



CATHOLIC
SOCIAL
SERVICES

Sign of
Hope!

ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22



LET LOVE ALONE
speak

CSS' client, Nicholle,
and her support
worker, Crystal.



"SAY NOTHING AND LET LOVE ALONE SPEAK."
Pope Benedict XVI

WE WILL CARRY HOPE FOR YOU

JESSICA FIRST CONNECTED WITH CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES' MORNING STAR OUTREACH PROGRAM IN 2020, WHILE VULNERABLY HOUSED.

Jessica felt hopeless. After a few months Jessica confided in Morning Star's Program Coordinator, Jill, about how she dreamed of moving into an apartment of her own. One that was safe, secure, and just hers.

But, after years of difficult life circumstances, Jessica's confidence was broken.

Jill and the team worked with Jessica to rebuild her self-esteem. They helped her believe that she could do hard things. After several months of discussing what "could be," Jessica felt ready to make big changes. Staff helped her build a budget, search for apartments, go to viewings, and even complete rental applications.

Unfortunately, after 32 viewings and 27 applications, Jessica was still unhoused. Every landlord she met looked at her and immediately denied her application. This was disheartening. Jessica felt hopeless. It would have been easy to quit. But, Jill told her, "We will carry hope for you, until you are able to carry it for yourself."

At her 33rd viewing, Jessica's persistence won through! The landlord looked beyond her appearance and saw a woman who needed a home.

Jessica moved into her own apartment in February, 2022. This one change has helped Jessica set goals in other areas of her life, which she continues to work toward with the support of Morning Star staff.

YOUR HOPE IS THEIR HEALING

Kintsugi is a Japanese art. When a bowl breaks the artist uses gold or silver glue to re-bond the pieces. Rather than hiding the cracks, they accent them. The bowl is not considered broken, instead a new more beautiful design is revealed.

Our world has many "cracks". Many face violence, acute loneliness or marginalization in our society. At CSS we help vulnerable people re-bond the pieces of their lives. The end result is so often more beautiful than before.

In 2021/22, we supported over 20,000 vulnerable Albertans: moms and their children living in poverty; the parolee seeking to start again; new Canadians building a new home; fathers struggling with mental health; and people who need help navigating our increasingly complex world.

We can only do this because of the support of our funders, our donors, our volunteers and our staff.

Together, we are the Potter's hands, working the golden glue which our clients use to put themselves back together again.

On behalf of all at CSS, we offer our sincere thanks for your trust in us, and your support of this work. We hope you enjoy reading these stories of hope and healing – made possible because of you.

With Gratitude,



Sett Policicchio,
Board Chair



Dr. Troy Davies, CEO



Sign of Hope Dollars at Work

Morning Star is 100% funded through donations. It is the only program of its kind in Red Deer. In 2021/22 Morning Star served 155 vulnerable women, the highest number since it opened.

IT TAKES A VILLAGE

A FOSTER CHILD AND THEIR FOSTER MOM
REFLECT ON THEIR JOURNEY.

CSS CENTRAL REGION FOSTER CARE
TEAM RECEIVED THESE TWO LETTERS
FROM CHELSEA, A CLIENT AND FROM
CHELSEA'S FOSTER MOM, CORRINE.

Dear Catholic Social Services,

School didn't come easy to me. Many subjects I had to work extra hard in, but I know I wouldn't have been able to push myself as hard as I did without Corrine cheering me on from the side. She often says she knows I have great potential to do good things. I was raised with good morals, and I had an amazing role model to look up to.

I didn't want to be just another statistic or another stereotype. I wanted more for myself than how society pictures me. I am aware of how society views First Nations people, and I have experienced hurtful words and actions from those who think people of my ethnicity cannot do well for themselves. Even though I am incredibly fortunate to live in a loving home, people assume I don't, and that, "I have no future."

Currently, with Corrine's guidance, I know I am capable of succeeding and creating a good life for myself. I watched Corrine's own children graduate and move from home to start college, a milestone I am now approaching. I am very excited to start my post-secondary education this fall, where I will begin a double major, Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Education.

Yours sincerely,

Chelsea
CSS Foster Care Client

"TO WALK IN HUMILITY IS NOT TO BE SMALL, IT IS
THE KNOWLEDGE THAT EVERYTHING IS EQUAL."

Chief R. Stacey Laforme,
Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation

Dear Catholic Social Services,

Chelsea is a wonderfully wise young woman who has a bright future ahead of her. This is no small feat for a child that has grown up in foster care. I think the most significant factor in Corrine's evolution was never labeling her as a foster child, but rather, embracing her as one of my own.

As adults, our words shape children's lives and eventually become the story they tell themselves. I could not change what had happened to Chelsea in the past, but I did come to understand the immense power my love had in shaping her future.

A child nurtured and surrounded by loving adults will flourish. It takes a village to raise a child, and Chelsea has an incredible village. Many people deserve the credit for guiding Chelsea in her pursuit of a better life: my biological children, who were terrific role models, and loving and kind in sharing their mom and dad; my parents, who provided respite and allowed me to recharge, while giving Chelsea the care of loving grandparents; the community role models that saw Chelsea for who she was; the numerous caseworkers over the years that trusted my judgment and parenting decisions; the many program coordinators at Catholic Social Services who provided a soft place to land when I wrestled with uncertainty and loss; and, most importantly, Chelsea's biological Mom, a victim of racism and poverty, who sacrificed her own heart to give her child a better life.

I am immensely proud of Chelsea. She had to overcome the fear of adults, and trust that I had the best intentions for her. Her acceptance and appreciation for my guidance were the vehicles of change that are driving her toward a better future.

Yours faithfully,

Corrine
CSS foster parent

SERVING VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS, CHILDREN & FAMILIES

IN 2021/22 WE:

- Operated 77 foster homes, supporting 132 children.
- Ran three shelters and homes, serving 395 women and children facing domestic abuse.
- Provided subsidized counselling to 1166 clients in Edmonton, 171 in Red Deer and Lloydminster.
- Helped 128 seniors experiencing abuse or neglect.

SERVING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

IN 2021/22 WE:

- Operated 68 homes, housing 273 persons with developmental disabilities.
- Provided outreach services to 310 people receiving SIL supports.
- Offered additional residential and outreach services to 98 families and 126 children through Family Supports for Children with Disabilities.
- Supported 320 individuals and families impacted by a diagnosis of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorders.



LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT

SUPPORTED INDEPENDENT LIVING CLIENTS FIND LOVE.

“It was love at first sight,” says Mindy, describing the moment she first met her husband, Tyson.

Tyson agrees. “It was love at first sight. It was her smile that I noticed first.”

Tyson and Mindy are receiving services through the agency’s Supported Independent Living (SIL) program, which helps adults with developmental disabilities live independently in the community.

Tyson began receiving services from CSS nearly 20 years ago, when he first moved out on his own. Mindy began receiving supports while still living at home, preparing to transition into the community.

The two met in 2003 at a CSS social event for people receiving support through the SIL program. They became quick friends after their first meeting and continued to see each other at CSS events over the next two years. In 2005, Tyson finally gathered the courage to ask Mindy on a date.

“We went to the Londonderry Mall,” says Mindy. “He was so kind. It was his personality that I loved most.”

After a year of dating, Tyson decided to ask Mindy to marry him. “I was so nervous. I was pacing back and forth and thinking, ‘what if she says no?’”

His fears were unfounded. Tyson didn’t even have the chance to finish his proposal before Mindy accepted. On a rainy day one July, surrounded by friends and family, they were married at St. Dominic Savio Church in Edmonton. It was the happiest day of their lives.

“When she was walking down the aisle I just kept thinking, ‘Oh my gosh!’” says Tyson. “She was such a beautiful bride.”

Like any marriage, the couple has faced their share of challenges over the last 14 years, but credit the ongoing support from CSS for helping them weather the storms.

“Sometimes we talk about communication,” says Janet, the CSS Outreach Worker who supports the couple. “When things aren’t working well and they aren’t expressing things the way they want to, we talk about tone, and body language and delivery.”

Along with trust, Mindy says that over the years, thanks to this coaching and support, communication has become one of their greatest strengths as a couple.

Today, Tyson works for a distribution company and Mindy runs a home-based craft business. The two share their home with three pets: a cat, a guinea pig, and a fish, and enjoy taking walks, going to festivals and events, and are saving for a trip to celebrate their 15th wedding anniversary next year.

Janet helps the couple build and manage their budget, and reach their objectives together - such as saving for the trip.

“When you reach a goal and have that sense of accomplishment, it builds your spirit, so then you think, ‘I can do this.’” says Janet.

“We are just getting stronger each year,” says Tyson. “CSS has been very important to us and has helped us a lot, but the best thing to come from CSS, is ‘Us.’”

In October 2021, Catholic Social Services launched a Refugee Relief Fund. The Fund provides for the unmet emergency needs of newcomers upon arrival. In total, \$60,000 was donated.

EXODUS: JOURNEY FROM AFGHANISTAN TO CANADA

A NEW HOME FOR THE LEADING LIGHTS OF THE AFGHAN MOVEMENT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY.

Kabul fell quickly. When the staff of the Afghanistan Human Rights and Democracy Organization (AHRDO) left work on Thursday, August 12, 2021, they had no idea they would be fleeing their home country before the weekend was over.

Dedicated to improving the lives of civilians, including war victims, women and girls, AHRDO operated in the heart of Kabul. When the Taliban returned, they were in danger.

Rabia, AHRDO's lead researcher, recalls the chaos at the airport. Staff waited outside while she negotiated for safe passage out. Authorities offered to evacuate only her through Kabul Airport, but she refused. Either they would leave together or not at all.

They went home and packed what they could carry. They decided to leave the country, and take their families with them. The group hired buses to take all 172 staff and family members to Pakistan. They faced Taliban checkpoints and waited for days at the border. After crossing they still feared the Taliban would come for them. The group, half of them children, remained in hiding for five months.

They hoped that a country committed to human rights would come to their aid.

In the end, Canada extended a hand. Immigration Refugees & Citizenship Canada (IRCC) created a dedicated immigration stream for human rights defenders, the first

country in the world to do so; AHRDO was one of the groups who used it.

On January 11, 2022, they flew from Pakistan. Their trip was complicated by the pandemic, but CSS staff worked quickly to support this large arrival.

While in quarantine, CSS staff educated them about life in Canada and worked with volunteers in the local community to bring them Afghan food.

"This is an incredible group and we got to be part of their first steps in Canada; it is a great honour" said Kathryn Friesen, from CSS.

Today many have found meaningful employment and volunteer opportunities. Children are enrolled in school. Young adults have resumed their university studies. The chance for an education is inspiring, because the Taliban banned education for girls.

AHRDO is continuing to focus its efforts on building awareness of the dire human rights situation in Afghanistan.

"We are so grateful to be here, in Edmonton," says Hadi, AHRDO's Executive Director. "The support we have received from CSS and the opportunities we have been given are incredible. Thank you."

SERVING NEWCOMERS

IN 2021/22 WE:

- Served a total of 11,604 newcomers in Edmonton and Central Alberta.
- Settled 880 refugees from 22 countries.
- Also settled 674 Afghan refugees (April 2021-March 2022).
- Served 2,441 newcomers in Lloydminster.
- Coordinated the Alberta-wide response to the war in Ukraine.

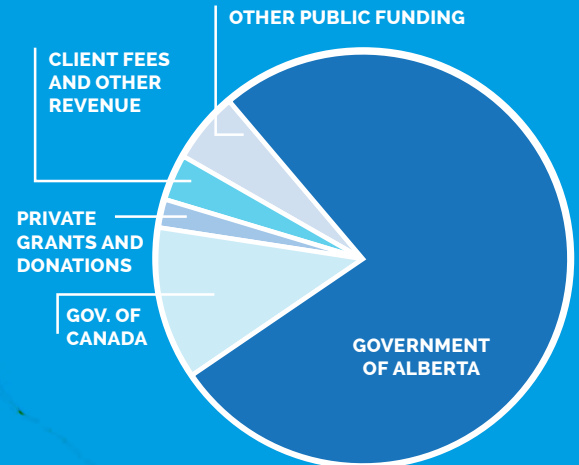


FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS 2021/22

For complete financial statements, visit www.cssalberta.ca.

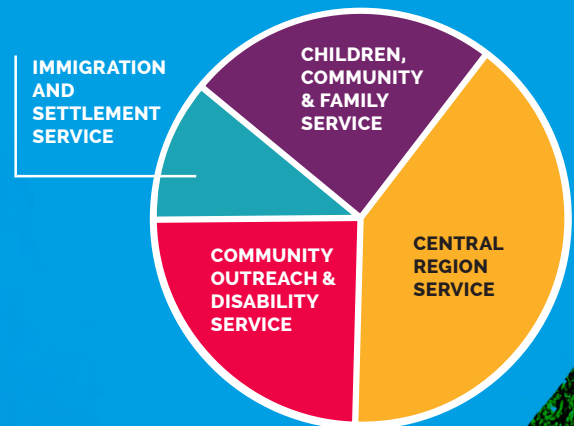
REVENUE

Government of Alberta	\$80,830,310	[76.8%]
Government of Canada	\$12,501,114	[11.9%]
Private grants and donations	\$2,502,787	[2.3%]
Client fees and other revenue	\$3,648,353	[3.3%]
Other public funding	\$5,761,444	[5.7%]
Total	\$105,244,008	



EXPENDITURES

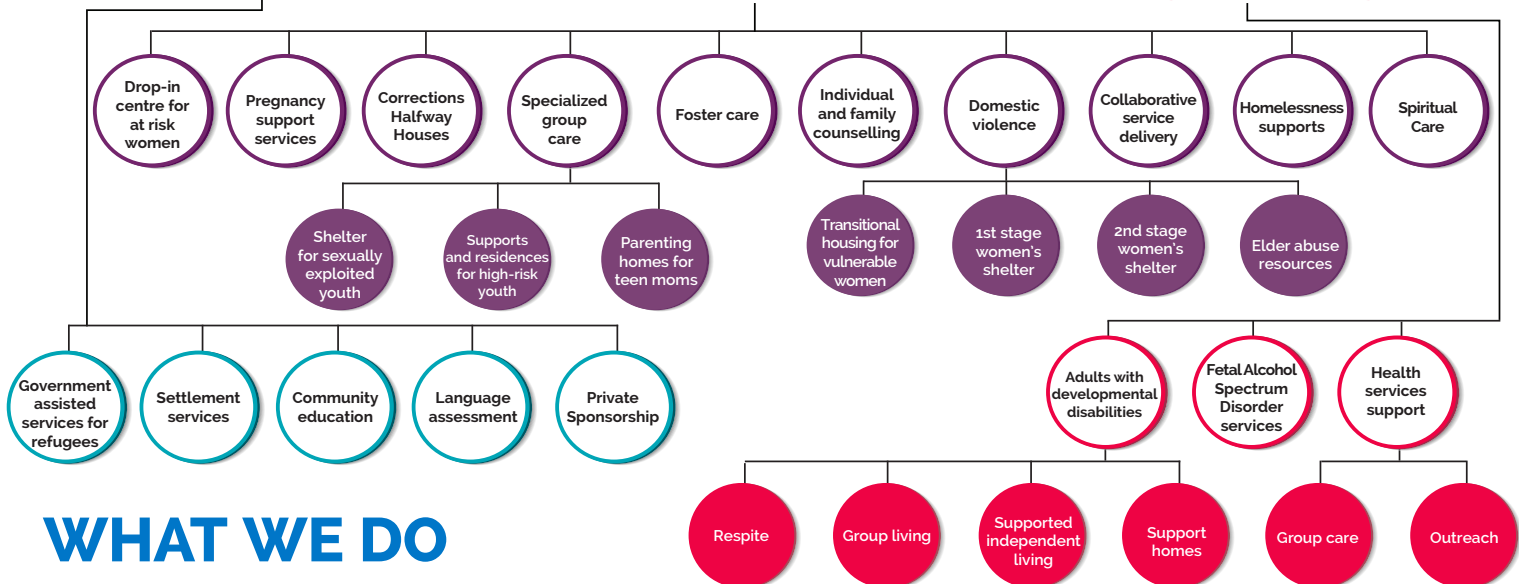
Immigration and Settlement Service	\$11,850,306	[11.3%]
Community Outreach and Disability Service	\$25,761,036	[24.5%]
Central Region Service	\$41,978,851	[39.9%]
Children, Community and Family Service	\$25,576,864	[24.3%]
Total	\$105,167,057	



SERVING NEWCOMERS

SERVING VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS, CHILDREN & FAMILIES

SERVING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



WHAT WE DO

SERVING 11 COMMUNITIES ON
TREATY 6 & 7 TERRITORIES



1900 STAFF



400 VOLUNTEERS



20,000 PEOPLE SERVED