

---

## Her Excellency Sharon Johnston visits Calgary Counselling Centre

**Calgary, AB – Sept. 19, 2013** – Her Excellency Sharon Johnston, wife of His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada, visited Calgary Counselling Centre on Tuesday, September 17. Calgary Counselling Centre was one of two local agencies in the city that was toured by Her Excellency.

“We are excited to be celebrating our 50<sup>th</sup> year of service in the community and we are truly honoured to have been chosen by Her Excellency to visit,” said Dr. Robbie Babins-Wagner, Chief Executive Officer, Calgary Counselling Centre. “Her Excellency is a leader and champion for mental health in Canada. We are proud to share a common goal of providing flood recovery support to our community. Equally important is creating awareness around mental health to reduce the stigma so more people will seek help.”

Part of Their Excellencies tour in Southern Alberta was to recognize the contributions of individuals and organizations who have generously given back to their communities in the wake of the devastating floods in June.

“Thank you for the work you do. It’s truly amazing,” said Her Excellency. “Organizations such as Calgary Counselling Centre make a significant difference in the lives of many. It is important we continue to reduce the stigma around mental health in order for more people seek support.”

Her Excellency was escorted through the Centre by Dr. Robbie Babins-Wagner, CEO and Board Chair Elizabeth Carson, where she visited the call centre and the play therapy room. The tour concluded with a small gathering of speeches from former clients, a student intern and a counsellor.

Her Excellency engaged with the speakers by asking questions and sharing her own experiences relating to theirs. It was her personable energetic nature that allowed her to instantly connect with each speaker and the audience making them feel valued. Their Excellencies’ have identified several pillars of focus, one of which is supporting families and children across Canada. Her Excellency’s commitment to this pillar was evident in her stories, her questions and dedication to act on information she gathered in her visit.

Her Excellency completed her visit by addressing the room with a simple question, “what information do you want me to take back?”

“That there is hope. It’s important to keep this in mind as our community continues to recover from the flooding in June. Apart from physical damage there was also emotional damage, which may be felt over several years,” said Dr. Robbie Babins-Wagner, CEO, Calgary Counselling Centre. “We are seeing change every single day and we will continue to work with our community to provide recovery services for those accessing counselling.”

Her Excellency left with a commitment to promote Calgary Counselling Centre’s initiatives and specifically the annual awareness event National Depression Screening Day on October 10.

-30-

---

**For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact:**

Caitlin Simpson, Communications Assistant

P. 403.691-5905

E. [caitlin.simpson@calgarycounselling.com](mailto:caitlin.simpson@calgarycounselling.com) W: [www.calgarycounselling.com](http://www.calgarycounselling.com)