



THE FAMILY
CENTRE

ANNUAL REPORT

2020/2021

Message from the Chair of the Board of Directors Bob Hassel

It has truly been an honour for me to have been a part of The Family Centre Board of Directors for these past six years.

I believe that this past year, in particular, has provided all of us with many unpredicted challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet, given all of these new challenges, the team at The Family Centre responded with amazing levels of creativity, innovation, ingenuity, perseverance and leadership!

The unwavering commitment by every team member of The Family Centre ensured that services to our families remained the top priority for all.

Key accomplishments this year included the extremely quick development of an agency wide virtual delivery model, ensuring that families had food and technology, new safety protocols for the reunification homes (which never closed), creation of BIPOC forums and an advisory committee, and also the delivery of new programs. All of this occurred while in the midst of a worldwide pandemic. Well done!

The Family Centre recently achieved accreditation through the Council on Accreditation (COA). This included being successfully audited against 985 standards. I attended the COA auditor feedback session and heard first hand how extremely impressed the COA was with the entire organization.

This past year The Family Centre also achieved certification in Trauma Informed Care. This international Trauma Informed Care certification is an incredible achievement and will help guide the work of The Family Centre in all of its operations.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to thank Pauline Smale, TFC's CEO, for her incredibly strong, innovative and consistent leadership. Also, on behalf of the Board I want to thank the entire Family Centre team for your passion, innovation, creativity and commitment to truly making a difference in our community. All of you faced the pandemic challenges head on and then elevated The Family Centre to whole new level!

Thank you!



Message from the CEO Pauline Smale

This has been a year like no other. Who could have anticipated that we would be working throughout a pandemic balancing personal and professional lives in this way?

What strikes me the most is how we responded and ultimately thrived during this very challenging time, speaking both to our collective fortitude and resilience. Organizational resiliency is defined as the ability to anticipate, respond, cope and recover from internal and external challenges such that organizational performance is maintained and new capacities are developed to strengthen the organization. I want to focus my CEO report on how we strengthened our organization.

We responded to the killing of George Floyd and the anti-racist movement by coming together to develop a BIPOC Advisory Committee and a Cultural Humility Framework.

We refused to put our agency accreditation or Trauma-Informed Culture Certification on hold. We completed both with flying colors in the fall of 2020.

We focused on our own well-being, knowing that our personal wellness is key in supporting children and families. We engaged in daily, weekly and monthly check-ins. We completed two staff satisfaction surveys, an organization resiliency assessment, and an emotional and physical safety assessment to ensure we kept the conversations going and had a pulse on our mental health. We created a Community of Practice, gathering together to regularly focus on our psychosocial wellness.

We continued to celebrate appreciating long-standing employees with a day in the park along with our United Way kickoff raising about \$45,000 as an organization to give back to the community. We had our winter celebration online, gifting days off and gift cards. We retired and celebrated the work of William Smiley - someone who helped us shape community mental health services, ensuring the most vulnerable could find us.

We kept safe.... only 19 employees tested positive for COVID-19, and we did not experience one outbreak, not one home closure. We increased staff retention and reduced staff turnover.

We continued to imagine recreating our work to ensure families could access our services throughout the year regardless of the restrictions, regardless of the service area. Shaping and reshaping to ensure that we were responsive to the needs of those we serve. And responsive we were.

Thank you to all the staff who, throughout the challenges, found ways to connect with children, youth, families, and communities, reducing isolation and enhancing health. And to the board of directors for their unwavering support.

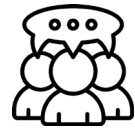


Recap of 2020



We moved to a complete virtual delivery model agency-wide within 2 weeks

We were accredited by the Council on Accreditation



We maintained communication with the community: 50,000 visits to our blog, 250,000 social media impressions and over 90,000 visits to our website

\$ 45,000

raised through our
**United Way workplace
campaign**



We expanded to the 4th floor and to 2 new community spaces to increase our capacity to see our families and ensure that they could see each other



Our therapists were trained in Telehealth immediately and began virtual therapy, reaching anyone who couldn't access us directly

We developed new psycho-educational and therapeutic groups for anxiety and depression



We were certified as a Trauma Informed Agency

We held 2 BIPOC forums and initiated a BIPOC advisory committee



We ensured families had food and technology. We have delivered hampers, gift cards, laptops, play kits and anything else to those in need. We made thousands of wellness calls.



We reopened our 106 street office resuming all on-site services within 3 months



Our reunification homes developed protocol and safety practices while delivering services. The homes never closed.



We sustained a workforce through ongoing self-isolation, childcare gaps, school closures and personal strain. Everyone continued to be paid – on time!

We continued to provide services in the community, in family homes, and in our community schools.



We started delivering new programming as part of the Family Resource Network (FRN) in west Edmonton.

We had our Winter Gathering and acknowledged 6 TFC-ers with awards



Our Year in Numbers

Translation & Interpretation



315

documents were translated into a different language



We reduced the language barrier for newcomers accessing essential services by providing **782** interpretations

Education Services

791 people participated in **156** classes designed to enhance skills in parenting, relationships, communication, and self-regulation



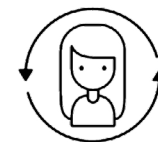
We provided **246** subsidies to remove financial barriers for those desiring improvement through our classes

Families, Youth, & Children



children and youth lived in our reunification homes

The Family Support Services team supported **428 families** and **874 children and youth**



We brought families together **97** times in circles, ceremonies, and family group conferences to plan for the children they care about

We were able to keep **183 children** in family care through our Kinship program



Counselling

8,056 people accessed **30,986 hours** of counselling



Community Initiatives

Roots and Wings

assisted **1,009** families with parenting skills, finances, mental health, and community connections

Cultural Coaches

engaged with **331** students to help adjust to life in Canada

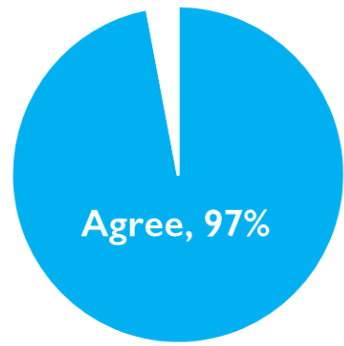
Success Coaches

supported **3,859** students to become positively engaged in school

Youth Liaisons

facilitated **27** projects engaging over **440** youth and community members to improve community safety and increase youth empowerment; engaged and supported **1,243** people through community events, resource mobilization, and presentations.

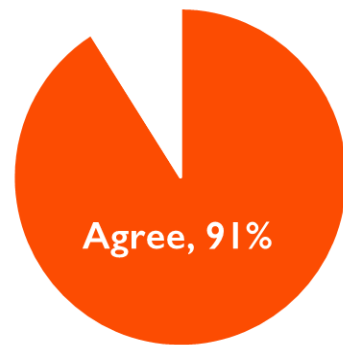
Feedback From Our Clients



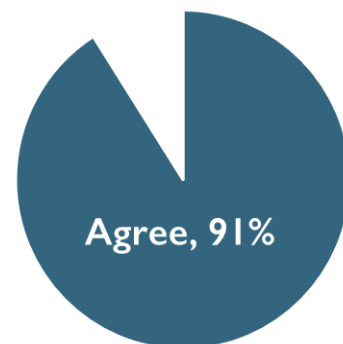
I felt safe when I received services from The Family Centre.



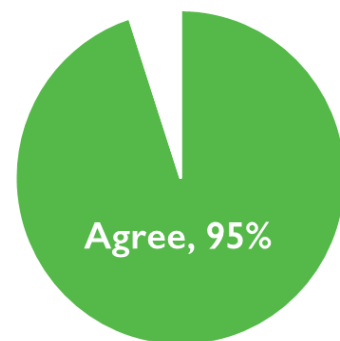
I had a lot of control over how services were provided to me.



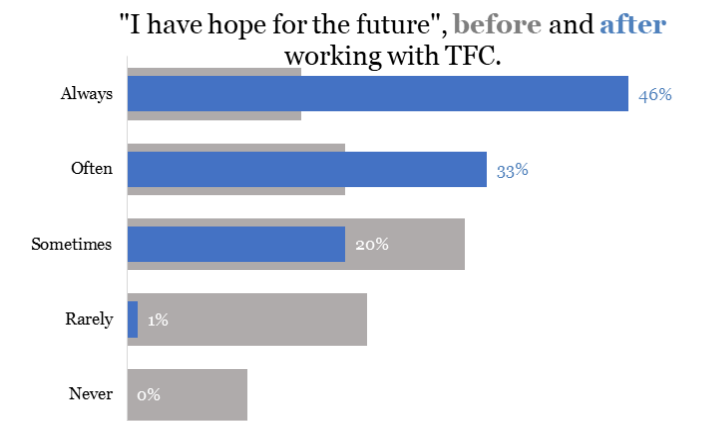
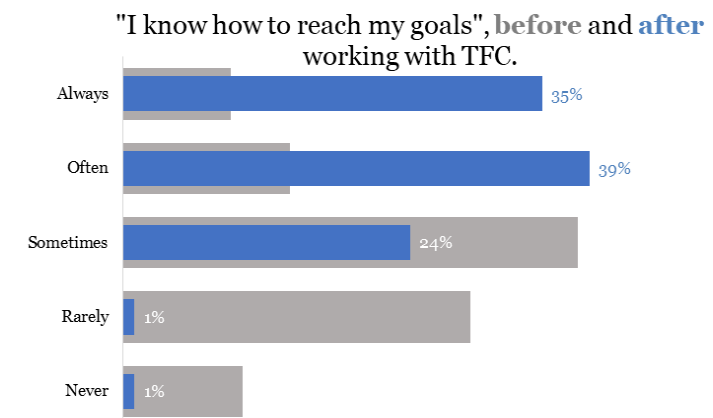
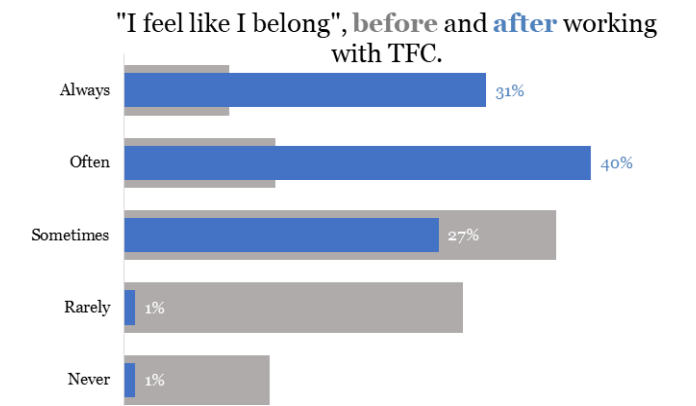
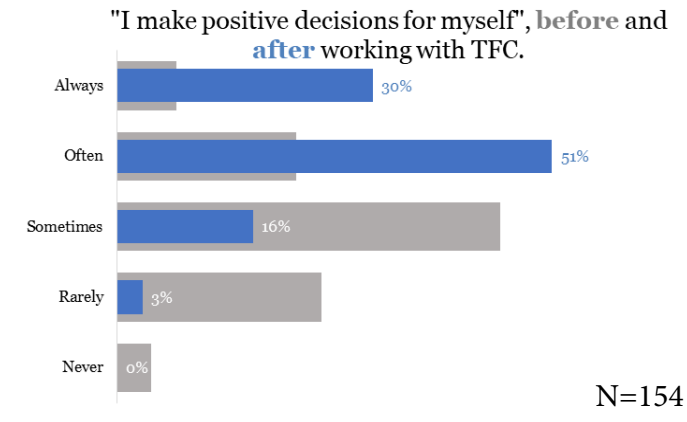
When decisions were made about my services, I felt like I was a partner with the staff and that they really listened to what I wanted to accomplish.



I feel stronger as a person because of the services I received from The Family Centre.



I trust the people who work at The Family Centre.



Long Serving Employees

The Family Centre works hard to create an agency that engages and motivates employees. We believe that by providing employees an opportunity to learn, grow professionally and personally and aspire to their passion, we can provide better services to the Edmonton community. We want to honour the following employees by acknowledging their anniversaries.



Laura Chen, 15 years

Laura started with The Family Centre in 2006. Since her time at TFC, she has held roles in both Community Initiatives as well as Community Support Services (SEC). Currently, Laura has a dual role supervising the Administrative Services Team and is also the Executive Assistant. These are roles she enjoys very much.

Laura has become a significant source of support to many people throughout the organization. She is a pillar of the agency and has played a role in many successes throughout the organization. Laura is dedicated, resourceful, graceful, inspiring, and a terrific leader. We are very fortunate and grateful for all the gifts Laura brings to TFC!

written by Mary-Ann Kelly



Sheryl Beaudry, 15 years

Sheryl is celebrating her 15th year at TFC as our well-known Receptionist. She is the consistent welcoming face of our downtown office. Meeting Sheryl has a lasting impact on our clientele, as they often remember her friendly smile and joyful demeanor. She is often going above and beyond to serve and to help everyone. She cares so much about everyone who walks through that door, and she is always focused on the wellbeing of others. Her interactions with our clientele play a huge role in their experience at TFC.

And who doesn't love Sheryl's incredible fashion sense; she has even adapted well to matching her face masks to her fashionable wardrobe. She likes to match the season, wearing colours and themed attire for any occasion. And let's not forget about her amazing Halloween costumes! She always goes all out for Halloween – make-up, hair, the whole shebang. It's just another way she brings joy into our workplace.

We are grateful for Sheryl's impact on our agency and those we serve for these last 15 years, and look forward as she continues to make a lasting impact at TFC.

written by Chelsey Yee

5 Years

Navkiran Kooner
April Bastien
Jobin Thomas
Mark Frederick
Philiana Wong
Jori Ruzycski
Gail Norman
Calvin Arnold
Carly Keats Oswald
Omolade Ogedengbe
Kevin Sun

Kolby Schmeelke
Danelee Schroter
Kristin Neuman
Mohammad Alam
Nimir Raval
Brandie Rosario
Joelene Connolly
Janelle Jaster
Katja Frosterus-Goulet
Fatima Bangura

10 Years

Maureen Young
Jaclyn Wickens
Fran Zhang
Sarah McGreer
Janelle Koziel
Kate Prins
Danny Allen

Employee Awards

Each year we take the time to honour employees that reflect The Family Centre's culture and the values we aspire to.

Walk the Talk Award

Walk the Talk award acknowledges an employee who has demonstrated outstanding skill and empathy in their dealing with others. The Family Centre believes in the importance of dealing with people skillfully, compassionately, and respectfully.



Award winner Elaine Neher, nominated by Trina Moser



Award winner Vanessa Contreras, nominated by Freda Reinhart

Best Idea Award

The Best Idea award acknowledges an employee who thinks outside the box in order to solve problems. They are an innovator who creates solutions to enhance the way either children and families or employees experience The Family Centre.



Award winner Coral Desautels, nominated by Janelle Jaster and Nikki Houde

Staff Development Award

The Staff Development award is given to an employee, who has made outstanding contributions to staff development. The Family Centre believes in the importance of mobilizing well trained professional employees in all areas of the agency.



Award winner SherryLynne Jondreau, nominated by Brooke Wilson and Heather Frayne

Above and Beyond Award

The Above and Beyond award acknowledges employees who have gone above and beyond the duties of their position for the betterment of The Family Centre. The Family Centre believes in the importance of extending oneself in an effort to grow professionally while focusing on the larger scope of TFC.



Award winner Megan Jivraj, nominated by Terry Sharp and Genevieve Jacques



Award winner Brendon Pratt, nominated by Fred Sudfeld

COA Accreditation

In 2020, we were accredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA); an international, independent, not-for-profit organization dedicated to improving the delivery of social services. COA accreditation signifies that our agency has voluntarily undergone a rigorous evaluation process and that our service offering meets or exceeds industry best practices

“Ethical conduct and practice is well articulated and understood at all levels of the organization. This includes board, senior management and direct service staff.”

“HR policies and procedures are all in place, followed and very strong. The agency analyzes and evaluates on a regular basis their staffing patterns and needs of the agency. The retention and turnover analysis is an excellent measurement and guides HR planning. The staff morale within the organization is high. Staff members at all levels are passionate and dedicated to the mission of the organization. Staff members feel they are cared about, appreciated and feel very supported in their jobs. There is an evident learning and improvement culture.”

“The Family Centre’s leadership has driven the development and implementation of a comprehensive PQI program with full staff engagement and support. The organization receives and uses PQI information to make strategic and budget decisions, build organizational capacity, and monitor the quality and impact of the organization’s services on the community and on the lives of individuals served. TFC has taken particular care to develop a comprehensive list of stakeholders, notably those external to TFC, and to ensure that they are and remain “in the know”. Overall this program is literally exemplary, and TFC is to be commended for creating and maintaining a quality awareness culture, organization-wide, while continuing to refine PQI structure and processes.”

“The organization’s financial policies and procedures are strong and compliant. The expertise within the staff and Board Treasurer support a transparent, risk managed and ethical finance department. The budgeting process is solid with a funding base as stable as can be expected, given the current environment. Overall in a very good financial position with a well managed department.”

“The organization has a well informed, very strong board that is very representative of all sectors of organizational activity: personnel, finance, and program.”

Community Spaces



Though during this past year COVID-19 created some challenges for our work supporting children, youth, and families in the community, it also provided us with opportunities to reflect on our practice. One change that came out of both those challenges and reflective moments was the addition of two community spaces for supported family time, where Family Support Services (FSS) staff are able to bring parents and children together to have visits while the children are in government care.

The search for community spaces began in late November, and by mid-December two half-duplexes had been rented. One of these is located in the east area, and one in the north central area, to correspond to our Children Services contracted areas. These home-like spaces were ready to use by mid-January, and we have seen consistent significant usage since then. On average within each space there are 18 - 22 visits each week, taking place over seven days. Though maintaining these spaces has been challenging, the feedback from both staff and families using the spaces has been overwhelmingly positive!

“I really hope we keep the house spaces even after COVID-19 blows over! They are incredibly helpful for scheduling family visits and provide a home-y atmosphere that I think is really great for families!”

Indigenous Practice

Watch Indigenous Practice Video



The Family Centre is committed to enhancing our practice by increasing our knowledge and understanding of the history of Indigenous people combined with opportunities to experience ceremony, traditional teachings, and activities.

Our hope is that we all become allies addressing the impacts of colonialism and the on-going forms of colonization. We have been very intentional in our approach to increase our capacity. We believe it is imperative that given the work we do that we are intelligent, experienced and comfortable when working with Indigenous families and all the families we serve.

We have been taught that there is no healing without ceremony. In this video we asked TFC employees to share how they have evolved their practice.

Success Stories

Jessica's Story

[Watch Jessica's Video](#)



At the very young age of fifteen, Jessica was exposed to significant trauma. After being sexually assaulted, she resorted to drugs, alcohol, and self-harm. Jessica tried counselling and medication. Yet, nothing could take away her depression, anxiety, and fear. On top of this experience, Jessica had to grow up fast. She took care of her mother, who had polycystic kidney disease, and her diabetic father. Her father also had anger issues and implemented improper discipline techniques.

Jessica didn't know how to tell her family what had happened, so she ran away. She then moved towards unhealthy relationships that she feels resembled her father. After losing many children before birth, Jessica finally had a daughter. She ended up leaving her daughter's father because of domestic violence.

But, Jessica continued to experience domestic violence in another relationship. During this relationship, she was not allowed to get medical attention. Jessica now lives with visible scars and an ongoing back injury. When her son was born, Jessica was alone in the delivery room. Shortly after his birth, Children Services got involved and her kids were taken away.

Jessica found herself in a very deep hole. She had developed PTSD from the severe abuse. She continued to have flashbacks, nightmares, and shakes. Children Services wanted Jessica to have her mental health under control. She was then introduced to Monika, a Mental Health Therapist at The Family Centre. "When I first started with her, because I was still in the relationship with my son's dad, I was very closed off. I didn't really want to talk because I was afraid of the repercussions," mentioned Jessica.

The control she was under made her feel like she wasn't able to open up. Then, Jessica gained the courage to leave the abusive relationship. "Once I left him, I was able to open up a little bit more, and Monika noticed that. She also noticed that I was turning my life around and becoming a completely different person."

Since starting counselling, Jessica's life has changed in many ways. She was able to get her kids back, and she is in a healthy and happy relationship. "I never thought that I would be able to find a healthy relationship, and so when I found Josh, it was a major breath of fresh air." Josh helps support Jessica through her trauma and PTSD attacks. He spends time with Jessica outside as she is afraid to be outside alone. Being in nature helps Jessica feel grounded and relaxed.

Her relationship with her mother and sister has also improved. "I'm able to spend a lot more time with them. When I was in the relationship, I wasn't talking to them every day. I didn't have the opportunity, or I couldn't open up to them."

Additionally, Jessica is receiving supports from a Roots and Wings worker. They discuss developmental stages and techniques for raising a newborn. They have also determined Jessica's Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) score. Jessica understands that her children will also have high ACE scores. She wants to eventually get her daughter into counselling with Monika.

For now, Jessica works towards minimizing her PTSD attacks and living a peaceful happy life with her family.

Calvin's Story

[Watch Calvin's Video](#)



Calvin's love for his daughters gave him the courage to hold his family together as a single parent. His daughters were put into care because their mother struggled with addiction and unhealthy relationships. When Calvin heard the news, he was living and working in Saskatchewan. Edmonton Family Services contacted him through Facebook. They told him he had the opportunity to get custody of his daughters.

"I was agitated and angry," said Calvin. "She never asked me for help." Calvin was upset because their mother would take them away from him for long periods of time. He knew that this was his opportunity to step in. Only one of the girls is his biological daughter but it didn't stop him from viewing both of them as his own.

He made the journey down to Edmonton to be reunited with his family. When he arrived, he met with their social worker. Calvin had to prove that he was a stable parent before he could get custody of his daughters. "It was a long year and a half of courts and programs I had to get through. They had a program there that was on how to be a parent. So, I took that."

Calvin's hard work paid off. When he got custody of his daughters he met Trina, a Roots and Wings worker with The Family Centre. Trina helped them settle into their new home and connected them with family resources. At first, Calvin felt very guarded and didn't want to speak much to Trina. As she continued to support him, Calvin was able to open up.

One day Calvin's sister reached out to him as she was going through challenges in her life. "My sister said that she needed help to stable her life. So, I stepped up and told her I'll come pick up her kids

and take them in until she stands up on her feet again." Two of his nephews and one niece came from Saskatchewan to Calvin's home in Edmonton. Trina helped Calvin apply for guardianship of the three children.

Over time, the kids settled in and wanted to stay with Calvin. Unfortunately, Calvin had to set boundaries for one of his nephews who was going down a bad path. His nephew became a safety issue for the rest of the family and had to move into a group home. "It was difficult because I really wanted to help the kid."

Growing up, Calvin experienced abusive behavior from his role models. He is determined to show his kids healthy discipline and raise them differently. "I'm just trying to break the cycle and I don't want anybody to feel that way," expressed Calvin.

Calvin is grateful for the support from Trina. He feels their relationship has really grown since when he first met her. Trina continues to take Calvin and his kids to appointments and provide them with resources for stability. He believes that the Roots and Wings program "will help families strengthen themselves."

Each day, Calvin focuses on personal growth and hopes that his children achieve all the goals they set for themselves. He is a proud father who loves to help his children, nephew, and niece with their homework and is happy they are engaged in school.

As the pandemic gets better, Calvin hopes to get a dress made for his daughters and niece and to attend pow wows. In the meantime, Calvin and his family enjoy nature walks with Trina.

Poem Project by Students

See full story, poem, and video



Black History Month honours the achievements and contributions of Black Canadians. Each February, Canada celebrates and acknowledges the impact of the Black community in our society. This year, students from John D. Bracco school celebrated what being Black meant to them.

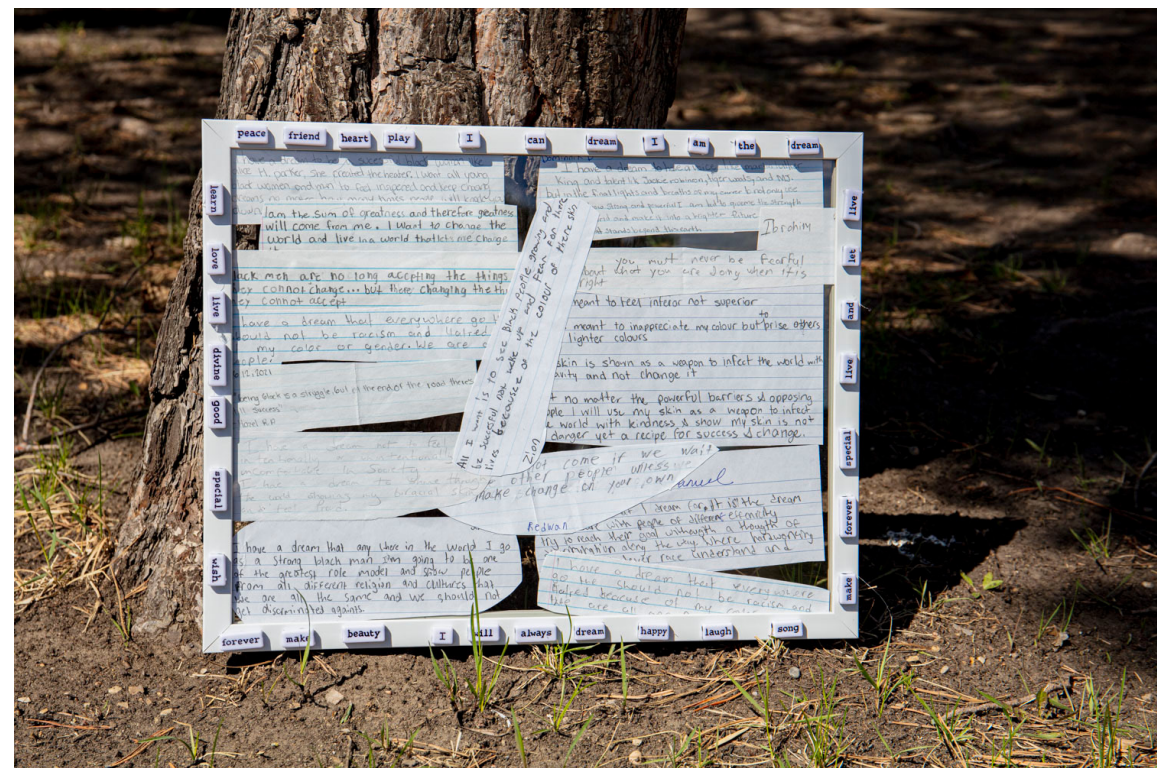
CBC radio approached the school to creatively contribute something for Black History Month. Maryama Addow, a Success Coach with The Family Centre and thirteen grade nine students jumped on the opportunity.

“They decided that they wanted to talk about both the positives and the negatives about what it is to be a Black person and specifically a Black student,” mentioned Maryama. Each student wrote a couple of lines that focused on the Canadian experience, important figures in Black history, or their own personal experience.

The students received tremendous feedback once the poem aired on CBC.

“We got an email from our superintendent actually just saying how moving of a piece it was and how he was really proud of the students. The school itself was very proud of it. When other people had heard it and to see how much of an impact it made on them I think made the students understand this is a really big thing that they were a part of.”

Maryama was overwhelmed with how this heartfelt piece of work was received. “It was just very comforting to see them be celebrated authentically for who they are, for the mere fact that they are Black students and that this is their life-lived experience was such a beautiful thing to witness and be a part of.”



Board of Directors

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- Irene Fraser Director
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Financial Statement

Income

United Way: Allocation	\$760,090
United Way: All In For Youth and Youth Capacity Grants	\$1,364,111
Provincial Contracts	\$2,591,594
Collaborative Service Delivery Contracts	\$14,326,617
City of Edmonton: FCSS	\$1,223,741
Fees for Service	\$2,300,934
Grants	\$403,953
Interest, Casino, and Other	\$92,280

Total \$23,063,320

Expenses

Salaries, Benefits, and Contracted Services	\$17,344,504
Occupancy and Office Costs	\$1,503,699
Program and Client Expenses	\$4,057,947

Total \$22,906,150

This information is courtesy of The Family Centre of Northern Alberta



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