be educated and counseled for their eventual release.

To learn more about Elizabeth Fry and the work that she had committed to throughout her life, you can go to: <http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/REfry.htm>

Origins of the Elizabeth Fry Society

180 years later, the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies and 24 Elizabeth Fry Societies across Canada have established themselves to continue in the fight for the humane treatment of women involved in the criminal justice system and those at risk. The Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies (CAEFS) was originally conceived of in 1969 and was incorporated as a voluntary non-profit organization in 1978. CAEFS is an association of self-governing, community based Elizabeth Fry Societies that work with and for women and girls in the justice system, particularly those who are, or may be, criminalized. Together, Elizabeth Fry Societies develop and advocate the beliefs, principles and positions that guide CAEFS. The association exists to ensure substantive equality in the delivery and development of services and programs through public education, research, legislative and administrative reform, regionally, nationally and internationally.

The Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia was formed in 1982 by a group of concerned women from the metro area. The Society joined the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies in 1984 and opened its office in 1987. The local Society has now five core staff positions (Interim-Executive Director & Program Coordinator, 2 Community Outreach Coordinators, a Café manager and assistant manager) who work with a group of 25 committed volunteers. The Society is working to achieve its ongoing mission of responding to the needs of women in prison and women at risk. The goals of the Elizabeth Fry Society is to develop and maintain high standards of programs and services for the purposes of aiding adults and young women who have come into, or who are at risk of coming into conflict with the law, whether such programs be in courts, institutions, or in the community, and whether they be for the purpose of assistance, guidance, rehabilitation or prevention, and whether provided by paid or volunteer personnel.

The Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia

Since 1982 the image of the Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia has greatly expanded. In this expansion, we strive to continually promote a positive image within the community, government and the clients we serve across the province. Creating this positive image is accomplished through educational presentations, word of mouth and through the development of community relations.

Throughout the years the Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia has built various partnerships with community agencies in funding special projects and programs. One such project that was developed in partnership with *Health Canada* was a Hepatitis C Project, which was divided into two segments. The first segment was a booklet devised of vocabulary that the women could understand about Hepatitis C. The second segment was a video production where three women from the Nova Institute for Women in Truro were interviewed. The video consisted of the women discussing the effects of living with Hepatitis C and the types of treatment they have undergone.

Another project that the Elizabeth Fry Society worked in partnership with was *Crime Prevention*. Youth workshops that focused on Anger Management strategies and Healthy Relationship strategies were developed and presented at St. Pat's High School on Maitland Street in Halifax. The feedback from the project turned into a successful endeavor. We are hoping to develop more projects in the future that focus on providing support and programs for youth in working towards greater education, awareness and prevention.

The Society worked in partnership with Mental Health Canada and the Status of Women Canada to produce the report *Women in Nova Scotia, Mental Illness and the Criminal Justice System, A Qualitative Review*. We interviewed women about their experiences living with mental health issues and the types of support and services that are available to them in the community. You can read the report at www.efrynovascotia.com

Our partnerships include but are not limited to:

- Coverdale
- Alice Housing
- Bryony House
- Canadian Mental Health
- Correctional Services Canada
- Status of Women
- Adsum House
- Stepping Stones
- Human Resources Development Canada
- Feed Nova Scotia
- Avalon Sexual Assault Center
- Various churches within HRM

Programs & Services

The Elizabeth Fry Society centralizes on three key areas: *education, awareness* and *prevention* for all women in the community. Through the services and programs that we offer we work towards promoting and encouraging change in these three key areas.

Programs and Services the Elizabeth Fry Society offers:

- **Supports and Services:** Our Society and the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies monitor and promote just treatment for all women, both those in the community and those incarcerated in the criminal justice system. Our society is also active in promoting change in our social and criminal justice systems.
- **Provincial Support Work.** Heather McKenzie works with women who are incarcerated at the Central Nova Scotia Correctional Facility and assists them in transitioning safely into the community.
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- **Federal Support Work.** Nicole Farmer works with women who are incarcerated at the Nova Institution for Women and assists them in transitioning safely into the community.
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- **Programming:** Programs are held at our location and/or at the Central NS Correctional Facility, they include: Anger Management, Healthy Relationships, Personal Boundaries, Relapse Prevention and a Stop-lifting Program. All programs were developed by The Elizabeth Fry Society and designed specifically for women. We hold social and recreational nights at the Central NS Correctional Facility on Sunday and Thursday evenings.

What is the Anger Management Workshop?

The Anger Management Workshop was developed to help women confront their issues with anger. Addressing anger issues, specific to women, has been identified as an immediate need by the women in our community. The workshop provides a comprehensive overview of the kinds of anger women encounter and ways to express that anger in healthy and appropriate ways that work for them – not against them.

Many women have difficulty recognizing and acknowledging their feelings of anger. The Anger Management Workshop investigates these feelings and provides coping tools, exercises and techniques that enable women to identify and deal with their feelings in a constructive way. When a woman is enrolled in the workshop, she will have the opportunity to discuss, in a safe and supportive environment, the issues surrounding anger with other women who are experiencing similar concerns.

“The effect this has had on my life: I came in not thinking anger was a problem but realizing now that how I react to my anger is a problem. I learned to react differently and appreciate the feelings I have. I do now think sometimes

after...but I am always thinking and changing or working on changing my reactions. Thanks!"

What is the Healthy Relationships Workshop?

Studies show that people with healthy relationships have more happiness and less stress. There are basic ways to make relationships healthy, even though each of us is different: parents, siblings, friends, boyfriends, girlfriends, professors, roommates, and classmates.

The workshop was designed to give women the opportunity to explore and evaluate their relationships with others. The workshop will introduce varied tools and skills that will enable women to develop the healthy relationships that will potentially improve the quality of their lives and the lives of those around them.

The workshop is a skills training workshop, not psychotherapy. It blends available materials from the educational and therapeutic helping fields and investigates these concepts into practical skills to use in daily life.

Healthy Relationships

- Promote the well being of those involved
- Are realistic and flexible
- Embrace sharing and talking
- Include self – care
- Use fair fighting techniques and negotiation

Principal topics covered in the Healthy Relationships workshop:

- Self Awareness
- Couple's Awareness
- Effective Communication
- Fighting Fair
- Negotiation

What is the Personal Boundaries Workshop?

The Personal Boundaries Workshop was developed to help women explore their feelings about personal boundaries. Addressing issues of weak or non-existent boundaries has been identified as an immediate need by the women in our community.

Many women have difficulty recognizing and acknowledging that their boundaries are being violated. The workshop investigates these issues and provides coping tools and techniques that enable women to develop solid boundaries that can promote healthier, happier lifestyles.

"I liked that the workshop was geared for women, by women, with women!"

Client of Personal Boundaries Workshop

The Personal Boundaries Workshop is offered in a series of four sessions. The principal topics covered in the workshop include:

- Identifying and understanding the need for personal boundaries.

- How our families influence our personal boundaries.
- Boundary development and personal responsibilities.
- How our boundaries (or lack of) determine our present and past relationships.

What is the Stop-Lifting Program?

It is a program designed for women who:

- Are convicted of theft under \$5000
- Are convicted of theft over \$5000
- Are convicted of fraud
- Believe they have a problem with shoplifting, fraud or theft and are seeking help

It consists of four 10 hour modules. It will help women identify factors that contribute to committing crimes and it will help women develop a personal plan for recovery.

The program will consider:

- The costs of shoplifting
- Who shoplifts
- The reasons women shoplift
- How life events contribute to women committing crimes
- The development of coping skills

We believe that shoplifting is a way to cope with pain in our lives. By working together we can identify maladaptive patterns and learn to make healthier choices.

Topics include:

- Self Awareness
- Anger Management
- Assertiveness
- Stress Management
- Dealing with Grief
- Communication
- Addiction...and many more!

All programs are held in a supportive, women-centered environment.

Additional Services:

- **Holly House:** safe, affordable housing, open to all women
- **Our Thyme Café:** A social enterprise initiative that provides women with the skills and training needed to work in the hospitality industry.
- **Pre-Release Planning:** Staff meets one-to-one with women incarcerated at the Central Nova Scotia Correctional Facility and the Nova Institute for Women to plan for their release. Plans often include housing, financial assistance, education and employment opportunities.

- **Social / Recreational:** Elizabeth Fry volunteers visit the women at the Central Nova Scotia Correctional Facility and provide a weekly Bingo, with prizes (non-financial) donated by the community and The Elizabeth Fry Society. Volunteers also hold a weekly Craft and Movie night at the Central Nova Scotia Correctional Centre.
- **Addiction Counseling:** Both one-to-one and group counseling is available for women in the community who live with an addiction.
- **Public Education:** Presentations are given upon request to interested groups on topics related to women in conflict with the law.
- **Consultation:** The Society is available for consultation on community agency and government programs and policies.
- **Community Development:** The Society works with other organizations to develop and implement programs relevant and accessible to women in the system.



HOLLY HOUSE

Safe, affordable housing in a supportive setting, one conducive to healing and, ultimately, to fostering the ability to live independently. This house is open to all homeless women in the community

Holly House created 8 new beds for women within HRM. The women are welcome to inhabit individual, rented units for up to two years during which time they are able to easily access our supportive services which are housed in an on-site office. The services available to the women, on a voluntary basis, include the kinds of one-on-one services currently offered by the Elizabeth Fry Society to the larger community and enable the women to address such personal issues as trauma and recovery, boundaries, forming healthy relationships, unresolved grief, low self-esteem and compromised coping skills. Addictions and mental health issues can also be addressed by our staff social workers and addictions counsellor. Moreover, the women are able to receive advocacy and life planning support on an as needed basis from our menu of programs and services



Our Thyme Cafe

Our Thyme Cafe realizes a long-time dream of the Elizabeth Fry Society. Based on a model of social enterprise Our Thyme Café and Catering provides an education and employment program for women and female youth experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness, involvement in the criminal justice system and/or other issues and barriers related to living in poverty. From an outcomes perspective the project provides immediate employment skills for women and

female youth with a long term goal of creating sustainable employment for these women. Partnerships with the Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Advanced Education and Service Canada's Employment Program provide a wage subsidy and job creation monies to support this initiative. The goal is to prepare women for jobs in the food service industry in a non-judgemental environment, in a program developed to provide and promote life skills, job readiness and hands on training, and to increase confidence and strengthen the ability of participants to obtain long term employment.

The Board of Directors

The Board of Directors consists of 5 - 12 members. Their basic responsibilities are to:

- Ensure the organization is following its mission and purpose.
- Ensure effective organizational planning.
- Ensure adequate resources.
- Manage resources effectively.
- Enhance the organization's public standing.
- Recruit and orient new board members and assess board performance.
- Determine, monitor, and strengthen the organization's programs and services.

Our Board of Directors consists of:

- Pamela Harrison- E.D. Transition House Assoc.of NS – Board Co-Chair
- Dawn Ferris- Administrative Support - Board Co-Chair
- Jennifer Cleator-Credit Counsellor-Board Treasurer
- Lori Root- Research Officer-Member at Large
- Kelly Murphy – Support Worker - Member at Large
- Michael Knight- – Senior Planning and Development Officer, NS
Department of Agriculture- Member at Large
- Kelly Abi-Daoud - Community Residential Worker – Member at Large
- Patricia Jones- Lawyer – Member at Large
- Kelly Ryan- Lawyer – Member at Large

The Committees:

There are various committees that the Elizabeth Fry Society has formulated. Members from the management team volunteer and core staff all sits all these committees. Each committee is designated for specific purposes and some committees will only be active when the need arises. There is presently four committees' altogether:

- Finance Committee
- Governance Committee
- Fund Development Committee
- Social Action Committee
- Second Stage Housing Committee
- Personnel Committee
- Our Thyme Café Committee

Core Staff Members

- **Jeanette Milley, Executive Director.** Jeanette implements programs and resources that promote personal empowerment and healthier lifestyles for women involved in, and those at risk of becoming involved in the criminal justice system. She provides addiction counseling services to women in the community. Jeanette is also involved in educating the community about the work of the Elizabeth Fry Society and works in partnership with many other organizations.
- **Heather McKenzie, Provincial & Community Resources Liaison Coordinator.** As Provincially Sentenced Women's & Community Liaison Coordinator, Heather works closely with women residing in the community and with women incarcerated at the Central NS Correctional Facility. She provides counseling and services on a daily / weekly basis for these women. Heather assists the women in developing a plan of action upon their release from prison and provides the support and guidance that is needed for these women. She also maintains a network of partnerships with several agencies in Nova Scotia to provide referrals for the women where appropriate.
- **Nicole Farmer, Federal & Community Resources Liaison Coordinator.** Federally Sentenced Women's & Community Liaison Coordinator Nicole works with women residing at Nova Federal Institution for Women in Truro NS and women who are living in or transitioning into the community. Nicole provides services and support that encourages women to live healthy and safe lifestyles. She is an intricate part of the women's pre-release planning and also refers women to appropriate resources in their reintegration process.
- **Mary Young, Our Thyme Café Program Training Coordinator.** Mary has a background in finance, but her passion is with cooking and catering. Mary was the unofficial caterer for Elizabeth Fry Society and other not-for-profit groups for many years. As our project took shape it was quickly identified that Mary was the person for the job! With 6 years involvement with Elizabeth Fry Society as finance coordinator Mary has an understanding of the many barriers that face the women we serve and her personal experiences strengthen that understanding.
- **Lynn Yetman, Our Thyme Café Program Training Coordinator.** Lynn has a background in health education and promotion. Lynn came to the Elizabeth Fry Society 4 years ago looking for resources and support as a result of her own life altering experience and has been working with the association ever since. Lynn plays a pivotal role in the running of the cafe and catering part of this initiative but she also contributes greatly to the success of the project by researching and developing links within the community.

Contributions of Volunteerism

“A Volunteer is a person who is a light to others, giving witness in a mixed up age, doing well and willingly the tasks at hand – namely, being aware of another’s needs and doing something about it.

A Volunteer is a person who remembers to do the thing to make other people happy, who takes the loneliness out of the alone by talking to them, who is concerned when others are unconcerned, who has the courage to be a prophet and to say the things that have to be said for the good of all.

A Volunteer is a person whose charity is fidelity, who is faithful in an unfaithful world, grateful in an ungrateful world, giving when all about are grasping, listening when others need to tell about their fears and problems.”

From “The Beacon” newsletter of Birthrite, South Africa

Volunteering is the most fundamental act of citizenship and philanthropy in our society. As the present moment we have 25 active volunteers involved in continuing the goals of the Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia. Our volunteers are recruited from university fairs, students from the criminology and sociology departments at St. Mary’s University and Mount Saint Bernard University and by word of mouth. At the Elizabeth Fry Society all of our volunteers complete a volunteer training program and are provided support and guidance while they are volunteering for one of our programs and / or services. Volunteers dedicate their time and energy to fulfill the Society’s mission in an on-going basis. Without our volunteers we would not be able to offer the many programs and services to the women on regular basis. Volunteers are the heart of our organization!

Members of the Society

The members of the Society come from all walks of life. Membership to the Society is open to anyone who wants to support the Society's goals and mission statement. Members are women who contribute their time to volunteer, women who are users of the services of the Society and those who wish to provide a financial contribution to the Society.



The Operational, Program, Special Project and Research Needs of the Society

- To maintain Holly House in a manner that is beneficial to the women who live there by adding increased staffing and additional services.
- To continue to provide the employment support training program at Our Thyme Café.
- Provide additional programs and services for women, both in the community and in the criminal justice system (Halifax Correctional Center & Nova Institute for Women).
- Expand our programs and services throughout the province and provide workshops that train the trainers for these programs.
- Provide a very “intense” re-integration program for women who are being released from the criminal justice system and for the women who live in the community.
- Increase networking to communities throughout the province to expand the image of E. Fry.
- Establish good working relationships with lawyers.
- Improve the structure and organization of the Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia.
- Create community education events (i.e. presentations, classes) to build education and awareness in what it is that the Elizabeth Fry Society works towards.
- Continue to establish working relationships with other agencies / organizations. Create consistent communication and interaction with each other to give clients the best care and support that is available.
- Implement improved and up-to-date technology systems in the office (i.e. new computers, power point projector, new fax machine and photocopier, more phone lines, new accounting system, updated website)
- Develop research projects that allow us to have a broader knowledge base on women in prison, mental health issues, physical health issues, the current dynamics of the prison system, etc.), so that we can provide more expertise in those areas that women incarcerated need.
- Continue to establish good working relationships with the staff at HCC and at Nova. Also educate the staff on changing their perceptions so that women incarcerated can be treated more like an individual as oppose to a number or a statistic.
- Work in partnership with the sister to maintain up to date information.
- Recruit local businesses in donating hygiene products in an on-going basis.
- Expand the Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia team: include a mental health worker (outreach), a psychologist, a youth worker, a fund development coordinator, a receptionist and an additional community outreach coordinator. Also include additional staff to work under each coordinator for the delivery of certain services.
- Provide more resources to the women in the community such as food vouchers, bus tickets, and quality personal care products.
- Establish an E. Fry office inside the Central Nova Scotia Correctional Centre and at the Nova Institute in Truro.

Fundraising and Additional Financial Support

Our clients come from all walks of life, in all geographical areas of the province. Throughout the years we have expanded our client base due to the increase in more women being criminalized. Younger women are coming into the criminal justice system with a limited knowledge of what their rights are and how to navigate the criminal justice system. Many women who become involved in the criminal justice system are experiencing barriers that include poverty, mental health issues, addictions and homelessness. To provide on-going and additional support, programs and services to the women we support it is essential to have the resources and personnel to continue our mission.

The image that The Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia portrays in the social service community is very positive and we are acutely aware that we must maintain this positive communication for the benefit of the women we serve. We must increase education and awareness in the community to show people the great benefits and rewards of providing the right supports and resources to women who may otherwise be labeled as non-productive citizens. We are always open to presenting educational events such as presentations and workshops in the community. Our limited staff compliment does present a challenge at times but we recognize the importance of being in the community.

Additional financial support for The Elizabeth Fry Society is a critical component in our ongoing commitment to meet the needs of the increased demand for our services and programming.

Where Do Our Funds Go?



The majority of the funds we receive from in-kind donations, membership fees, fundraising profits, and grants go towards our core operations. These funds allow us to continue our quest to honour and preserve our Society's mission statement and to meet our goals. The funds, in large part, go towards allowing us to deliver our programs and services to marginalized women.

Annual Fundraisers:

- Holly House Heroes
- Bowl-a-thon
- Mary Magdalene Appeal

Previous Fundraisers:

- Bar Auction
- Christmas Basket Raffle
- BBQ at a local grocery store
- Basket of Goodies raffled at the *Halifax Forum Craft Show*
- A Harley-Davidson Motorcycle Ticket Sale
- Painting raffled at the *Halifax Forum Craft Show*
- Cookbook Sales

Personal Motivation: Quotes to Reflect On

"We work hard at the prevention level so that women don't get criminalized. The majority of women in the federal system are not hard core criminals. Ninety-three percent of the women in the federal system are victims of abuse, trauma, addiction and mental health issues."

Core staff at E. Fry

"My husband and daughter think very highly of E. Fry!"

Client of E. Fry

"More funding needs to be made available for this workshop as it would be a very beneficial part of our children's education in learning life skills, coping mechanisms, etc..."

Client of Anger Management Workshop

"I want to empower the women to not come into conflict and most of all I want to make a difference in someone's life."

Core staff at E. Fry

"I recommend that all girls who come to the Correctional Centre call E. Fry immediately to get the support and direction they need. I wish I had known about The Elizabeth Fry Society when I first got here as I wouldn't have had all the troubles or sense of not knowing what is going on."

Client of E. Fry

"The only negative (aspect of the workshop) I can come up with is that the workshop has to end, it is such a great tool to be able to use everyday and it saddens me to think that it is not better funded so that it can be made available to everybody, especially young girls so that they learn the skills are able to put them to good use when need be."

Client of Healthy Relationships Workshop

"The Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia has been my lifeline! Without the support network that E. Fry provides"

Client of E. Fry



www.efrynovascotia.com

www.ourthymecafe.biz

www.caefs.com