

Alberta Provincial Shelter Data 2012-13

Collected from April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2013

42 ACWS member organizations reported. These organizations represent:
35 Emergency shelters, 10 second-stage shelters and 2 seniors' shelters throughout the province.

People served

Type of shelter	Women Admitted		Children Admitted	Women Turned Away	Children Turned Away
	TOTAL	Safety from abuse as primary cause			
Emergency	5,646*	4,350	5,480	14,337	12,138
Second-stage	239	239	367	575	743
Seniors	81**	61	n/a	120***	n/a

*Includes 4 Men (While 1 women's emergency shelter in Alberta also admits men; most shelters in Alberta will provide outreach support to men when applicable)

**Includes 16 men

***Seniors' shelters serve women and men

"Turned-away" defined: *Those who cannot be accommodated due to a number of factors (e.g. due to a lack of available beds). Those who are turned away are connected with other resources in the community in best efforts to keep them safe.*

Aboriginal Women served

Type of Shelter	Aboriginal Women Admitted*	Percentage of women admitted in reporting shelters
Emergency**	3,264	61.1%
Second-stage	74	31.0%
Seniors	11	13.6%

* women who self-identified as Aboriginal

** One participating shelter in this shelter type did not provide this data.

Crisis calls received

Type of Shelter	Crisis Calls	Average Length in Minutes
Emergency	51,874	14
Second-stage	4,412	9
Seniors	1,817	10

What we're seeing behind the numbers:

1. Women's poverty is keeping services out of reach

Women leaving abusive relationships comprise a growing number of the "hidden homeless" in Alberta. Subsidized housing options are full in most communities and so-called "affordable housing", just isn't affordable.

As a result, some women are choosing to remain in unhealthy relationships to survive.

2. Length of stay is increasing

The amount of time that a woman is staying in a shelter after leaving a violent situation is increasing. Many shelters report that it is difficult for a woman to find sufficient income or funding support to obtain housing as she works towards independence.

The barriers faced by women leaving abusive relationships means that it takes more programming resources, more connections to outside specialized supports, and more time to empower women with the tools they need to pursue violence-free lives.

Figure 1. Provincial Average Length of Stay by Municipality Size

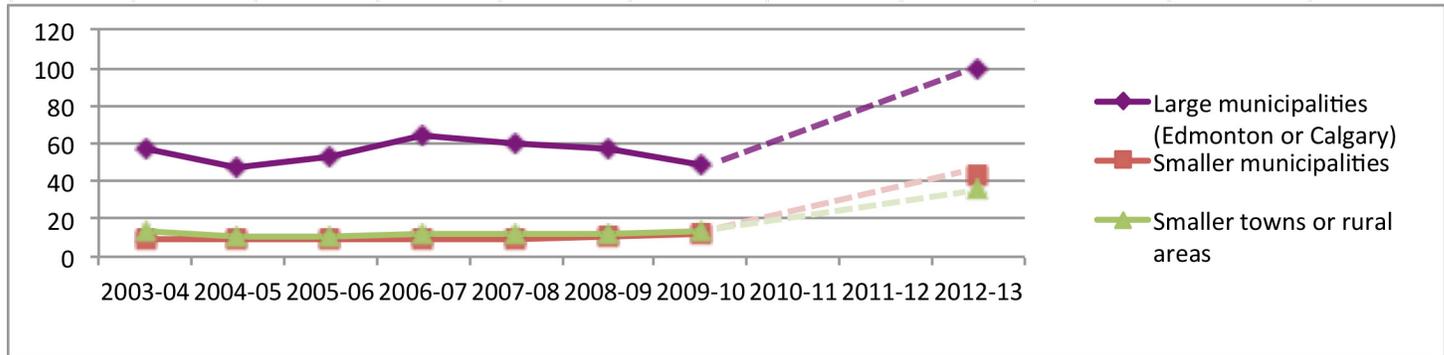


Figure 2. Emergency Shelter Average Length of Stay by Municipality Size

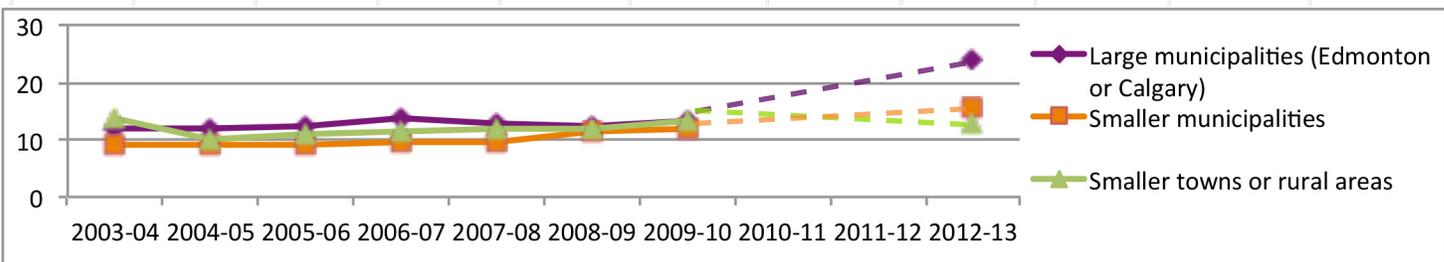
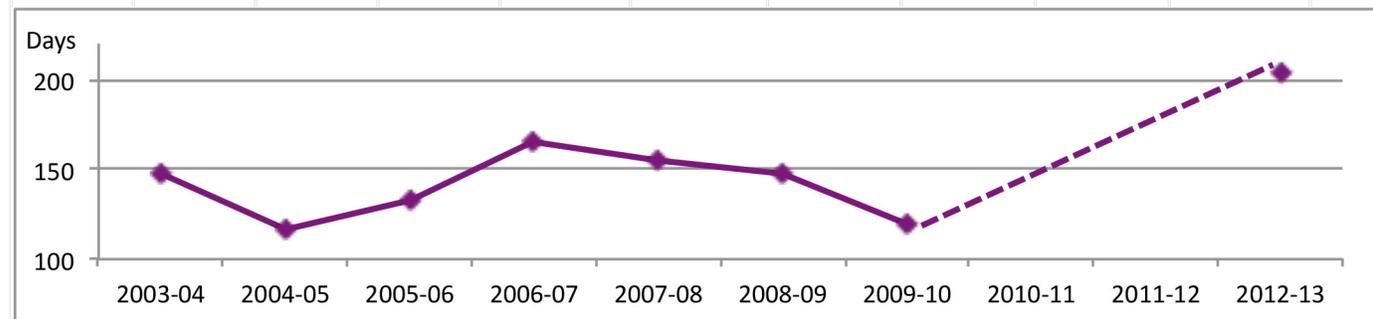


Figure 3. Average Length of Stay in Second-stage Shelter by Year



Note: Length of stay data were not collected for 2010-11 and 2011-12 due to transition from HOMES database to Outcome Tracker.

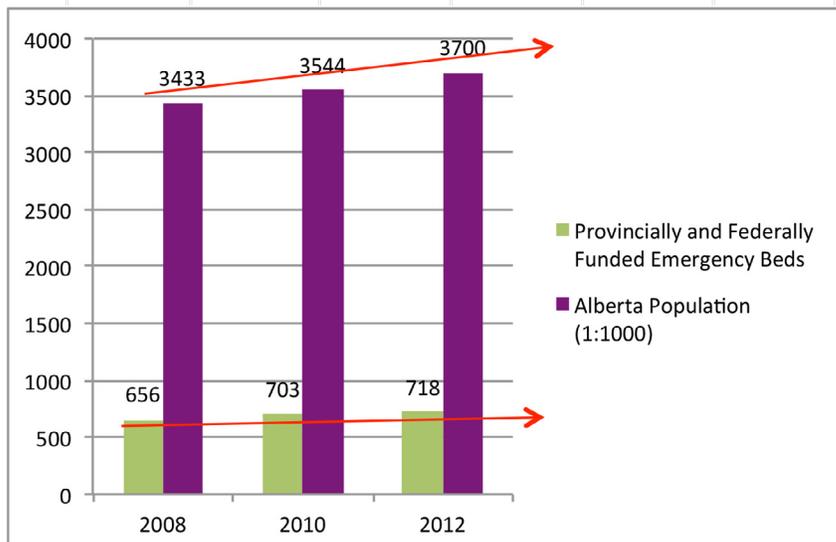
3. Increasing complexity of needs

Shelters are seeing more newcomers to Canada, more women with English as an Additional Language (EAL), more women with mental health and/or addictions challenges. This means that women fleeing violence are staying in shelters longer, and that shelters need an elevated level of training and resources to meet the complex needs of women in the shelters.

4. Population is increasing more rapidly than funded beds*

2012-13 saw the largest increase in Alberta's population in the last 5 years. In shelters, funded beds increased slightly.

Figure 4. Provincial Population and Number of Provincially and Federally Funded Shelter Beds* by Year



*This graph does not include Senior's shelters.

5. Children are about half of the people served in domestic violence shelters

Children traumatized by living in an abusive home require specialized supports. The current staffing model for women's shelters provides on average about 1 child support worker for every 6 counselors. The staffing model needs to be updated (and financially supported) to reflect the large number of children in shelter with specialized needs.

6. More support is needed for the journey towards a life free from violence

The most dangerous time for a woman in an abusive relationship is after she's made the decision to leave. Second-stage and third-stage shelters continue the critical work of providing secure residences for women, with the programming to empower them further along the spectrum towards independent, violence-free lives. These shelters often provide on-site childcare services.

Only two out of ten second-stage shelters in Alberta receive funding from the province. Second-stage shelter services are in high-demand: more than 574 women who made it to the wait-lists for second-stage couldn't get in.



ACWS

Alberta Council of
Women's Shelters

www.acws.ca