



CANADIAN NETWORK *for*  
the PREVENTION of ELDER ABUSE

RÉSEAU CANADIEN *pour la* PRÉVENTION  
du MAUVAIS TRAITEMENT des AÎNÉS

Everyone deserves  
to feel safe and  
valued.





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# A message from our Executive Director

As Fall begins and we prepare for our Annual General Meeting, it's time to look back and take stock of our accomplishments. This was another big year for us and our community, marked by inspiring highs, deeply affecting losses, and exciting future perspectives.

We recently lost three pioneers of elder abuse prevention: Jill Hightower, Judith Wahl and Dr. Elizabeth Podnieks. Each blazed a trail to ensure that the well-being and safety of older people would be taken seriously. They were fierce, unstoppable advocates who wanted older people to be recognized, valued, and celebrated. Each pushed elder abuse prevention to the forefront of national and international conversation and inspired many to follow suit. Like many people in our sector, I owe them a lot and I deeply value the conversations that I had with them since my early days at CNPEA.

One development that would have delighted Dr. Podnieks, is the progress made at the United Nations' Open Ended Working Group on Aging (OEWGA) where the recommendation for an international Convention on the rights of older people was made in the Spring. In August, the United Nations member states adopted a resolution paving the way for a UN process to establish a convention. As I type these words, we are awaiting further developments, notably

whether the matter will now proceed to the Human Rights Council. CNPEA was in NYC in the Spring, along with many Canadian civil societies, ensuring that the voices of older Canadians were represented during the OEWGA.

CNPEA also had the great privilege of attending and presenting at the impressive, first Community-Based Seniors Services Forum in Ottawa. Change is afoot. The many stakeholders who provide services to older people are ready to claim their space as a sector and make their voices and the voices of the people they serve be heard by decision-makers.

As we get ready to say goodbye to some of our Board members and welcome new ones, I want to thank the Board members, volunteers, donors and partners who have contributed to the work and successes showcased in this report. As always, none of it would be possible without your support.

Here's to another year together,

*Bénédicte Schoepflin*  
*Executive Director, CNPEA*



# A message from our Board Chair

It is with pleasure that I reflect on the work accomplished by the CNPEA Board over the past year.

During the past twelve months, our working Board and Executive Director revised our mission, established a new three-year strategic plan and aligned our committee structure with this new plan. Each of our committees addresses one of the pillars of our strategic plan. Our goal is to promote consistency, transparency, and accountability across every aspect of CNPEA's work.

2025 is just around the corner, and our one-of-a-kind knowledge hub is about to turn 10 years old. We are now actively planning to update it and seeking funds to enhance it so that it remains the number one national resource for elder abuse prevention in Canada.

Generally, the sustainability of the network is always a critical part of our thinking and planning. We deeply appreciate the financial support of our Board members, stakeholders, and community and corporate partners. They help us move forward to address the challenge of elder abuse in Canada.

Our dedicated Board of Directors provides crucial organizational oversight, and ensures our organization has the infrastructure and resources needed to fulfill its mission. We still have much work ahead of us to address elder abuse and its causes. I would like to express my deep appreciation to all Board members, past and present, for their commitment as they promote the values and work of the network. I would also be remiss not to specifically thank our Executive Director, Bénédicte Schoepflin for her leadership.

*Sandi P. Hirst, BScN, PhD*





### Dr. ELIZABETH PODNIEKS

An international trailblazer in the field of elder abuse prevention, Elizabeth was a passionate champion of the rights of older people. Among many other accomplishments, Dr. Podnieks founded Elder Abuse Prevention Ontario, as well as our very own organization, CNPEA, and she was a co-founder of the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA). She was also the visionary and architect behind World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, an official United Nations Day since 2006.

### JUDITH A. WAHL

Judith was the founding Executive Director of the Advocacy Centre for the Elderly (ACE). She is remembered for her fierce advocacy for seniors, her lifetime work in elder law, especially on the issues of consent, capacity and substitute decision-making, for contributing to the development of legislation, and her work in supporting legal clinics throughout Ontario.



### JILL HIGHTOWER

Jill was the Executive Director of the BC Institute Against Family Violence for 13 years. After retiring from that role in 1998, she became partner in a research and education consulting group focused on public policy, health and social issues affecting older women and did extensive research on violence against older women. Jill published and presented papers across Canada and internationally. Her contributions to elder abuse prevention and her focus on older women are invaluable.

# In Memoriam





# Our year in review

## October 2023

CNPEA hosted the **first Ageism Awareness Day Webinar**, in partnership with the Canadian Coalition Against Ageism and Elder Abuse Prevention Ontario.

## March 2024

- Presentation on Elder Abuse and Future Us for the graduate program in clinical psychology, at the University of PEI.
- Spoke on panel about Gender Based Violence in the Media in support the launch of Aura Freedom International's *Guidelines on GBV in the Media*.

## December 2023

Hosted the **virtual Conference on Gender-Based Violence, Inclusive Voices, Collective Power** with partners EAPO and CREVAWC.

## April 2024

- **Launch of *Seniors Leading Change: How to Build an Elder Abuse Prevention***.
- Submission to the HoC Standing Committee re: Bill S-249: *An Act respecting the development of a national strategy for the prevention of intimate partner violence*.
- Supported the call for a UN Convention on the Rights of Older People with webinar *Getting Serious about the Human Rights of Older Persons*.

## January 2024

- Participated in discussion on Gender-Based Violence with Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth of Canada Marci Ien.
- Participated in Federal Government consultation on Cybercrime Legislation.
- Introduced the CNPEA strategy *Future us* to P.E.I.'s Minister of Social Development and Seniors, the Honourable Barb Ramsay and policy team.



# The year in review

## May 2024

- **CNPEA attended the United Nations' 14th Open Ended Working Group on Aging** in New York to support the call for a Convention.
- Contributed to consultation about Alberta's 10-year strategy to end gender-based violence to provide a focus on older people.
- **Hosted the online symposium *Safe Havens: Emergency Shelter Solutions for Older People in Canada*** with partners EAPO and CREVAWC.



## June 2024

- Participated in and led a presentation at the first ever **Community Based Seniors Services Sector Summit**, hosted by HelpAge Canada, and the first *Ageism and Health Care, Community Care, and Support* forum, hosted by ILC Canada and CCAA in Ottawa.
- **Hosted the largest WEAAD online event to date** (983 participants) with national and provincial partners.

## Advisory Roles:

- **Canadian Coalition Against Ageism** led by ILC Canada: Ongoing
- **CourAGE Working Group for Canada's Aging Plan** led by SE Health and Covenant Health - Ongoing
- **Gender-Based Violence in the Media Project** led by Aura Freedom International. Launched: Early 2024
- **Des résidences privées plus saines, sécuritaires, accueillantes et inclusives au moyen d'un jeu sérieux visant à prévenir et à contrer la maltraitance envers les personnes âgées lesbiennes, gaies, bisexuelles et trans (LGBT)** led by Marie-Ève Bédard, Centre collégial d'expertise en gérontologie (CCEG|CCTT) du Cégep de Drummondville - Report published July 2024
- **Stranger than Family project:** Consent, capacity, and decision-making for people who are facing dementia led by Dr. Celeste Pang (Mount Royal University) - Ongoing

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# Our annual impact

14

Webinars hosted

2

Online conferences

3,349

People attended our online learning events (+56%)

5

Videos “It’s Time to Talk About Elder Abuse” Series

4

Consultations with Provincial and Federal Government

8

Media interviews and other public speaking engagements

1,251

CNPEA members across Canada

4,500

Social media followers across platforms

27K

hub users

## Future Us Goals:

- **Prioritize** elder abuse prevention in every community.
- **Establish and support** elder abuse prevention networks at local, regional and national levels.
- **Teach everyone** to recognize warning signs of abuse and neglect, how to respond safely and effectively and where to refer in the community to find help.



## Advocacy

CNPEA continues to identify issues of relevance to older adults who are experiencing abuse in Canada and those who work to address this important health and wellness challenge. This year, we actively reviewed the recent federal budget to identify how the health of older people is being addressed and responded accordingly. In May, CNPEA also contributed to the 14th Open Ended Working Group on Aging at the United Nations— thank you to Benedicte for participating in person at this key event. We continue to forge and expand relationships with organizations who are committed to promoting social justice for older people across Canada and internationally.

## Awareness and Education

This year started with the CNPEA Education Committee aligning to the pillars of the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan and evolving into the Awareness and Education Committee. The Committee revised the Terms of Reference to incorporate the Strategic Goals to guide the Committee’s work.

Work this year included focusing on opportunities to engage students, and exploring the potential development of accredited elder abuse training for health care professionals. The Committee also turned its attention to the CNPEA website and began to assess what would be required to update and improve it.

## Capacity Building

This past year, the Committee celebrated the completion and launch of the *Seniors Leading Change* toolkit to support committed citizens in establishing local and regional networks throughout Canada, thus advancing Goal 2 of Future Us.

CNPEA continues to develop and expand its collaboration with many different groups to expand its reach and identify new opportunities to develop resources and programs to support elder abuse prevention.

## Governance

The work of the Governance Committee has focused on its primary mandate of overseeing and directing the CNPEA Board and supporting the work of our Executive Director. The Governance Committee has two subcommittees, whose primary objectives were Board Nominations and Recruitment, and formalizing a review and evaluation process for our Executive Director. The members of the Governance Committee also ensure that CNPEA remains in compliance with all regulatory requirements and worked to review and update our bylaws.

## Fund Development

Foundational to our new strategic plan, the Fund Development Committee is working hard to ensure the network’s sustainability. The Committee has developed a comprehensive sustainability plan for operational revenue generation. We have divided our committee work into two subcommittees: grants, and giving programs. The former locates and addresses applications for government and community grants, and we have had some success in this work. The latter includes initiatives such as Giving Tuesday, individual donations, corporate sponsorships, and other related activities. We continue to grow the [Gloria Gutman Fund for Elder Abuse Prevention](#), which is focused on providing operational funding for CNPEA in the long term.

# Committee Updates

# Seniors Leading Change

## Seniors Leading Change: A Future Us Initiative

How to Build an Elder Abuse Prevention Network



## Continuing on the Future Us path

In 2022, CNPEA launched *Future Us: A Roadmap to Elder Abuse Prevention* setting out 3 main goals.

In 2024, CNPEA developed the *Seniors Leading Change* toolkit to support Future Us' Goal 2 to build a stronger network infrastructure across Canada.

**Download Seniors Leading Change and its accompanying infographic on:**

<https://futureus.cnpea.ca/>

## About the Seniors Leading Change Toolkit

This toolkit has been developed to support individuals and organizations who want to start an Elder Abuse Prevention Network (EAPN) and for existing EAPNs that want to expand their membership, activities and reach. A section on Advocacy and Strategies has been included to help support and coordinate a pan-Canadian movement in elder abuse prevention.

This toolkit reflects consultations with existing Elder Abuse Prevention Networks, advocates and researchers who have contributed as advisors to the project. We are thankful for their time and expertise in informing this content.

## Release and Reach

Release date: March 2024

Reach:  
105 downloads  
2 launch webinars (FR and ENG): 277 people reached

This project was funded by the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program



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# Safe Havens Symposium

## Summary

The event aimed to:

- raise awareness of existing sheltering options for older adults who have experienced violence, abuse or neglect;
- highlight the stark gaps in shelter services for older adults across the country and the importance of including older victims in efforts to address the emergency shelter crisis in Canada;
- illustrate the role that support and response services, can play in assisting older victims by being trained to detect ageism and understand seniors' needs better;
- Examine best practices to provide safe, respectful, trauma -and violence- informed services and appropriate support.

## Release and Reach

Hosted in May 2024 in partnership with EAPO and CREVAWC.

4 sessions, 259 participants from across Canada.

All sessions recorded and available on [YouTube](#)

## Materials

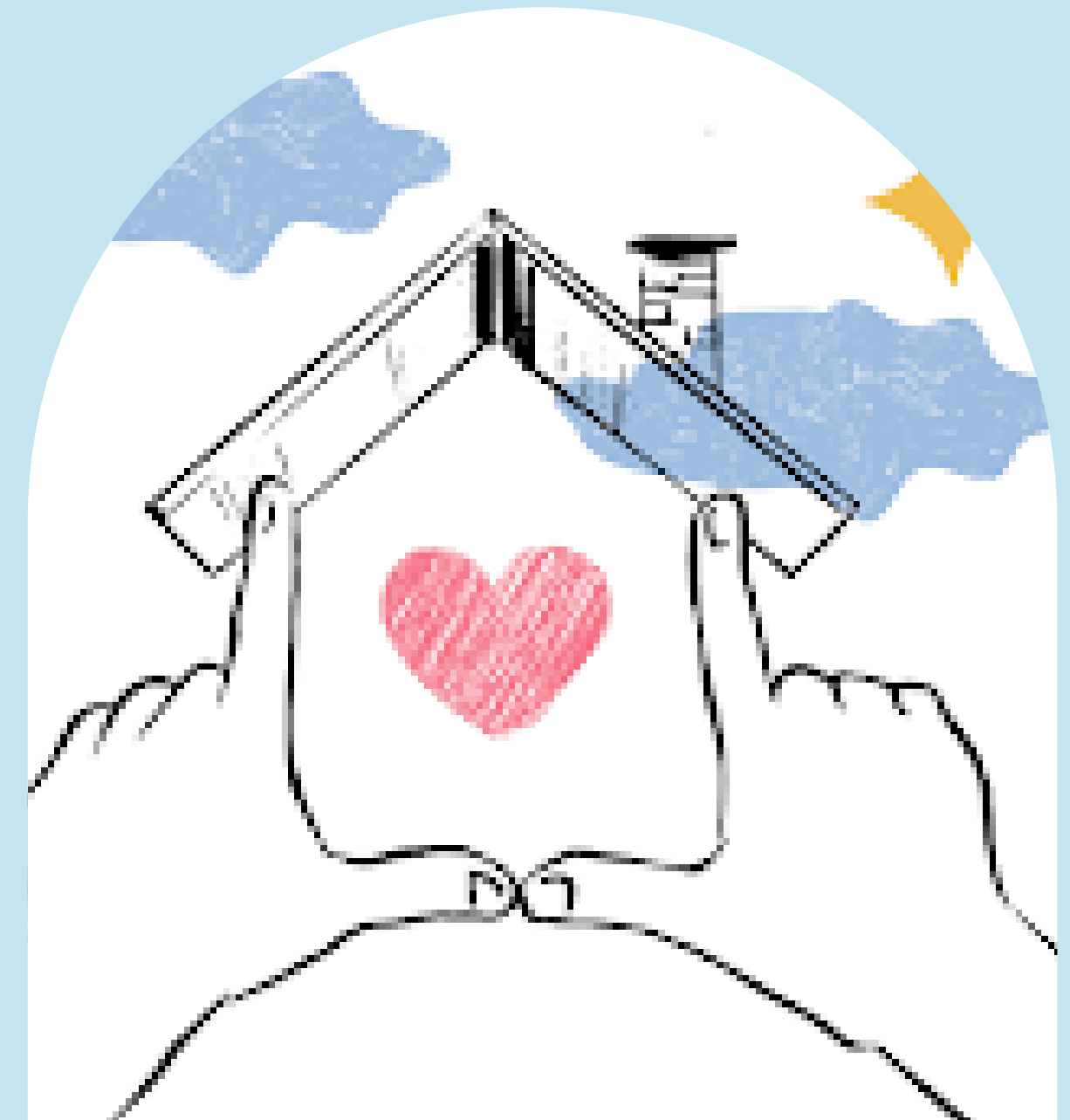
Download our [Resources List](#) and [Key Learnings](#)

## Funder

This event was made possible thanks to the support of the Department of Justice Canada for Victims and Survivors of Crime Week.

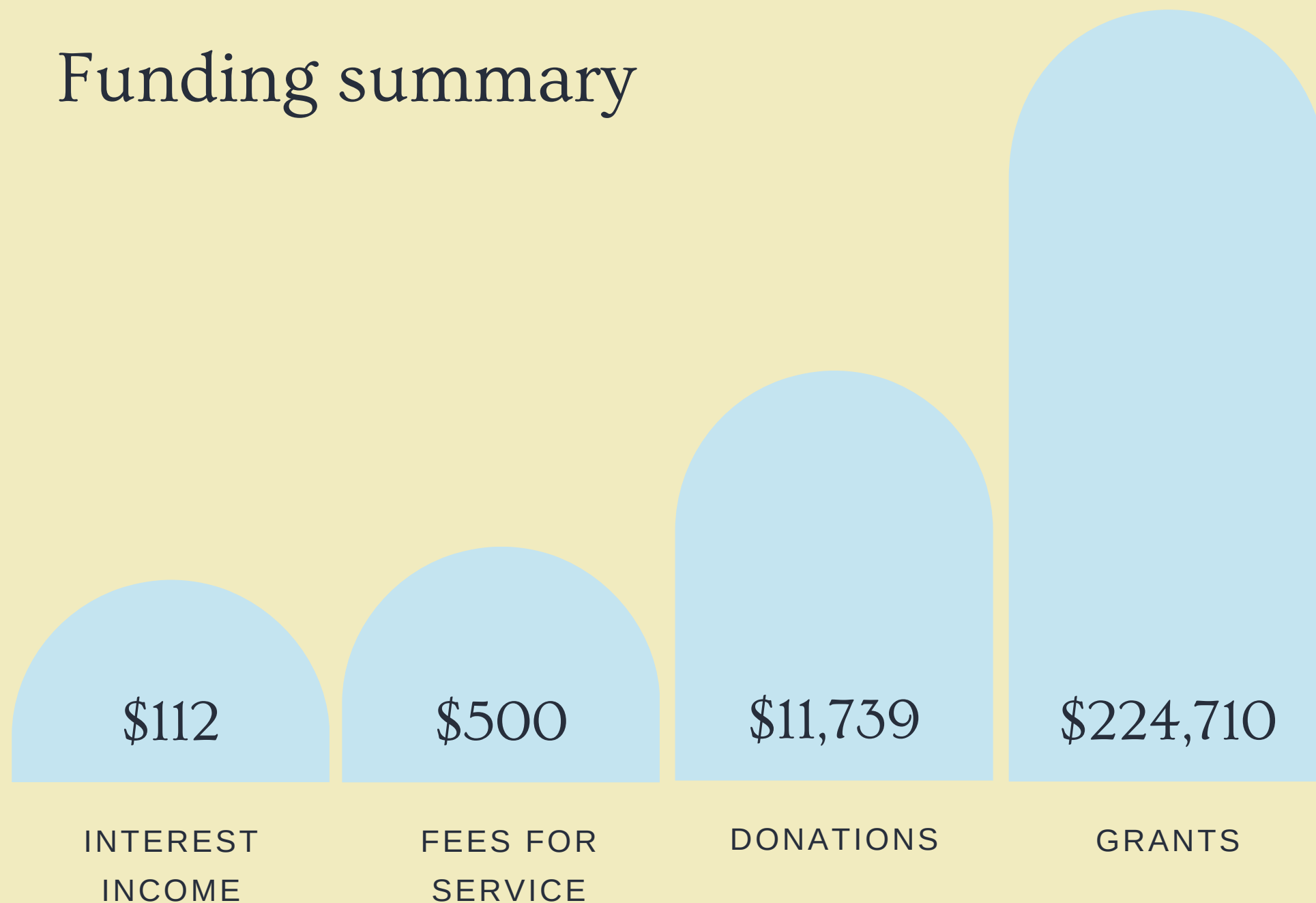
## Thank you

Many thanks to the members of CNPEA's Safe Spaces community of practice for contributing to the planning and presenting of this event.



# Financial report

## Funding summary



The Women And Gender Equality grant that funds the Stop GBV55+ project, and two smaller grants from ESDC's New Horizons For Seniors and Justice Canada's Victims and Survivors of Crime Week, allowed CNPEA to carry out exciting, meaningful work this year. CNPEA is currently in steady financial standing. We continue to regularly pursue relevant project funding while also expanding and strengthening our fund development efforts to diversify CNPEA's revenue sources and guarantee our stability and longevity.

## Financial summary

### CURRENT ASSETS

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Funds \$133,131

### LIABILITIES

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Accounts Payable \$107,705

[SEE OUR FULL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO MARCH 31, 2024 HERE](#)



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# Thank you to all our donors and volunteers!

Our work would not be possible without partnerships, collaboration and the support of countless individuals and organizations. We wish to thank all who championed our mission again this year:

**Our departing Board members**, Dr. Marie-Ève Bédard, Sean Fitch, Dr. Rose Joudi, Denise Lemire, and Greg Noseworthy, for their time, expertise, congeniality and endless support over the years.

**Our members** for supporting our cause, sharing our message and stepping up for older people's safety and well-being in their communities across Canada.

**Provincial, territorial and local prevention networks and organizations in the aging sphere** across the country for carrying out critical work of public education and engagement and advocacy and sharing their unique perspectives with us.

**Practicum student Shawn Hall and volunteers Grace Hu and Gail Zahradnitzky** who dedicated their time to help CNPEA craft policy and research materials. Your contributions are greatly appreciated by us all.

**Our donors**, known and anonymous, whose gifts and words of encouragement make a considerable difference for a small organization like ours. Special thanks to Dr. Gloria Gutman for her advocacy for CNPEA and for establishing the Gloria Gutman Fund for Elder Abuse Prevention at the Vancouver Foundation.

**Our funders** - ESDC for funding Seniors Leading Change through the New Horizons or Seniors Program; the Department of Justice Canada who funded our Safe Havens Symposium for Victims and Survivors of Crime Week; and Women and Gender Equality Canada who makes our Stop GBV 55+ project possible.





# Support CNPEA

Your charitable donations are critical to sustain our work. Please consider making a gift to CNPEA today.

## Immediate impact

You can donate to CNPEA through our secure CanadaHelps donation form at <https://cnpea.ca/en/donate>

## Long-term impact

You can contribute to our long-term sustainability through the **Gloria Gutman Fund**, held in trust at the Vancouver Foundation. To learn more and make a gift, visit:

[www.vancouverfoundation.ca/loriagutman](http://www.vancouverfoundation.ca/loriagutman)

We recognize that every person's reality is different. Monthly donations are an easy way to make a significant difference for CNPEA with limited impact on your budget, and no amount is too small. You can set up a monthly donation easily through CanadaHelps and through the Gloria Gutman Fund page on the Vancouver Foundation website. All donations are eligible for tax receipts.





Stay in touch  
with us!

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Looking forward  
to making even  
more of an  
impact next year!

