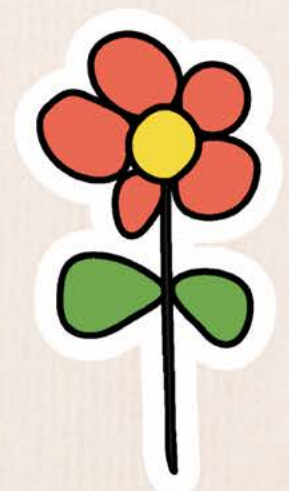




Report to the Community 2025-2026

Celebrating 40 Years
of Helping Children
& Families Thrive.





Land Acknowledgement

In the spirit of Truth and Reconciliation, we acknowledge that the Children's Cottage is located in the traditional territories of the peoples of Treaty 7. This includes the Tsuut'ina First Nation, the Stoney Nakoda – including Chiniki, Bearspaw and Goodstoney First Nations – and the Blackfoot Confederacy comprised of the Siksiká, the Piikani and the Káínai First Nations.

We recognize and honour the people of the Métis, Districts 5 & 6, the Inuit nations, and the diversity of First Nations people from treaties across Canada who now call Calgary home. We appreciate the important role that Two-Spirit and gender-diverse individuals have served in Indigenous communities throughout history.

Here is where, together, we live, learn, play, and heal.



Saying It With Respect

Some Nation names can feel unfamiliar or tricky to pronounce, even when we see and hear them regularly. Learning to say them correctly is one small but meaningful way we can show respect and care for the people, cultures, and communities around us. Here are a few pronunciations to help guide you.

Tsuut'ina

"Sue-tin-ah"

Siksiká

"Six-ih-gah"

Chiniki

"Chin-ih-key"

Piikani

"Be-guh-nee"

Káínai

"Gai-nah"

There are many perspectives on how these Nation names should be pronounced. For simplicity and consistency, the pronunciations included here were sourced from Mount Royal University's Land Acknowledgement Pronunciation Guide.



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Funding Partners

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Greetings from Leadership

Over the past year, The Children's Cottage Society has continued to support children and families across Calgary through prevention programs, crisis support, family resource programming, rehousing services, and community-based supports. Grounded in our mission of building strong children and safe, nurturing families, we have expanded our reach while staying focused on what matters most: helping families access the right support at the right time.

In 2025-2026, the Society provided support through a broad continuum of care. Behind each number in this report is a family experiencing a moment of safety, stability, connection, or hope. Together, these efforts are strengthening families today while helping create better outcomes for children in the future.

This year, we also grew in important new directions. We expanded mental wellness supports for families, programming for youth, and services focused on early childhood development and school readiness. Streamlined

central access is helping families connect with services and resources more quickly, while day respite programming has added a much-needed option for families navigating difficult moments.

We are deeply grateful to everyone who has contributed to this work over the past year. To our employees and volunteers, thank you for your compassion, skill, and dedication. To our donors, funders, community partners, and the more than 60 agencies who work alongside us, thank you for investing in children and families. As we look ahead, we remain committed to innovation, collaboration, and reconciliation, and to building a stronger, more connected community where every child has the opportunity to blossom and thrive.

Tracy Baker
Board Chair

Danielle Ladouceur
Chief Executive Officer

“We remain committed to building a stronger, more connected community where every child has the opportunity to blossom and thrive.”

Board of Directors



Tracy Baker, CPA, CA
VP of Operations
Modus Structures Inc



Elice Lee, MBA
NOVA Chemicals



Candice Jones
Lawyer, Canadian Natural
Resources



Ming Ji
Controller at J&S Group of
Companies



Brad Hayden
Lawyer, Senior Partner,
Norton Rose Fulbright



Anna Premyslova, CFA
Sr. Wealth Advisor,
National Bank Financial



Dean Slater
Retired Professional
Engineer



Peter Steenaerts
MBA, ECFO, Deputy Fire
Chief, Operations



Carol DeLong, MBA
Retired Business
Operations Director



Harjit Baumann
Executive Director - Nurse
Practitioner Association of AB



Joe MacGillivray, BA
MHSA, CHE, Retired
Health Executive



Dr. Danielle Nelson
MD, PhD, FRCPC
Community Pediatrician



Kelly MacQuarrie
City of Calgary Comms &
Community Liaison

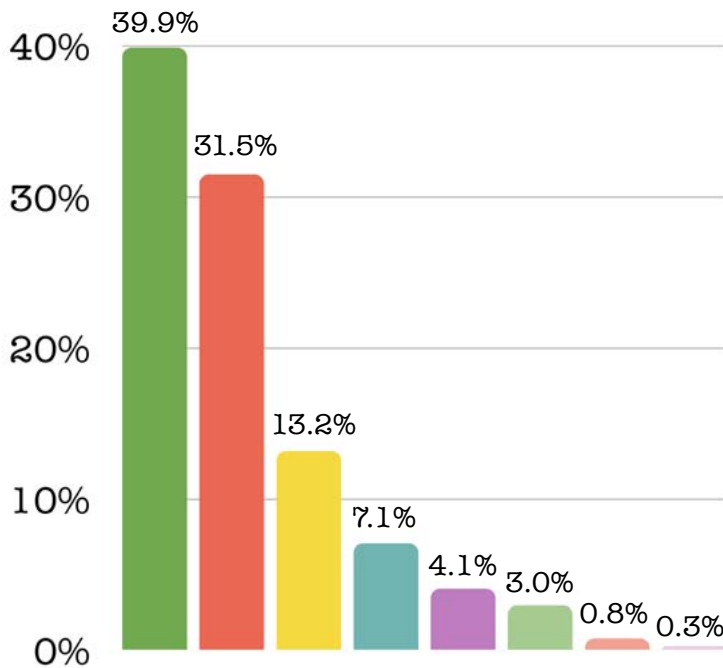


Amanda Goodstone
Îethka Family Resource
Network Family Support

We are deeply grateful to our Board of Directors for their thoughtful leadership and unwavering commitment to our mission. This work strengthens The Children's Cottage and the children and families we serve.

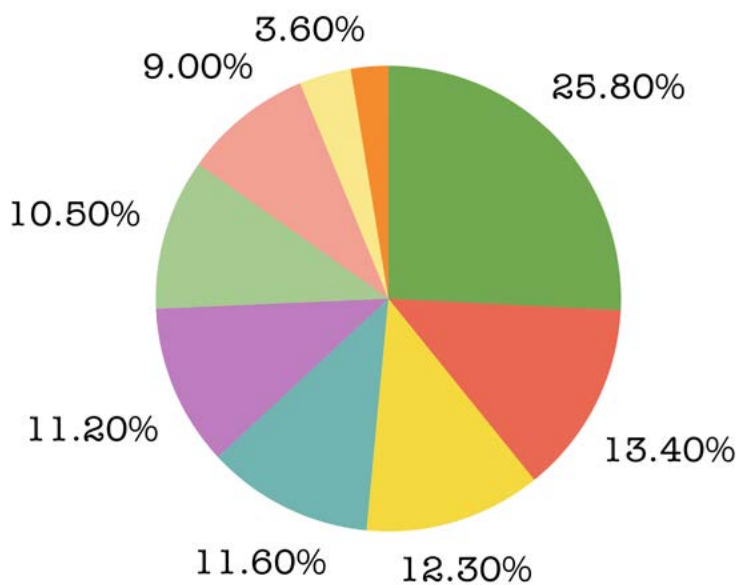
Financial Report

Revenue



Community Donations	\$3,303,994 (39.9%)
Alberta Government - Children's Svcs	\$2,609,874 (31.5%)
City of Calgary - FCSS	\$1,095,038 (13.2%)
Calgary Homeless Foundation	\$590,640 (7.1%)
Alberta Government - Social Svcs	\$336,335 (4.1%)
Investment Income	\$247,467 (3.0%)
United Way of Calgary and Area	\$64,000 (0.8%)
Federal Government	\$28,667 (0.3%)

Expenditures



Crisis Nursery	\$2,056,929 (25.8%)
Administration	\$1,066,374 (13.4%)
Community Programs	\$976,845 (12.3%)
Housing and Homelessness	\$924,180 (11.6%)
Family Resource Network	\$893,290 (11.2%)
Family Mental Wellness	\$834,995 (10.5%)
Fundraising	\$719,079 (9.0%)
Facility	\$282,610 (3.6%)
Indigenous Strategy	\$206,034 (2.6%)

Our current and complete audited financial statements are available on our website.

40 Years of Gratitude

For 40 years, The Children's Cottage
has been strengthened by people who
care.

To the families who place their trust
in us, and to the donors, volunteers,
partners, sponsors, staff, and friends
who make this work possible:
Thank you.

Every gift, every hour, and every act of
generosity helps create safety, support,
and hope for children and families.

You are part of the heart of our work.



Resilient
children
blossom in
healthy
families.



2025-2026 Program Impact

	# of Families	# of Children
Family Resource Centre	2,783	4,262
Crisis Nursery	412	675
Home Visitation	92	139
Home Links	45	95
Nurturing Newborns	87	91
Early Years	93	93
Family Mental Wellness	116	81
Little Blossoms	21	21
Indigenous Family Support	31	85
Total	3,680	5,542

Behind each number in this report is a family experiencing a moment of safety, stability, connection, or hope.

Caring Together Campaign Complete!

We did it!

After more than seven years of dedicated community support, the Caring Together Campaign is complete. Launched in 2017 to build the Child & Family Centre on Home Road NW, the campaign reached its \$26.5 million goal through the generosity of our **donors, partners**, the **Government of Alberta**, the **City of Calgary**, and a transformational anonymous gift through **Calgary Foundation**.

With the mortgage retired, **The Children's Cottage** begins a new chapter: growing into the full potential of the Child & Family Centre, expanding prevention-focused services, and welcoming even more families into a space built for safety, connection, and hope.



“Together, we’ve built a place where families can find support, stability, and hope.”

Danielle Ladouceur, CEO

The Cottage Art Tour



Art has the power to transform spaces into places of comfort and healing. Throughout our Child & Family Centre, donated artwork and murals help create a welcoming environment that supports wellbeing, reflection, and belonging. We are especially grateful to the **Nathan O'Brien Foundation** for supporting the playrooms in the Crisis Nursery, helping create warm, playful spaces for the children & families who spend time with us here.



Yuliya Alagir



International contemporary artist **Yuliya Alagir** generously donated her painting *Fingertips* to us as part of her commitment to supporting children through charitable initiatives. Displayed when you first walk into our Child & Family Centre, the piece contributes to the warm, welcoming environment created for children and families accessing support. Scan the QR code to learn more about the artist and her work.



Carl White

Artist **Carl White** created whimsical murals throughout the centre inspired by classic woodland storybook illustrations, helping create a warm and welcoming environment for children and families.



Keevin Rider

A member of the Bearspaw First Nation, born on the Blood Tribe reserve to Clifford and Kaye Rider, **Keevin Rider** was raised on the Eden Valley reserve located west of Longview Alberta in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. Keevin is a self-taught artist. A love and respect for nature and the traditional ways of life have always been an inspiration for Keevin as depicted in much of his work. He began drawing at an early age – for him, drawing was a means of escape, now he creates to inspire others.

Where We Started...

1984 - A Crisis Nursery Planning Committee submits notice of intent to Alberta Social Services to open a 24-hour Crisis Nursery for families in Calgary.



Grand Opening of the First Children's Cottage Location



The First Children's Cottage Located in Killarney

1986 - Dr. Sandra Reilly secures funding and writes the proposal to establish Alberta's first Crisis Nursery. Parents Anonymous opens the 24-hour nursery, tentatively named The Children's Cottage, in a 1,700 sq. ft. bungalow donated by the Senator Patrick Burns Foundation.

*1987
The volunteer program is formalized through support from the Junior League of Calgary.*



*1989
The Children's Cottage begins separating from Parents Anonymous to become its own society, with Patty Kilgallon as the organization's first CEO.*



Room to Play



*Bridgeland Crisis
Nursery Grand Opening*



*Ground Breaking at
Bridgeland*

1994 - After launching a Million Dollar Campaign and surpassing its goal, The Children's Cottage opens a new 5,000 sq. ft. Crisis Nursery in Bridgeland, replacing the original facility.

2008 - Children's Cottage becomes the operator of Brenda's House, providing shelter and support for families as part of Calgary's plan to end homelessness.



Brenda's House

1995

Evaluation work identifies growing demand and gaps in family services.

1997

Community Respite launches, extending care beyond the nursery.

2002

Healthy Families strengthens early intervention for parents & newborns.

...Where we've been

2010 - 2014 A temporary 6-bed satellite Crisis Nursery opens for children under age 2, expanding support for infants and families through partnership with Calgary and Area Child and Family Services.



Sattelite Nursery

2014 – Early Years Program expands prevention and early intervention for young families at risk.

2016 – HomeBridge supports families at risk of eviction.



Bridgeland Under Water

2017 – The Child & Family Centre vision begins to take shape.



Early Renderings

2013 Flood

The Bridgeland Crisis Nursery is impacted by the Calgary flood, forcing a temporary closure for the first time in the organization's history. The community rallies to help rebuild, and Children's Cottage purchases land in Montgomery for a future Child & Family Centre.

Where we are today...



Ground Breaking on Home Road

2022 – Ground is broken on the future Child & Family Centre in Montgomery, bringing the long-held vision for expanded, integrated family support closer to reality. Danielle Ladouceur becomes the second CEO of Children's Cottage.

2023 – An Indigenous Strategy is implemented, embedding culturally grounded approaches across programs and services as construction of the Child & Family Centre nears completion.



Moose Hide Campaign Walk



Child & Family Centre Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

2024 – The Child & Family Centre opens in Montgomery, bringing programs and services together under one roof to strengthen support for children and families.



Mortgage Shredding

2025 – The Caring Together Campaign is completed. The Child & Family Centre mortgage is fully paid.



2026 – Children's Cottage Society Celebrates 40 Years of Helping Children & Families Thrive.



Celebrating Collaboration

We're proud to be part of a compassionate network of organizations working together to support children and families. Each partner brings unique strengths, insights, and services that complement the support we provide.

Alberta Health Services
Assure Community Services
Autism Calgary
Basically Babies
BGC Cochrane
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Calgary
Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse
Calgary Counselling Centre
Calgary Food Bank
Calgary Homeless Foundation
Calgary Housing Company
Calgary Newcomers Guide
Canadian Immigrant Women's Association
CanLearn Society
Carya
CASA Mental Health
Centre d'Appui Familial Sud de l'Alberta
Centre for Newcomers
Centre for Sexuality
ChildbirthU
Closer to Home
Cochrane Family Resource Network
Cochrane Pregnancy Care Centre
Community Kitchen Program of Calgary
Connect Society
CUPS
Distress Centre
Elbow River Healing Lodge
Families Matter
HERConnect
Hull Services
I Belong Bags
ICan4Kids
Inn from the Cold
Kids Up Front
Kindred Connections Society
Lead Foundation
Legacy Children's Foundation

Legal Aid Alberta
Little Roots Learning Centre
Loretta's Wellness Circle
Luna
Made by Momma
McMan Youth, Family and Community Services
Miskanawah
Momentum
Mount Royal University
Niitoyis Family Support Society
North Hill Community Health Centre
Northwest Community Health Centre
NSTEP
Okotoks Family Resource Centre
Onward Homes
Portail de L'Immigrant Association
Renfrew Educational Services
RockPointe Church
Samba Swing
Shaganappi Community Health Centre
STEAMistic
Stoney Nakoda Nations
The Alex
The Canadian International Institute of Art Therapy
The Dollar Detectives
The Further Education Society of Alberta
The Magic of Christmas
Trellis Society
Twins, Triplets & More Association of Calgary
United Way of Calgary & Area - Natoo'si Indigenous
Healing and Well-being Initiative
University of Calgary
Urban Society for Aboriginal Youth
Wheels for Kids
Wood's Homes
Worth Resolving Youth & Family Services
Youth Unlimited Calgary
YWCA



Hope's Cradle

We're honoured to be home to Calgary's first Hope's Cradle, created in partnership with **Gems for Gems**. Hope's Cradle is a safe, anonymous infant surrender site located at our Child & Family Centre, where a parent in extreme crisis can place an infant into immediate care rather than leaving the baby in an unsafe place.

While we hope it is never needed, Hope's Cradle is an important part of our commitment to prevention, child safety, and compassionate support without judgment. It exists for moments when someone may feel alone, afraid, or unsure where to turn, offering a safe alternative that protects the life of an infant while preserving dignity and anonymity.

How you can help

Sometimes, the most powerful way to help is simply by making sure someone knows where to turn before they ever need it. Sharing information about Hope's Cradle helps ensure that if a parent becomes scared, overwhelmed, or in crisis, they already know there is a safe, anonymous option available. Awareness matters because the right information, remembered at the right moment, could help protect an infant's life.



Learn more
about Hope's
Cradle

HOPE'S CRADLE



A GEMS FOR GEMS INITIATIVE TO SUPPORT
THE SAFE SURRENDER OF INFANTS

For information about installing
Hope's Cradle in your community,
contact Gems for Gems.
www.gemsforgems.com.



Indigenous Family Support Program



Indigenous Family Supports Include:
Home Visitation
Kokum Storytime
Elder Hours
Drumming Sessions

40% of families we served in the past year identified as Indigenous.

This story was shared with us by an 8-year-old staying at the Crisis Nursery for the first time.

A woman came up to me and introduced herself. She works here with families like mine.

I smiled and said, *"You look like you could be my relative."*

I put my arm beside theirs. *"Our skin and hair match."*

She asked if I wanted to smudge. I said, *"Yes, please."*

When we walked into the ceremony room, I stopped. It felt familiar.

"This reminds me of my Nation," I said. *"The sage smells so good. I feel like this is my people back home. I want to move my bed in here!"*

We talked about powwow dancing, regalia, and the nicknames my Kokum calls me in Cree.

I'm proud of who I am, and my culture is important to me.

—
Cultural connection is essential to wellbeing, identity, and a strong sense of belonging. We are creating space for Indigenous children and families to feel safe, seen, and connected to culture.

What does Kokum mean?

"Kokum" is a Cree and Métis word many families use for Grandma. A Kokum is often someone who shares stories, wisdom, comfort, teachings, and love.

There are quite a few accepted spellings of "Kokum," especially because Cree was traditionally oral first. Others include Kookum, Kohkom, Kookom, and Kôhkom.

Different Indigenous Nations and families use different words for Grandma, such as Kokum, Nokomis, or Aanaa.



Top 4 Reasons Families Accessed Support:

- Cultural Activities
- Cultural Ceremony
- Elder Support
- Parenting Guidance

"Starting with smudge, hearing the songs, and experiencing the medicines brings a strong sense of being home. Attending programs at The Cottage feels like home. I feel safe, connected to my culture, and grateful to be here."

Reconciliation at the Cottage

We are grateful to Steve Laut and Lori Egger, the Nickle Family Foundation, and United Way of Calgary for their support and commitment to advancing our Indigenous Strategy.



Our Tipi



Moose Hide Campaign Walk



Making Christmas Angels



Making Beaded Poppies



Sage Harvesting



Drumming Circles



In partnership with **Momentum**, The Children's Cottage hosted Tipi Life, an eight-week Indigenous financial literacy workshop, with onsite childcare provided for participating families.

In May, we held our first Moose Hide Campaign Awareness Walk, joining the national movement to end gender-based violence. Twenty-five individuals attended.

In July, staff joined our Indigenous Advisory Council on Stoney Nakoda Nation for sage harvesting, creating an opportunity for learning, connection, and relationship-building.

In September, we established our Truth & Reconciliation Working Group and developed our ReconciliACTION Journal to support ongoing learning, reflection, and action across the organization.



The Crisis Nursery

When Iryna was hospitalized after experiencing seizures while pregnant, her partner Dmytro's world changed.

Suddenly, Dmytro was navigating complex medical, legal, and financial challenges while caring for his children.

Having experienced war in his home country, he was no stranger to adversity. During this time, Children's Cottage provided a safe, nurturing place for his children. The father of two, soon to be three, shared, "For me, this family situation was more stressful than war itself."

Dmytro was able to focus fully on supporting Iryna through her recovery by utilizing the Crisis Nursery, for up to three days whenever he needed to attend appointments, spend time with his recovering wife, or take a break for self-care.

In moments like this, the Crisis Nursery helps prevent further disruption, providing up to 3 days of 24/7 childcare for families, so parents can address challenges, get support, and rest.



75% of children who stayed at the Crisis Nursery were 6 years old or younger

90.2% of parents felt less stressed after using the Crisis Nursery

New: Day Respite

Day Respite is a new daytime option for families who need short-term childcare support, but do not require overnight care. Available Monday to Friday, this program gives parents and caregivers time to attend appointments, manage urgent responsibilities, or take a needed moment to rest, while their children are cared for in a safe, nurturing environment.

Why Families Turn to the Crisis Nursery:

Caregiver Stress

Mental Health Challenges

Medical Needs

Nobody to count on

In Their Words

What Children Say About
Staying at the Crisis Nursery

i asked my mom if she
was stressed yet. She
said "no" so i said "hurry
up and get stressed so i
can come back!"



Don't tell my mum I
eat carrots here!

can I stay here forever?



i Love THAT YOU
ALWAYS give Me A
HUG WHEN I COME BACK.

I feel safe with YOU.

i love that everyone
knows my name And
what i like here

I love waking up and
seeing what adult is
working today



Is the grandma
cook here today I
love her smagetti

I can't believe I got to wear
SPIDERMAN PJS! I wonder what
superhero I get to be tonight?

Family Resource Centre



When parents are looking for support or connection, we're here for them. We help parents and caregivers access support programs, referrals, and one-on-one guidance — connecting families to the right resources at the right time.

A mother of two, Amina, arrived carrying bags of donated items. The staff greeting her noticed she seemed distressed and asked if she was okay. She broke down in tears and was invited into a private space where an Access Coordinator could support her in a safe, confidential setting.

As the conversation unfolded, she shared that she had just left an unhealthy marriage of 10 years, and was now parenting their two children alone.

Our Access Coordinator met her with compassion, and without judgment, listening carefully as she shared her experience. Together, they created a plan to help her navigate immediate concerns, while also identifying next steps toward more formal goals when she felt ready. She was also connected to community resources that would help her family adapt to their new normal.

"I don't know what I would do without The Children's Cottage. You've been incredibly helpful and connected me to resources and supports I didn't know existed in this city."

580
Events hosted

723
Referrals made

2,783
Caregivers

4,262
Children



See Our
Program Calendar

Calgary West Family Resource Network

Our centre is home to the Calgary West Family Resource Network (FRN) Hub, part of Alberta's provincial network of 70 FRNs. FRNs offer free prevention and early intervention supports for children, youth, and families. As the Hub, The Children's Cottage helps families access information, referrals, and coordinated support, connecting them to the right services at the right time.

Partners in Program Delivery



Families Matter Society of Calgary offers family life education programs that help strengthen parenting skills, improve communication, build problem-solving tools, and support healthy family relationships.



Hull Services' Resilient Families program provides in-home support to help families strengthen relationships and build resilience, develop parenting skills, and make progress toward family-identified goals.



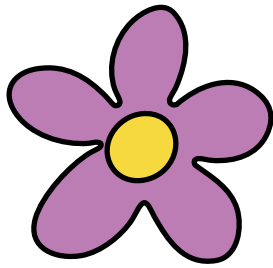
Kindred Connections Society offers Rapid Access Counselling, providing timely, focused support for individuals, couples, and families. Through counselling, caregivers and families can explore immediate challenges, build resilience, and set goals.



Big Brothers Big Sisters Society of Calgary provides mentoring programs that connect children and youth with caring mentors. Through one-to-one relationships, young people build confidence, connection, and positive support networks.



The Children's Cottage Home Visitation program supports pregnant parents and families with children up to age six through regular in-home, phone, or virtual visits. Home Visitors work alongside caregivers to build parenting confidence, understand child development, set goals, and connect with community resources.



Little Blossoms

SCHOOL READINESS

supported by the Steve & Tina Wilson Family Foundation

Starting school is a big milestone, but not every child is ready for a traditional classroom environment right away. Little Blossoms supports children ages 3-5 experiencing developmental delays, behavioural challenges, or difficulties with social and emotional regulation.

When Noah first joined Little Blossoms, separating from his mom felt impossible. Each morning, he became so dysregulated that he screamed through the hallways, clung tightly to her hand, and pleaded not to stay. Group activities, transitions, and sitting near other children felt overwhelming. His mom worried how he would ever manage kindergarten.

With predictable routines, emotional support, guided play, and gentle encouragement, small moments became big changes. First, Noah stayed in the classroom without crying. Then he accepted comfort from staff, joined another child in play, participated in songs, and proudly showed what he had created.

By the end of the program, Noah was walking into the classroom independently, greeting staff with a smile, and excitedly talking about starting kindergarten.



Ready for Kindergarten

21

Children built
school-readiness
skills through Little
Blossoms



Sensory Exploration



Hand-Eye Coordination

94

Hours of
Speech-Language
& Occupational
Therapy provided

Early Childhood Development Strategy

The Children's Cottage has deepened our commitment to early childhood development through a focused ECD strategy at the Family Resource Centre. This approach provides families with access to early assessments and support while they wait for specialized services, helping children with developmental lags receive timely support.

Science in Practice

Early intervention is critical. Language development is foundational for lifelong learning, mental health, and social connection. We embed this science in practice, ensuring that families and staff have the tools to nurture every child's growth.

Building Staff Capacity

Speech-Language Pathologist consultations empowered staff with practical, easy-to-implement techniques for language modelling and play-based learning. Educators also observed real-time examples during circle time and transitions, helping bridge theory to practice.

Meeting Growing Needs

We worked closely with the Speech-Language Pathologist to co-create communication-rich environments. Presence in playrooms enabled dynamic, responsive support for children — emotionally and developmentally — as well as linguistically.



“I was relieved when my child, who barely spoke, began to speak full sentences. His social skills have improved remarkably.”

-Little Blossoms Parent

We create child profiles with individualized communication strategies to help staff and caregivers better support each child's needs.

We provide speech and language support through a Speech-Language Pathologist to help children build communication skills.

We offer targeted professional development for agency and partner staff to strengthen early childhood development practices.

Home Visitation

Sarah and Alex have been working with Home Visitation for over a year as they navigate parenting their two-year-old son, Liam. Like many parents, they came into the program with questions, fears, and a desire to build a strong, stable future for their child.

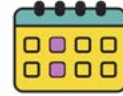
As their work continued, the family used tools like the **Family Star** to better understand their strengths and where additional support was needed. During this process, Sarah often shared that patience didn't come easily to her. Sarah openly shared concerns about safety. She spoke honestly about times when she had become overwhelmed and had reacted in ways she regretted. She expressed a strong desire to change and asked for help.

Together, the family and their support worker created a safety plan and identified additional supports, including access to respite through the Crisis Nursery and other childcare options during moments when she feels overwhelmed. Sarah was also supported in connecting with a psychologist to build new coping strategies.

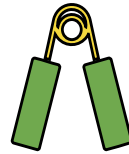
The Family Star (see next page) helped assess this family's support needs, guide programming, and measure progress as they worked toward their goals.



Prenatal to
6 Years



Weekly In-Home Visits



Strengthen Early
Childhood Development



Build Parenting
Confidence



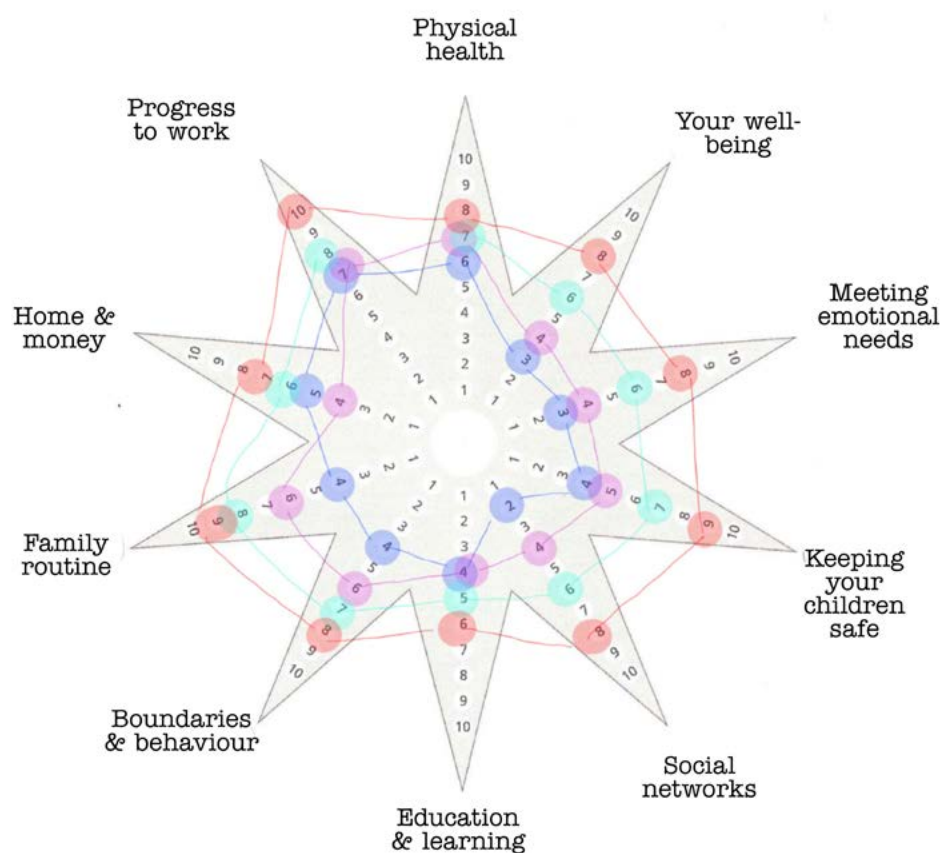
Local Resource
Connection

“I wasn't enjoying being a mom the way I thought I would. With support, I started to feel more connected to my child and learned ways to manage the stress of being a parent, and enjoy the journey.”



91% of parents reported that the support received from the Home Visitation program helped them make positive changes for their family

Family Star Outcome Tool



These examples show how the Family Star helps us identify key protective factors and recognize progress that strengthens parenting confidence, supports child development, and increases family safety.

Parent Wellbeing

Sarah shared that parenting often felt overwhelming. With counselling, respite, and regular Home Visitation, she reported stronger coping skills and more confidence managing stress.

Child Development

Screenings helped identify areas where Liam needed extra support. The family received activities and strategies to support his social-emotional development, and Liam is now meeting age-appropriate milestones.

Safety and Support

Sarah and Alex created a safety plan and identified supports they could call during difficult moments, including the Crisis Nursery. No further safety concerns were reported.

Early Years Family Support Program

Early Years supports families with very young infants who are navigating complex and overlapping challenges. Referrals come directly from Alberta's Vulnerable Infant Response Team – a multidisciplinary Children's Services program that includes nurses, child intervention assessors, and police – working together to help ensure the safety of highly vulnerable infants.

Families referred to the program may be parenting while also addressing concerns related to mental wellness, substance use, family violence, homelessness, social isolation, or limited support. Through once- or twice-weekly in-home visits, Family Life Coaches provide consistent, non-judgmental guidance that helps parents build confidence, strengthen parenting capacity, and create safer, more stable environments for their children.

Using tools such as the **Nurturing Parenting Curriculum** and the **Ages and Stages Questionnaire**, Family Life Coaches support healthy child development, help identify areas of concern, and provide parents with practical activities and strategies. When additional support is needed, families are connected to community programs and professionals who can provide ongoing guidance beyond their time with Early Years.

By helping families access the right supports at the right time, Early Years strengthens safety, stability, and connection during one of the most important stages of a child's development.

84% of families remained together with Early Years support



Strengthening relationships

"We learned to communicate our feelings and manage conflict in healthier ways."

Understanding early development

"I learned how fighting can affect my baby's brain."

Prioritizing safety

"My Family Life Coach helped me make safe decisions for my baby."

Building confidence and self-worth

"I felt more confident in myself, and I realized I am a good parent."

91% of families reported that the Early Years program helped them make positive changes for their family



Nurturing Newborns

Nurturing Newborns provides weekly in-home infant care and support to families navigating the early days of caring for a newborn, particularly those facing multiple stressors, including postpartum mental health concerns, isolation, or medical complexity. Perinatal Support Workers provide essential respite, help parents build confidence, reduce toxic stress, and promote secure attachment during a child's most critical stage of development.

When Huda and Samir welcomed their second baby, Hana, they were already navigating a complex time.

New to Canada with limited local supports, they were caring for their older child, Salma, who required significant support. After the birth, Huda experienced complications and needed extended rest and recovery.

In the early weeks, even simple daily tasks like caring for newborn Hana through the night became overwhelming. Both parents were exhausted and feeling anxious as they tried to meet the needs of their growing family. As time went on, Huda also began experiencing postpartum depression and anxiety, making it even more difficult to manage the constant demands of caring for a newborn.

A Perinatal Support Worker from the Nurturing Newborns program began supporting the family shortly before Hana was born and continued with regular visits afterward. She provided hands-on support with newborn care and created space for Huda to rest, something she had been deeply missing.

These visits allowed Huda to recover physically and begin to feel more like herself again. With consistent support, her energy and outlook improved, and she felt better able to cope with the challenges of postpartum recovery and mental wellness.

At the same time, Samir gained confidence in caring for their newborn, learning new skills and routines that supported the whole family. Over time, they began to feel more settled, supported, and confident as they adjusted to life with their new baby.



89%
of families now feel more
prepared as a parent

100%
of caregivers felt their
child was safe in our care

Family Mental Wellness Hub



Top 3 Reasons for Service

Domestic Violence

Trauma

Child Behaviour & Caregiver Support

The Family Mental Wellness Hub provides immediate, responsive support for families navigating mental wellness challenges, bringing together community connection, cultural support, and clinical care. Through Family Wellness Connectors and specialized clinicians, families receive intake, assessment, referrals, crisis response, and interim therapeutic support to begin their healing journey immediately.

Crystal came to the Family Mental Wellness Hub after her three children witnessed their father's drug use and subsequent arrest. Now parenting on her own, she noticed her children were experiencing emotional challenges, both at home and at school.

Through the Family Mental Wellness Hub, each child participated in six play-based counselling sessions. They built trust, learned to express their feelings, and developed age-appropriate tools to understand and cope with big emotions.

Crystal was supported with practical strategies to help her children at home. She began to see positive changes and a growing ability for her children to express their emotions.

With a strong foundation in place, the family needed continued, trauma-focused care. Through a formal referral, they were connected to a community partner specializing in trauma care, ensuring their progress could continue.

This coordinated approach meant the family didn't have to navigate an often overwhelming mental health system alone.

Modalities Provided:

Accelerated Resolution Therapy

Dialectical Behaviour Therapy

Play-based therapy

Sand tray therapy

Trauma Release Therapy

Person-centred therapy

Solution-focused approaches

Who We Supported:

55% Children
45% Adults

Youngest Client:
3 Years Old

Collaborations with:

CCASA

CUPS

CASA Mental Health

Lead Foundation

Luna

YWCA

HerConnect

HomeLinks

Linking Families to Safe Housing & Support



When Ari first connected with The Children's Cottage, they were preparing to leave shelter and begin rebuilding stability for themselves and their child, Noor.

Like many families navigating a major transition, Ari was facing questions about housing, employment, community connection, and what the future might hold. In those early days, even knowing where to begin felt overwhelming.

Through the HomeLinks program, Ari was met with steady, consistent support. What started as simple check-ins and guidance gradually became something more: a sense of direction. With encouragement and connection to resources, they began to take small, meaningful steps forward.

Over time, those steps built confidence.

Today, Ari and Noor's path looks different. They are living in stable housing, with a steady income and a clearer sense of what comes next. What once felt uncertain is now a path forward, one grounded in stability, purpose, and the support needed to build a new beginning.

73%
of families were
stable in new
housing after
completing the
HomeLinks
program



Mental Health &
Community Referrals



Housing Search &
Landlord Support



Rental Subsidies &
Housing Retention



Budgeting &
Financial Literacy



Parenting Support
& Life Skills



Volunteer Program

We're celebrating 40 years of
Volunteers at the Cottage!

What began with the vision and commitment of the Junior League of Calgary has grown into a community that continues to show up for children and families in meaningful ways. From rocking babies and preparing meals to supporting fundraising events, sorting donations, and offering their time and care, volunteers have helped shape the Cottage from day one, and have been at the heart of our agency every step of the way.



ARC Resources Ltd.

"This was my third time volunteering with the Children's Cottage Society. I always enjoy helping at their beautiful new facility. As a new father, it's touching to see the services they provide for children and families in need. I'm very grateful that we have such an impactful organization operating in Calgary."

Jordan Bowie, Senior Reservoir Engineer
ARC Resources Ltd.

ARC Resources has been volunteering and supporting the Cottage as a group since 2010.



Heather Davies

"For the last 30 years I have supported the Children's Cottage. I've held babies, bathed and fed children, and even cooked and cleaned. Now, I volunteer at fundraising events, pick up food donations, and work casinos. The Children's Cottage will hold a piece of my heart forever!"



Vicki Reid

"I retired from the Children's Cottage Board after 12 years, but wanted to stay involved. I now volunteer in the Crisis Nursery helping care for the children, which fills my heart."

Every time I walk through these doors I see so many children and families benefiting from our programs. I feel very proud to be part of this organization."



740
Lifetime
Hours

Bridget Mahoney

"I love being a part of a place that provides safety, comfort and care to children when they need it most. Whether I am playing with little ones, cuddling babies or cooking meals, I know that even small acts can make a difference in their day."

"It's a privilege to support families when they need a break or are going through tough situations. Being able to help create a calm, caring environment for the children is something I truly value and am grateful to be part of such a compassionate team."



UCalgary Club

"This UCalgary Club was founded to support Children's Cottage Society's mission. From volunteering with programs to organizing donation drives, our goal is to help families feel supported in real, tangible ways. Many of our members fondly remember moments like helping a child learn to count or holding a newborn for the first time."

A special
**THANK
YOU**
to all our
volunteers

Volunteers
Make
The Cottage
Feel Like
Home



Volunteering
by the numbers

371
Individual
Volunteers

14,150
hours

+

1,874
hours

740
Group
Volunteers

=

Over 1000
Volunteers
and 16,000 hours!

which represents
\$352,528
value in wages

The Brain Story

A Science-Based Framework for Healing



What is the Brain Story?

Developed by the Palix Foundation through the Alberta Family Wellness Initiative, the Brain Story explains how early experiences shape brain development and lifelong health, learning, and behaviour, giving us a shared language rooted in science.

1

Serve and
Return
Actions

Intentional, responsive interactions like eye contact, co-regulation, and connection help build the foundations of healthy brain development.

2

Reducing
Toxic Stress

HomeLinks, the Crisis Nursery, and the Family Mental Wellness Hub help buffer the effects of trauma, poverty, and instability, supporting healing and growth.

3

Building Core
Life Skills

Parent coaching and mental wellness services help families build emotional regulation, problem-solving, and decision-making skills rooted in science.

4

Healing
Through
Relationships

From Elder Hours to in-home visits, our programs are grounded in connection. Trusting relationships are the foundation for healing.

5

Supporting
Generational
Healing

Programs that support both parent and child, helping interrupt intergenerational trauma and strengthen families.

Did You Know?

All client-serving staff at The Children's Cottage are Brain Story Certified

The Brain Story is more than a framework; it's foundational to how we work. The science validates what we've always known: safe, responsive relationships build resilience.

Every interaction is an opportunity to reduce toxic stress, support brain development, and strengthen futures.



Learn more about the Brain Story and Alberta Family Wellness Initiative at www.albertafamilywellness.org

Marketing & Communications

In 2025-2026, Marketing and Communications strengthened how The Children's Cottage connects with families, donors, partners, volunteers, staff, and the broader community.

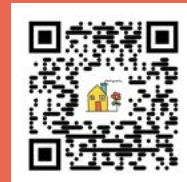
Through brand alignment, storytelling, social media, email updates, media relations, fundraising support, event materials, and program communications, this work helped build awareness of our mission and the value of prevention and early intervention.

As The Cottage continues to grow, communications remains focused on building trust, sharing impact, and ensuring every message reflects the care, compassion, and hope at the heart of our work.

Subscribe to
receive our
email newsletter



Follow Us
on Social Media



The Evolution of Our Logo



1987



2000



2014



2023



2024

Our Brand Beginnings: Carmel Gatt



Carmel Gatt was an integral part of The Children's Cottage from its earliest days, helping shape both the spaces where families found support and the visual identity that still represents us today. A former Board member & president, Crisis Nursery architect, and volunteer, Carmel created the original Children's Cottage logo, including the flower that symbolizes hope.

As our brand has evolved, the logo has been refreshed to reflect our growth while preserving the familiar house, flower, and warmth at the heart of The Cottage. Decades later, Carmel's contribution continues to identify us as a place of care, connection, and hope.

Community Engagement



Stock the Cottage brings companies, community groups, and supporters together to collect essential items for children and families during the holiday season. From diapers and hygiene products to household supplies, toys, and comfort items, these donations help fill immediate needs while showing families they are supported by a caring community.



Calgary's corporate community continues to get behind our annual Stock the Cottage campaign, we are always excited to see the Grinch, whose visit brings extra holiday joy to children at the nursery.



We were proud to take part in the 2025 Calgary Stampede Parade, sharing our mission and celebrating community connection. Thank you to **Pigeon Lake Horse Drawn Rides** for helping bring our parade entry to life!

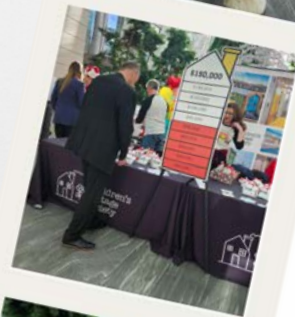
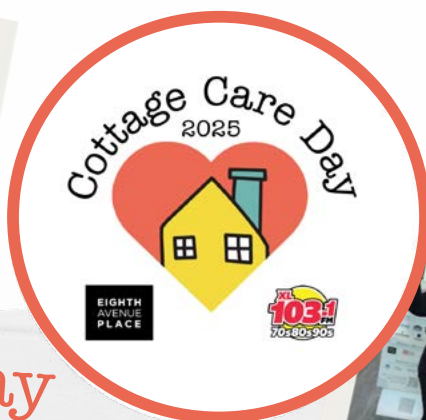


Balloon Wonders YYC has brought colour, creativity, and magic to The Children's Cottage, helping transform ordinary days into moments of joy for children and families. From cheerful balloon displays to playful surprises throughout our spaces, their work helps create a warm, welcoming environment where children can feel celebrated, comforted, and cared for.



Over the past decade, **Clays for the Cottage** has grown from a casual gathering of friends into a sold-out fundraising event that has raised more than \$1.3 million since 2017. Made possible through the dedication of the Chestermere Langdon Oilmen's Association, along with loyal sponsors and participants, this event continues to help ensure families in crisis have a safe place to turn.





Cottage Care Day

From 2000 to 2014, the **Children's Cottage Radiothon** brought the community together through the power of storytelling, generosity, and local connection.

In 2024, that legacy was revived as Cottage Care Day, a renewed Giving Tuesday tradition that continues to grow each year. With the support of valued partners including Eighth Avenue Place, media partners, donors, volunteers, and community champions, Cottage Care Day has become a beloved annual moment of care and connection, one that honours our history while inspiring a new generation of support for children and families.

Jenny's Troop: Recurring Gifts

Jenny's Troop is a community of cherished donors helping children and families feel safe, supported, and loved. As a member of Jenny's Troop, your monthly gift helps us respond when families need us most. Your ongoing support helps build stability for all our programs and services.

As a thank you for joining Jenny's Troop, you'll receive one of our beloved stuffed Jennies, complete with a tiny joey tucked safely in her pouch. They've quickly become a favourite for children and grown-ups alike, and are a sweet reminder of the comfort, care, and connection that your support helps provide every day.

Join our Troop today by scanning the QR code



From the very beginning, The Children's Cottage has been held up by people who choose to show up for children and families. Our Circle of Hope donors are part of that legacy, and we are deeply grateful.

See our full donor list



Circle of Hope & Friends Luncheon: Building Children's Resilience for Healthier Futures

As part of our 40th anniversary year, the Children's Cottage hosted the Circle of Hope & Friends Luncheon, presented by Cenovus Energy, bringing together donors, partners, community leaders, and practitioners for an inspiring conversation about children's resilience and family mental wellness.



The event featured Dr. Gabor Maté and Suzanne Tough, PhD, who shared insights into how early relationships, stress, connection, and community supports shape children's long-term development. Their messages reinforced what we see every day at the Children's Cottage: when families are supported early, children are better able to grow, heal, and thrive.



Grounded in research, compassion, and collaboration, the luncheon highlighted the importance of prevention and early intervention in building healthier futures for children and families. We are grateful to Cenovus Energy and all who joined us in advancing this shared commitment to resilient children and healthy families.





The Circle of Hope

The Circle of Hope recognizes donors who make an annual gift of \$10,000 or more to support children and families through The Children's Cottage. This generous community of supporters helps sustain critical prevention programs, crisis support, and family-centred services, creating a lasting impact for families across Calgary.

Accredited Condominium Management Services Ltd.
 Aecon Group Inc.
 Aeonian Support for Humanitarian Charities Foundation
 Altitude Energy Partners
 ARC Resources Ltd.
 Margaret and Matt Aufricht
 Denise Bardeau
 Baytex Energy Corp.
 Christian Bayle and Nicole Cramer
 Richard and Cathy Bird
 Clarence and Evelyn Buckley Family Trust
 Paul and Wendy Burrowes
 Bonnie Butler
 Calgary Co-operative Association Ltd.
 Calgary Police Rodeo Association
 Canadian Energy Services
 Canadian Natural Resources Limited
 Cannonball Foundation
 Cenovus Energy Inc.
 Chandos Construction Calgary
 Children's Hospital Aid Society
 CKLAS Foundation
 Andreas and Cheryl Cordsen
 Henry and Linda Crawford
 Culbert Family Fund
 Danyluk Family Foundation
 EJO Fund
 George and Sherry Elder
 Dawn Farrell
 Michael Fawcett
 Flaman Foundation
 Flynn Canada Ltd.
 Fonds Familial Louise Gloutnay & Réal Foley
 The Gauthier Family Charitable Fund
 The Ernie and Leah Hagel Family Foundation
 Gary Hall
 Richard and Lois Haskayne
 Dr. Janice Heard and Bruce McFarlane
 The Hunter Family Foundation
 IFF Holdings Inc.
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 The Prosser Charitable Foundation
 Kevin Reinhart
 Renton Family Foundation
 Jonathan and Chelsea Rogers
 Leianne Vye-Rogers and Greg Rogers
 Royal LePage Benchmark
 Rundle College Society
 Saturn Oil & Gas Inc.
 The Scotlyn Foundation
 The Donald & Eleanor Seaman Family Foundation
 The Shaunessy Family Foundation
 Skamokawa Fund
 STEP Energy Services Ltd.
 Strathcona Resources Ltd.
 Suncor Energy Inc.
 Tamarack Valley Energy Ltd.
 Michael and Renae Tims
 The Smith Vanstokkom Foundation
 Vitality Fund
 Ralph Ward Foundation
 The Welty Family Foundation
 Whitecap Resources Inc.
 Jeff Wilson
 Steve and Tina Wilson Family Foundation
 Mark and Julie Woitas

At the Calgary Foundation:

The Trevor and Amy Cooper Family Legacy Fund
 Carmel and Jane Gatt Legacy Fund
 Heartstone Foundation Fund
 Olwen Priestnall Memorial Fund
 The Graydon and Dorothy Morrison Flow Through Fund
 Rickbeil Family Fund

To learn more about becoming a Circle of Hope member, email fundraising@childrenscottage.ab.ca

Collective Action



ALIGN

Association of Community Services
Together for Children and Families



Continuing Care
Safety Association



Alliance against
Violence & Adversity
Alliance contre la
Violence et l'Aversité

enough
for  all



Children's
Cottage
Society

24/7 Link Line

Parent Support and Connection to
Child & Family Programs

403-233-CARE (2273)

LinkLine@childrenscottage.ab.ca

Administration

403-283-4200

admin@childrenscottage.ab.ca

Charitable Registration Number:
106914534 RR 0001

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Standard of Excellence

