

2019 and 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

**Community Services
Advisory Board**

Edmonton

CSAB

Message from the Chair

During 2019 and 2020 the Community Services Advisory Board (CSAB) has had the opportunity to provide advice to Council and the City of Edmonton to assist in long term planning for community services in Edmonton and allocate funding to community-based organizations in an effort to support the quality of life and wellbeing of Edmontonians. CSAB is composed of thirteen passionate community members who work collectively to bring their diverse professional and personal knowledge, perspectives, and experiences to inform city social policy, arts, culture, multiculturalism, parks, recreation, and sports.

In 2019, CSAB provided advice on a variety of topics including the City's neighbourhood revitalization approach and abundant communities, accessibility for people with disabilities policy, EndPoverty Edmonton, the City's approach to supporting seniors centres, sustainable assisted transportation, public washrooms, and the City of Edmonton's budget. Each of these topics has provided CSAB an opportunity to influence planning, ongoing delivery of programs and services, and continuous improvement.

In 2020, CSAB took a small pause during the onset of the pandemic in an effort to recognize the significant stress and changes that were being faced by the City of Edmonton, the non-profit sector, and members of the advisory board. After a shift to virtual meetings CSAB participated in the strategic review of the Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) program and a developed a process to work with the Citizen Services Department to ensure the effective engagement of CSAB in their work. In addition, CSAB navigated the need to make changes to FCSS funding agreements in light of the impacts of COVID-19.

As an advisory board, CSAB is responsible for reviewing applications and providing recommendations for funding for the City of Edmonton Community Investment Grants, the Emerging Immigrant and Refugee Community Grant, and the Family and Community Support Services Program. In 2019/2020, CSAB recommended the approval of \$24,098,039 and \$25,021,511 respectively, in funding to support the delivery of programs and services that enhance the social well-being of individuals, families, and community through prevention, sport, recreation, and culture.



The work of CSAB is greatly influenced by the exceptional staff and leadership from the City of Edmonton Citizen Services branch. These staff have been instrumental in ensuring the topics presented at meetings are timely, relevant, and aligned with the board members' expertise, and present opportunities where feedback and insights from engaged CSAB members can assist in planning and the achievement of the City's outcomes.

On behalf of all members of the CSAB, I would like to thank these City leaders and staff for their willingness to listen and consider the input, advice, ideas, and recommendations of the members. As a collective group of Edmontonians we feel proud to contribute to our city and its vision: "A healthy, vibrant Edmonton in which people embrace active lifestyles that improve their individual well-being as well as that of their families, neighbourhoods and communities."

Nancy Zuck
CSAB Chair 2020

CSAB Mission and Mandate

Mission

The Community Services Advisory Board (CSAB) is a diverse group of citizens who provide a community perspective on people, parks, and places to City Council and the Citizen Services Department.

Mandate

The mandate of the Community Services Advisory Board is to facilitate informed decision-making by:

- gathering information and sharing knowledge
- raising issues and awareness
- providing advice and recommending policy
- making recommendations on funding
- offering alternative strategies

All members of the Community Services Advisory Board are appointed by City Council. In 2019/2020, the Board had 13 members who brought their skills and experiences to the Citizen Services Department. The Deputy City Manager of the Citizen Services Department, or their designate, sits on the Board as a non-voting member.

Board Activities

CSAB members and community members on the Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) Committee contributed more than **1,722 volunteer hours** in 2019/2020, which included regular board meetings and numerous committee meetings, agency visits, and a funding retreat. CSAB members met regularly with City staff and provided advice on several topics including:

- Projects and priorities with the Citizen Services Leadership Team
- Agencies, Boards, and Committees Chair Networking
- Integrated Strategic Development—Public Washrooms Approach
- Approach to Supporting Seniors Centres
- Sustainable Assisted Transportation
- Neighbourhood Revitalization Approach and Abundant Communities
- Accessibility for People with Disabilities Policy
- EndPoverty Edmonton
- City of Edmonton Budget

The Community Services Advisory Board

Board Membership 2019: Nancy Zuck (Chair), Priti Laderoute (Vice-Chair), Leanne Brownoff, Bonnie Chan-Maier, Kyra Cusveller, Bette Gray, Sam Jenkins, Kanwal Lali, Sky McLaughlin, Jameela Murji, Victoria Smith

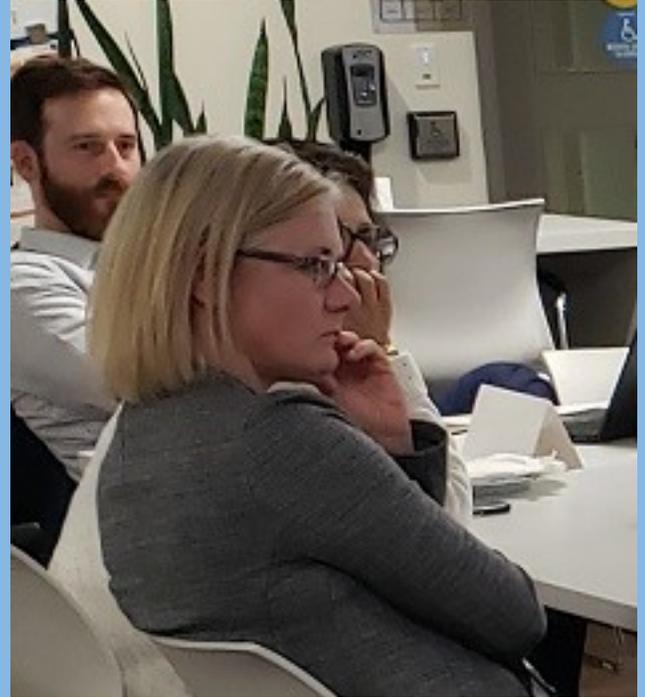
Term ended May 2019: Stephanie Chai, Joan Welch

Term began May 2019: Mishma Mukith, Scott Wright

Board Membership 2020: Nancy Zuck (Chair), Priti Laderoute (Vice-Chair), Leanne Brownoff, Bonnie Chan-Maier, Kyra Cusveller, Bette Gray, Sam Jenkins, Kanwal Lali, Sky McLaughlin, Mishma Mukith, Jameela Murji, Victoria Smith, Scott Wright

Term began May 2020: Steve Langer

Resigned in 2020: Leanne Brownoff (June), Sam Jenkins (June)



CSAB was supported by: Rob Smyth, Deputy City Manager, Citizen Services; Judy Smith, Director, Community Resources; and Brent Jans, Administrative Support, Community Resources.

Councillor Jon Dziadyk has been assigned by City Council as the liaison for the board.

Pictured (from L to R): Scott Wright, Mishma Mukith, Leanne Browning, Victoria Smith, Kyra Cusveller, Jameela Murji, Nancy Zuck (Chair), Kanwal Lali, Priti Laderoute (Vice Chair), Bette Gray, Sky McLaughlin, Sam Jenkins

Not Pictured: Bonnie Chan-Maier, Steve Langer, Rob Smyth, Judy Smith, Brent Jans



Standing Committees

Family and Community Support Services Committee (FCSS)

The Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) Committee serves to ensure that preventive social services and programs are available for the citizens of Edmonton. The committee, which includes CSAB representatives and community members, shares its knowledge of social trends and issues in Edmonton and provides advice to the CSAB regarding the allocation of funds as required under FCSS legislation.

Throughout 2019, committee members learned about the funded preventive programs and services through agency visits, presentations, grant applications, and information from FCSS liaisons. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, agency visits were not carried out in 2020.

For more information on the Edmonton FCSS program and funding, please visit their [website](#).

FCSS Committee members: Kanwal Lali, Heather Kennedy-Plant, Ashley Dryburgh (Edmonton Community Foundation), Nicolas Diaz (Edmonton Community Foundation), Bette Gray, Jameela Murji, Joan Welch, Joseph Luri, Kyra Cusveller, Leanne Brownoff, Shannon Butler (Butler Family Foundation) Sky McLaughlin, Vicki Van Vliet Vaitkunas; Victoria Smith

Community Investment Grant (CIG) Committee

The CIG Standing Committee was formed to advise and support City Administration on matters pertaining to the Community Investment Grants, and make recommendations to CSAB with regards to the awards for these grants.

2019 Committee members: Priti Laderoute, Bette Gray, Mishma Mukith

2020 Committee members: Bonnie Chan-Maier, Sky McLaughlin, Kanwal Lali

Board Representation

Members of the Community Services Advisory Board also participate on the following:

Family and Community Support Services Association of Alberta (FCSSAA) Board: City of Edmonton representative, Vicki Van Vliet Vaitkunas. Vicki was also the President of the FCSSAA Board in 2019.



Grants Allocated

Community Investment Grants

Community Investment Operating Grant

The Community Investment Operating Grant provides operating assistance to not-for-profit organizations whose primary mandates include social services, multicultural activities, or recreation/amateur sport to help them provide programs, services, and activities that benefit the citizens of Edmonton.

The total budget for the CIOG in 2019 and 2020 was \$3,617,775 each year. In 2019, 294 organizations received operating grants; in 2020, 278 organizations received CIOG funding.

For a complete list of organizations funded in 2019 and 2020, visit the [CIOG webpage](#).

Community Investment Hosting Grant

The Community Investment Hosting Grant assists organizations to host recreational, amateur sport, or multicultural events within Edmonton. These events can be provincial, Western Canadian, national, or international in scope. Due to COVID-19 restrictions the CI Hosting Grant was suspended for 2020. Events funded in 2019 include:

- **Ellerslie Curling and Recreation Association** hosted the 2019 Alberta BP Cup
- **Northern Alberta Irish Dance** hosted the Brady Academy Spring Feis
- **Judo Canada—Edmonton** hosted the Judo Canada Open Nationals

\$30,975

Funded 15 groups
to host events

Community Investment Travel Grant

The Community Investment Travel Grant assists teams or individuals with travel costs to participate in a western Canadian, national, or international amateur sport, recreation, or multicultural event. Some of the events attended include **U20 Women's Rugby Tri Nations Series**, **2019 FIE World Fencing Championships** in Budapest, Hungary, and the **Central Ukraine & Georgia Tour 2019** (for Ukrainian song and dance).

Due to COVID-19 restrictions the CI Travel Grant was suspended for 2020.

\$58,094

Funded 64 teams
and individuals

Emerging Immigrant & Refugee Community Grants

The **Emerging Immigrant & Refugee Community (EIRC) Grant Program** provides five grants to help organizations from emerging immigrant and refugee communities. These organizations support the settlement and inclusion of their members through community gatherings, strengthening of cultural pride, and becoming an active part of the cultural mosaic in Edmonton.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, only the Space Rental Subsidy Grant was offered in 2020.

Space Rental Subsidy Grant

This EIRC grant assists emerging immigrant and refugee communities with the cost of renting space for their programming.

Total amount awarded in 2019: \$126,918

Total amount awarded in 2020: \$124,254

Cultural Heritage Program Grant

This EIRC grant funds projects that strengthen the cultural knowledge and pride of emerging immigrant and refugee communities. Projects could include dance, music, storytelling, the arts, and heritage language.

Total amount awarded: \$38,214

of organizations awarded grants: 11

Community Event Grant

This EIRC grant assists emerging immigrant and refugee organizations in hosting community events that help to reduce isolation and create positive connections among members.

Total amount awarded: \$53,691

of organizations awarded grants: 39

Edmonton Heritage Festival Grant

CSAB approved a two-year pilot project in 2016 to support small ethno-cultural community organizations to participate in the Heritage Festival. This EIRC funding enabled these groups to display their culture on a scale the group could manage and share the pride of their culture. The CSAB recognized the value of this program and at the end of the pilot passed a motion to support the continuation of this grant, which provides a seed grant of up to \$750 to organizations towards registration fees for participation in the festival.

Total Amount Awarded: \$1500

of organizations awarded grants: 2



Program Delivery Partnership Grant

This EIRC grant encourages immigrant and refugee community organizations to partner with mainstream agencies to address gaps and barriers in existing programs and services, and to explore innovative approaches to working together. It also, if able, addresses emerging needs recognized by the Social Development Branch that require support.

Community Initiative Micro Grants: Action for Healthy Communities and the **Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers** have been working with emerging immigrant and refugee community groups for years to build community capacity and support them in developing community initiatives that will have a positive impact in their communities. The Program Delivery Partnership Grant provided each organization with \$25,000 to provide micro grants for the initiatives they support with emerging community groups.

Funding Approved: \$50,000

Seniors and Young Families Basic Needs

Enhancement Fund: The **Multicultural Family Resource Society** and the **Syrian Family Support Office** work to offer supports to Syrian refugees facing ongoing barriers and challenges in accessing settlement services and supports. Often, isolated seniors and young families struggle to meet their basic needs; these needs are currently not being met by existing services. Staff of the Syrian Family Support Office will use these funds to keep the most in-need seniors and families from slipping into greater socio-economic vulnerability.

Funding Approved: \$35,000

The Out of School Time (OST) Collaborative: The OST Collaborative is coordinated by **REACH Edmonton**. Many organizations participate for the training, networking, and resource sharing opportunities. Grants are available to community-based organizations

offering summer programs for immigrant, refugee, and other vulnerable children and youth. The City of Edmonton is one of several funders who contribute funds and participate in a collaborative funding process to provide grants to eligible OST summer programs.

The funding provided to the groups helps them with program costs and allows the children and youth to have an enriched program with a wider variety of activities. The groups also receive support through the OST Coordinator to help ensure a quality and safe program is offered.

Funding Approved (for 2020 & 2021): \$200,000

In 2020, the **Multicultural Family Resource Society (MFRS)** and the **Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations (ECVO)** received \$150K each to support activities in the community that create bonds within Newcomer/Refugee populations, bridge the needs identified in these communities to existing services provided by services agencies and lead to linking strategically to systemic/policy shifts with the State of Immigration and Settlement framework and plan.

Funding Approved: \$300,000



FCSS

Family & Community Support Services

Edmonton

Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) is a municipal/provincial partnership that works to ensure that communities in Alberta are supportive, safe, inclusive and engaged. Edmonton FCSS works to achieve this by supporting not-for-profit organizations in the design and delivery of preventive services and programs that reduce social isolation, encourage connection and belonging within communities and strengthen relationships and social support.



Blanket exercise at monthly Intercultural Gathering

2019

FCSS

Family & Community
Support Services

Edmonton

Total Unique Participants - 209,094

0-5 year olds
9,408

6-12 year olds
12,633

13-17 year olds
24,914

18-24 year olds
15,506

24-64 year olds
111,998

65+ year olds
16,000

Age Unknown - 18,635

Total Agencies - 70

Total Programs - 100

FTE's - 583

Program Staff Hours
1,213,000+

FCSS Committee - 12

Volunteer Hours
1,398

FCSS Core Funding
\$16.6 million

Practicum Students - 582
Practicum Student Hours
79,304

Program Volunteers
12,008
Volunteer Hours - 522,718

2019 Impact Areas

Edmonton FCSS and its funded partners believe that strong individuals, families and communities create a vibrant and caring community where everyone is able to thrive and succeed. The annual outcomes reporting contained in this report is a snapshot of the work accomplished for the year and represents data gathered from a sample of program participants. Many organizations are measuring outcomes in their programs beyond what is reported here to understand, evaluate, and improve services for residents of Edmonton.

Resilient Individuals

Resilient Individuals have the ability to bounce back from challenges and stress that they face. According to Michael Ungar, resilience is *“the capacity of individuals to navigate their way to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain their well-being, and their capacity individually and collectively to negotiate for these resources to be provided in culturally meaningful ways.”* (Ungar, 2008 and Ungar, 2011, <http://resilienceresearch.org/about-the-rrc/resilience/14-what-is-resilience>).

Children and youth reported that they had improved developmental skills

87%

Respondents reported that they had improved skills to address identified issues.

89%

Thriving Families

Thriving Families work together to overcome challenges, learn, and develop. Caregivers within the family have the capacity to support the physical, social, psychological, emotional, and spiritual development of the children, youth, adult, or senior. Creating stable environments that promote quality interactions support achieving the goals for the family group.

Respondents reported they had improved family functioning

88%

Caregivers reported they had increased knowledge of child development

94%

Caregivers reported they had increased knowledge of positive parenting skills

96%

Caregivers reported they had improved positive parenting skills

98%

Welcoming and Engaged Community

Welcoming and Engaged Communities are open, diverse, and inclusive. They ensure that all community members are active, connected, and supported in achieving their goals. They can be geographic or interest based depending on the program focus area.

Respondents reported increased awareness of social issues in the community.

88%

Respondents reported increased positive involvement in the community.

89%

Connections and Relationships

Strong relationships and connections are the glue between individuals, families, communities and the not for profit sector. It is through relationships that we can achieve a strong and supportive community where all people can thrive and contribute. Individuals and families have access to a network of community and social supports that can address their needs.

Respondents had increased knowledge of community resources

87%

Respondents reported that they accessed community resources that met their needs

98%

Respondents reported that they had improved networks of social support

88%

2019 Working in Partnership

Edmonton FCSS works alongside other funders and service providers to tackle complex social issues in collaborative and innovative ways. Edmonton FCSS not only provides funding for these partnerships but also expertise and support so that together as a community we are coming together to make our community a better place for all citizens. In 2019, approximately \$3 million were allocated to 16 partnerships, including:

- All In For Youth
- Prevention of Family Violence Collaborative
- Community Mental Health Action Plan
- Edmonton Seniors Home Supports Program
- Empower U
- Outreach Housing Team
- Communities United
- Rainbow Refuge
- Young Indigenous Women's Circle of Leadership

Organizations with funded programs also participate in partnerships that allow them to enhance their mandate and better address the needs of the community and of their program participants. The various partnerships are working to support:

Community Capacity Building	Early Childhood Development	Social Connection	Inclusion and/or Diversity
Community Mental Health	Youth Engagement	Poverty Reduction	Senior Wellness
Common Service Access	Safe Communities	Homelessness	Family Violence Prevention

2019 Profiles of Partnership

All in For Youth (AIFY)

Children and families can often face complex needs that cannot be met through the education system alone. Located in five demonstration sites, All In For Youth (AIFY) provides wrap around school-based support which help children and families thrive. The goal is to help children achieve success in both school and life. In 2019, a third year of full support was provided to five schools as well as partial support within eight other schools. The full complement of services are focused in five areas:

- In School Supports
- Family Supports
- After School Supports
- Teaching Excellence
- Systems Change

Some key findings from the Year 3 evaluation included:

- 1,471 students accessed one or more supports (does not include students accessing nutrition supports). This represents anywhere from 50 - 99% of the entire school community. Further, students and families reported that they experienced improved access to needed support.
- 85% of parent and caregiver respondents felt welcome whenever they visited the school and 81% thought the school was a safe place for their children. Students and families were more engaged in schools.
- 98% of 1,112 student respondents reported that they plan to complete high school. This program helped students stay in school and contributed to positive social change in students.
- Students developed healthy peer relationships. Family relationships were supported. 86% of parents and caregivers felt more confident as a parent / caregiver. While 55% of families reported that the help and support offered through the programs helped them gain stability.
- School culture has become trauma informed as school staff and agency staff learn together and apply a trauma informed lens.
- 84% of school staff and 78% of Agency Staff said that their school and the agencies involved in the AIFY work are collaborating successfully.

Community Mental Health Action Plan

In 2019, the thirty-one partners that form the Steering Committee and three leadership teams continued to work to implement the goals in the Plan. Work completed includes: the launch of the website <https://mentalhealthactionplan.ca/>, the creation of a training framework for mental health training in Alberta, the launch of the Shared Wisdom guide which has stories and resources, and the launch of the Need Help for Mental Health? Navigation Tool for Edmonton, including in seven other languages and a customizable version that communities across Alberta can adapt to their needs.

Rainbow Refuge

The Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers first received FCSS partnership funding for the Rainbow Refuge program in 2019. The funding provided for a full time staff position to assist LGBTQ+ newcomers, including refugee claimants, in understanding and navigating systems, getting connected to services, and building social supports. The program staff supported 55 unique participants ranging in ages from 13 - 64. 94% of 16 respondents reported an increased knowledge of community resources, 100% of 8 respondents accessed community resources that met their needs and 100% of 16 respondents reported an increased network of social support.

The staff position was also responsible for providing presentations to increase awareness among mainstream service providers about the needs of this group of newcomers. These providers reported strengthened individual skills within the organizations and enhanced collaborative efforts.

EMCN Success Story

“RL is a transgender teen from Mexico who came to Canada after his mother was killed back home. He made his way to Edmonton with his brothers who were visiting family in Canada. The family in Mexico and in Canada did not support his sexual orientation and gender identity, and left him with a family friend. His uncle in Edmonton tried to have him sent back to Mexico, however, the family friend applied for guardianship as she could see him being mistreated both physically, sexually, and mentally. In Mexico he had been institutionalized for behavior due to his transgender status, and he was denied public junior high school in Mexico because he did not want to wear a dress and wanted to be known by a different name. The school refused his entry at the age of eleven. The guardian was not knowledgeable about transgender teens, so she called the Pride Centre of Edmonton for help and to get information. She was then referred to our Settlement Practitioner LGBTQ+ (Rainbow Refuge Program) at EMCN, as RL did not have status in Canada and he required assistance. The Settlement Practitioner LGBTQ+ reviewed the documentation the teen had, which shows the history of abuse that RL had suffered, and provided the option that he could proceed with a refugee claim. After finishing and submitting the claim, the Settlement Practitioner LGBTQ+ referred RL to an EMCN school-based team (Family School Liaison Program), to help get him registered in school. Recognizing the trauma RL had suffered, the Settlement Practitioner LGBTQ+ referred RL to the EMCN Health and Wellbeing (therapy) team at EMCN who provide culturally appropriate counseling. Rainbow Refuge staff helped him join the LGBTQ+ Newcomers Group where RL realized that he could be his true self. In the fall of 2019, the great news arrived that with lots of support from Legal Aid Alberta RL’s refugee claim was accepted. RL is now attending grade 10 and is doing well. He has benefited from counselling, and has started feeling like other teenagers. When we first met RL, he was isolating himself in his room, now he has friends and enjoys school. He is even shoveling snow and getting used to winter in Canada! Rainbow Refuge staff still recognize there are scars from his past, but he is starting to relax and show his personality. For the first time in his young life, he can now see he has a future as himself. Here is something his Guardian shared with us: “Honestly I shudder to think about the abuse this youngster has suffered and I am so grateful for the help and support that Rainbow Refuge, EMCN, the great therapists and the LGBTQ+ newcomer’s meetings have given us.””

2019 Strengthening Knowledge & Skills

As part of its commitment to a strong, evidence informed sector, Edmonton FCSS hosted and funded training opportunities focused on evaluation and diversity and inclusion while also investing \$700,000 for programs and services focused on knowledge creation, mobilization and translation. The following are updates from 2019.

Strong Sector

Individuals, families and communities exist and function within society. Within Edmonton and area the not for profit sector is critical to creating an integrated and connected web of supports to reduce and eliminate people falling through the cracks. Ensuring that the individuals and organizations working within the sector have the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to be successful and healthy is critical. In 2019, some of the organizations funded to engage in this work included: Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations, Edmonton Social Planning Council, Mapping and Planning Support Alberta, Community University Partnership.

Respondents reported strengthened individual skills within organizations

88%

Respondents reported more effective community organizations

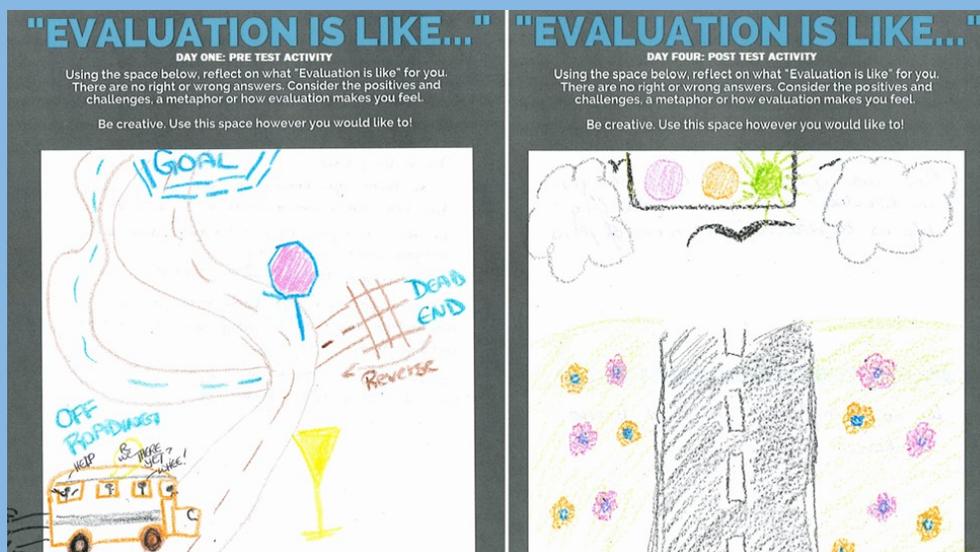
96%

Respondents reported enhanced collaborative efforts

96%

Eval 101

In 2019, 23 participants representing 16 organizations met over a four week period to gain increased knowledge, skills and confidence in evaluation and evaluative thinking. The four session introduction to evaluation course focused on: logic models, ethics in evaluation, evaluation planning, data collection, data analysis, key findings and communication of evaluation data. All participants that completed the pre and post evaluation of the course, reported an increase in their confidence in evaluation knowledge and skills. This was particularly true in the areas of evaluation planning, data collection tools and ethics in evaluation. The course was advertised with funded agency partners for those that are new or require an “refresher.” While only a small number completed a follow up survey, those that did indicated they have continued their learning and have made changes within their evaluation practices as a result of what they learned in this course.



Diversity & Inclusion Training Phase III

Phase III, the final phase of this training series, started in 2019. Building on previous work, five organizational assessment workshops were held by the Centre for Race and Culture, and a follow up survey was circulated to support the formation of several Communities of Practice. There were 77 participants (96 registered) from a total of 28 agencies.

An example of an organization and program that has recognized, embraced and integrated inclusive practices into their programming comes from [Dickinsfield Amity House](#). Dickinsfield Amity House is an organization that is situated in the neighbourhood of Evansdale and has existed since 1972. It's vision states that, "Amity House is a welcoming, vibrant place where diverse communities unite and people thrive." Tracy Patience, the Executive Director, recently shared a photo and story from their cooking club. She writes:

"So, I just wanted to send you this photo from cooking club today. Mauwa (Ma-oo-ah) from DRC [Democratic Republic of the Congo] is teaching us how to make Palau. She's being assisted by a Rwandan friend, 2 Somali women, a Chinese volunteer, a woman raised German Mennonite, a military wife from NB, a long time community resident and Indigenous man and 2 Indigenous youth. And it was delicious! All ages, capacities, 3 different languages. It was beautiful. It's almost always beautiful, but this time I got a photo. This is the stuff I can't put into words."



City of Edmonton

2019 FCSS Contribution

Programs, Services, and Initiatives

For over 50 years, the Government of Alberta, together with participating municipalities and Métis Settlements, have jointly funded preventive social services for Albertans through the Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) program. The Province contributes 80 per cent of the cost of operating a local program and the participating municipality or Métis Settlement contributes a minimum of 20 per cent. The City of Edmonton's mandatory contribution to FCSS consists of programs, services, and initiatives within the Citizen Services Department and any other funding provided directly by City Council to programs and/or projects that meet the provincial eligibility requirements. This includes:

- FCSS Program Administration
- FCSS Program Team
- Community Building Social Workers
- Community Capacity Building
- Community Safety
- Family Violence Prevention
- Individual & Family Well-being
- Volunteer Coordination

Some Highlights from 2019

Seniors Protection Partnership

The Seniors Protection Partnership (SPP) is a partnership between the City of Edmonton, Edmonton Police Service, Covenant Health, Sage Seniors Association, and Catholic Social Services. The SPP exists to prevent and respond to high risk elder abuse by working in partnership with the community, thereby enhancing the well-being of older adults. The City of Edmonton's Community Development Social Worker works to identify and implement leading practices on elder abuse prevention, engage with key stakeholders in Edmonton and surrounding areas, create awareness, and identify gaps in addressing this societal issue.

A goal identified for 2019, was to get out in the community and help citizens and front line service providers learn how to access appropriate resources for elder abuse. 32 presentations to 820 people were provided which included: educational support to Edmonton Police Service recruits and medical and pharmacy students at the University of Alberta. Additionally the City staff engaged with social work hospital staff across Edmonton to provide tangible financial literacy to seniors.

Some Highlights from 2019 (cont'd)

This is What it Feels Like: An Anti-Sexual Street Harassment Program

Engaging men as allies in the work to end sexual street harassment is a goal of the City's Gender-Based Violence and Sexual Assault Initiative. One innovative program the City has used is the "This Is What It Feels Like" (TIWIFL) Auditory Art Exhibit to attract men into learning about and taking a position to act on the problem of sexual street harassment. The goal of this program is three-fold:

1. To train male volunteers to engage passerby's to listen to the auditory exhibit and then debrief them on their experiences, and thus facilitating men to talk about the problem
2. To train our volunteers to help participants to take a position on the problem of sexual street harassment that can lead to action
3. To help men who witness or perpetrate sexual street harassment to imagine steps they can take to prevent the problem.

The City partnered with a grassroots organization, Men Edmonton, to run the exhibit and to recruit and train the volunteers. From 2017-2019, one dozen male volunteers attended a two-hour training session and volunteered at TIWIFL exhibits. All of these volunteers have grown in their allyship work in the GBVPSA movement and remained active in the movement, attending events hosted by Men Edmonton and other pro-feminist groups, like NextGen Men.

In 2019 TIWIFL appeared at 13 venues across the City, including farmer's markets, festivals, post-secondary institutions and public awareness events. Seven (54%) of the venue organizers asked us to return to venues because of positive feedback in the previous year. The auditory exhibit ran for a cumulative total of 48 hours during this period.

In the hours of operation, TIWIFL engaged 543 participants in extended conversations about their awareness of sexual street harassment and how they imagine themselves helping to prevent it. Only a minority (32%) volunteered to listen to the auditory recording of verbal street harassment, but a majority of those listeners (>65%) were from our target population of men. Participants were asked to write on a large whiteboard how the art exhibit made them feel. Men wrote down reactions of shock and concern or calls to action for other men, e.g. "That this happens here is horrible", "I hope you don't recognize yourself in this exhibit," "Learn to be yourself, not what others expect of you." About one in five male participants took a brochure explaining the problem of sexual street harassment and offering strategies for calling in/out other men to prevent sexual street harassment.

One learning from the program, which only targeted men who were 18 years and older, came from caregivers with teenage boys who asked to have the program adapted to work with young males.

Some Highlights from 2019 (cont'd)

Building Community Through Partnerships and Fresh Food

In Fall 2019 Fresh Routes Mobile Grocery Store started operations in Edmonton, after demonstrating success in Calgary. Fresh Routes is a not-for-profit social enterprise that is focused on creating new, innovative ways of providing healthy and affordable food to as many Canadians as possible - especially those who need it most. The mission of Fresh Routes is to ensure that everyone has access to affordable, nutritious food and information to make healthy decisions and live a healthy life.

In partnership with the City of Edmonton, Community Development Social Workers, Fresh Routes was able to quickly mobilize with established networks and partners to bring fresh food to communities where there are limited affordable food options. Each Fresh Routes location is established and developed with community partners and funding to ensure their success. Fresh Routes is for everyone and also aims to reduce stigma around access affordable food options.

This is a partnership where everyone benefits, community members have an affordable food option close to their home, agencies and partners are able to work together to build connections.

By Spring 2020 there will be nine locations, with more to come. The importance of cooperation and partnerships can not be understated.

Looking Ahead to 2020

The Edmonton FCSS Program has welcomed many new Executive Directors and FCSS Committee members. Edmonton FCSS will continue to work directly with the funded programs to support and strengthen the preventive social services sector and improve the social well-being of individuals, families and communities in Edmonton.

Working with Bassa Social Innovation, Edmonton FCSS will review and align its efforts to respond to the changes in community while ensuring that efforts remain in line with provincial legislation and City priorities. We look forward to ongoing conversations that will help guide our work now and into the future.

The FCSS Committee and the Community Services Advisory Board (CSAB) will continue to elevate the work, advocate for, and share the story of the impact that Edmonton FCSS programs have on the local preventive social services sector.

2020

FCSS

Family & Community
Support Services

Edmonton

Total Unique Participants - 191,133

0-5 year olds
6,493

6-12 year olds
10,031

13-17 year olds
15,717

18-24 year olds
7,628

24-64 year olds
54,289

65+ year olds
16,375

Age Unknown - 80,600

Total Agencies - 69

Total Programs - 98

FTE's - 632

Program Staff Hours
1,314,000+

FCSS Core Funding
\$16.6 million

Practicum Students - 385
Practicum Student Hours
54,357

FCSS Committee - 10

Volunteer Hours
100**

Program Volunteers
7,642
Volunteer Hours - 317,318

**Due to COVID-19 one year extensions were provided to all programs for 2021 - so no evaluation of applications was necessary, as well no program visits by volunteers were done.

EDMONTON FCSS - 2020

FAMILY & COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) is a municipal/provincial partnership that works to ensure that communities in Alberta are supportive, safe, inclusive and engaged. Edmonton FCSS works to achieve this by supporting the design and delivery of preventive services and programs that reduce social isolation, encourage connection and belonging within communities and strengthen relationships and social support.

2020 introduced new challenges and stress to the FCSS program as we faced a global pandemic. The social service organizations that FCSS works with had to look at how to offer the programs and services that support their clients in new and innovative ways, as well as adhering to health protocols. For many of them doing their work online at home and/or providing their services online was not something they had been doing. The organizations rose to the challenge and found new ways to offer programs that worked for their participants. Edmonton FCSS supported organizations by discussing service delivery, encouraging as well as supporting connections with other programs and modifying programs to ensure they were meeting the greatest needs of their participants. That involved a lot of flexibility and creative thinking, but the willingness and determination to do things in different ways was fantastic. It also involved new partnerships and collaborations and program delivery systems being developed to provide services in more coordinated ways. Edmonton FCSS is very proud of the work that our funded agencies did during this time and continue to do to serve the citizens of our community.

“Every program and service we have had to rethink, and when you are able to do it, it feels successful. Also the way we have created health and safety protocols that feel good and everyone understands them.”

Special thanks is extended to the Ministry of Community and Social Services for their support and flexibility during this year, which included a Ministerial order to allow FCSS funding to be used to support food security, for several months. The Edmonton FCSS Program was also asked to participate in supporting the administration of the Social Service Supports for COVID-19 Grant Program that many local community organizations accessed for much needed community support. Working together as partners helped both our provincial counterparts and helped make an impact in our community.

Thank you to all our funded programs, staff members and volunteers for your tireless efforts in 2020 to support our community. Also thanks to our City of Edmonton FCSS team, our City colleagues and community partners for supporting the community during these challenging times. We are stronger together.

It is the hope of the Community Services Advisory Board and the FCSS Committee that we can take the lessons we have learned during this challenging time to make changes to systems and program delivery to better serve our community in the future.

Pandemic Responses: Successes and Learning

2020 was a unique year for communities dealing with the challenges of a worldwide pandemic. During virtual agency visits, FCSS Liaisons asked Executive Directors about their most successful adaptations and what they had learned. Several themes came through clearly. The strongest theme, perhaps unsurprisingly, was pride in how quickly they were able to adapt as organizations and as staff teams. The following represents additional themes and quotes provided by those discussions with Executive Directors:

Adapting & Being Flexible - This theme cuts across several of the themes below. In general, agencies were proud of how adaptable and flexible they had proven to be.

- **Quick transition of Programming** - This transition was not always to virtual programming; some agencies still had to find ways to provide in-person support due to the services they provided. Transitions to implement safety protocols were a priority to ensure the safety of clients and staff.
- **Adaptation to the use of new technology** - This theme was about the learning curve for staff to use the new technology and how to provide online programs, implementing privacy protocols, ensuring all staff had the required equipment, and that clients had what they needed to participate.
- **Work from home is possible** - This theme was focused on the shift in mindset by staff and leadership, and the creativity of staff in reaching out meaningfully.

Coordination & Partnerships - Numerous agencies were excited by the increased coordination, collaboration, and new partnerships that had been spurred agency responses to the pandemic

Closer Relationships - What came across most often in this theme is a sense that some walls had come down between people, because of an intense shared experience. Agency leaders saw stronger relationships forming, and compassion that went both ways - from participants to staff and staff to participants.

Increased Programming Success - Some agencies have found that virtual/remote programming (including texting, telephone, pre-recorded and live online programming) has been more successful or inclusive in some cases than their traditional programming.

Implementation of Safety Protocol - Agencies were also proud that they had successfully implemented safety protocols despite the many changes to requirements: many reported no cases of COVID-19 (as of December 2020).

Staff Resilience & Dedication to being Client-Centered - Many leaders spoke highly of the resilience, dedication and creativity of their staff, as well as staff/agency increased attention to community needs.

“One thing this has taught is how flexible we can be - and that we are all people. It has really humanized people.”

What Has Been Your Most Successful Adaptation?

“Being connected to families at their homes. I am driving more than I ever have. They are much happier to see me at their home. We are much more connected [to the families]. We email and text and can communicate at different times of day. We are not just delivering a program, we are providing a relationship. Who knows who the last person they saw was, or when? We are talking more on the same “level” - there is more understanding between us. We were concerned that we would lose parents when we had the first positive case - would they think that we were not following protocols? But no, they were so supportive and asking “How are YOU doing?”

“How we were able to adapt so quickly to an online format. I never would have thought that could happen so quickly or be sustainable. I have realized that there is a need for online programming even if we can be in-person. I think a lot more people started attending who weren't before. We got a whole new group of people attending.”

“Our ability to pivot to online services quickly, thoroughly and ethically and still maintain the support for all of our team members working remotely providing high quality counselling services. To do it without interruption was a great success.”

As You Have Adapted to the New Environment, What Have You Learned?

“The one thing that struck me was how people were able to adapt, they were resilient. It wasn't doom and gloom, it was “how can we work together?” It still surprises me, that people are more friendly and saying “hello”. We're all in the same situation and finding ways to cope and communicate.”

“That my staff are very resilient, more-so than I thought they would be. Their ability to manage the stress of all the challenges, their passion to go out and do the work. They go for it. I am extremely fortunate. This is not a job for them, it's what they do. It's inspiring.”

“My biggest learning is how easy it actually was to move to online, and how it worked to remove barriers for people, which is a core value of our organization. We will maintain this as an option for people.”

2020 Impact Areas

Edmonton FCSS and its funded partners believe that strong individuals, families and communities create a vibrant and caring community where everyone is able to thrive and succeed. The annual outcomes reporting contained in this report is a snapshot of the work accomplished each year and represents data gathered from a sample of program participants. Many programs are measuring outcomes beyond what is reported here to understand, evaluate and improve services for citizens of Edmonton.

Resilient Individuals

Resilient Individuals have the ability to bounce back from challenges and stress that they face. According to Michael Ungar, resilience is *“the capacity of individuals to navigate their way to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain their well-being, and their capacity individually and collectively to negotiate for these resources to be provided in culturally meaningful ways.”* (Ungar, 2008 and Ungar, 2011, <http://resilienceresearch.org/about-the-rrc/resilience/14-what-is-resilience>).

Children and youth reported that they had improved developmental skills

91%

Respondents reported that they had improved skills to address identified issues.

94%

Thriving Families

Thriving Families work together to overcome challenges, learn, and develop. Caregivers within the family have the capacity to support the physical, social, psychological, emotional, and spiritual development of the children, youth, adult, or senior. Creating stable environments that promote quality interactions support achieving the goals for the family group.

Respondents reported they had improved family functioning

94%

Caregivers reported they had increased knowledge of child development

99%

Caregivers reported they had increased knowledge of positive parenting skills

96%

Welcoming and Engaged Community

Welcoming and Engaged Communities are open, diverse, and inclusive. They ensure that all community members are active, connected, and supported in achieving their goals. They can be geographic or interest based depending on the program focus area.

Respondents reported increased awareness of social issues in the community.

82%

Respondents reported increased positive involvement in the community.

96%

Connections and Relationships

Strong relationships and connections are the glue between individuals, families, communities and the not for profit sector. It is through relationships that we can achieve a strong and supportive community where all people can thrive and contribute. Individuals and families have access to a network of community and social supports that can address their needs.

Respondents had increased knowledge of community resources

76%

Respondents reported that they accessed community resources that met their needs

87%

Respondents reported that they had improved networks of social support

98%

Strong Sector

Individuals, families, and communities exist and function within society. Within Edmonton and area the not for profit sector is critical to creating an integrated web of supports to keep people from falling through the cracks. Ensuring that the individuals and organizations working within the sector have the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to be successful and healthy is critical. In 2020, some of the organizations funded to engage in this work included: Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations, Edmonton Social Planning Council, Mapping and Planning Support Alberta, and Community University Partnership.

Respondents reported strengthened individual skills within organizations

>99%

Respondents reported more effective community organizations

99%

Respondents reported enhanced collaborative efforts

>99%

2020 Working in Partnership

Partnerships encourage innovative solutions to complex social issues. It encourages community organizations to work together in new and collaborative ways, to leverage and utilize community resources more effectively, and increases the impact to the community. Some of the partnership tables that Edmonton FCSS supported in 2020 include:

- All in For Youth
- Communities United
- Community Mental Health Action Plan Implementation
- Community Initiatives Against Family Violence
- Coordinated Seniors Home Supports
- Coordinated Youth Response
- Financial Empowerment

These are examples of organizations coming together around a social issue to work together to find solutions, do things differently, decrease unnecessary duplication, be innovative, be responsive, support each other and work together to help our community. To make meaningful change together. It is happening and the work is making a big difference.

The Edmonton FCSS team and Social Development Branch staff continued to participate with our community colleagues to support these coordinated efforts in supporting individuals, families and communities.

During COVID-19 many other collaborative efforts took place to ensure supports were in place during these challenging times for our community, they included:

- Edmonton Community Coordination of Food Resources
- Eviction Prevention
- Tipinawaw Shelter Supports - cultural services, day program wellness services.

Funded programs also participate in partnerships that allow them to enhance their mandate and better address the needs of community and of their program participants. The various partnerships are working to support:

- Community Capacity Building
- Poverty Reduction
- Senior Wellness Social Connection
- Common Service Access
- Safe Communities
- Homelessness
- Youth Engagement
- Early Childhood Development
- Inclusion and/or Diversity
- Community Mental Health
- Family Violence Prevention

“There have been a lot of collaborations [...] we did that before, but now, it's bringing everybody's resources to bear to meet the community's needs. The sense of collaboration is really exciting and a huge silver lining.”

2020 Profiles of Partnership

Communities United

Amidst the pandemic keeping us all locked down, 23 youth participated in an online employment program offered by Communities United. In partnership with The RBC Foundation, the Youth Employment Initiative provided a supportive virtual space to help youth make the most of their summer and upgrade their skills from home. This initiative focused on areas of emerging employment opportunity, such as social media, digital marketing, digital design, and entrepreneurship. *“These online skills will prepare them to present themselves, or their future employer, effectively in the digital world,”* shared a web designer and content expert for the initiative. *“The students were also able to remain connected with their peers and learn networking skills through forums and live workshops.”*

“Just that this is an experience that all of us are going through together. How do we support participants by making sure that we are supporting our staff? Because they are also facing intense pressures and anxieties. How important it can be to focus fully on staff, knowing that will translate to participants.”

With COVID-19 transforming the landscape of work drastically, it was essential to create opportunities that allow our youth to grow, develop, and put themselves in positions for future success despite the regional lockdowns and global uncertainty. *“A lot changed this year and with the available jobs largely disappearing, especially for youth, we thought that there needed to be a program for youth to remain engaged and improve their employment opportunities, even if jobs weren’t available,”* said the Coordinator for Communities United.

Following in the footsteps of the successful Leaders of the Pitch program from 2019, the staff at Communities United quickly transitioned to provide online options for youth. *“With everything happening around COVID-19, it wasn’t possible to run an in-person program, so, we made the change and embraced a new challenge.”* The shift to an online setting required the creation of a user-friendly E-learning platform that worked as a foundation to prepare participants for the continual shift of the workplace to more virtual settings. In addition to learning key competencies from the Digital Skills courses, the initiative also invited participants to create LinkedIn and

MatchWork profiles, further enhancing their qualifications. *“The best time to engage in professional development is before you need to have it. Having a resume of all the different professional development you have completed really pops when introducing yourself for a job or networking with others who are in the field you would like to pursue,”* said the Summer Program Coordinator. *“It prepares you for your career, as all people should strive to be lifelong learners, and helps you stay on top of your professional practice.”*

In a time of social distancing and working from home, this initiative endeavored to provide a platform to help set our youth up for success. And it was a success! Out of 20 program surveys, 100% agreed that *‘this was a meaningful way to spend my summer.’* 100% said that they learned a lot from the Digital Skills courses. And 100% reported that the skills they gained throughout the summer will help them in their future job search.

Coordinated Home Supports

This program has always been a gateway for access to other vital services. This was even more necessary during the COVID-19 pandemic. When home support coordinators realized that seniors may be at risk of social isolation due to COVID-19, they referred them to outreach programs and friendly phone programs. They supported each other to adapt program delivery and stay up-to-date on health restrictions that could impact home support service delivery. Their work involves screening service providers and with the pandemic and the risk it presents to older adults it required re-screening providers in relation to their safety protocols so seniors could feel less anxiety about the workers they were hiring to come into their homes. The coordinators split up the list of providers to do this re-screening. They also supported their organizations in efforts to reach out to seniors who were participating in friendly telephone programs.

Common Outcomes Initiative

The Common Outcomes Initiative began over 20 years ago as a partnership between Edmonton Family and Community Support Services (FCSS), United Way of the Alberta Capital Region (UWay), Alberta Children's Services (GOA) and over 100 funded community agencies. Unfortunately, beginning in 2020, Alberta Children's Services was no longer able to partner with this initiative, as the GOA developed their own measurements, which has resulted in a decrease in the number of agencies participating in this initiative. However, the momentum remains as the partners continue to provide a continuum of programs and services that meet the needs of vulnerable community members.

The common outcomes report provides a tool to gather some of the inputs, outputs and outcome measures that are rolled up and reported back to the community in order to demonstrate the social impacts these partners are collectively achieving. The reporting form has created efficiencies in the sector as reporting has become simplified and streamlined.

Edmonton FCSS and UWay are able to show individually and together the impact of the work they are supporting in the community, while allowing funded organizations to report to two funders at one time — collaboration and cutting red tape all rolled up together.

The full reports from the past few years are available at www.edmonton.ca/fcss. These reports represent a snapshot of the impacts of the partners.

City of Edmonton

2020 FCSS Contribution

Programs, Services, and Initiatives

For over 50 years, the Government of Alberta, together with participating municipalities and Métis Settlements, have jointly funded preventive social services for Albertans through the Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) program. The Province contributes 80 per cent of the cost of operating a local program and the participating municipality or Métis Settlement contributes a minimum of 20 per cent. The City of Edmonton's mandatory contribution to FCSS consists of programs, services, and initiatives within the Citizen Services Department and any other funding provided directly by City Council to programs and/or projects that meet the provincial eligibility requirements. This includes:

- Edmonton FCSS Program Team
- Community Social Work Team
- Community Capacity Building
- Tenant Support Services
- Community Safety Team
- Poverty Reduction
- Poverty Reduction, including funding to End Poverty Edmonton
- Gender Based Violence Prevention
- Family Violence Prevention Team
- Community Wellness Team
- Suicide Prevention- Living Hope
- Homeless Prevention, including funding to Boyle Street Outreach

Some Highlights from 2020

Tipinawâw Art Project Summary

The Tipinawâw Art Project was initiated as part of a larger effort to animate space around the Edmonton Convention Centre (ECC) that has been in place since the introduction of Tipinawâw. The intention of animation was to have a positive impact on perceptions and realities of safety in the space. Therefore efforts were placed on ways to shift the dynamic and sentiment in the area that would hopefully disrupt or interrupt disordered behaviour.

Along with community partners from Capital City Clean Up, Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society, Boyle Street Community Services, Bissell Centre and Explore Edmonton the Neighbourhood Empowerment Team (NET) began exploring opportunities to create murals on boarded up spaces at the Centre. NET connected with local youth serving agencies to create artwork for the wall constructed on the pedway level of the Centre. While Boyle Street connected with Tipinawâw guests with the goal of having them create artwork for the boards utilized to cover the windows along the shelter entrance level. iHuman coordinated young artists, apprentices

Some Highlights from 2020 (cont'd)

Tipinawâw Art Project Summary (cont'd)

who supported others to create twelve unique pieces of art which reflect the new City of Edmonton Indigenous Ward names.

Feedback has already been received and the general sentiment has been that guests are supportive and thankful for the artwork and colourful imagery. With permission, a few individuals took pieces of art which they felt a connection to or had themselves created.

Financial Empowerment Program

In 2020, the Financial Empowerment Program was initiated. A team of social workers skilled in assessment and systems navigation pivoted to help expand initiatives identified in the End Poverty Edmonton Roadmap by improving the financial well-being of residents living on low incomes in Edmonton and further establishing the City as a leader in poverty reduction approaches.

Financial Empowerment Program social workers help individuals and families by providing a range of short and long term financial guidance, including mentoring, coaching, and tax form guidance to help them meet their needs. The aim of this program is to reduce barriers by recognizing that underlying conditions such as mental health, addictions, domestic violence, and abuse may need to be addressed so that individuals and families can move forward and prosper.

The City's new services are free and confidential and include comprehensive, remote financial empowerment guidance to help ensure participants get connected to the right resources, education, and information on financial matters.

Psychological First Aid - Pandemic

In the first few months of the COVID-19 pandemic, a team of social workers participated in Psychological First Aid-Pandemic facilitator training provided by Alberta Health Services.

This team provides regular online workshops for community organizations and agencies as well as the general public. Since December 2020, the team has facilitated 17 workshops with 253 participants successfully completing the workshops. The participants have found the information provided to be helpful and practical as we navigate through the pandemic. For those that have ever taken a flight, a key part of the safety briefing is the importance of putting on your air mask first, then helping those around you, this is the foundation of Psychological First Aid (PFA). The facilitators focus on listening and providing tools that help us take care of ourselves. Through active listening, they honour the thoughts, feelings and emotions of the participants & acknowledge that we are all experiencing stress, trauma or some sort of crisis. Demonstrating how taking care of oneself, helps us be there for family, friends and community when they are having difficulty coping is a powerful tool in our personal toolbox.

Some Highlights from 2020 (cont'd)

Change Reality VR App

Change Reality is a virtual reality simulation app that immerses a player in a sexual harassment scene where the player becomes the bystander who must intervene in the situation.

The player wears a set of virtual reality goggles and finds themselves at the Churchill subway station during the morning rush hour. As they look on, they notice a man verbally and sexually harassing a young indigenous woman. A menu floats in front of the player with a variety of disruption strategies. They can select from: do nothing, distract the harasser, fight the harasser, delegate to others in the crowd, or call out the bad behaviour and call in the harasser. At the end of each scene, the person experiencing harassment returns in a voice-over. She explains how the chosen intervention affected her day.

Research on virtual reality as an educational tool shows promise in building empathy, perspective-taking, and skill development. However, this appears to be the first application using virtual reality to address a social issue like sexual street harassment.

Three partners worked together to create the *Change Reality* app. Two early partners, the City of Edmonton and Men Edmonton, came together in 2018 to run *This is What it Feels Like*, an Anti-Sexual Street Harassment Art Exhibit. Learning from this experience led to conceiving the *Change Reality* app. In 2020 they partnered with Elixir Simulations, a social enterprise group that supports the development and use of virtual reality applications as tools for businesses and educational institutions.

Over the last eight months, the partners developed the script and application software. A minimally viable application now exists. It runs on any Oculus Quest VR headset. In the next few months this group will refine the visuals and sound and develop an in-app evaluation tool and manual. This group seeks approximately \$20,000 to polish the application. Partners have made cash and in-kind contributions of just over \$20,000 to bring the app to its current state.

It will be possible to develop new scenarios to sensitize and train bystanders to become effective “violence disruptors.” Virtual reality apps could address all forms of harassment, from racist street harassment to office sexual harassment. Currently, bystanders intervene in less than 10% of real-life harassment incidents. Most people report they would like to intervene, but many don’t feel they have the skills to do so. *Change Reality* could be a game-changer.

Food Security Collaborative

During COVID-19, Edmonton’s social service sector responded quickly to local food security and food access challenges. In addition to those agencies with a mandate to address food insecurity, a number of other community agencies pivoted to meet the increased need for hampers and food delivery supports. In order to ensure a coordinated approach, The Edmonton Community Coordination of Food Resources Committee (The Committee) was established.

The Committee has been meeting regularly to discuss issues around food insecurity, research, best practices, collaborative efforts, unique responses required due to the pandemic, as well as the systemic challenges of food insecurity related to poverty. (Cont'd)

Some Highlights from 2020 (cont'd)

Food Security Collaborative (cont'd)

The Committee is comprised of front line services providers, including some who pivoted their services to include food provision in response to the pandemic, researchers, funders, ethno cultural organizations, and some grass roots organizations. Agencies and groups that received public funding to provide food supports were contacted to learn more about the type of support they were offering and were invited to join the discussions at the Committee. Membership continued to grow over the year.

New and revised approaches to ensuring people could access free and affordable food were explored and implemented, new partnerships and relationships were established in Edmonton. The Committee had three social media campaigns to share information that food is available for everyone who is struggling during the pandemic.

Looking Ahead to 2021

The Edmonton FCSS Program will continue to work directly with the funded programs to support and strengthen the preventive social services sector and improve the social well-being of individuals, families, and communities in Edmonton. The connection is especially important with the pandemic and helping support recovery efforts. We recognize that organizations will need to increase innovation within their operations and their programs both resulting from the pandemic and ongoing economic pressures.

Edmonton FCSS will be looking at strategic priorities in 2021 which will come into effect for 2023. The work will align its efforts to respond to the changes in community and what our community will need post pandemic, while ensuring that efforts remain in line with provincial legislation and City priorities. We look forward to having a stronger focus that will help guide FCSS work now and into the future.

The FCSS Committee and the Community Services Advisory Board (CSAB) will continue to elevate the work, advocate for, and share the story of the positive impact that Edmonton FCSS programs have on the local preventive social services sector.

FCSS
Family & Community
Support Services

Edmonton