

ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

HARD FEELINGS MENTAL HEALTH
645 Dupont St.
Toronto, ON, M6G 1Z4

hardfeelings.org / @hardfeelingsto

LEANING INTO CHANGE

As we moved into a second year of pandemic life, we leaned into change in an uncertain landscape. The ups and downs of the pandemic were a challenge for counsellors, clients and staff.

In September, we worked to develop strategic directions for the organization that broadly define who we are and our priorities. We also took time to reflect on and refine our mission. These resources will enable us to build our capacity to deliver on our mission, and lean into the shifts which we will know will continue to roll in.

While we had new resources and support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, fluctuations in revenue streams and the shift to online practice led us to the difficult decision to leave our storefront permanently in May 2022. This move will give us the time to reflect on our model, build on its strengths, and prepare us for new ways of working in the coming years. Our online counselling is growing, and we are hoping the shift to online-only retail sales will grow, as well.

The commitment and flexibility of our staff and the counsellors in our community of practice are what have kept us afloat. As the demand for accessible mental health supports grows, we plan to innovate and respond through new partnerships and community supports.

Kate Scowen
Founder & Executive Director



Hard Feelings brings low-cost therapy and stylish self-care to the people / Toronto Star, August 2021

Photos: Briony Smith



OUR MISSION AND VALUES

Our mission is to bring innovation to the mental health sector that reduces barriers and increases access to stronger mental health. We work with mental health professionals, community members, and partners to facilitate the delivery of low-cost counselling, curate mental health resources, and foster conversations that fight stigma.

LOW-COST COUNSELLING

The pandemic continued to bring uncertainty and challenges to the world and to Hard Feelings. We made the difficult decision to move out of our storefront location in response to counsellor uncertainty of returning to in-person practice, and we maintained short term contracts with our counsellors in the hope that we could all be together in-person soon.

This was one of the rare times in history where counsellors were facing the same challenging situations at the same time as clients. We encouraged counsellors to take time for self-care throughout the pandemic, which meant reducing their availability and caseloads at times. This led to fewer available counsellors even though demand for mental health support was high. We gathered a counsellor focus group to redesign our model with the aim of meeting our mission and solidifying the financial sustainability of Hard Feelings. This new model and a redesigned website will launch in September 2022. With these changes, we will persevere through upcoming challenges and come out stronger.

Despite all the changes and challenges, we were able to support almost double the number of clients than the previous year, and we look forward to the coming year as we continue to expand our supports.

More Free Online Groups

With ongoing support from a private donor, we were able to offer a second series of free online groups in February 2022, attended by 126 individuals.



2021/22 IN NUMBERS

284 clients attended an intake session with a counsellor

262 clients engaged in ongoing counselling

On average, **128** clients were engaged in counselling each month

22 counsellors offered low-cost counselling through our model

On average, **11.5** clients were on the waitlist for counselling each month

91 booster sessions were provided to client in need of a touch up

Our Winter Solace Group Series saw **10** unique groups, with **16** facilitators to support **126** participants over **63** sessions.



STORE

Like most stores throughout the pandemic, we leaned into the hybrid online and in-person shop model. We hosted our first outdoor Mental Health Pop-Up Market in September 2021 at Christie Pits park, which included 12+ vendors and had over 500 visitors. When we moved out of our storefront, we developed a partnership with another local retail store as a package drop-off location for our online shoppers to ensure continuity in the Bloorcourt neighbourhood that had been our home for 5 years.

We introduced an innovative “Shop by Feeling” experience in our store. This was a fun and clever way to support customers to find and engage easily with products. This and other efforts led to a significant increase in sales revenue, thanks in part to support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

May 2022 was the last month in our physical space at 848 Bloor St. West. We were sad to say goodbye to our space, but excited for the opportunities this change could bring to Hard Feelings.



Hard Feelings Mental Health Pop-Up Market / Hard Feelings, September 2021

From left to right: Kate Scowen, Taima Humbert and Bea Gancedo

BOARD REPORT

Hard Feelings continued to rise to the challenge of delivering access to mental health support in an environment of uncertainty as the pandemic carried on through its second year. We developed a strategic direction for Hard Feelings for 2021 to 2024. We built on what we learned in the previous year and made the difficult decision to move out of our beloved storefront and focus on planning for the next phase of Hard Feelings. We worked hard to connect with as many stakeholders as possible to create a strategy that would see us innovating as we did when we launched Hard Feelings in 2017 and we are excited to introduce Hard Feelings 2.0 in the coming year.

The Hard Feelings Board of Directors

HFMH Board of Directors

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