



CAMBRIDGE WOMENS CENTER



# 2022 Annual Report



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# LETTER FROM STAFF

Dear Friends,

The Cambridge Women's Center (CWC) had an eventful 2022 as we continued to serve an ever growing number of women. With many shelters bursting after the pandemic, in 2022 the CWC saw the number of individual visits double from 2021. With housing evictions soaring, inflation rising and the mental health aftereffects of the pandemic, our community proved their resilience over and over again.

The women who utilize our services prove their resilience every day by surviving incredibly difficult situations, such as losing their homes, being stalked, trauma and food insecurity. Thanks to our donors and supporters we are able to meet them where they are and provide a place open to all women for respite and rest.

At 51 years young our small but mighty organization continues to rely on volunteers to provide 100% of direct services, three staff members and an active Board of Trustees. As we look to the future and move back to our permanent location, 46 Pleasant Street, currently under renovation thanks to the incredible generosity of an anonymous donor, we are blown away by the resilience of our entire community.

The move back to the house presents an exciting opportunity for us to expand our programs to better meet our community needs and to honor the activist roots of the Cambridge Women's Center. We are excited for what 2023 will bring for the Cambridge Women's Center. Thank you so much for your continued support.

In gratitude,



Marta Lee-Perriard, PhD  
Co-Director of  
Development & Outreach



Dosa Chidandali  
Co-Director of  
Programs & Services



Ali Sorrels  
Co-Director of  
Operations & Administration

# OUR MISSION

The Cambridge Women's Center is a physical and digital community space open to anyone for whom woman is a meaningful identifier or lived experience. We offer a safe space for learning, emotional support, empathy, and empowerment through self-determination.

The Cambridge Women's Center has a robust history with a wide variety of programmatic offerings. The offerings are intended to directly meet the needs of our community members. The flexible approach to programming is a reflection of our desire to lend effective and targeted support. The main programmatic offerings in 2022 fell under two central categories; drop-in services and support & activity groups.



## 2022 Program Offerings

### Drop-In

We operate a low-threshold drop-in program three days a week: Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. On these days, we open our doors to women from across the Greater Boston Area and provide an array of direct social services. Every person comes to us with a distinct history, and our programs are designed to meet their varied and individual circumstances.

Our drop-in offers unfettered access to all of the facilities at our location. This includes a computer lab with printing services, a lending library, common spaces for relaxation and conversation, a community kitchen, small private rooms, and bathrooms.

In addition to the amenities of our space, we offer warm meals, material aid and supplies, and 1-on-1 volunteer led support.

Our team also maintains a publicly accessible resource referral database where we compile information on various social programs in the pursuit of connecting our participants with adequate support.



### Support & Activity Groups

Our support and activity groups aim to foster healing, grow networks, and provide learning experiences for those willing to invest their time. Some of our groups are open to all while others are intended for those with a shared lived experience.

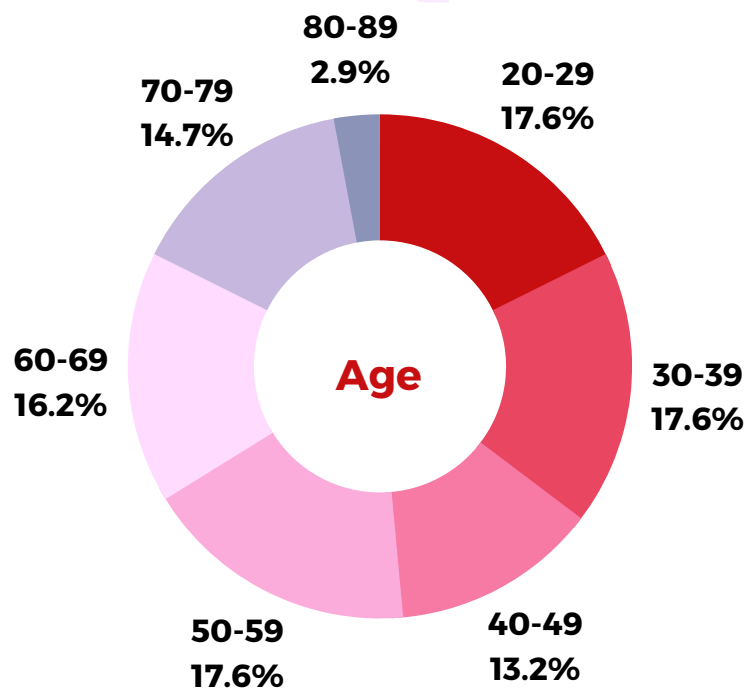
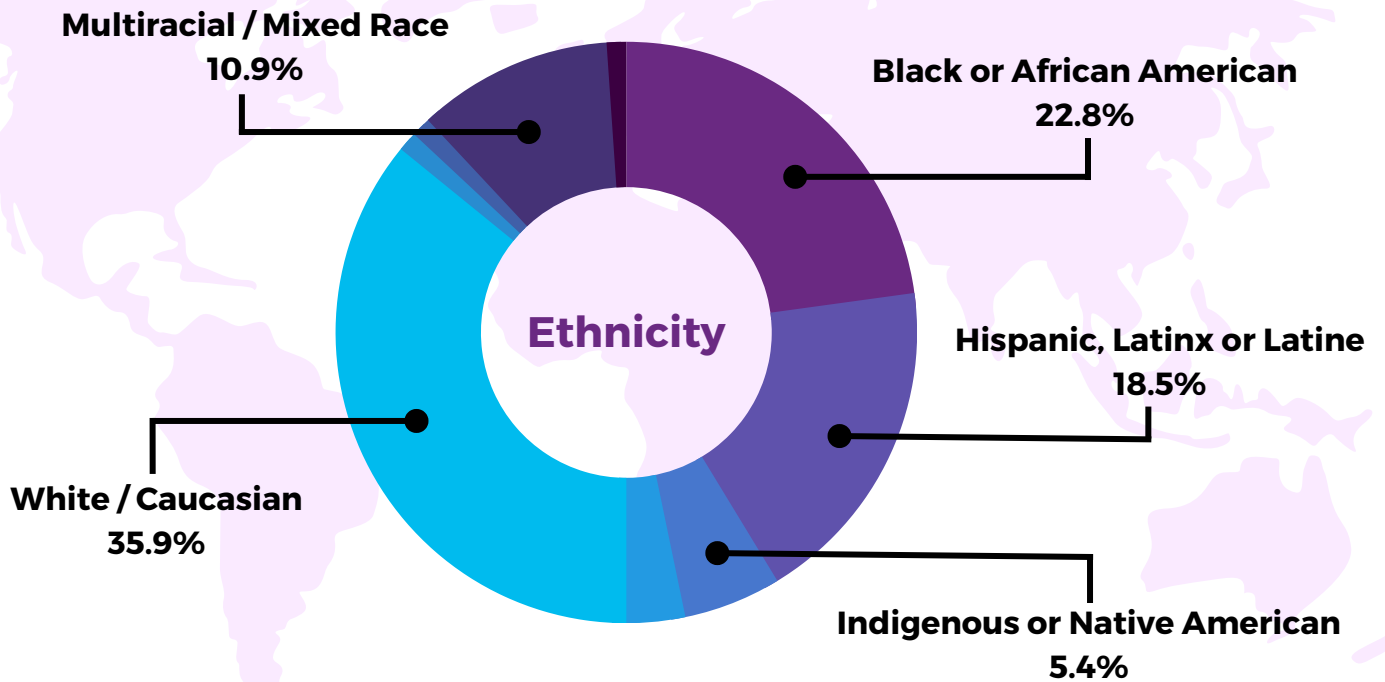
Popular support groups include Trauma Support, Women's Coping Group, Women 65+ Discussion Group, and the Straight Marriage, Still Questioning group. We also welcomed several new support groups like Sex Worker Support and Journaling and Self Expression that have garnered significant interest.

Popular activity based groups include Sewing, Art Group, Let's Write!, Slow Flow Yoga, and the Spanish-English Conversation Exchange.

Our new additions in 2022 included: Body Positive Book Club, Women's Film Club, and the Podcast Club.

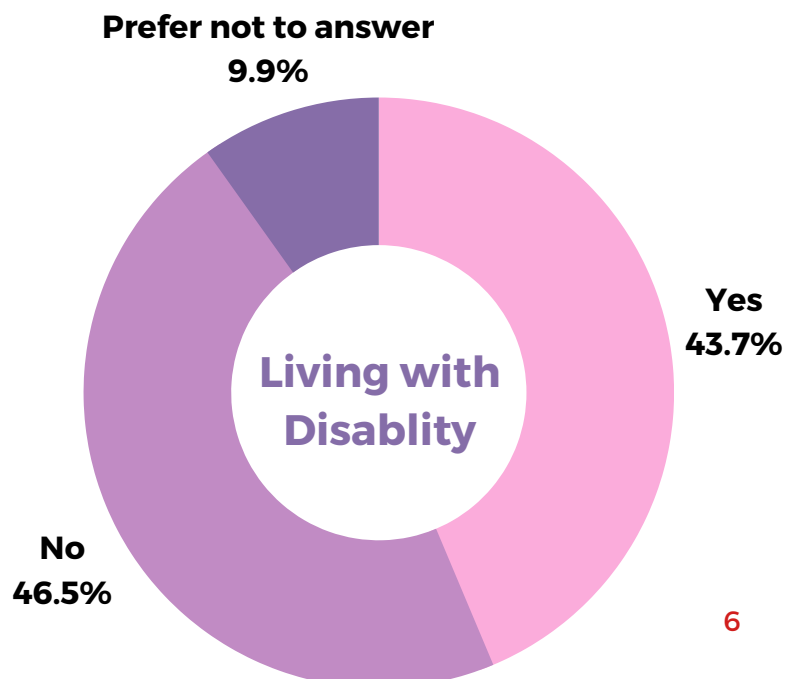


# OUR COMMUNITY AT A GLANCE...



All of the following information was gathered through an anonymous and voluntary survey, not as a prerequisite to entry, to respect the confidentiality of our participants while preserving our commitment to low threshold services.

We conducted this survey from August-October and received 75 responses. This represents 13.7% of the total unique individuals served in 2022.



# OUR COMMUNITY AT A GLANCE...

## Shared Experiences

There are enumerable reasons women across the Greater Boston Area connect with our programs and services. There are many shared experiences that unite us together in this space.

*I find the Women's center is valuable because it provides friendly, kind people, and help if you feel lonely. They make you feel like family.*

*- Program Participant*

*“The Women's Center is ...*

*A safe space to connect with other women who have experienced trauma.*

*- Program Participant*

**Respondent's  
identify as survivors  
of trauma**

**59.4%**

*”I love how I get to go to a place to relax and eat food. I like meeting others in my situation. I overall love the genuine support I receive.*

*-Program Participant*

**62.1%**

**report experiencing difficulties  
with mental health**

**58.2%**

**report experiencing emotional,  
physical, or sexual abuse in  
their lifetime**

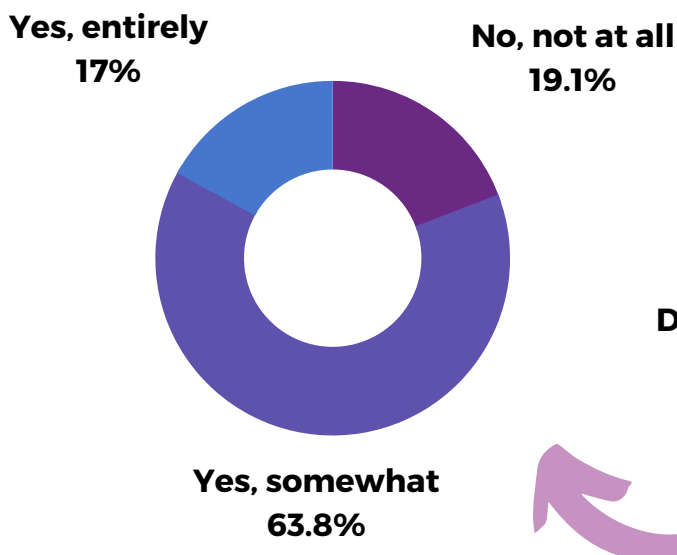
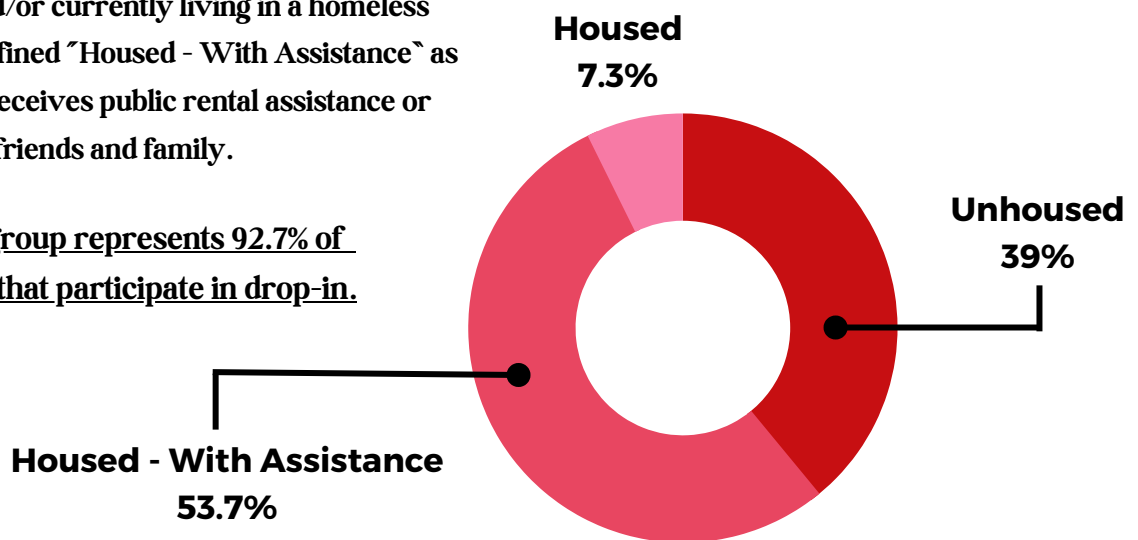
## Drop-In Program Participants

### Housing & Homelessness

Certain aspects of our programming appeal to distinct populations. It is clear that our drop-in programming is used, in large, by those experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity.

In our survey, we defined "Unhoused" as anyone living on the street, in a car or place not intended for habitation, and/or currently living in a homeless shelter and defined "Housed - With Assistance" as anyone who receives public rental assistance or support from friends and family.

In total, this group represents 92.7% of respondents that participate in drop-in.



### Food Insecurity

In total, our survey found that 80.8% of our drop-in respondents utilize our food program.

Do you depend on food from our center to meet your weekly food needs?

# A CLOSER LOOK...

## Support & Activity Groups

### LGBTQ+ Inclusion



Our groups offer additional avenues for us to connect with cross sections of the community. We are particularly proud of our LGBTQ+ support groups that have cultivated queer-friendly spaces for our participants. We are currently hosting the Lesbian & Bi Discussion Group and the Straight Marriage, Still Questioning Group.

43.6%

Of group participants reported identifying as LGBTQ+

11.1%

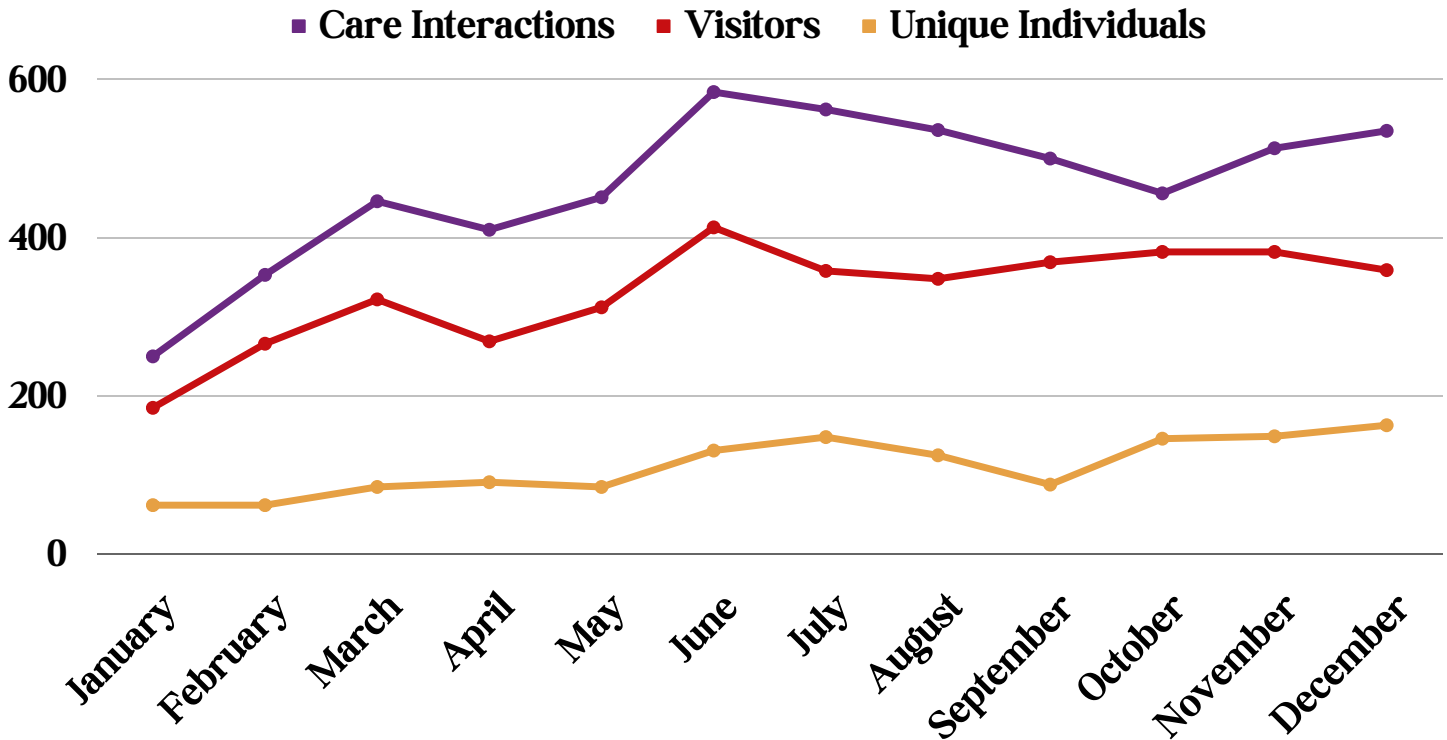
Of group participants identify as non-binary or gender non-conforming.



CWC IMPACT REPORT 2022



## Drop-In Program



Care Interactions is the term used to encompass all our services.

This can represent getting a meal, computer use, emotional support, resource referrals, and more.

**Median of 478 Monthly Care Interactions**

Visitors represents the total number of participants seen over a month.

**Median of 353 Monthly Visitors**

Unique individuals represents the number of distinct people visiting our center. This number is essential to understanding the number of lives directly impacted.

**Median of 108 Unique Individuals Served Monthly**

# 2022 PROGRAM OUTCOMES

## Drop-In Program

### Food and Material Aid

An essential aspect of our drop-in programming is the food and material aid available to each visitor. We offer prepared meals each day and once a week we also serve a buffet-style community meal.

We offer material aid to all participants. These supplies include basic toiletries like shampoo, conditioner, body soap, deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste, etc. Additionally, we provide seasonal survival supplies for those of our members living outside or in housing insecure situations. These supplies include first aid materials, sunscreen, bug spray, cold weather clothing, and hand and body warmers.



**2,614**  
visitors accessed  
food & material  
aid in 2022

We welcomed  
**142**  
first time visitors in  
2022!



The CWC distributed  
**\$30k**  
in Charlie Cards  
in 2022

### Transportation Vouchers

Our current program offers each participant one, \$20 T-pass, every month. This offering, in alignment with all our others, is an intentionally low threshold. We only ask for a first name or alias to access these vouchers.

In this program, each unique individual has access to \$240.00 value in Charlie Cards per year.

On average, we serve 81 unique individuals accessing this program every month.

## Support & Activity Groups

In 2022, the Cambridge Women's Center was proud to host a total of 34 distinct support and activity groups. We have continued to be flexible with this programming; hosting in-person, online, and hybrid options to make our groups as accessible as possible to their participants.

442  
unique individuals  
participated in our  
groups

We welcomed  
2,326  
group attendees

- Art Group
- Alterations with Aelen
- Body Positive Book Group
- Body Size Freedom
- Coping Group
- Community Art Group
- Direct Action Group
- Feminist Book Club / Podcast Club
- How to Make Time for Your Goals
- Healing Through Creative Arts Workshop
- Holistic Living
- In Your Body: Poetry for Healing
- Journaling Group
- Journaling and Self-Expression
- Knitting
- Lesbian and Bi Discussion Group
- Let's Journal
- Let's Write!
- Make Your Own Greeting Cards
- Meditation Group
- Nonviolent Communication for Compassionate Conflict Resolution
- Reiki Sessions with Jessica
- Self-Love Group
- Sex Worker Support Group
- Sewing Group
- Slow Flow Yoga
- Spanish-English Conversation Exchange
- Straight Marriage, Still Questioning
- The Practice of Journaling
- Trauma Support and Discussion Group
- Women 65+ Discussion Group
- Women's Film Club



# CWC TEAM: SMALL BUT MIGHTY

Since our beginning, we have been a predominantly volunteer guided organization.  
All our programs are supported by the tireless efforts of our volunteers.  
In 2022, we recorded a total of...

**8,454**

**Total Volunteer Service Hours**

**144**

**Total Active Volunteers**

**2,848**

**Drop-in Volunteer Hours**

**1,400**

**Group Leader Volunteer Hours**

**Volunteers**

“

Volunteering with the CWC has been one of my most meaningful experiences. Our members are incredible and resilient people who constantly inspire me to be a better community member and advocate. In volunteering I have developed important skills that will carry forward through my personal life and career, including active listening, grounding, conflict de-escalation, and resource advocacy. I am so grateful for the opportunity to serve the Cambridge community and continue the mission for which our founders organized.

-CWC Group Leader



“

It is important to me to support women, particularly when I am in a space where I have the ability to do so, since there have been times when support from others was crucial for me.

-CWC Volunteer

# CWC TEAM: SMALL BUT MIGHTY

All of this is made possible by the generous support of our funders and the unrelenting efforts of our Board of Trustees

## Board of Trustees

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Anna B Stearns Foundation

Anonymous

Basil Tree Catering

Bay State Federal Savings

Bristol Myers Squibb

Charitable Foundation

Bushrod H. Campbell And Adah

F. Hall Charity Fund

Cambridge Community Dispute Settlement Center

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Our Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence

Point 32 Health

Riverside Boat Club

Rochelle Ruthschild

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The 888 Women's History Project

The Morrison & Foerster Foundation

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Town Fair Tire Foundation

Wagner Foundation

Flour Bakery



Cloe Pippin



Judy Norris



Rachelle Quimby



Emily Schkeryantz



Rochelle Louis



Ruth Erickson

# PLANS FOR THE FUTURE...

## Returning to 46 Pleasant Street

Due to the generosity of an anonymous donor, our cherished house at 46 Pleasant Street is undergoing a full renovation for the first time in our history. The house will now be fully ADA accessible with a chair lift, an elevator, and bathrooms on every floor. We expect the renovations to be completed in Summer 2023 and cannot wait to return home!

This represents an exciting moment in our 52 year long history. Our newly renovated building has secured our future and will aid our capacity to serve our beloved community.

