



Closer to Home
COMMUNITY SERVICES

YEAR OF OPPORTUNITY

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY 2020/2021

Our Principles

We take pride in having established a culture that is built upon a unified set of principles:

- ♥ Respect for Diversity
- ♥ Individualized Approaches
- ♥ Effective Services
- ♥ Outcome-Focused Programs
- ♥ Trauma-Informed Approaches
- ♥ Client and Stakeholder Satisfaction
- ♥ Collaborative and Inclusive

Vision

Every child thriving within supportive family and community relationships.

Mission

Closer to Home Community Services facilitates growth and belonging in communities of meaningful relationships. Our integrity is grounded in evidence-based practice authentically informed by, and connected to, diverse cultural wisdom. We journey with children and families to uncover strength, hope, and healing, creating new possibilities for a brighter future.

“

The staff helped me learn skills that I never knew. They don't get upset, and they are patient. They give me a chance to find my words.

”

Practitioner of the Year

Over the past four years, Michele Dube has shown her passion for serving children and families through her strong desire to create a team atmosphere and ensure children build strong, healthy, and safe relationships with their caregivers. Michele is a vital member of the Closer to Home team, as she strives to build relationships, problem-solve at an agency level, and create opportunities for herself and others that will benefit us all for years to come.



Land Acknowledgement

In the spirit of reconciliation, we acknowledge that we live, work and play on the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Confederacy (Siksika, Kainai, Piikani), the Tsuut'ina, the Iyāxe (Stony) Nakoda Nations, the Métis Nation (Region 3), and all people who make their homes in the Treaty 7 region of Southern Alberta.

Messages from our CEO and Board Chair

In March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic hit hard and fast throughout our city and the world. Through it all, from its start to March 2021, Closer to Home Community Services faced the many changes and challenges that presented themselves to us with strength and purpose... and we re-framed them as opportunities. These included: an office move; opening the North Central Family Resource Network; a pivot to virtual delivery of services; and, adding a significant number of new staff for our intensive youth mental health community home given the Indigenous name Pookaikamootah'pisskoyiss which opened in August 2021.

Always before us is our goal to better serve the thousands of children, youth, and families who seek our support, resources, and information. This past year we served 1584 families despite the impact and challenges of the pandemic. We continue to be focused on three core areas of building family resilience, nurturing hope and healing, and connecting community.

All that we do at Closer to Home is thanks to you – our incredible funders, faithful donors, and our dedicated staff. You persistently rose to the challenge as we met more and different opportunities to serve children, youth, and families throughout these turbulent times.

Please enjoy this review of our 2020/2021 highlights.



Karen Olivier
Chief Executive Officer

It is a privilege and inspiration to work with and support the visionary and accomplished leadership of Closer to Home to serve vulnerable families. In 2020 we celebrated our 25th year of serving Calgarians. And this past year was indeed a year of change, challenge, and opportunity.

We made a deeper commitment to our understanding of the Indigenous worldview in all our work and activities, ensuring our staff, programs, and connections create spaces for ways of knowing, doing, being, and connecting.

We embarked on a journey to refresh our brand and mission/vision statements in 2020/21 which came into being in this calendar year. We are excited to share these new images and words with you in this report.

Our future vision of creating a purpose-designed community hub on Bow Trail SW near our former location in west-central Calgary is strengthened by our vision to have every child thrive in their family and in meaningful relationships. We look forward to sharing more great news about that project in next year's report.

On behalf of Closer to Home staff, volunteers, and the Board, we would like to extend our sincerest thanks to all who are part of our mission and vision. Thanks to you, we can continue providing programs to children and families to develop skills and access the resources they need to grow stronger together and to create a positive future for each person and the whole community.



Trish Bronsch
Chair, Board of Directors

Community Impact

COVID-19 closed our doors and limited our regular style and methods of program delivery. We pivoted to virtual technology as a way to continue to deliver critical services to children and families. We learned that this virtual tech option may always be a part of our future plans.



Women's Group has played a vital role in changing my life. There are many unforgettable contributions from many women from different countries of different races. I am so happy, grateful, and hopeful of the continuity of this group forever.

A white icon of three stylized human figures inside a dark blue circle.

Community Programs & Resources

A white feather icon inside a dark blue circle.

Indigenous Cultural Connections & Supports

A white icon of a house with a heart inside, inside a dark blue circle.

Foster Care & Group Care

A white icon of a house with a heart inside, surrounded by teal and yellow shapes, inside a dark blue circle.





31 families housed


Housing for Families

“
I was struggling. I was homeless. Then Closer to Home called and said I was accepted into a program. The help I've gotten from Closer to Home has been amazing. I'm very thankful. Now we are in a good place. I'm beyond grateful for the help they've given me.
”

75 Community Partners


Research Advocacy & Training

“
I attended the Summer in the City camp program and it was so much fun! We got to make bracelets, make our rap music, and have a talent show. We learned about Blackfoot culture, our community, and many other things. And I made new friends. I hope we get to see each other in person next year!
”


Child & Youth Development & Mental Health

1,584 unique program participants


Family Support & Resources

639 adults served (parents, caregivers, individuals)

945 children & youth served

Opportunities Arising



86% reported an increased sense of belonging with the Indigenous community and increased empowerment and ability to address issues as they arise.



I liked the drumming programs and learning of the traditions of the Indigenous people.



100%

reported increased engagement with the traditional knowledge, practices and ceremony needed for their healing journey.

Indigenous Programs

Thanks to virtual programs, we began to see people from all over Alberta and Canada logging into our online drumming circles for men, women, and families. We focused our work on healing strategies that respect and affirm culture, traditions, and beliefs through cultural teachings, protocol, and ceremony that leads to self-awareness, empowerment, and independence.



Addressing Homelessness

Our Home Again program works with families to provide tools and resources that prevent homelessness and keep families housed. Financial assistance and individualized supports help people remain in their homes. In this reporting year, 31 families were housed.

Thanks to a new grant from the Calgary Homeless Foundation, we launched a supplemental program called Staying Home to prevent or divert families from imminent homelessness.



I don't know where we would be without our Home Visitor. With her help, our family is on a path of healing and restoration.



Programs

Thanks to the foundation of success built upon the evidence-based Teaching Family Model, our outcomes continue to demonstrate that programs are delivering effective services that meet the needs of our participants. We continually assess our data to better understand the conditions that impact change, including our strategic investment in clinical consultation and more training in trauma-informed practice. To support our commitment to continuous improvement, we integrated the Therapeutic Crisis Intervention system into our crisis prevention and management processes.

FAMILY MATTERS

91% of children were able to stay home with their families.

FOSTER CARE

86% of children improved or maintained healthy development.

PARENTING SKILLS

96% of parents in Home Visitation programs said they now have improved skills to handle daily challenges.

PARENTING SKILLS

83% of parents improved their parenting skills and knowledge of child development.

GROUP CARE

Outcomes have improved significantly over last year decreasing youth risk factors by

81%

GROUP CARE

100% of children and youth in foster care and group homes can identify a friend or family member who provides friendship, connection, and emotional support.



Organizational Highlights

Through the challenges and adversity that COVID-19 brought, Closer to Home was able to build upon our 25 years of experience and knowledge to respond to both crisis and opportunities. Our foundations of learning, expertise, and an entrepreneurial spirit equipped us to ride through the storm of the pandemic. We responded to our participants' needs with agility through this lens of opportunity and action.

We Grew

Our small but mighty team has grown significantly over the past fiscal year (excluding Foster Parents and Relief Staff) from 68 staff in March 2020 to 92 staff in March 2021.

Opportunity Met: Serving more people with more well-trained staff.

We Expanded

Our reach expanded with Home Visitation programs being offered through the Family Resource Networks in Canmore and Airdrie. We added Youth Programs in Airdrie.

Opportunity Met: Serving more Albertans with more partners and collaborators, so we can build better relationships with and for families where they live.

We Shifted

Due to a provincial restructuring, we closed our West Central Community Resource Centre in Westbrook-Shaganappi area. We re-opened our centre in Beddington to serve the North Central catchment area through the newly redesigned province-wide Family Resource Network model. Like those we serve, we had to welcome a new adventure, find a new home and meet new neighbours.

Opportunity Met: We can do more, for more Calgarians, through our Beddington location thanks to our need to discover and build new relationships, awareness, presence, and partners, thereby expanding our reach throughout the city.

We Moved

In 2020 and in the midst of the pandemic, we faced an unsustainable leasing situation at our 17th Avenue office space. As well, we needed more room to accommodate the rapid growth in staff.

Opportunity Met: More staff means more programs and resources delivered to more people, from the main space where we have room to gather, train and share the journey.

Adopt-a-Family News

The 2020 holiday season required creative thinking to change how we ran our Adopt-a-Family initiative. We shifted from asking for physical gifts to asking for financial contributions so we could buy gift cards for families - so they could buy what they needed for their own kids and families. The families loved the change.

Opportunity Met: We served 407 families - more than ever before. By providing gift cards to parents and caregivers, they are empowered to make decisions that best meet the needs of their families.

In 2020, we
raised 42% more
donations than in 2019 to
support 17% more
families, resulting in each family
receiving 21%
more support.

407
families
served



1,738
individual family members
who benefitted from
Adopt-a-Family

“

We feel loved, even though we don't know who the donors are. No words can express how we felt. We felt special. We felt welcomed.

”



Financials

Statement of Operations

(Fiscal year ended March 31, 2021)

FUNDING SOURCES

Ministry of Children's Services: Calgary Region	6,548,928	64%
City of Calgary: FCSS and Neighbourhoods	723,789	7%
Government of Canada	1,846,739	18%
Delegated First Nations Authority	47,402	1%
Calgary Homeless Foundation	245,015	2%
Other Grants and Revenue	455,848	4%
Donations and Fundraising	429,176	4%
Investment Income	14,970	0%
Total Funding Source	10,311,867	



FUNDING USES

Community Group Homes	3,608,740	44%
Foster Care Services	603,793	7%
In Home Family Supports	811,708	10%
Early Intervention Services	1,852,208	22%
Grants and Other	403,808	5%
Fundraising	108,932	1%
Administration	868,171	11%
Total Funding Uses	8,257,360	



Excess of Revenue Over Expenses

2,054,507

FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

Program Delivery Costs	7,280,257	88%
Administration	868,171	11%
Fundraising	108,932	1%
	8,257,360	



Closer to Home delivered strong results through additional program contract funding, federal funding and fundraising for the construction of our new home on Bow Trail. We also launched a new Program Reserve Fund to support new initiatives and operational contingencies.

Funders and Sponsors

In addition to the generosity of our individual donors, service clubs and groups, what we do is made possible thanks to the following government, corporate and foundation supporters:

Primary Funders:



Corporate Sponsors & Supporters (\$5,000+):



Board of Directors

Executive:

Trish Bronsch, Chair
Dean Mullin, Vice-Chair
Mark E. George, Treasurer

Directors:

Sally Bishop
Shannon Friesen
Colleen Potter
Erin Viala
John Wilbeck

Paul Ratti, Medical Advisor

Out With the Old And In With the New

In 2021, Closer to Home's branding has been reimagined with a refreshed colour palette and an energetic and contemporary look. This new look symbolically represents hope, healing and home, while emulating strength, stability and optimism. The shape elements in the logo are a balance of structured and organic shapes to represent unity, inclusivity, diversity, family and community. Together these elements reflect Closer to Home's dedication to children and families for over 25 years.

Dhanyavada

Gracias

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cám ơn

شکرا

Tashakkor

Thank you

धन्यवाद

Merci

Hiy Hiy

Ksii Mah' Tsim

Obrigado

**Closer
to Home**
COMMUNITY
SERVICES

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