



Imagine a Just Community



Deepening Relationships
Expanding Impact

ANNUAL REPORT 2025/2026



Letter from the Executive Director

Kate Crozier

When I joined CJI and began working with the Revive program, I noticed that there was an opportunity to strengthen our connection with the local sexual assault centre. It raised an important question for me: how can we ensure our services are responsive to community needs if we are not actively in relationship with the community we serve?

Of course, it's easier to go it alone. Relationships with community partners, while important, can also be challenging! Without moving slowly and with care, they can become transactional and easily discarded as soon as conflict arises. Luckily, the CJI team and our partners in this region are filled with people who are guided by curiosity and know the value of building slowly and honestly.

This past year was defined by our excellent partnerships. Building and maintaining those relationships has become a normalized practice to ensure that our work remains grounded, relevant, and responsive.

Through these relationships, we have been able to expand pathways for healing, accountability, and change. The Victim-Initiated Restorative Responses initiative brought together community partners across Waterloo Region to create clearer pathways for people impacted by crime and harm to access a restorative response when they choose one. The National Upstream Project connected CJI with a network of national partners working together to develop community-based interventions for cities responding to hate-motivated extremism. Through Bridging Justices, a collaboration with Dr. Mandi Grey, Dr. Jessica Evans, LEAF, and partners in Toronto, CJI contributed to province-wide momentum toward policy change related to restorative responses. These are just a few of the meaningful partnerships that have shaped CJI's work this year.

The work ahead will continue to require courage, humility, and a willingness to stay in relationship even when things are difficult. We are grateful to the many partners who have walked alongside us this year, and we look forward to continuing to build a justice system rooted in connection, accountability, and community care.

MISSION

We mobilize restorative justice alongside the community to meet healing, justice, and safety needs across continuums of harm, conflict, crime, and wrongdoing.

VISION

A Waterloo Region where justice is reclaimed as a restorative community practice rooted in accountability, dignity, consent, and repair.

2025/2026

Through deep relationships with community members and partners, we are supporting healing and accountability, offering tools to repair harm, and fostering long-term change in individuals, communities, and systems.

145 CJI volunteers gave **19,227 hours*** living out the values of restorative justice in real and meaningful ways.

2265 people were directly supported through restorative services, including mediations, coaching, groups, and skills-based training.

16,061 people participated in community learning through newsletters, social media, presentations, workshops, and public events that built awareness of CJI and restorative justice.

CJI VALUES

- Dignity & Worth
- Accountability
- Hope & Possibility
- Empowerment
- Transformation
- Collective Care & Interdependence
- Consent & Boundaries

*This equals \$615,264 of donated time, which is 44% of our budget!



Lasting impact rooted in relationships.

Capacity Strengthening

We envision a Restorative Waterloo Region; a community equipped and supported to prevent and address harm in relational and non-punitive ways across everyday spaces. We strive for excellence in advancing access to restorative justice through advocacy, partnership, and world-renowned trainings and capacity-strengthening options. CJI's restorative approaches have proven effective in fostering accountability, rebuilding trust, and cultivating relational wellbeing.

"Absolutely incredible facilitation - the skills/techniques/tools were great learning, but more than anything they made me feel how I want folks in restorative processes to feel."

- Organization Participant



THIS YEAR THROUGH OUR WORKPLACE & CULTURE SERVICES...

683 people engaged with CJI trainings, workshops, and presentations.

16 unique organizations in Waterloo Region embedded restorative practices into their workplace.

Mediation Services

Family, Older Adult, & Workplaces

118 coworkers engaged in our services to better manage conflict situations.

310 caregivers, children, and other supports involved in escalated family conflict participated in Child Protection Mediation, Family Group Decision Making, Transitional Planning Conferences, and Conflict Coaching to navigate conflict and make collective decisions.

251 people were impacted by our older adult services, learning and engaging in restorative justice.

"The Walk the Talk Program supports parents experiencing co-parenting conflict by helping them build practical coping skills, improve communication, and stay focused on their children's well-being. It is my go-to referral for separated parents, particularly when children are experiencing emotional harm from post-separation conflict... Parents who have completed the program have shared that they wish they had participated years earlier."

- Program Partner, Family and Children's Services of Waterloo Region



Expanding Access Through Partnership

Access to information about restorative justice is recognized within Ontario's Victims' Bill of Rights, however, meaningful access depends on multiple factors in tandem with policy. It requires strong relationships between organizations, clear referral pathways, and a shared commitment to ensuring that people receive the support they need.

Research consistently highlights the importance of interagency collaboration in expanding access to restorative justice. CJI has brought this principle into practice through the Victim-Initiated Restorative Responses (VIRR) Project. During a pre-charge diversion meeting, CJI connected with Starling Community Services, a community hub offering youth mental health, youth justice, and a wide range of community-based supports.

What began as an exchange of information quickly grew into an active partnership. CJI and Starling shared information about their respective services, delivered reciprocal presentations to staff, and began identifying opportunities to work together. These conversations helped staff from both organizations better understand the supports available and how individuals and families could be connected with them. The partnership was further strengthened through a formal memorandum of understanding, reflecting a shared commitment to expanding access to both mental health supports and CJI's restorative justice services.

This collaboration demonstrates what becomes possible when organizations move beyond working alongside one another and begin building pathways together. Through relationships with Starling and other VIRR Working Group members, CJI is strengthening awareness of restorative justice and helping ensure that survivors can access responsive, coordinated and meaningful options following harm.

"Partnerships like ours foster collaboration, trust, and a strong sense of shared purpose, benefiting both our organizations and, most importantly, the clients we serve. We are grateful for the opportunity to learn and grow alongside our colleagues at CJI, strengthening our ability to meet the evolving needs of our communities."

– Working Group Partner, Starling Community Services

Mediation Services

Community, Court-Based, and Identity-Based Harm

210 people experiencing neighbourhood and community conflicts were provided with restorative processes.

99 people were involved with our dialogue services after a criminal incident.



Design by Stride Program Participant
Spencer St. Amand



"For more than two decades, CJI's vision, upstream approach, deep community connections, and ability to bring people together have had a profound and lasting impact on advancing Correctional Service Canada's Creating Choices philosophy at Grand Valley Institution (GVI). Through Stride Night activities and Stride Circles, CJI's skilled and compassionate staff and volunteers create supportive, restorative spaces grounded in connection and belonging that help individuals build relationships, take responsibility, and move forward."

– Program Manager, Grand Valley Institution for Women

Stride

74 Stride nights gathered 230 people in prison and 38 community volunteers for recreation and relationship.

20 women and gender-diverse people were supported by a Circle of caring volunteers to return to the Waterloo Region community.

114 merch products were sold, with proceeds going towards Stride nights and Circles.



Artwork by Stride participants from community quilt activity facilitated by local artist Alana Decker

Open Homes

In the **first full year** of our newest program, **Open Homes**:

14 guests in the refugee claimant process were matched with 10 active hosts to be supported.

Hosts contributed more than **3150 hours** to provide this life-changing support.

"Strong partnerships with services such as CJI's Open Homes are the foundation of housing success, connecting refugee claimants with the support, opportunities, and welcoming communities they need to thrive."

– Program Partner, COMPASS Refugee Centre





Collaboration for Change

Revive

27 survivors of sexual harm were supported in their healing journey.

19 family members, partners, and others impacted by sexual harm were provided space to share their experiences.

13 people who offended sexually were assisted to address their offending patterns.

27 facilitated dialogues brought people together to discuss impacts and needs after sexual harm.

"LEAF's partnership with CJI for the Bridging Justices report was such a fruitful one. CJI's expertise facilitating restorative justice processes with survivors of sexual harm helped us to ground our advocacy in powerful stories. We are so grateful to be working together to ensure survivors can access justice options that work for them, and look forward to continuing our partnership."

– LEAF Senior Staff Lawyer

In response to hearing distressing accounts from several survivors about the barriers they faced in accessing a Restorative Justice (RJ) process once they became involved in the criminal legal system, CJI felt compelled to advocate for survivors to be able to choose the justice pathway that they felt was the best option for them. We learned that Crown Policy D4 was one of the barriers that prevented referrals to RJ service in Ontario.

The Bridging Justices project, in partnership with Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF) and researchers Dr. Mandi Gray and Dr. Jessica Evans, explored to what extent those working in gender-based violence work believed that survivors should be able to access RJ if they wanted that option. See the report on our website [here](#).

We learned so much. Not only did 86% of people working in GBV work support survivors having voluntary access to RJ, but this project also fostered wide-spread support for the survivor work at CJI. Hundreds of people across Canada engaged with this project.

Locally, the Waterloo Region Gender Based Violence Leadership Table submitted a letter of advocacy to the Ministry in support of RJ for sexual harm. Also, the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres launched campaigns in support of RJ for sexual harm. Internationally, Survivors for Justice Reform continue to elevate the work of CJI to support survivors' unique healing and justice needs.

CJI continues to offer RJ services to survivors of sexual harm, regardless of where the referral comes from. We are grateful to the wider community for their recognition of this option.



2025-2026 Financials

Revenue

DONATIONS & FUNDRAISING	27%	\$373,184.82
UNITED WAY	3%	\$40,000.00
GOVERNMENT GRANTS & CONTRACTS		
FEDERAL 27%	46%	\$632,573.41
PROVINCIAL 47%		
REGIONAL 12%		
FEES & OTHER INCOME	25%	\$342,920.10
	100%	\$1,388,678.33

*Unaudited financial statements. Audited version available on request.

Expenses

WAGES, BENEFITS & CONTRACT SERVICES	77%	\$989,861.02
PURCHASED SERVICES	12%	\$157,349.31
PROGRAM & EVENTS	1%	\$15,525.32
PROMOTION & FUNDRAISING	0.1%	\$1643.80
TRAVEL	1%	\$14,195.38
STAFF TRAINING	1%	\$8,253.50
OFFICE & FACILITIES	8%	\$105,881.44
	100%	\$1,292,709.77
		\$95,968.56

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The Michael and Jocelyn Horner Fund
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Transforming Justice Australia
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