



***For Immediate Release***

September 6, 2018

**FOCUS ACCREDITATION ANNOUNCES FOUR YEAR ACCREDITATION FOR CORNERSTONE FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION CENTRE**

**Belleville, ON** – FOCUS Accreditation is pleased to announce that Cornerstone Family Violence Prevention Centre (Cornerstone) has been successful in its bid to be accredited by FOCUS Accreditation for the second time, for four years from July 2018 - July 2022.

Cornerstone is a place where hope grows. As an organization Cornerstone works to break the cycle of family violence by providing immediate shelter, counselling and prevention services. Through these programs Cornerstone helps women understand their options, and build on positive changes so they can rebuild their lives after experiencing violence, allowing them to begin a new life free from abuse.

FOCUS Accreditation looks at all aspects of how an organization provides services – from how people are supported to the effectiveness of the operations. FOCUS Accreditation sent a team of four people to review Cornerstone Family Violence Prevention Centre’s services on-site, for three days. The team observed how services were provided, reviewed data, and collected input from various people who have a stake in the services being provided.

Many strengths were identified at Cornerstone Family Violence Prevention Centre’s by the FOCUS Validators:

- Cornerstone was a recipient of the 2018 Cobourg Police Services Recognition Award for their partnership on a number of community initiatives and for their positive and effective working relationship with Cobourg Police Services.
- Community Partners described the quality of their working relationship with Cornerstone as strong, respectful, a collaborative relationship with management and staff, responsive, very supportive, and extremely knowledgeable. It was specifically noted by one community partner that “Cornerstone works tirelessly to solve community issues.”
- Extensive financial policies and procedures are in place at Cornerstone and provide guidance and outline clear expectations for sound fiscal management and financial stability. Some examples of policies and procedures in place are Petty Cash, Overtime Hours, Honorarium and Gifts, Financial Management Standards, Finance Committee Terms of Reference, Salary and Wage Guidelines, Vacation, Leaves of Absence, Mileage and Travel Expenses, Hours of Work, and Benefits.
- All programs and services of Cornerstone have clearly defined outcome measures and goals, which are monitored, reviewed, analyzed and results shared with staff and Board and through Cornerstone’s Impact Report to external stakeholders.



Cheryl Whiteman FOCUS Executive Director comments, “Cornerstone Family Violence Prevention Centre has successfully achieved its second FOCUS Accreditation Award. Congratulations to the entire organization for its dedication to the principles and practices of Quality Improvement. Cornerstone is described by stakeholders both internal and external to the organization as a trusted organization where everyone cares (employees, board, volunteers), that is well-known, respected, knowledgeable, strong advocates, and an amazing resource in the Northumberland area.

Nancy Johnston Cornerstone Executive Director comments, “Going through the accreditation process with FOCUS is time well spent. Coming out successful assures that we are maintaining a high standard of quality services for our clients – and quality supports for our clients and community is what it is all about. We are grateful for the opportunity to be reaccredited and to our donors, community collaborators, staff and board for the support the provided us throughout the entire process.

### **About Cornerstone Family Violence Prevention Centre’s**

Established in 1983, Cornerstone Family Violence Prevention Centre has been providing vital services to women, children and youth impacted by family violence and abuse, helping to break the cycle of violence by providing immediate shelter, counselling and prevention services throughout Northumberland County. Together we are a community committed to healthy, respectful relationships free from family violence, dedicated to creating a place where hope grows. Cornerstone offers a variety of services and encourages you to explore them at our website [www.cornerstonenorthumberland.ca](http://www.cornerstonenorthumberland.ca).

### **About FOCUS Accreditation**

FOCUS is a non-profit accreditation agency for community service organizations. Created in Ontario, Canada, by the very people who use and work in these services, FOCUS reflects the culture and expectations of community service organizations in Ontario.

FOCUS accredits the whole organization, not just select programs within. The standards reflect best practice in the way services are provided as well as the effectiveness of how the organization operates. An organization that meets FOCUS’ standards can be viewed as an organization that focuses on the people it serves, and on high quality service delivery. FOCUS has accredited over 48 organizations and works with over 60 groups. A full list of accredited organizations is on our website [www.focusaccreditation.org](http://www.focusaccreditation.org)

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