

ANNUAL REPORT

2017/2018



THE FAMILY
CENTRE



Message from the Chair of the Board of Directors

This year, The Family Centre continued to be very busy delivering services to families and children, under conditions of increased economic restraint, changing labour regulation and increased demand for services. I am so proud of our Chief Executive Officer (Pauline Smale), her leadership team, the managers, and each and every staff member, for their pursuit of excellent competent service delivery while addressing decreases in funding through innovative approaches to program delivery.



I also thank my colleagues on the Board of Directors for their commitment to Board governance. As has been said in the past by many chairs, The Family Centre is defined by its staff who create a wonderful, caring place that supports the nurturing and preservation of families.

Key accomplishments this year include pursuing a second year of trauma informed care strategy, increasing the number of mental health services provided within the school systems, continuing collaboration and innovation with partners in the All in for Youth Program, and managing high and complex caseloads in the child services development area. A further sign of The Family Centre's continued commitment to making a difference in the Edmonton community is reflected in its employees' contributions to the United Way Campaign, which this year reached \$45,000, an 18% increase over last year.

You are all amazing humans in your commitment to your work and to the needs of your community. I continue to be so grateful to all of you for pursuing the mission of The Family Centre so that everyone in our community can "find their place" by connecting or reconnecting to family or community.

Michele Annich
Board Chair 2017-2018

Message from the CEO

To me, the theme for 2017/18 is "developing our practice". Our trauma informed care framework was initiated a year and a half ago. This year we implemented many of the recommendations and followed up with stakeholders (clients and staff) to see how we've improved our work.



Our Indigenous practice was enhanced in many ways. We provided many opportunities for staff to experience ceremony, initiated an Indigenous Advisory Committee which will guide our responses to the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, and we've partnered with Bent Arrow to build our internal capacity. This was also the year we completed our first round of Brain Story Certification. Working as an agency of practice, 120 of us came together every month to expand our understanding of brain development, trauma and evidence based neuroscience.

As an agency that works in many Edmonton communities, with a variety of partners in many sectors, investing in our practice is one of the ways we learn together, think together and develop a common understanding of our work.

Peter Senge defines a learning organization as one "where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free and where people are continually learning to see the whole together." I believe this describes TFC very well. We are smarter, healthier and more responsive as a learning agency.

There isn't a day that goes by that I am not struck by the courage and resilience of the families we have the honor to walk alongside, the passion and intelligence of our staff and the support and guidance of the board of our directors. I hope you enjoy the following pages of this report as much as we've enjoyed putting them together.

Pauline Smale
CEO

Our Year in Numbers

3,817

students in 52 partner schools connected with success coaches

We interpreted for

3,676

newcomers to Canada

27

families were able to stay in touch via

266

visits in our safe visitation rooms

813

documents were translated into a different language

12 children

stayed with their parents in our reunification homes



and 8 youth

lived in our youth reunification homes

237

families were supported by Roots & Wings

Our youth intervention team supported youth to create

51 new kin connections and

78 reconnections to formal supports

Our Parental Support workers helped

91

families to maintain relationships

We placed

75

children in kinship care



Children and families received **14,928 hours** of counselling

We completed **98 family circles, family group conferences, and family searches** to reconnect families and create plans for displaced children



100% of our clients in the employee assistance program are satisfied or very satisfied with our services

378 families and **742 children** were supported via our Family Preservation services

1,065 youth were empowered by **16** NET projects

95% of participants gained increased knowledge of child development and their own child(ren) in our parenting workshops

Teresa's Story | Roots and Wings

"I started doing crack cocaine and prostitution when I was 16, and basically my whole life up until I was 30 was gangs, prison, using while I was pregnant. I wanted to turn my life around. My kids were in Permanent Guardianship Orders, but I got it rescinded, changed my life, and now I've been clean for thirteen years,"

Teresa says.



Teresa still recognized that she had a lot of work to do. "I felt that I was in over my head parenting wise," continues Teresa.

Teresa's daughter started experimenting with drugs and alcohol when she was 12 years old, and her eight-year-old daughter had behavioural issues.

That's when Sarah, a Roots & Wings worker at Teresa's daughters' school, came into the picture. "I never asked for support because I was too ashamed. The day I met Sarah, I kind of knew that I was in a good place," says Teresa. Sarah and Teresa set up counselling for Teresa and her daughters, appropriate school supports, and more structure and routine at home. Both daughters are now attending school regularly, have not received a suspension in months and are respecting their mom's boundaries.

"Sarah doesn't judge me whatsoever, no matter what I tell her. She gives me a lot of parenting techniques. I feel more empowered and have more self-esteem. I don't feel so isolated. I've noticed a huge improvement since I've had Roots & Wings in my life. Sarah's a really amazing person, and I appreciate everything she's done for me."

Colton's Story|Family Engagement Services

For most of his life Colton, aged 8, was cared for by his grandpa David, who has legal guardianship. Colton had a brain tumor as an infant, and consequently struggles with high cognitive, physical and behavioral delays. David is elderly and was struggling to manage Colton's needs. The service team was also concerned about David's physical health and issues with memory and dementia.

The Family Engagement Facilitator (FEF) worked very hard at building a relationship with David to develop his trust. The FEF also worked closely with the Frog Lake First Nation Designate and community.

To increase the support for Colton and David, the FEF organized and prepared for a number of extended family members to come together through a process called a Family Group Conference. In doing so the family was able to come together and commit to a comprehensive plan actively supporting David to continue to care for Colton. The family also created a plan B for when/if David cannot continue in home care of Colton.

The family followed through with these plans between the family group conference and a review meeting. Colton and David were consequently supported and CS was able to close their file.

Chris' Story | Strive & Counselling

Chris was struggling with day-to-day life as a result of experiencing many adverse events throughout his life, including bullying, his mother's suicide attempt, falling-out of his marriage, a bankruptcy, being a part of a drive-by shooting, and being a first responder to a fatal incident. "I have taken much counselling through the years," Chris says. "Up until recently, I never really got a handle on things."

In November 2016, Chris was at a low-point in his life, and his then-girlfriend caught him trying to commit suicide. She called the police and Chris was admitted to a hospital for the night. "That is when I called The Family Centre. I began seeing a counsellor weekly."

Chris' counsellor tested him in a session, and revealed that he had a PTSD reaction to abandonment. "It was remarkable," remembers Chris. "The Family Centre really helped me 'flick the switch'." Chris also began the Strive program. "It was a long and hard road, however I got through it," remembers Chris. "I felt like I was changing, evolving. There were ups and downs, but on average I was finally on an upward trend."

"Since finishing the Strive program, I've had friends and family invest in me and help me. I am also volunteering. I cannot express how grateful I am for the help of The Family Centre. The learnings of Strive took effect in me, more so than any other program I had tried. Now when I get down or depressed, it's half a day, not a week or months or years. I don't look for a substance to help me escape. I am attacking life and taking mine back," Chris says.

Brittany's Story | Success Coach

Brittany, 21, recently completed a bachelor's degree in nursing from the University of Alberta and started her career as a registered nurse. When she was in junior high, she received supports from The Family Centre.

"I had been dealing with some friends issues at school, my self-esteem and insecurities, and addictions in my family. I also wasn't getting the support that I needed at home," Brittany remembers. "Then I was a bystander at a knife fight after school. Edmonton Police Service notified my school. As a result, I was referred to Michelle, The Family Centre's success coach at my school."

Brittany started seeing Michelle roughly on a weekly basis. After the official commitment ended, Brittany still went to see Michelle on her own time throughout junior high.

"Michelle gave me that adult support that I needed. She completely changed my life. She helped me to figure out how I can best take care of myself. To this day, I follow some of the advice she gave me. I am very happy to have been involved with The Family Centre when I was growing up because I had people looking out for me and giving me the guidance and support that I needed. I believe my life would be very different if I hadn't received that positive intervention."



Employee Awards

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



The Finance team won the Above and Beyond award. This award acknowledges employees who have gone above and beyond the duties of their position for the betterment of TFC. We believe in the importance of extending oneself in an effort to grow professionally while focusing on the larger scope of TFC. In this photo (left to right) are Laura Chen and Lisa Stern (who nominated the Finance team), and Stephanie Kolibaba, Tristin Arcouette, Kristin Neuman, and Brendan Kelly (Finance).

The Big Idea award went to Alfredo Acedera (IT). This award acknowledges employees who think outside the box in order to solve problems. They are innovators who create solutions to enhance the way either children and families or employees experience TFC. In this photo are Alfredo (the in middle) with his nominators Timothy Doyle and Laura Chen.



Natalie Cox (right) with one of her nominators, Aubrey Watson (left). Natalie Cox (Family Preservation) received the Staff Development award, which acknowledges an employee who has made outstanding contributions to staff development. We believe in the importance mobilizing well trained professional employees in all areas of the agency.

This year, three people received the “Walk the Talk” award. The award acknowledges employees who have demonstrated outstanding skill and empathy in their dealing with others. TFC believes in the importance of dealing with people skillfully, compassionately, and respectfully.



Jacob Vander Meulen (Reunification) with Julian Wigg, who nominated Jacob for the award.



Michelle Gibson (Roots and Wings) and Genevieve Malena who nominated Michelle.



Janelle Gersky (Family Engagement) in the middle with Jacqueline Dagneau and Christine Duggan who nominated Janelle.

Long Serving Employees

It is a great privilege to honor those employees that have contributed 10 or more years to The Family Centre. What you notice when you look at the names of those that spend so much of their career with us is their focus on mission. They are leaders in their own right, contributing to the fabric of the TFC community by expressing their loyalty and commitment to the children and families we serve with pride and respect.



Inder Madra, Terry Sharp, Brendon Pratt, Kathryn Grier, Taryn McDonald, Elaine Neher, and Katie Maxwell are celebrating their 10, 15 and 20-year anniversaries with TFC.

“I feel like I have grown up with the TFC over the past ten years. It has shaped part of who I am today, and has given me the space to really define my own practice and professional self. Thank you for the countless supervisions, trainings and opportunities. It is a gift to get to do this work and belong at TFC.” **Katie Maxwell**

“The past 10 years at The Family Centre have provided me with an exceptional opportunity to work alongside some amazingly talented and committed professionals. Working together towards creating health and wellbeing for the people we serve brings a very high level of joy and reward to my work. I feel very privileged to be a part of our work that is so very important to our community and enjoy the challenge of changing the status quo.” **Terry Sharp**

“The piece I love the most about working for The Family Centre for the past 10 years, is that it has been dynamic! Our mission has always remained steady and we are constantly striving for more.” **Taryn McDonald**

“It is wonderful to know you have a great supporting team who also has your back and in a small way you are also contributing to the success of the company. When you enjoy what you are doing, and it is easy to stay with the same company for a very long time. Your work is like solving a big puzzle, it is both challenging and fun at the same time.” **Inder Madra**

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Pauline SmaleCEO



Senior Leadership Team



Financial Statement

Income

United Way: Allocation	\$925,265
United Way: All In For Youth and Youth Capacity Grants	\$1,655,734
Provincial Contracts	\$2,842,469
Collaborative Service Delivery Contracts	\$8,838,130
City of Edmonton: FCSS	\$1,178,778
Fees for Service	\$3,829,732
Grants	\$185,898
Interest, Casino, and Other	\$117,270

Total \$19,573,276

Expenses

Salaries, Benefits, and Contracted Services	\$15,881,136
Occupancy and Office Costs	\$1,036,652
Program and Client Expenses	\$2,366,763

Total \$19,284,551

This information is courtesy of The Family Centre of Northern Alberta



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