



# 2022 COMMON OUTCOMES INITIATIVE

## DATA SUMMARY REPORT





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This document was prepared by the Common Outcomes Initiative Working Group. This is a living document and in order to accommodate new information and learnings from our funded partners this document may be updated as needed. Please be sure to access the most recent version found here: <https://www.myunitedway.ca/common-outcomeagencies/> or [www.edmonton.ca/fcss](http://www.edmonton.ca/fcss)





## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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The Common Outcomes Initiative embraces our connection to each other here on Treaty 6 Territory and Métis Nation of Alberta Region #4. We honour and thank the diverse Indigenous peoples including the Cree, Blackfoot, Métis, Nakota Sioux, Iroquois, Dene, and Saulteaux whose ancestors' footsteps have marked this territory for centuries and whose histories, languages, and cultures continue to influence our vibrant community. As treaty people we recognize the harms caused by colonialism and systemic racism, honour the knowledge and wisdom that has been shared with us, and endeavor to work in this spirit of community and relationship.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Edmonton Family and Community Support Services (FCSS), United Way of the Alberta Capital Region and numerous funded community agencies work together to provide a continuum of programs and services to meet the needs of vulnerable community members within the Edmonton Metropolitan Region. Together, these groups form the Common Outcomes Initiative (COI).

This 2022 Common Outcomes Data Summary Report aims to share the story of these programs and provide a window into the region's Social Services Sector, based on data collected through annual reporting and sector meetings. The report reflects the perspectives, activity, and impact of 96 agencies reporting on 171 programs through the following domains:

**Sector Supports:** Overall, funding for these programs remained level from the previous year. Meanwhile, the number of Full Time Equivalent program staff decreased by 4%. Programs emphasized that not shown in these somewhat stable numbers are the impacts of inflation, and a significant amount of staff burnout and turnover.

**Program Participants:** The overall number of participants served per program has steadily increased since 2019, seeing a 14% increase from the previous year and a 39% increase since 2019. At the same time, programs report that the complexity of need that participants are facing is substantially increasing. Community members have been deeply impacted by the rise in cost of living; basic needs are an area of concern as well as mental health & addictions. Overall, needs are significant and layered, requiring systems navigation and coordination as well as increased support and advocacy on the part of program staff.

**Evaluation & Recommendations:** When asked how funders could support them in these challenges, COI agencies provided the following recommendations:

1. Provide consistent, flexible funding at a level appropriate to community need.
2. Provide learning opportunities on ways to address the operational challenges many agencies are facing including supporting frontline staff, building technical capacity, and integrating hybrid work and service delivery.
3. Support collaboration and information sharing across the Sector.
4. Reduce reporting burden and support the Sector with meaningful data.

Despite the challenges experienced through 2022, agencies and their program staff engaged in difficult, meaningful work with participants and together created significant positive life impacts. The adaptability and resiliency of agencies, staff, and community deserve to be celebrated. However, agencies warn that increasing community need, along with funding and human resource challenges, should be addressed with long-term solutions that ensure that the Sector can effectively serve community in 2023 and beyond.



# INTRODUCTION

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Edmonton Family and Community Support Services (FCSS), United Way of the Alberta Capital Region and numerous funded community agencies work together to provide a continuum of programs and services to meet the needs of vulnerable community members within the Edmonton Metropolitan Region. Together, these groups form the Common Outcomes Initiative (COI). In order to provide a summary of the social impacts these partners are achieving, funders and funded agencies continue to work together to implement a common outcomes reporting form aimed at simplifying data collection and highlighting the positive difference programs are making in the community (the Common Outcomes Report, or COR).

In the spring of 2023, the COI Working Group released a [2022 Data Summary Sneak Peek Report](#) as a summary of quantitative data submitted through the Common Outcomes Report on 2022 program activity and impact. To gain a deeper understanding of the program-reported data, the working group convened a co-analysis session for interested programs in April of 2023. At this session, attendees used their first-hand Sector knowledge and experience to provide feedback and analysis, and thereby make meaning of 2022 COR data.

This 2022 Common Outcomes Data Summary Report aims to share the story of COI programs based on 2022 COR data, and the perspectives, themes, and meaning made during this co-analysis session.

2022 was another year of challenge for the Edmonton Metropolitan Region and its Social Services Sector. The community faced heightened mental health needs, skyrocketing cost of living, the opioid crisis and a lack of safe and affordable housing. In all, programs report that both community need and complexity of need has increased.

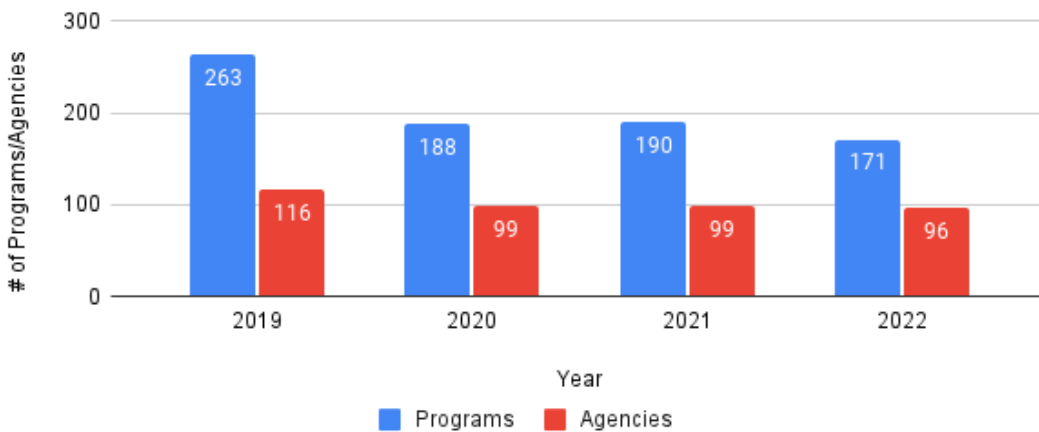
Through significant efforts from agency staff, the Social Services Sector rose to meet these challenges. Programs shared that this effort was not without cost, however, facing staff burnout and turnover, coupled with funding challenges. This report intends to share the perspectives agencies have provided on the current state of the Sector and what it needs to effectively serve community in 2023 and beyond.



# A NOTE ON DATA

This report reflects data reported by 171 programs at 96 agencies on their 2022 activity and impact. When considering the longitudinal COI data in this report, it is important to note that the programs providing data to COR fluctuates from year to year, primarily due to changes in the programs funded.

Figure 1: Year-Over-Year COI Programs and Agencies



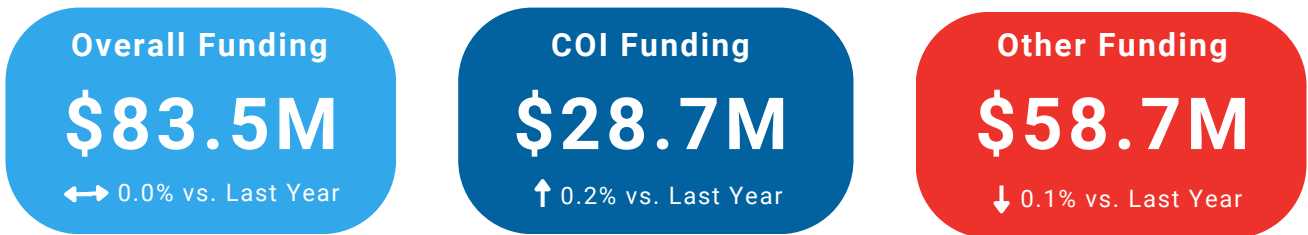
Programs work within the [COI Model](#), which organizes efforts into five Impact Areas:

Theory of Change		
Strong individuals, families, and communities create a vibrant and caring society where everyone is able to thrive and succeed.		
Impact Area Definitions		
<b>Resilient Individuals</b>	<i>Outcomes related specifically to building up the skills of individuals</i>	Resilient Individuals have the ability to bounce back from challenges and stress that they face. According to Michael Ungar, resilience is “the capacity of individuals to navigate their way to the psychological, social, cultural and physical resources that sustain their well-being, and their capacity individually and collectively to negotiate for these resources to be provided in culturally meaningful ways (Ungar, 2008 and Ungar, 2011, <a href="http://resilienceresearch.org/about-the-rrc/resilience/14-what-is-resilience">http://resilienceresearch.org/about-the-rrc/resilience/14-what-is-resilience</a> ).
<b>Thriving Families</b>	<i>Outcomes related specifically to supporting the family in becoming stronger</i>	Thriving Families work together to overcome challenges, learn, and develop. Caregivers within the family have the capacity to support the physical, social, psychological, emotional and spiritual development of the children, youth, adult or senior. Creating stable environments that promote quality interactions support achieving the goals for the family group.
<b>Welcoming and Engaged Communities</b>	<i>Outcomes related specifically to community awareness and involvement</i>	Welcoming and Engaged Communities are open, diverse and inclusive. They ensure that all community members are active, connected and supported in achieving their goals. They can be geographic or interest based depending on the program focus area.
<b>Strong Sector</b>	<i>Outcomes related specifically to supporting the sector &amp; staff to better serve participants</i>	Individuals, families and communities exist and function within society. Within Edmonton and area the not for profit sector is critical to creating an integrated and connected web of supports to reduce and eliminate people falling through the cracks. Ensuring that the individuals and organizations working within the sector have the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to be successful and healthy is critical.
<b>Strong Relationships and Connections</b>	<i>Outcomes that often cross all program areas and programs where relationships are built and participants are connected to people, services and resources.</i>	Strong Relationships and Connections are the glue between individuals, families, communities and the not for profit sector. It is through relationships that we can achieve a strong and supportive community where all people can thrive and contribute. Individuals and families have access to a network of community and social supports that can address their needs.

# SECTOR SUPPORTS

## FUNDING

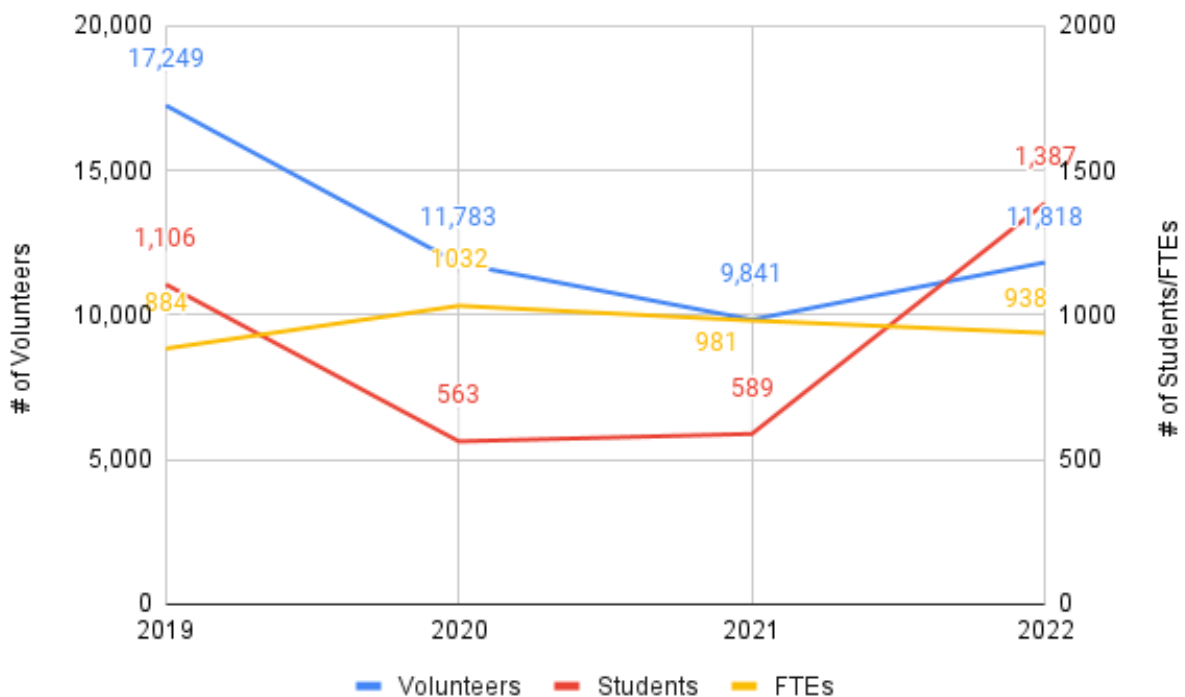
Overall funding for 2022 COI programs remained static from the previous year. In total, they operated on \$83.5 million in funding which included \$28.7 million in COI funding and \$54.7 million in funding from other sources.



## HUMAN RESOURCES

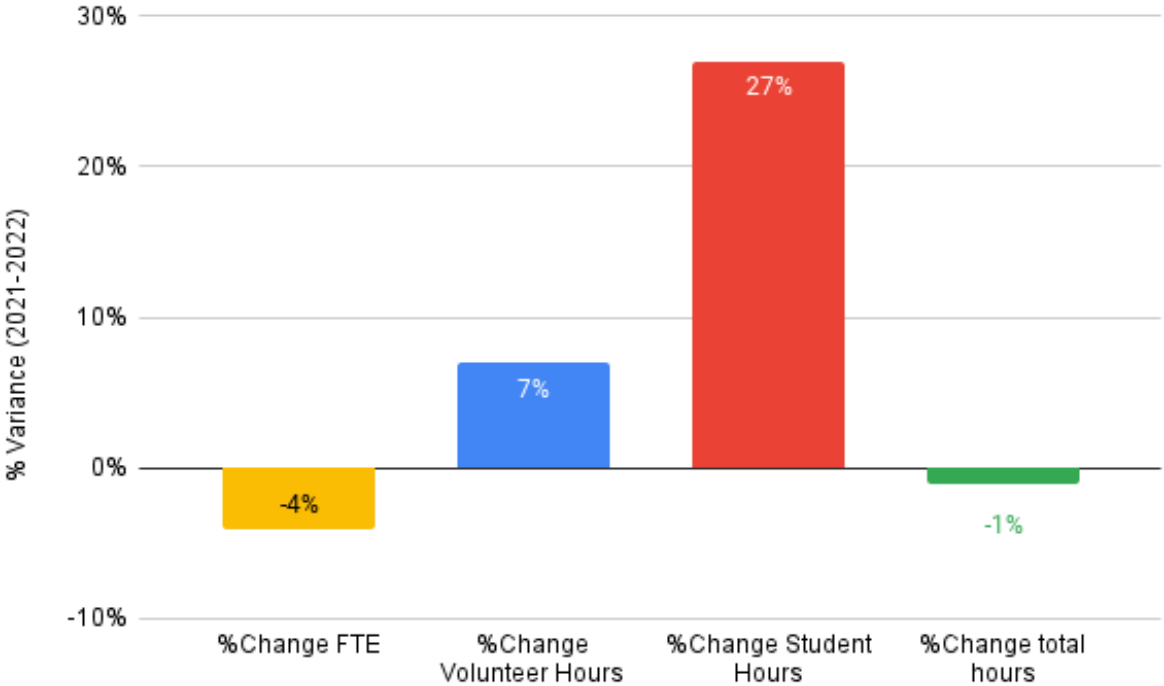
When considering the people powering the Sector, the most obvious shift between 2021 and 2022 is a 135% increase in the number of students, along with a 27% increase in student hours. When probed at the sector meeting, programs indicated that this spike in students was largely as a result of post-secondary institutions resuming in-person placements in the field.

Figure 2: Year-Over-Year People Input



The number of volunteers and full time equivalent staff (FTEs) has remained relatively stable in the past year, with FTEs seeing a 4% decrease and volunteers seeing a 7% increase year over year. Participants at the sector meeting suggested that the modest drop in FTEs was likely as a result of emergency pandemic funding ending. Conversely, the 7% increase in volunteer hours was indicative of many volunteers returning to support programming after time away due to the pandemic. Due to the relative number of FTE hours to volunteer and student hours, overall, the number of hours serving the Sector decreased by 1%.

Figure 3: Hours Variance, 2021-2022



Programs expressed concern that these numbers do not fully capture what is happening within the sector, suggesting that while the overall number of FTEs has remained stable, it does not account for significant turnover within the sector and its impact on effective service delivery. Further, they reported that workload was continuing to expand as a result of a growing number of unique participants per program as well as increasingly complex cases that are outpacing capabilities of individual programs.

Beyond case complexity and an increased number of people accessing services, programs reported experiencing the following staffing challenges:

- Inflation hasn't just impacted program funding. Program staff are experiencing financial hardship as a result of rising costs and relatively low salaries.
- Staff burnout. Staff are reluctant to take the time off they need as they recognize their clients are also struggling.
- As a result of this burnout, there is a cascading effect on program leadership as they have been required to take on additional workload.



# PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

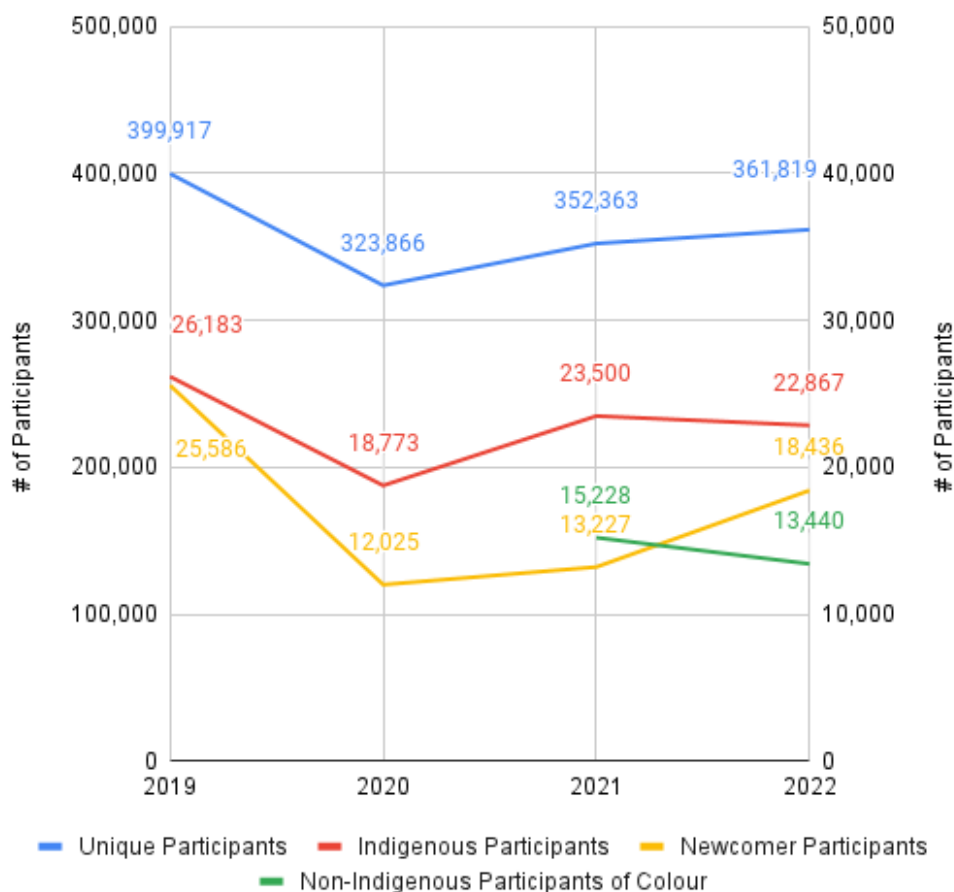
## UNIQUE PARTICIPANTS

A unique participant is a participant in a program who receives direct services. If they choose to gather this information, programs may also report certain self-reported demographic information relating to their participants.

Programs aimed to count each participant once during the time period covered regardless of the number of program-related services that the participant received. In certain program models such as drop-in, information & referral, and public education programs, tracking this number can be particularly difficult. Despite these limitations, the number of total unique participants is an indicator of the significant volume of work occurring in the social services sector.

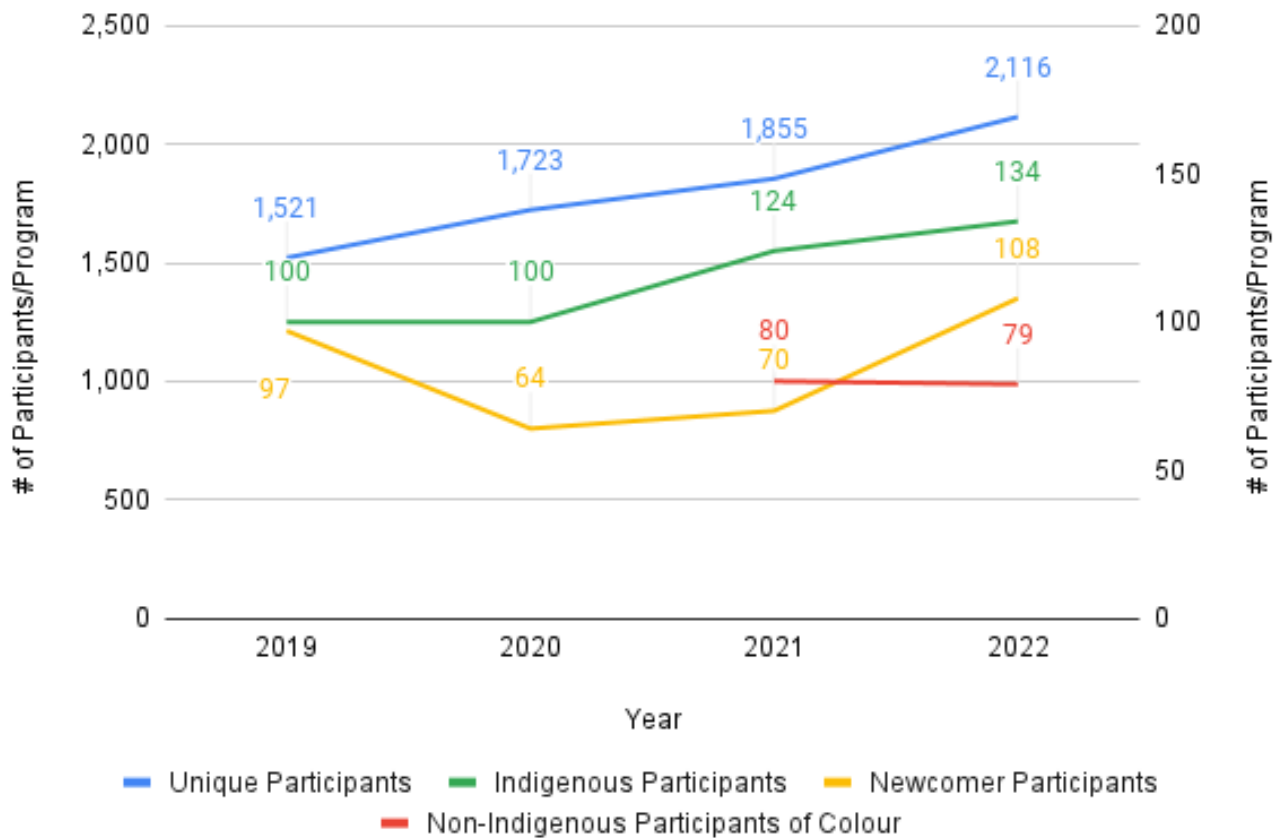
In its totality, the number of unique participants remained relatively stable between 2021 and 2022. However, as seen in Figure 5 on pg. 8, the number of unique participants being served per program has been steadily rising since 2019.

Figure 4: Year-Over-Year Unique Participants



Conversely, while the number of total Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Participants of Colour appear to be decreasing overall (Figure 4 on pg. 7), each remained relatively stable when looking at the number of participants per program (Figure 5). The number of Newcomer participants served is increasing by both measures.

Figure 5: Unique Participants by Program



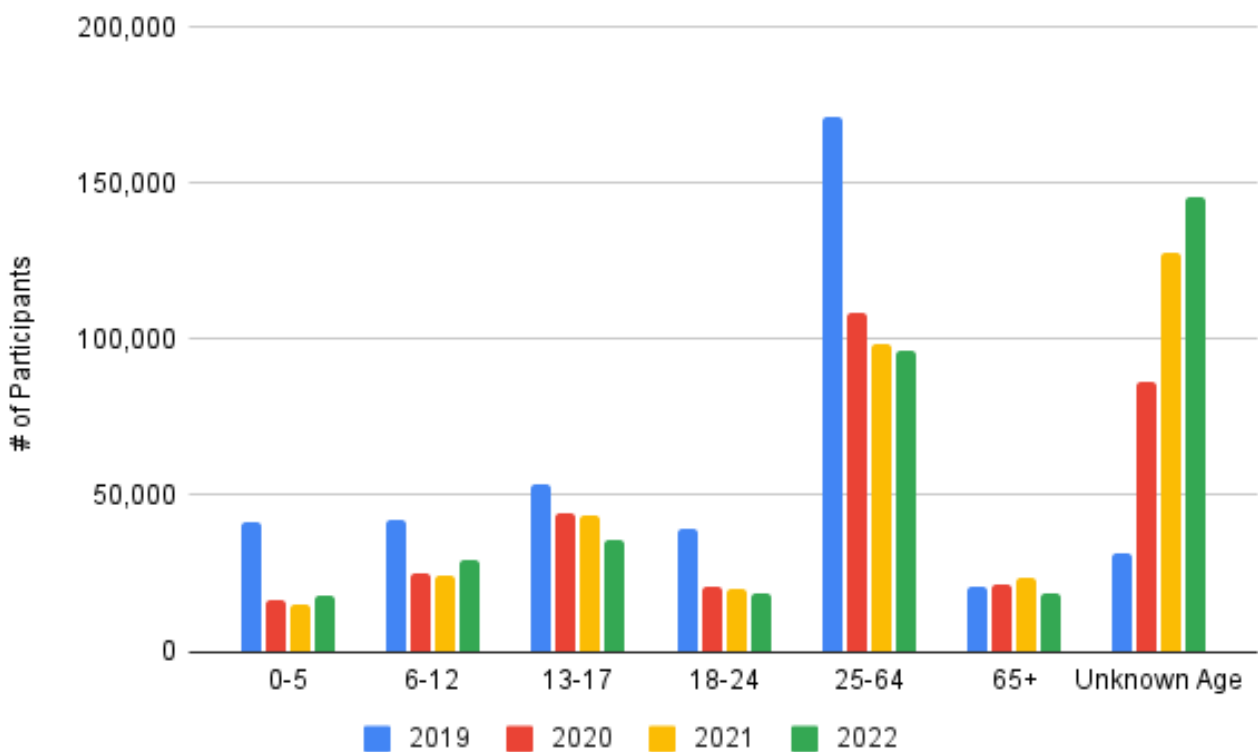
## Participants by Age

Agencies have shared that smaller age ranges for children and youth and larger age ranges for adults and seniors are preferable for data gathering. Due to the comparatively large age range, adults aged 25-64 continue to be the age grouping most served by COI programs; the number of children and youth (aged 24 and under) served in 2022 is approximately equal to the number of participants aged 25-64.

From 2021-2022, the number of participants aged 12 and under increased, whereas the number of participants in each age range older than 12 decreased. The number of participants for whom age was unknown continues to increase year over year. According to program staff, this is due to the ad hoc nature of some programming, making it difficult to collect age data.



Figure 6: Unique Participants by Age



While the data suggest a decrease in youth (13-24) and seniors (65+) participating in COI programming, accounts from programs working with those age groups suggest those programs, specifically, have seen not only a spike in number of participants, but an increasingly complex caseload. Programs working with adults and children also noted an increase in complexity.

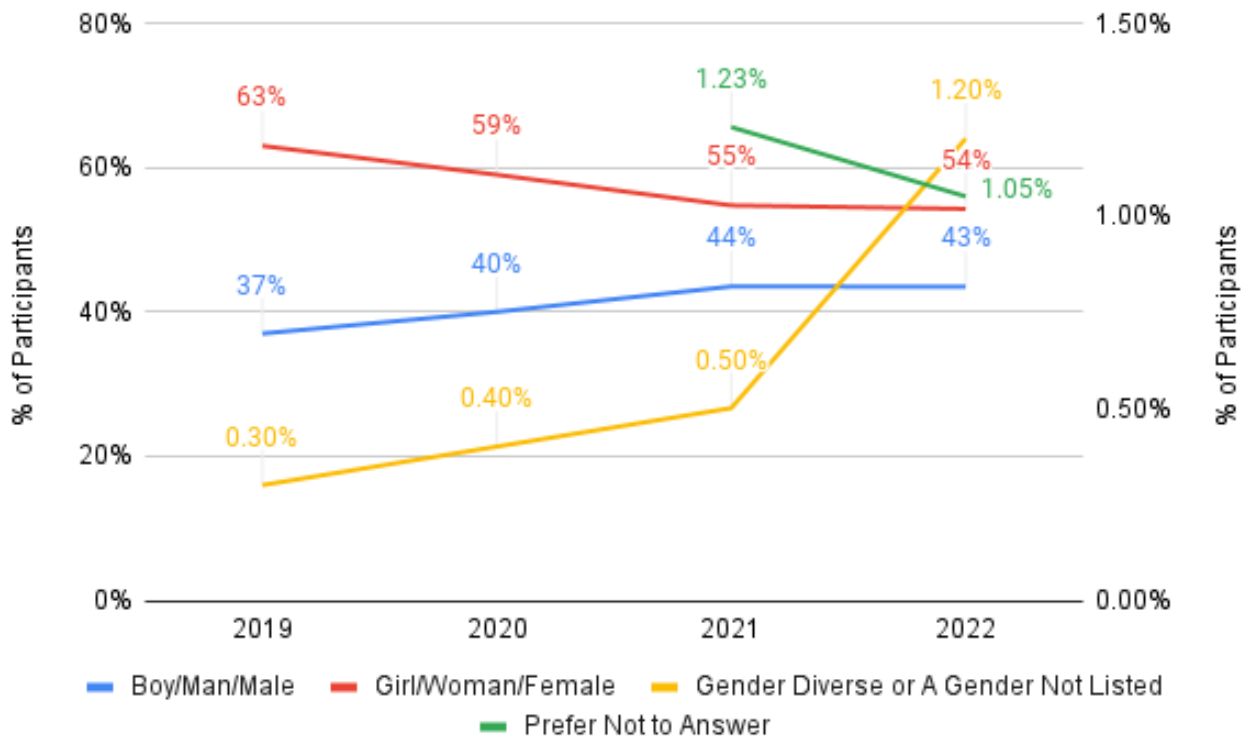
Across age ranges, program representatives cautioned that while unique participant data is an important indicator of program reach, it does not adequately capture the aforementioned complexity: a person may need longer-term engagement with a program, taking the spots of multiple unique participants, but the value of this programming is greater, especially for vulnerable populations.

## Participants by Gender Identity

Women and girls continue to be the gender most served by COR programs. However, the proportion of women and girls served has been decreasing while the proportion of other genders, with the exception of those who Prefer Not to Answer, has been increasing.

The number of Gender Diverse individuals has steadily increased from 364 (0.3%) in 2019 to 950 (0.9%) in 2022. In 2021, A Gender Not Listed was added as a category. 108 individuals (0.1%) identified as A Gender Not Listed in 2021, increasing to 247 (0.3%) in 2022. The graph below combines these two categories to show longer-term trends.

Figure 7: Unique Participants by Gender Identity



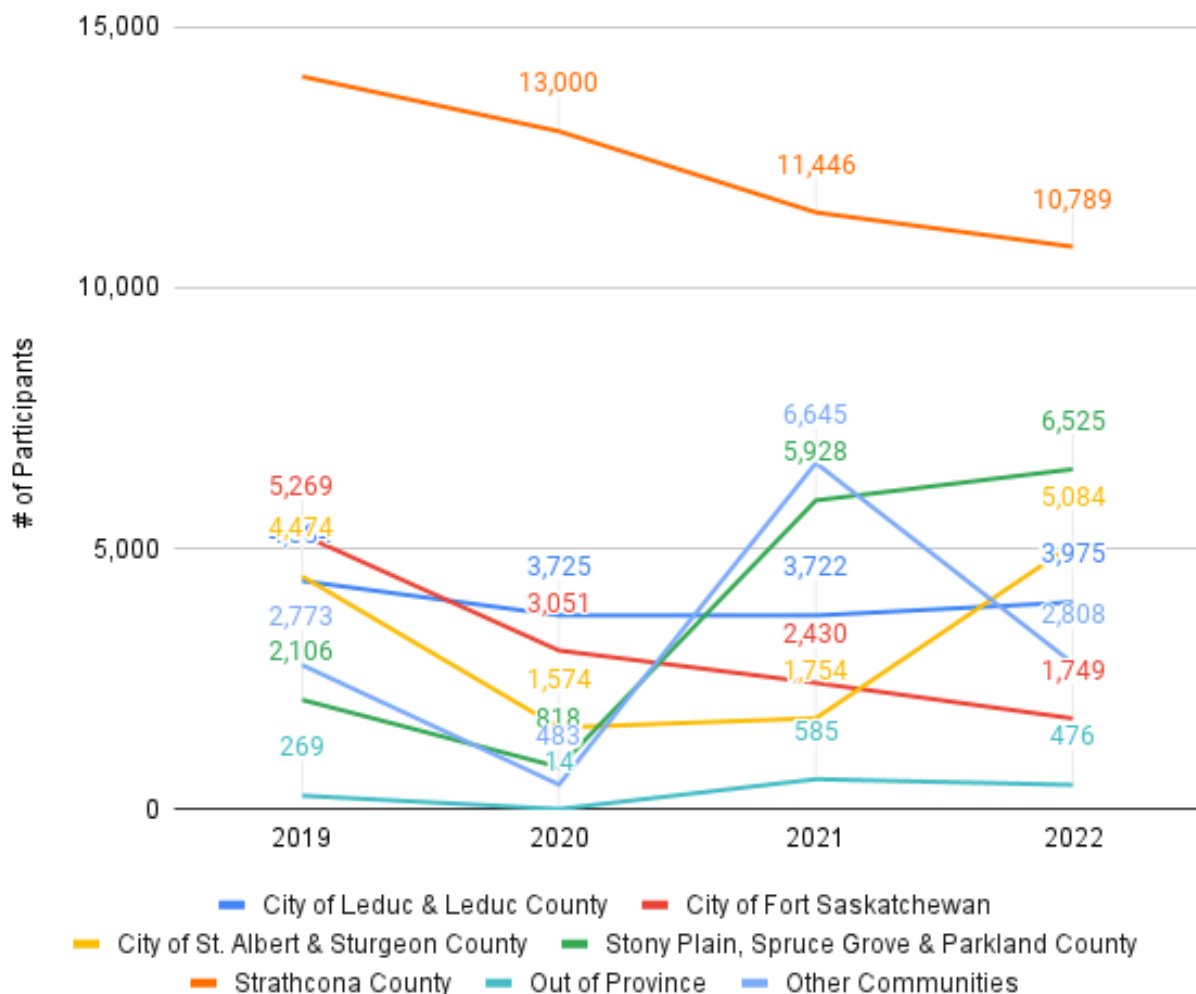


## Participants by Geographic Community

Programs receiving United Way funding have the opportunity to report on the “home” geographic community of their participants. The graph below shows the trends in participants from outside of the city of Edmonton accessing United Way-funded services since 2019. Some participants access programs in their home community, while others may travel to access services in other parts of the Edmonton Metro Region. While there was a general decrease in participants from all communities from 2019 to 2020, trends during and after the pandemic have varied by community. Beginning in July 2021, United Way began funding programs located in Stony Plain, Spruce Grove & Parkland County, resulting in a large increase in participants from these areas being served.

Figure 8: Unique Participants by Geographic Community

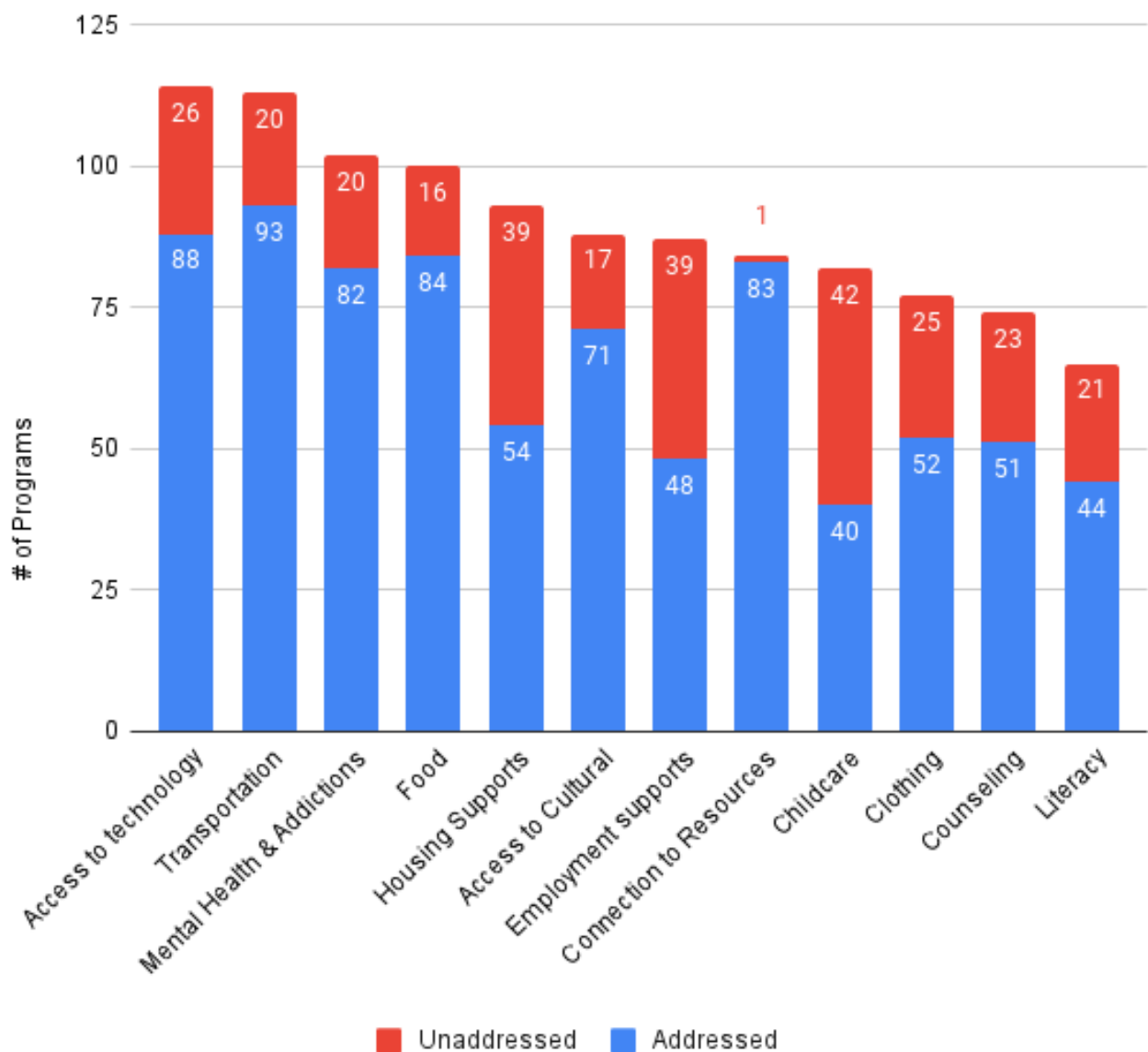
\*Edmonton FCSS serves Edmonton only, whereas United Way serves Edmonton and region



## PARTICIPANT BARRIERS

Programs were asked to identify barriers that their participants faced, and to distinguish whether or not the program was able to address those barriers. In the co-analysis, programs shared several concerns around the way this data is collected, including what it means for a barrier to be “addressed”. In many cases, a program may be able to do something small to address a barrier to accessing their program, such as providing a bus ticket to help a participant attend a session - but this does not mean that the issue of transportation has been solved in the participant’s life, nor does it remove the need for broader conversations and actions to address the systemic barriers affecting that participant. For this reason, “addressed” and “unaddressed” barriers are considered together in the graph and discussion below. The prevalence of the barriers when presented this way also better corresponds with the qualitative data reported to COR, as well as the co-analysis discussions.

Figure 9: Count of Programs Noting Barriers



As in previous years, Access to Technology, Transportation, Mental Health & Addictions, Food, and Housing Supports have been most often reported as barriers in the quantitative data. While these barriers are reported individually, programs emphasized that participants increasingly face multiple layers of complex needs and barriers.

A program supporting survivors of family violence described it like this:

*“Many people are in need of a range of supports including mental health, safe and affordable housing, access to funding, and basic needs. The myriad of presenting needs, coupled with the trauma experienced due to the family violence, means that clients require multiple supports and various amounts of time to address their concerns at a pace that feels safe and appropriate for them. Long term supports are vital to their ongoing success and feeling of empowerment. Unfortunately, without the right supports in place in a timely manner to help individuals navigate the many systems that they need to access, many people feel overwhelmed, scared, and frustrated leading many to return to the previous situation feeling that at least there, they knew what to expect.”*

Often, to access the needed range of supports requires a significant amount of systems navigation, which is challenging for multiple reasons. Many systems are difficult to navigate or require significant advocacy on the part of program staff for a participant to receive supports. Additionally, programs describe the transition to accessing government resources online as presenting a new barrier for some participants, where a lack of access to technology, internet, and/or digital literacy can prevent participants from being able to connect to the supports they need. Further, long wait lists, particularly for mental health supports, housing, childcare, and child developmental assessments prevent participants from getting help when they need it.

A significant factor in the rise in community need has been the rise in cost of living which has severely impacted basic needs, but which additionally has direct and indirect effects in many other aspects of participants' lives.



*“Barriers have been amplified in the past year. Rising cost of living has impacted secure and regular access to healthy food, mental health support, and addiction services while increasing the need for supported or low-income housing, employment services, and access to training.”*

*– Co-Analysis Participant*

Further discussion of particular barriers is included below:

- Programs especially emphasized the significant need and complexity of need in the community with respect to mental health and addictions.

*"Issue complexity is a barrier to mental health healing. Clients present with a multitude of issues and require case managed support as well as a greater depth of therapy that requires more time per client."*

This is one of many areas that programs pointed to long waitlists as evidence that current services are insufficiently resourced to keep up with need, and where culturally appropriate services are vital.

- There is particular concern for unhoused community members and the challenges they are facing.

*"For those in our community who are experiencing houselessness, there are many barriers they face to overcoming their current situation. Tent fires, explosions in encampments, lack of safe overnight shelter space, and a significant increase in demand for services have all contributed to a more desperate and increasingly unsafe environment. There are ever more obstacles to connecting community members to financial supports, and housing options are becoming fewer and fewer. As the avenues out of poverty slowly disappear, people are increasingly becoming stuck in the cycle of houselessness."*

Additionally, these communities have been deeply affected by the opioid crisis and the pandemic. Many have died due to opioid poisonings and COVID-19, and those left behind navigate grief and loss.

- Transportation continues to be a barrier for participants. Programs noted that the reduction in ETS routes have negatively impacted some participants and their ability to access services.
- Community safety is a rising concern, particularly within the downtown core and for those riding transit.
- Seniors-serving agencies described growing challenges for older adults who are not yet 65.

*"We are seeing more complex needs in younger seniors who are yet unable to access seniors' resources due to being under the age of 65. Seniors from 55-64 years of age experience huge barriers to accessing resources and supports, which contributes to the pressure on community resources."*

Programs particularly highlighted challenges for these seniors in accessing appropriate transportation and housing.



- Programs serving children reported an increase in developmental delays and challenges.

*"After the COVID-19 pandemic, we have noticed a huge increase in the lack of children's ability to cope, adapt, and regulate their emotions. This may not be necessarily a new barrier, however, we have noticed a dramatic increase in challenging behaviors that is far more prevalent than it ever was before. After fully returning to in-person programming, it was apparent that children were struggling to reintegrate back into normalcy after the pandemic."*

These programs advocate that current services are not sufficient to meet the rising need, with more families needing access to affordable professional support for developmental delays in babies and toddlers, and low- to no-cost programs that support social-emotional development and life skills for children.

- Anti-2SLGBTQIA+ efforts and attitudes deeply impact participants and their experience in society. Programs pointed to a troubling rise in anti-2SLGBTQIA+ activity including legislation, activism targeting drag story times and events, and an increase in transphobia and homophobia in school settings.
- Programs emphasized intersectionality and the need for services that are safe and sensitive to the needs of particular communities. This includes an increasing need for accessible translation services for newcomers; culturally appropriate mental health supports; and mental health, housing, and employment supports that are safe and affirming for 2SLBGTQIA+ individuals.

## **HOW ARE WE HELPING?**

Despite the significant challenges described thus far, agencies and their program staff engaged in difficult, meaningful work with participants and together created significant positive life impacts. In general, participants in COI programs were likely to report positive change across all 14 outcomes of the [COI Model](#), with positive change ranging from 60% (Caregivers have increased knowledge of positive parenting skills) to 99% (Participants access community resources that meet their needs).

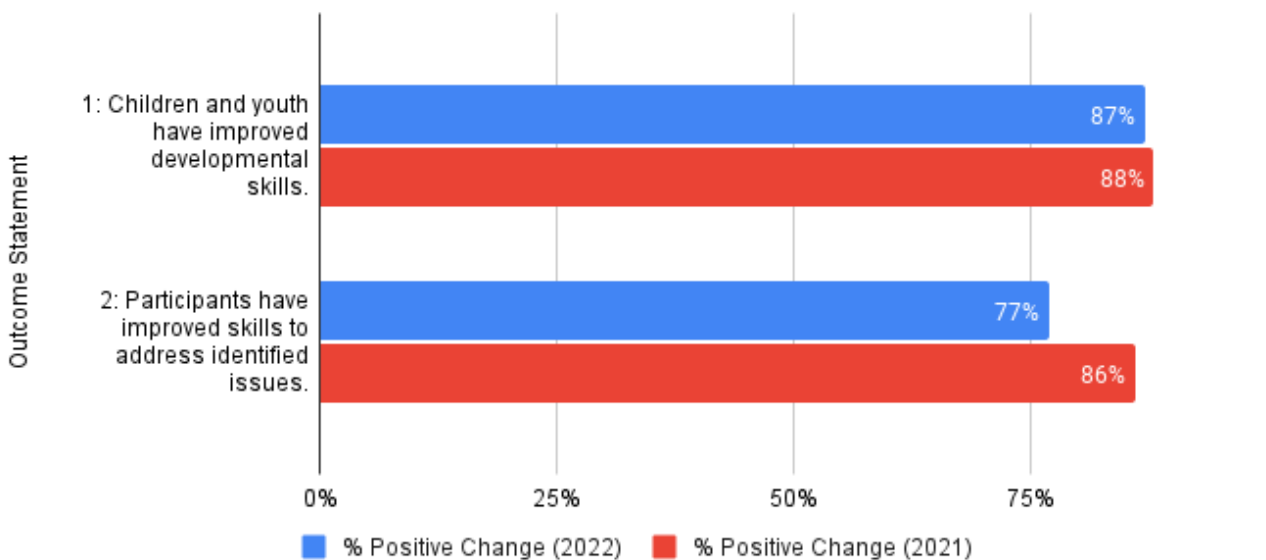
This section provides a summary of outcomes by Impact Area. A full breakdown of impact by indicator is included in Appendix 2.

## Resilient Individuals

Resilient individuals have the ability to bounce back from challenges and stress that they face. According to Michael Ungar, resilience is, "the capacity of individuals to navigate their way to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain their well-being, and their capacity individually and collectively to negotiate for these resources to be provided in culturally meaningful ways" (<https://resilienceresearch.org/about-resilience/>).

Programs reporting on Outcome 1 saw negligible difference in participant positive change, year over year; however, those reporting on Outcome 2 saw a considerable decrease in the percentage of participants reporting positive change.

Figure 10: Resilient Individuals Outcomes Summary



When asked what positive change looks like in program participants, the following themes emerged:

- **Improved sense of belonging** - A considerable number of programs reported that participants felt an improved sense of belonging as a result of programming offered. This manifested in the following ways:
  - Connection to culture
  - Developing a sense of trust with other program participants
  - Meeting people with similar values
  - Learning the importance of healthy and supporting relationships

*"Nathan and [the] Drop-In Program Coordinator had a lengthy conversation about culture and addiction on National Indigenous Peoples Day - how those two things overlap one another and ways in which they can coexist symbiotically for the sake of healing. He also expressed how "happy" he was "to experience the day" and feel a sense of belonging culturally as someone who has been very disconnected from those spaces for a while. Nathan was "overjoyed" to spend the day enjoying the festivities with fellow clients."*

- **Personal growth through improved social and emotional skills -**

Through almost all of the feedback provided, responses referenced participant growth in the following areas:

- A general increase in the ability to address mental health and addiction concerns
- Increased coping skills and resiliency
- Increased ability to address basic needs
- Improved communication skills
- Increased self-esteem, sense of purpose, and confidence

*"After suffering the loss of a loved one, along with experiencing chronic health issues and homelessness, one participant expressed that this program has drastically improved their lives. The program was able to help the participant apply for housing, IDs, and other basic needs that the participant required. They said, "It is such a relief having a place to call home, with an amazing support staff to help me navigate this new beginning."*

- **Youth and child development -** Many programs spoke to the growth that children and youth experienced in the program. This growth was most often related to skills (i.e., communication skills, social skills, language skills, etc.). Emphasis was also placed on the importance of nutrition on child and youth wellbeing.

*"Caregivers and educators have noticed an improvement in the children's ability to regulate their emotions and verbally express their feelings when upset. By communicating through different methods like using an iPad, responding to visual indicators, and more, children are successfully interacting and playing cooperatively with each other. One caregiver said that when their children fight, they now use their words to communicate and problem solve with minimal intervention."*

## Success Story

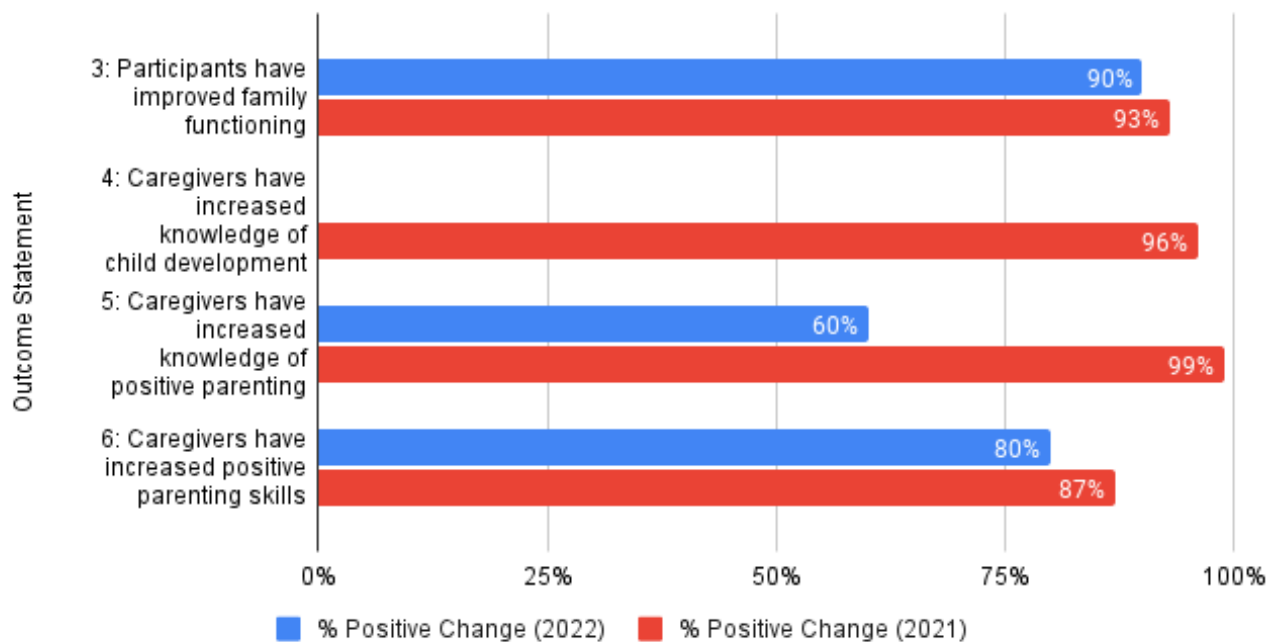
*"The Head Start program at Norwood has had such a profound impact on my daughter's development and overall well-being. As a mother it's amazing to see how X has blossomed in just a couple of months. Her capacity to retell everything she does at school and recall her favorite activities and exciting moments with new friends is beautiful to hear. I can see a major improvement in how she communicates using her words, sharing details, how certain things make her feel and being able to mimic fun activities she learned at school at home. She has gained tremendous confidence in socializing with other children including making new friends to play with every time we go to the park or indoor playgrounds. Her ability to follow instructions and be confident in doing things independently has been the biggest shift. I love when she shares how she's encouraged at school to use her BIG VOICE, this helps her understand that her voice is important and not just to her family, but to everyone else around her as well. She's growing into herself and feels safe and supported at school. Even my son who visits the park after school while we wait for X has grown comfortable around the teachers. The staff is so warm and welcoming and always willing to work with us as a family. We feel very lucky and grateful X can attend Head Start, and I know this is just the beginning of X's growth here. Thank you!"*

## Thriving Families

*Thriving Families work together to overcome challenges, learn, and develop. Caregivers within the family have the capacity to support the physical, social, psychological, emotional and spiritual development of the children, youth, adult or senior, creating stable environments that promote quality interactions to support achieving the goals for the family group.*

Rates of positive change in 2022 decreased somewhat for all reported outcomes in this Impact Area. In particular, positive change for Outcome 5 decreased significantly. This is partially due to the reduction of programs reporting to this outcome; 2021 data is based on reporting from eight programs, whereas 2022 data is based only on the reporting from one.

Figure 11: Thriving Families Outcomes Summary



When asked what positive change looks like in program participants, the following themes emerged:

- **Positive family relationships** - Participants often reported that the positive parenting strategies shared through the programs and the support provided to their children resulted in stronger family bonds and better family functioning.

*"The participants have been feeling confident after taking our classes and they are utilizing their positive parenting practices by using more positive language with their children, planned discipline, and they have begun implementing family routines. We have also witnessed some parents via online sessions using nurturing behaviors with their children. Overall, their knowledge of child development and communication styles have improved significantly. Our participants finally feel as though they are capable of discovering themselves and are capable of preparing their children for society. Participants have also verbalized that they are also learning how to implement healthy practices and use more positive decisions when they encounter unhealthy relationships."*



- **Improved networks and access to support** - Programs shared that by becoming a safe space for families, they often functioned as a starting place for accessing further support and developing community. Supportive relationships with staff allowed participants to reach out for referrals to meet other needs. Many participants also described the importance of the relationships that they developed with other participants in supporting their overall wellbeing as a family.

*“During parent groups, participants learn from each other’s experiences and support one another in discussing challenging family situations. Through these meaningful connections they have built their network of natural supports.”*

## Success Story

*Hope (not her real name) is a young Indigenous mom of a one-year-old. She was referred to our Circle of Safety Family Violence Program due to ongoing concerns of domestic violence in her relationship. Her daughter was apprehended by Children's Services when she was only a few months old. When Hope began the group, she was hesitant, shy and presented as being very sad, and understandably so. Over the course of the 20 weeks of the Circle of Safety, facilitators and program staff have observed Hope as she blossoms into a more confident, open, expressive and determined young woman. Although her daughter is still in care, Hope went from having zero visits to having four visits per week. She has left her ex-partner and continues to come to group every week. We observe her being a role model for newcomers into the group, as she is open and proud of what she has accomplished in a short amount of time. Facilitators report that other women in the group seem to look up to her, despite being so young, because of her pride in her accomplishments. Hope has begun to open up about her own childhood experiences of victimization. She has a high level of insight into her childhood and is able to track her experiences of being physically and emotionally abused as a child to being a teenager participating in risky behaviours and then to being a young woman in an abusive relationship. She has not yet graduated by the end of 2022 and we are continuously inspired by her resilience and dedication to getting her daughter back into her care.*

- Aboriginal Counseling Services Association of Alberta - Circle of Safety Family Violence Program

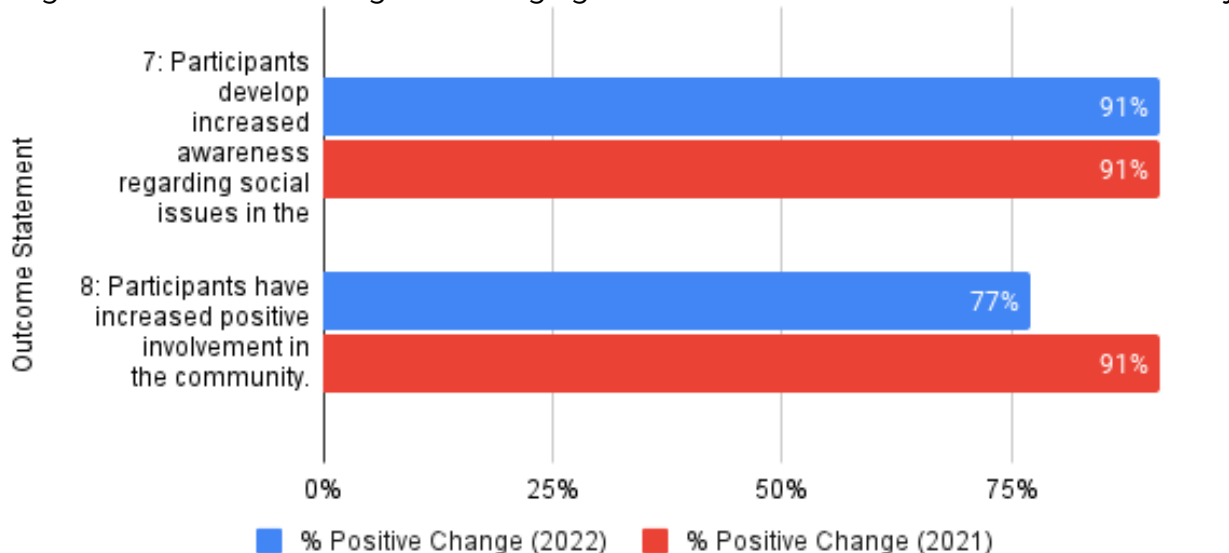


## Welcoming and Engaged Communities

*Welcoming and Engaged Communities are open, diverse and inclusive. They ensure that all community members are active, connected and supported in achieving their goals. They can be geographic or interest based depending on the program focus area.*

While rates of positive change for Outcome 7 stayed consistent with last year, Outcome 8 saw a decrease in rates of participants experiencing positive change.

Figure 12: Welcoming and Engaged Communities Outcome Summary



When asked what positive change looks like in program participants, the following themes emerged:

- **Increased sense of purpose and self-confidence** - Participants reported feeling an increased sense of purpose and confidence because of their program involvement.
- **Personal growth and the development of new skills** - Many programs reported that participants developed new skills as a result of volunteer opportunities and interactions with people from a variety of backgrounds.

*"Volunteering opportunities (at community events, Food Bank Depot, Community Lunch, Sewing group, etc.) provide our participants with a safe space to develop skills, build relationships, and become an active and contributing member of the community."*



- **Increased connection to their communities and increased sense of belonging** - Participants reported a sense of belonging and feelings of gratitude as a result of their volunteer services.

*“Participants talked about the impact of feeling more connected to their peers, those we serve, and the broader community while participating in volunteer opportunities at our downtown community centre. After the volunteer program being largely on pause for over two years, we saw consistent enthusiasm, gratitude, and connectedness occur during every volunteer opportunity. Volunteers talked about their gratitude to participate in something grounded in dignity and respect for all involved.”*

- **Breaking the cycle of violence** - Programs illustrated numerous examples of their participants accessing resources and support required to escape abusive situations and learn about the impacts of past traumas.

*“As clients become more educated on healthy relationships and learn to end the cycle of violence in their own lives, they are also able to support their friends and loved ones. This often includes referring their loved ones onto appropriate services such as ours. This also means that clients are doing the work to manage their own trauma responses so they can bring their whole selves to these relationships so they can offer meaningful support to loved ones experiencing violence.”*

## Success Story

*“After my wife passed away, I was not in a good place. My daughters suggested I join a seniors center. Not knowing what a seniors center was about, I went to get information. I was surprised to see all the activities they were offering. I started with exercise classes which helped get me out of the house and helped change my mindset. I was then introduced to different card games. This created a social life for me. This also showed me life could be lived even though I was a senior. Meeting these people introduced me to dancing, pickleball and socializing. After a few months, I discovered life was good and it was ok to be happy again. I feel so good to be a part of this family. It feels great to live, love your life and be happy. I wish I could have discovered this place sooner. I want to thank members for accepting me. I would encourage anyone to join a seniors center.”*

- North West Edmonton Seniors Society - Wellness and Volunteer Program

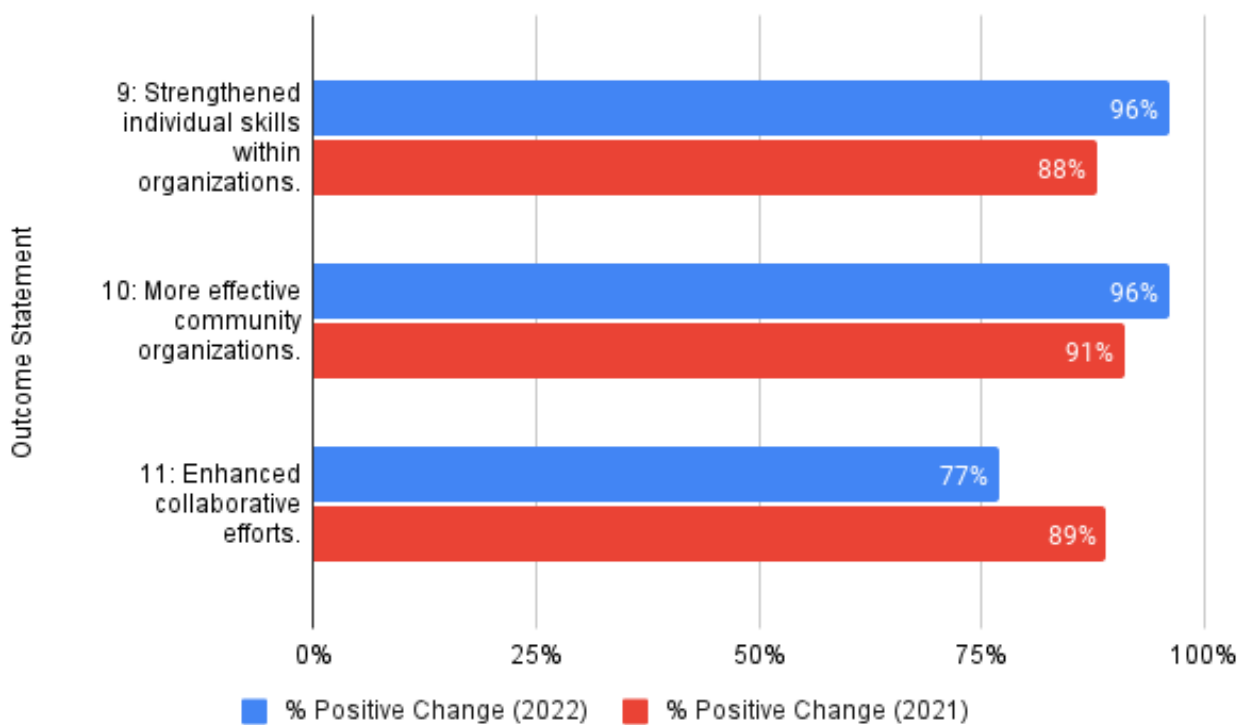


## Strong Sector

Individuals, families and communities exist and function within society. Within Edmonton and area the not for profit sector is critical to creating an integrated and connected web of support to reduce and eliminate people falling through the cracks. Ensuring that the individuals and organizations working within the sector have the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to be successful and healthy is critical.

Programs reporting on Outcomes 9 and 10 saw a slight increase in participant positive change, year-over-year; however, those reporting on Outcome 11 saw a slight decrease in the percentage of participants reporting positive change.

Figure 13: Strong Sector Outcome Summary



When asked what positive change looks like in program participants, the following themes emerged:

- **Improved relationships and connections** - Participants often reported that collaborative programs and projects supported cross-agency relationship building and trust among staff and volunteers.

*"One of the most important elements of the collaborative for us is being able to connect with and form relationships with other agencies in our service areas who are providing adjacent services to alike clients. This strengthens the overall network of service providers in the city and personally benefits our clients through the ability to perform meaningful referrals when necessary."*

- **Improved insight into the broader ecosystem of services and community needs** - Programs reported the value of collaborations in more deeply understanding assets and needs emerging in communities and how the broader ecosystem of services and supports can respond collaboratively to best support community members.

*"The extensive shared program evaluation has provided us with community insight beyond the clients we serve and has allowed us to evaluate our impact and address our clients needs."*

- **Emerging partnerships to meet community need** - Many participants reported that building relationships with other members of their collaborative opened opportunities for new partnerships to emerge that improved service delivery and met the needs of community members.

*"All agencies involved reported that the collaborative efforts of Youth Agency Collaborative has opened pathways for them to make connections with other organizations. In some cases, organizations have begun supporting each other in a variety of ways."*

## Success Story

*"We had 2 staff members who used Transform share how much of a benefit it has been to their work and how much it has complemented their work. Prior to using Transform, an enterprise level software was used which is primarily business oriented and doesn't fit the needs of helping vulnerable populations as it is very non human-centred. The consensus has been how clunky, cumbersome and intimidating this software has been for staff. The immediate switch to Transform was a night and day difference to them. Here are their testimonials verbatim: 1) It was great. I found it particularly feasible with the editing part and the reloading looks faster than what we currently use. I was taking notes on Transform as the client was speaking and found it to be very simple. Thanks! 2) Using Transform has been exciting. It is easy to navigate and more efficient. I know it is still in an early stage, but being able to make 1-2 clicks to get where I need to has been great. Our previous system is a nightmare in comparison to Transform. I am looking forward to the next steps and everyone getting a chance to start doing their work in Transform. We also had clients who spoke highly of Transform of how intuitive it is and being served by it - the biggest compliment being how smart it is and easy it is. They felt empowered by it because it gives ownership and autonomy to their own data."*

- Islamic Family & Social Services Association (IFSSA) - Transform

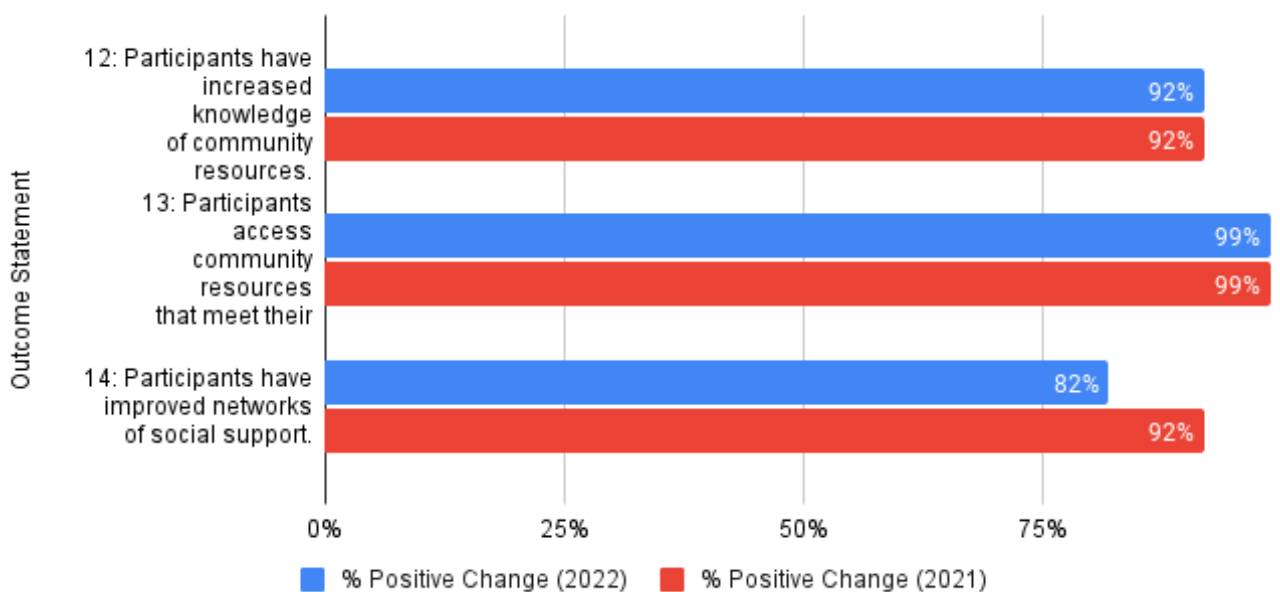


## Strong Relationships and Connections

*Strong Relationships and Connections are the glue between individuals, families, communities and the not for profit sector. It is through relationships that we can achieve a strong and supportive community where all people can thrive and contribute. Individuals and families have access to a network of community and social supports that can address their needs.*

The rates of positive change reported in Strong Relationships and Connections remained the highest overall of any Impact Area in 2022. This is despite a noticeable decrease for Outcome 14.

Figure 14: Strong Relationships & Connections Outcome Summary



When asked what positive change looks like in program participants, the following themes emerged:

- **A greater sense of community and purpose** – Participants and volunteers alike described the importance these programs play in building relationships with their neighbours and making people feel like they are part of a broader community. Beyond just offering opportunities for social interaction, these connections allow people to share their knowledge and experience, creating networks of support. This in turn leads to a deeper sense of connection to their communities and to their cultures, particularly for people who might otherwise be prone to feelings of isolation and loneliness, such as seniors and newcomers to Canada. Participants often describe not just developing new friendships through these programs, but finding what feels like a new family.

*'I feel like I have found a whole new family...I have new friends to talk to on the phone when I am feeling lonely at night. I have new friends that I go for lunch with every Sunday afternoon. I have come to know my neighbors better now that I am involved more at my community hall...I have something to look forward to several times a week and feel excited to see my friends.'*

- **Better knowledge of and access to available supports** – As increased economic pressures continue to impact peoples’ physical and mental wellbeing, many participants spoke of how invaluable these programs are in helping to educate them about the supports available to them in the community in a caring and non-judgemental way. Over the course of the pandemic, many programs shifted to hybrid service models, relying more on technology and online service delivery to meet participants’ needs. For some, this has made it easier to access available supports, but for others who may not have the skills or access to required technology, such as seniors, these programs can be invaluable in helping them navigate the rapidly changing social environment.

*"I appreciated the amount of support! I had no idea the city had so much to offer...[our support worker] was always supportive and never judgemental. I really appreciated having an open and trusting person to support me and my family."*

- **Developing new skills** – Whether it is helping children to learn and develop basic life skills, helping adults to improve their financial literacy, or helping newcomers to Canada develop improved language skills, participants describe feeling supported and better equipped to face the challenges in their lives thanks to the skills they’ve learned through these programs.

*"I have made new friends at the centre without them I would be very depressed. I call them sometimes...I have also improved my English. Not only English, in fact, I didn't have any idea about computers before, but now I can email, open google and I can search many things."*

- **Increased confidence and improved mental health** – Participants describe the increased confidence that comes with being part of a supportive community and being better equipped to face the challenges in their lives. This leads to less stress and better mental and physical health for participants, which in turn allows them to better support their own families and the broader community. This creates a cascading effect of positive social change, increasing the overall impact of these programs.

*"At intake, one participant was struggling with several disabilities, very limited social connections (including family), an extensive history of trauma, including years of homelessness, and physical and mental health and addictions issues. He is now stably housed, his substance use has significantly decreased, he has started addressing his trauma history, developing coping and daily living skills, he has home care in place, and he still expresses often how happy he is with the people in his life."*



## Success Story

In March 2022 members of the Spruce Avenue community began to observe an increase in crime and disorder on and around the footbridge located at 97 Street on 115 Avenue. Over the next few months, the Edmonton Police Service (EPS) Alberta Avenue Beats Team worked with members of the community to address these concerns. Some of these concerns included reports of students at Spruce Avenue School crossing 97th St by foot rather than using the footbridge, due to feeling unsafe using the bridge because of the graffiti, drug use, litter, etc. EPS approached the Youth Liaison (YL) to discuss animating the bridge and intentionality involving students from the school to empower them to be involved in positive change in their community. The YL connected with Spruce Avenue School to facilitate a partnership with EPS which evolved into The Bridge of Reconciliation Project. The goal of the project was to positively impact the students' feelings of safety and empower them within their community. The partners decided to animate the bridge with paint and art to align with the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation on September 30. The YL and the Success Coach (SC) at Spruce Avenue School collaborated with Elder Francis Whiskeyjack to discuss how best to navigate the process and teachings that the students would need. The SC then shared Elder Whiskeyjack's teachings of the medicine wheel with the students and they created artwork depicting their interpretation of those teachings. As a result of various meetings with the CoE and EPS, permission to paint the 4 pillars of the footbridge was granted as well as permission to include artwork from the students on the upper cage of the footbridge. The CoE agreed to cover the cost of labour for the painting required and EPS approached and received grant funding from the Edmonton Police Foundation to cover the cost of materials. The animation of the bridge is an intentional approach to restoring and reclaiming Indigenous ideas and concepts that will assist to promote trust and reconciliation between community members. Each of the 4 pillars/sections of the bridge were painted a different colour of the medicine wheel, incorporating all 4 colours according to Cree, Treaty 6 teachings. On September 28, 2022, students from Spruce Avenue School unveiled the footbridge to the Spruce Avenue community during a celebration that included the attendance of Francis Whiskeyjack, members of the Edmonton Public School Board, EPS, NET, and various city officials. The bridge was unveiled during ceremony that included smudging and drumming, supported by students from Amiskwacy Academy. The artwork done by the students of Spruce Avenue School can be seen on the bridge today. Students have expressed that their perceptions of safety around the bridge have improved. Students report their observations of the bridge to the SC at the school, indicating a sense of ownership and a feeling of connection to and pride in their community.



# EVALUATION & RECOMMENDATIONS

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Agencies engage in evaluation activities to understand and improve their programming and impact. Similarly, the COI Working Group and their respective organizations are accountable to community and aim to be responsive to ways they can better support it.

## PROGRAM EVALUATION

Programs were asked to reflect on evaluation learnings they experienced over the course of 2022. Their responses typically fell into three broad categories:

- Discussion of evaluation methods
- Identifying and addressing client need towards enhanced participant impact
- Reflections transitioning from the acute phase of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Program representatives reflected on several different ideas regarding their evaluation methods, best summarized as the following:

- Ensuring evaluation tools are easy and quick for participants to complete and written in plain, easy to understand language
- Finding ways to naturally incorporate evaluation tools into program delivery (i.e., more use of intake tools, direct observation, and informal conversation)
- Working with participants and other stakeholders to co-create evaluation strategies
- Development and implementation of more robust data collection systems

Many programs also reported that evaluation activities were critical in identifying and addressing the needs of their participants and highlighting the impact of their respective programs.

- Programs used evaluation data to identify current and shifting demographic trends to be able to better address community need
- Evaluation data was important in uncovering participant barriers and developing mitigation strategies to ensure program accessibility and participant success
- Programs used evaluation data to celebrate their successes as well as those of their participants

The transition from the acute phase of the COVID-19 pandemic was specifically mentioned by several programs when discussing their evaluation activities. Typically, their feedback was captured in the following categories:

- Developing virtual service delivery strategies during the height of the pandemic has given programs new and flexible ways to serve their participants as in-person services began to return (e.g., in some cases, participants had opportunity to access programming virtually or in-person)
- Some programs lauded the return to in-person services as they found virtual service delivery to be less effective in meeting participant needs. Further, many indicated that a return to in-person service delivery aided in diminishing feelings of isolation previously experienced





## RECOMMENDATIONS & NEXT STEPS

When discussing the significant challenges of the past year as relayed in this report, COI agencies suggested that funders could support them in the following ways:

- Provide consistent, flexible funding at a level appropriate to community need
- Provide learning opportunities on ways to address the operational challenges many agencies are facing including supporting frontline staff, building technical capacity, and integrating hybrid work and service delivery
- Support collaboration and information sharing across the Sector
- Reduce reporting burden and support the Sector with meaningful data

In 2022, the Common Outcomes Working Group committed to a series of actions based on agency feedback. We share our progress and further commitments below.

- **Provide agency capacity building opportunities** - In partnership with the Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations, the Working Group held a series of Eval 101 Lite standalone workshops in late 2022 and a more intensive Eval 101 course in spring 2023. The Working Group and their respective organizations will explore further capacity building offerings addressing areas of agency interest in 2023-2024.
- **Support connections between COI agencies** - Eval 101, the spring Sector Meeting, the FCSS Learning Series, and United Way Agency Partner Meetings featured opportunities for agency conversation and information sharing. In 2023-2024, the Working Group and their respective organizations will provide continued space for this type of connection and will explore ways to provide more responsive opportunities.
- **Undertake an evaluation of COR** to implement a framework that better meets agencies' needs for feasible, meaningful reporting that supports effective program delivery.
  - In 2023, the Working Group conducted a literature review and gathered feedback from agencies through a survey and a series of focus groups. This fall, the Working Group will share:
    - A "What We Heard" report which incorporates this information along with further agency feedback shared during the Sector Meeting.
    - Information on what reporting for the COI funders will look like going forward, based on the recommendations shared.Agencies will be invited to provide further feedback during this process.

The Common Outcomes Initiative celebrates the important work that agencies, their program staff, and participants engaged in through 2022 and the impact that they created together. We hear and relay their challenges and feedback, and commit to supporting solutions in the ways we are able.

# APPENDICES

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## APPENDIX 1: DATA COLLECTION METHOD/TIMING

*While the interventions and activities provided by the programs reporting to the COR contribute to achieving the outcomes reported below, attribution cannot be claimed.*

Programs were asked to report on their primary data collection methodology. The majority of the data continued to be collected through surveys/questionnaires (58%). Direct observation (21%) also continues to be a frequently used data collection. Programs also reported using group discussions (8%), document reviews (5%), administrative statistics (4%) and interviews (4%). Finally, less than 1% of programs identified using text messages as a data collection method.

Programs may collect data more than once with each participant. In total, data collection was attempted with 64,607 participants.

Data collected:

During program: 34% (↑)

During & Post: 20% (↓)

Post: 21% (=)

Pre, During & Post: 13% (↑)

Pre & Post: 7% (↑)

Follow Up: 4% (↓)

## APPENDIX 2: INDICATOR SUMMARY

Common Outcomes	# of programs reporting	# of participants asked	% of participants with a positive change
<b>Impact Area: Resilient Individuals</b>	<b>Positive Change = 81.6%</b>		
<b>1: Children and youth have improved developmental skills.</b>	38	11,198	87.0%
1a: Participants demonstrate developmentally appropriate skills in one or more of the following areas: personal/social skills, communication skills, gross motor skills, fine motor skills, problem solving skills, coping skills, literacy, numeracy.	25	2,965	88.6%
1b: Participants demonstrate/report behaviours or feelings that are consistent with some of the following of the eight developmental assets: support, empowerment, boundaries & expectations, constructive use of time, commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, positive identity.	33	8,233	86.4%
<b>2: Participants have improved skills to address identified issues.</b>	34	15,627	77.8%
2a: Participants demonstrate being able to positively cope with day-to-day stress	-	-	-
2b: Participants demonstrate an increased capacity to solve day-to-day problems and challenges (problem-solving skills).	8	6,838	59.8%
2c: Participants demonstrate skills in one or more of the following areas: money management/financial literacy (i.e. knowledge related to budgeting, asset building, financial literacy, government benefits and subsidies, savings, decreasing debt.); self-care; community involvement; socialization; self-advocacy; interpersonal/relationships; parenting; literacy; refusal skills.	18	8,087	92.7%
2d: Participants demonstrate characteristics that are likely to help them address their identified issues - e.g., resiliency (ability to 'bounce back' from setbacks), optimism (positive outlook for future), positive self-esteem (feeling good about self, seeing own strengths), sense of meaning/purpose - e.g., pertaining to family/friends, broader community, belief systems (e.g., spiritual), healthy sense of identity	-	-	-
2e: Participants report being involved in activities that support or assist with education (degrees, certificates, credentials or qualified for continuing education) or employment readiness (job relevant licenses, resume writing support, interview skills, accessing proper equipment, skills training, gaining proper ID).	8	491	89.4%
2f: Participants demonstrate that they have the capacity to navigate the options and resources available to them (i.e., understand the information and how it could apply to their situation, feel they have the 'tools' to make an informed decision).	1	14	100%
2g: Participants increased their wages or found employment	197	116	60.9%

<b>Common Outcomes</b>	<b># of programs reporting</b>	<b># of participants asked</b>	<b>% of participants with a positive change</b>
<b>Impact Area: Thriving Families</b>	<b>Positive Change = 89.2%</b>		
<b>3: Participants have improved family functioning.</b>	22	3,352	89.8%
3a: Participants report a positive change in their family's routine (more structure & stability).	-	-	-
3b: Participants demonstrate increased positive interactions among family (e.g., listening to each other, accepting each other for who they are, praising each other, solving problems together, supporting other family members to feel good about themselves/each other).	22	3,352	89.8%
3c: Participants report doing more activities together as a family	-	-	-
<b>4: Caregivers have increased knowledge of child development</b>	-	-	-
4a: Caregivers identify activities that are appropriate for their child(ren)'s development (e.g., what activities they would encourage children to do, or do with their children, at a particular age/stage).	-	-	-
4b: Caregivers identify ways they can interact with their child(ren) in a way that matches their level of development (e.g., read to child(ren), engage in interactive play in home or community).	-	-	-
4c: Caregivers identify the developmental stages that can be expected of their child in relation to: communication, physical development, attention, focus.	-	-	-
<b>5: Caregivers have increased knowledge of positive parenting skills</b>	2	157	86.7%
5a: Caregivers identify aspects of a nurturing environment for their child(ren) at home (e.g., defining home, have books, toys in the home, play with child(ren), engage in conversations about things of interest to the child, create social opportunities for child(ren) with peers).	-	-	-
5b: Caregivers identify strategies to apply in one or more of the following areas: providing a nurturing environment, helping their children develop age-appropriate skills, providing positive feedback to children, addressing children's behaviour challenges, setting boundaries, transmission of traditional knowledge or skills.	2	157	86.7%
5c: Caregivers report understanding of positive cultural parenting practices.	-	-	-
<b>6: Caregivers have improved positive parenting skills</b>	2	152	80.3%
6a: Caregivers use developmentally appropriate strategies learned during the program (e.g., healthy attachment behaviours, positive feedback, constructive criticism/behavioural alternatives, etc.).	2	152	80.3%
6b: Caregivers report using positive parenting strategies at home (e.g., have books, toys in the home, play with child(ren), engage in conversations about things of interest to the child, create social opportunities for child(ren) with peers).	-	-	-

<b>Common Outcomes</b>	<b># of programs reporting</b>	<b># of participants asked</b>	<b>% of participants with a positive change</b>
<b>Impact Area: Welcoming &amp; Engaged Community</b>	<b>Positive Change = 89.4%</b>		
<b>7: Participants develop increased awareness regarding social issues in the community.</b>	8	13,417	90.7%
7a: Participants identify social issues that impact their quality of life or that of others in their community (e.g., poverty, family violence, bullying, broader personal safety, crime, addictions, mental health, sexual health, healthy relationships, homelessness, physical disabilities/chronic health conditions).	8	7,208	91.3%
7b: Participants identify ways they could get involved in addressing social issues that impact their quality of life or that of others in their community (e.g., volunteering for or organizing events/activities, advocacy in areas like respect for human rights, policy changes to support or protect people, specific types of programs/services to fill gaps).	1	6,209	89.8%
7c: Participants understand the history of colonization and its impact on Indigenous people in Canada.	-	-	-
<b>8: Participants have increased positive involvement in the community.</b>	16	1,407	77.1%
8a: Participants report or demonstrate becoming more interested in community activities or groups (e.g., try activities that are new to them, get involved in volunteering for or organizing community activities, become part of a group of people with common interests).	5	904	75.7%
8b: Participants report that they enjoy spending time in their community.	1	14	100%
8c: Participants report that they feel a sense of belonging/citizenship in their community.	-	-	-
8d: Participants report being involved in cultural events/ceremony/teachings that are meaningful and significant to them.	-	-	-
8e: Participants report way(s) in which their volunteering has made a positive difference in the community (- e.g., safety, community connectedness, access to supports (food, transportation), beautification, etc)	-	-	-
8f: Volunteers identify what they have learned about their community and/or themselves through volunteering (e.g., community issues, how they can match their own interests or skills with volunteer opportunities).	10	489	79.1%
8g: Volunteers demonstrate skills that could assist in or enhance their contribution to other paid or unpaid work.	-	-	-



<b>Common Outcomes</b>	<b># of programs reporting</b>	<b># of participants asked</b>	<b>% of participants with a positive change</b>
<b>Impact Area: Strong Sector</b>	<b>Positive Change = 70.6%</b>		
<b>9: Strengthened individual skills within organizations.</b>	13	618	95.8%
9a: Organization staff or volunteers report new knowledge to serve their participants.	-	-	-
9b: Organization staff or volunteers report new skills to address identified needs.	-	-	-
9c: Organization staff or volunteers report commitment to and/or confidence in implementing knowledge and/or skills.	-	-	-
9d: Organization staff or volunteers report relationships/connections have been enhanced	13	618	95.8%
<b>10: More effective community organizations.</b>	6	702	96.0%
10a: Organizations report training has strengthened organizational capacity (e.g., board and financial governance, succession planning, evaluation support).	1	190	95.3%
10b: Organizations report resources (e.g., research, tools and templates) have strengthened organizational capacity (e.g., board and financial governance, succession planning, evaluation support).	6	512	96.3%
10c: Organizations report making evidence informed decisions.	-	-	-
10d: Organizations report making improvements to their practice/policy.	-	-	-
<b>11: Enhanced collaborative efforts.</b>	9	1,137	41.2%
11a: Organizations report increased capacity to engage in collaborative efforts.	-	-	-
11b: Participants of the collaborative report that they are better able to meet community needs due to working together.	9	1,137	41.2%
11c: Participants identify how their communities (as a whole) are demonstrating progress in one or more of the following domains of community capacity: Participation; Leadership; Community structures; External supports; Asking why; Obtaining resources; Skills, knowledge, and learning; Linking with others; Sense of community.	-	-	-

<b>Common Outcomes</b>	<b># of programs reporting</b>	<b># of participants asked</b>	<b>% of participants with a positive change</b>
<b><i>Impact Area: Strong Connections &amp; Relationships</i></b>	<b><i>Positive Change = 96.3%</i></b>		
<b>12: Participants have increased knowledge of community resources.</b>	28	6,166	91.7%
12a: Participants identify community resources that could address their information or service needs (e.g., could be for caregiving, relationships, mental health, physical health, basic needs, abuse, community connections, intergenerational trauma or other issues).	9	2,862	91.7%
12b: Participants ask for information about or referral to one or more community resources that address their information or service needs.	-	-	-
12c: Participants report awareness about the options and resources available to them (e.g., types of housing, counselling, safety-related information/support, financial information/support, community involvement, health-related services).	19	3,304	91.7%
<b>13: Participants access community resources that meet their needs</b>	22	84,679	99.1%
13a: Participants access nutritious food (e.g. fruits, vegetables, multiple food groups).	9	82,608	99.2%
13b: Participants access housing that is safe, adequate, affordable, permanent -- in either independent or supported living arrangements, as appropriate to their needs (e.g., their physical, mental or social health; economic situation).	2	424	97.6%
13c: Participants access appropriate clothing.	-	-	-
13d: Participants access transportation.	-	-	-
13e: Participants access resources that promote safety (e.g., protection from physical emotional, or financial abuse; assistance with daily living tasks as needed).	3	652	98.9%
13f: Participants access mental health resources (e.g., counselling).	-	-	-
13g: Participants access resources that promote social inclusion (e.g., group activities, outings, home visits).	3	577	99.0%
13h: Participants access resources that promote financial stability (e.g., employment opportunities, career counselling, financial literacy training, accessing benefits and/or subsidies).	4	242	98.4%
13i: Participants report referrals provided were relevant to meet their needs.	2	176	88.1%
<b>14: Participants have improved networks of social support.</b>	73	14,856	82.1%
14a: Participants report making positive social connections with peers in the program or in the broader community (through the program).	26	3,062	95.5%
14b: Participants report having sources of personal, cultural, community, or professional support.	47	11,794	79.4%
14c: Participants report that they feel safe (physically, emotionally, financially) with people in their lives.	-	-	-
14d: Participants report feeling heard/understood/respected by program staff, volunteers and/or participants.	-	-	-

## APPENDIX 3: FCSS PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

<b>FCSS Partnerships and Collaborations Summary</b>		
<b>Primary Focus of Partnership</b>	<b># of Agencies</b>	<b>Total # of Partners Involved</b>
Poverty Reduction	3	34
Community Capacity Building	2	23
Youth-serving (engagement & collaboration)	2	31
Senior Wellness	1	6
Homelessness	1	5
Common Service Access	1	2

<b>Partnership/Collaboration Accomplishments</b>
<p><b>Multicultural Family Resource Society - Khair for All</b>            KFA was operated by a cross-sectoral partnership with the for-profit and not-for-profit sector. The corporate partner, Gud Box, was responsible for operations and logistics. The community partners were responsible for marketing, connecting directly to clients that could most benefit from KFA and to provide additional wrap-around holistic support as needed. KFA was piloted from Nov 2021-Oct 2022. During this time food insecurity was deepening and many community agencies implemented short term food access programs despite not having proper infrastructure ie. refrigeration, pallet jacks, warehouse space etc. As a result of this partnership model stakeholders could work together in a more coordinated way and reduce duplication and expenses and respond to community priorities with greater efficiency and quality service provision.</p>
<p><b>Islamic Family &amp; Social Services Association (IFSSA) - Transform</b>            Main accomplishments were: - Working in collaboration with Bissell on defining requirements and future vision of how we can make Transform more impactful to our service users - Working on technical requirements, software features that are impactful, scoping and wire-framing functions, and centering KPI's around it - Working with Common Approach has been investigating a common lexicon of shared information among service providers - Working on a data ontology standard of how data mapping between organizational backend data structures can speak in 'common language'</p>
<p><b>Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society - Practise as Ceremony</b>            The partnership entered in its first year and we are getting familiar with each other. The Practise as Ceremony team has reached out to more programs in the partnership and will continue to do so.</p>

## Partnership/Collaboration Accomplishments - continued

### **Youth Empowerment and Support Services- Planning for a City Model for the Prevention of Youth Homelessness**

1) YAC increased membership from 10 partner organizations to 20+ 2) YAC collaboratively developed a 2/5/10 year vision of our collaboration's framework for youth services in the City of Edmonton during a two retreat in May 2022 3) YAC members participated in multiple ceremonies together which were led by NiGiNan Housing - a feast to begin their relationship within the collaborative and ceremonies on the Solstices and Equinoxes 4) YAC continued work on developing a Complex Care Management System that will be the main communication system for YAC 5) YAC Developed an Ad-Hoc Governance Structure that will act as the agreement between partner agencies as the collaboration grows 6) With assistance from MAPS, YAC built partner profiles of each YAC member organization and used them to create resource maps displaying where YAC partner agencies offer services 7) YAC members collaborated on writing guiding principles which act as a guide for all of YAC's communications

### **Edmonton Social Planning Council**

Four (4) Community Matters publications that engaged members of various organizations, volunteers and staff to collaboratively complete a publication based on the themes of Gender, Houselessness, Community Safety, and Mental Wellness. Sixty-one (61) blog topics were published and were written primarily by volunteers and students with staff support and review. Fifteen (15) projects that varied from environmental scans, literature reviews, wisest practice guides and more were completed as part of capacity-building efforts for various agencies/organizations in the Edmonton region.

### **Bissell Centre - Housing Outreach Program**

One of the Housing Outreach Program's main accomplishments this year is that we were able to expand Housing Workshops to 3 new Edmonton Public Library (EPL) locations across the city. This expansion helped in reaching individuals seeking housing support who may not be able to access services downtown. Another accomplishment was hosting over 150 Housing Workshops in Bissell's Community Space. These workshops enable participants to connect with Navigators who can support them in applying for Income Support and provide referrals to housing support workers to secure stable housing. Similar to the housing workshops at Bissell's Community Space, workshops were held twice per week at WIN House. WIN House staff connect participants to income supports as soon as possible, as this can take some time, before referring them to a housing workshop. This process speeds up their access to housing, as Housing Support Workers are then able to focus immediately on securing housing.

### **United Way of the Alberta Capital Region - Community Mental Health Action Plan**

The Action Plan collaborated to support Peer-Led work. In particular, there was a need to continue the work of peer-led programming at E4C through the Wellness Network, leading to the Action Plan providing funds to support a Peer Navigator at E4C. Additionally, the Action Plan supported the work of Imagine Institute for the initial gathering of the Seven Generations Youth Peer Support Project, which aimed to gather the wisdom & perspective of Indigenous youth for mental health. The Action Plan conducted the Community Conversations Project, capturing insights from service providers on the challenges and opportunities were & where the future direction of the Action Plan. We strengthened our connection to Living Hope: Edmonton's Suicide Prevention Plan which led to strategizing how our two plans can better Edmonton and ensure that lived experience has a determined role in the system. This led to the proposal of Edmonton's Mental Health Strategy and became a key focus in 2022

## Partnership/Collaboration Accomplishments - continued

### **United Way of the Alberta Capital Region - Empower U - Building Confident Futures Initiative**

We celebrated the 10 year anniversary of Empower U in November, where alumni, current participants, partners and funders were gathered to celebrate participants' achievements. This event was also a reminder of the vast impact Empower U has had on people's lives and wellbeing by helping them build healthy financial futures. Empower U successfully completed 11 years of working collectively with 16 partners. We continued to work on governance matters to improve collective decision-making processes and partners' responsibilities to improve our social impact. One of the main accomplishments was stabilizing and surviving two very difficult years of operating under COVID19 restrictions. Agencies were able to adapt to virtual and hybrid models of service delivery to address gaps and continue supporting folks who needed the most supports. Three Hive Consulting was hired to conduct the evaluation of Empower U. This change has strengthened the evaluation framework and efficiencies.

### **United Way of the Alberta Capital Region - All in For Youth**

In addition to continuing to adapt programming to meet changing needs of the students and caregivers we serve, we also added three additional schools to AIFY thus supporting hundreds more children, youth and families to access a variety of services in their school and at no cost. These wraparound supports ensure students have access to nutritious food, mentoring and programming when school is not in session. Both students and their families can access family support services and mental health therapy to improve their relationships, address stressors in their lives and build resiliency.

### **Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council - Coordinated Home Supports**

The program reach set records for referrals provided and total individuals served which indicates a full recovery after the Covid-19 disruptions. The collaboration was able to weather the departure of one of the partners halfway through the year, with home support coordinators seamlessly covering for that district due to the data sharing agreements. The governance committee was able to successfully re-draw the system boundaries based on historical data analysis, and showed a strong commitment to both the seniors served and supporting the home support coordinators in their workload.

## How Partnership is Contributing to Identified Focus

### **Multicultural Family Resource Society - Khair for All**

This partnership contributed to the identified focus by 1) leveraging the deep relationships we have to the community to co-create and pilot a population based food security initiative such as KFA which aims to impact both individual and systems level 2) connecting directly to relevant community agency clients that could most benefit from KFA 3) diverse community partner depots connected KFA users experiencing food insecurity that are not formally connected to service agencies with additional resources and supports 4) partnership model served as an organic channel to convene and mobilize relevant stakeholders for broader conversations on food insecurity, Edmonton's food system and intersections of poverty

### **Islamic Family & Social Services Association (IFSSA) - Transform**

This collaborative partnership was crucial in not working in a silo on massive data mobility issues the sector experiences and what our citizens face on a daily basis. Speaking with our partners about technical approaches, complexities and nuances with alternative approaches and investigating these perspectives and angles were important doing it in unison. Sharing insights and doing a deep dive on the nitty gritty of how we can structure Transform for success for our frontlines has been instrumental.



## How Partnership is Contributing to Identified Focus - continued

### **Youth Empowerment and Support Services - Planning for a City Model for the Prevention of Youth Homelessness**

During 2019, YAC engaged in research to acquire the voices of young people, youth workers, and the agencies to inquire what was working well and what needed improvement within service delivery. From this research, we were able to determine that we needed to find pathways towards better communication, improved collaboration, and expanded resources to better meet the needs of the youth. A clear message was received from young people. They wanted youth serving organizations to communicate with each other creating an atmosphere where they did not have to retell their traumatizing story to obtain services. They wanted to see organizations with similar standards of practice making agencies have a unified approach. Our increase in member organizations, work towards having a unified vision for city-wide services, collectively writing guiding principles, and movement towards a city-wide communication system contribute to YAC providing better services for youth through collaboration.

### **Edmonton Social Planning Council**

The Community Matters and Blog topics contribute to raising awareness of social issues in the community, contribute to capacity building for agencies/organizations, and foster conversation. The research and capacity projects contribute to program development, informed practice, and new ways of doing and were, in some cases, a foundational research step to further the research agencies/organizations had planned to continue. By having informed and robust planning, program development and capacity building contributes to the overall efforts of poverty reduction in the Edmonton area. Providing opportunities for agencies/organizations to share their work through the Lunch & Learn platform, provides a space for these agencies to share their work, the lived experiences of the people they serve and help inform and connect the social sector. Supporting front line agencies with capacity efforts contributes to a stronger Edmonton community.

### **Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society - Practice as Ceremony**

The funding has helped in adding a new staff member to the team. This is an example of the importance of this partnership as the funding has allowed us to grow so we can provide more teachings and have more knowledge holders on the team providing their land based teachings.

### **Bissell Centre - Housing Outreach Program**

These partnerships have been immensely beneficial to reaching our objectives as individuals from various agencies and locations are now able to connect with Navigators about housing options and resources. Navigators can make direct referrals to eviction prevention resources including Community Bridge and Alberta Supports. Collaborating with partners facilitates quicker achievement of housing criteria, including obtaining current government-issued identification and sufficient income, and allows for direct referrals to a Housing Outreach Worker. Additionally, our housing team completes referrals to supportive housing sites throughout the city. Coordinating with those sites and acting as a liaison ensures that Homeward Trust's files on participants are kept active so they remain on the housing list. By having Bissell Centre staff complete and follow up on supported referral funding, housing workers and programs across the agency can focus on their own roles in the community.

### **United Way of the Alberta Capital Region - Community Mental Health Action Plan**

The Community Mental Health Action Plan partners continued to collaborate while also working to develop a strategic plan for mental health in Edmonton. Partners contributed their time, energy, and expertise at various tables and represented diverse areas across sectors, such as health, social, and education who serve various populations (newcomers, seniors, children/youth) and reflected a mix of community, government, and business. Key people with lived/living experience of mental health challenges are part of the Peer Working Group. The resources, tools, training, and relationship-building helped to shift practices and policies at service delivery and system levels to benefit community mental health, such as the development of the Information Sharing tool to help inform professionals at a system level. Key partners and collaborators tell us how the Action Plan work enhances their practices, policies, and system change efforts.

## How Partnership is Contributing to Identified Focus - continued

### **Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council - Coordinated Home Supports**

The Seniors Home Support Program was designed to allow older adults to age independently in their own homes. They consistently report a very high satisfaction rate with the program (96%) and express this by linking the service to peace of mind, feeling safer, increased ability to remain independent and feeling included. In addition to referrals to service providers, the program continues to act as a gatekeeper for older adults, giving them information and referrals to government benefit programs and other community supports.

### **United Way of the Alberta Capital Region - All in For Youth**

Responding to multiple changing needs during the course of the pandemic was done efficiently as AIFY partners were able to rely on each other and benefit from each other's resources. Collectively, we can do more than the sum of what each organization could provide if they were working alone.

### **United Way of the Alberta Capital Region - Empower U - Building Confident Futures Initiative**

Empower U is a financial empowerment initiative and a poverty reduction strategy that helps improve the financial capability and financial stability of people living with low income. Through financial literacy education, matched savings and one-on-one financial coaching, program participants are able to increase access to government benefits and tax credits, pay down debt, increase savings and build their credit score. Our latest evaluation shows that participants have precarious financial health with most participants living below the low-income threshold. 67.1% of participants have incomes below \$25,000 and 1 in 5 have annual incomes below \$10,000. In terms of household debt, participants' total debt varied widely, 45.3% had debts under \$10,000, while 16.4% of participants had debts exceeding \$30,000. In addition, participant savings are very limited, 51% indicated having no savings at all and 20% have savings of less than \$500.

## FCSS Information and Referral Summary

<b>Type of Information / Referral Requests Received</b>	<b># of Agencies</b>	<b># of Requests</b>
Phone Calls	3	73,597
Emails	3	2,002
Walk-ins	1	17
<b>Information Sharing Mediums</b>	<b># of Agencies</b>	<b># of Participants Reached</b>
Newsletters	3	51,623
Website Hits	2	262,218
Information Fairs/Evenings/Sessions	1	733
<b>Social Media Interactions</b>	<b># of Agencies</b>	<b># Followers</b>
Facebook	2	22,812
Twitter	2	3,005
Instagram	2	N/A
Radio Advertisements	1	N/A
Text Message Interactions	1	2,209
Chat interaction	1	2,895
LinkedIn	1	N/A

## APPENDIX 4: UNITED WAY-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

Programs receiving United Way funding were asked to report on one or more outputs. The intention of this reporting was to help donors to United Way understand program impact in a more tangible way.

<i>Output Category</i>	<i># provided</i>
<b>Basic Needs - Food Security</b>	
Meals	1,281,826
Food Baskets/Hampers	429,627
Other Food Security Support	58
<b>Basic Needs - Housing</b>	
Contact Sessions	464
Other Housing Supports	227
<b>Basic Needs - Emergency Funds</b>	
Emergency Funds	5,537
Housing Supports	140
Transportation Trips (bus tickets, ride fare)	1,657
<b>Educational Supports</b>	
Contact Sessions	8,245
Devices (computers & personal devices)	633
Supported Referrals	406
Other Educational Supports	1,747
<b>Employment Services</b>	
Employment Training/Workshops	970
Resume/Interview Supports	514
Other Employment Supports	383

<b>Output Category</b>	<b># provided</b>
<b>Financial Empowerment</b>	
Financial Counselling Referrals	36
Financial Education/Literacy Sessions	435
Tax Returns Prepared and Submitted	8,962
Other Tax Preparation Supports	5,524,692
<b>Information &amp; Referral - Staff member(s) connect participants to resources (systems navigation, supported referral)</b>	
Inquiries	9849
<b>Information &amp; Referral - Traditional Information &amp; Referral phone or web interaction</b>	
Calls/Web Inquiries	65,870
Other Traditional Information & Referral Supports	247
<b>Mental Health &amp; Wellness - Group Counselling</b>	
Group Sessions	1015
Other Group Counselling Supports	44
<b>Mental Health &amp; Wellness - Individual Counselling</b>	
Counselling Sessions	23,352
Supported Referrals	175
<b>Mental Health &amp; Wellness - Public Education</b>	
Mental Health Workshops/Presentations	1,121
Other Public Education Services	31
<b>Parenting/Caregiver Supports</b>	
Caregiver/Child Activity Kits	4,390
Caregiver Workshops/Sessions	895
Contact Sessions	22,376
Other Parenting/Caregiver Supports	869
<b>Personal Safety</b>	
Intakes	419
Safety Plans	4,736
Other Personal Safety Supports	75

<b>Output Category</b>	<b># provided</b>
<b>Reducing Social Isolation</b> - Bringing supports to people who are isolated and who may not be able to participate in community-based group activities due to various barriers (seniors in residences with mobility issues, low-income single parents, people in domestic violence shelters) but the program comes to them through individualized supports/outreach/check ins.	
Contact Sessions	2,809
Outreach Visits	1,977
Transportation Trips	10
Devices (computers & personal devices)	16
<b>Social Inclusion</b> - Increasing community connections and building strong relationships by bringing people together in groups. This could be through a culturally-based youth program, peer support group, recreation opportunities for families, etc. These programs reduce barriers for low income individuals and families so they can participate in society in a more fulsome way.	
Outreach Visits	4,459
Social Activities	10,776
Contact Sessions (one on one)	38,749
<b>Strong Sector - Collaboration</b>	
Collaborations/Networks facilitated	104
Partners Engaged	325
Other Collaboration Supports	48
<b>Strong Sector - Evaluation</b>	
Trainings/Workshops Completed	19
Evaluations Completed	2
<b>Strong Sector - Research</b>	
Partners Engaged in Research	58
Workshops/Presentations	20



## APPENDIX 5: LIST OF AGENCIES

This report is based on the activities and reporting of the following agencies. Our sincere thanks for the important work that they continue to do in the community, and for the information that they have provided that has made this report possible.

Abbottsfield Youth Project (AYP) Society  
ABC Head Start Society  
Aboriginal Counseling Services Association of Alberta  
Action for Healthy Communities  
Alberta Caregivers Association O/A Caregivers Alberta  
Alberta Parenting for the Future Association  
ASSIST Community Services Centre  
Ben Calf Robe Society  
Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society  
Beverly Day Care Society & Family Resource Centre  
Bissell Centre  
Boyle Street Community Services  
Boys & Girls Clubs Big Brothers Big Sisters of Edmonton & Area  
Boys and Girls Club of Leduc  
Boys and Girls Club of Strathcona County  
Canadian Arab Friendship Association  
Canadian Mental Health Association - Edmonton Region  
Canadian National Institute for the Blind, The  
Candora Society of Edmonton, The  
Catholic Social Services  
Centre for Family Literacy Society  
Centre to End All Sexual Exploitation (CEASE)  
CHANGE Health Alberta  
City West Childcare and Community Support Society  
Community Options - A Society for Children and Families  
Community-University Partnership for the Study of Children, Youth, and Families, University of Alberta  
Connect Society  
Council for the Advancement of African Canadians operating as Africa Centre  
Dickinsfield Amity House  
Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations  
Edmonton City Centre Church Corporation (e4c)  
Edmonton Immigrant Services Association  
Edmonton John Howard Society  
Edmonton Meals on Wheels  
Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers  
Edmonton Multicultural Coalition Association  
Edmonton Seniors Centre  
Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council  
Edmonton Social Planning Council  
Edmonton's Food Bank: Edmonton Gleaners Association  
Elizabeth Fry Society of Edmonton  
Esquao, the Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women  
Family Centre of Northern Alberta, The  
Family Futures Resource Network Society  
Fort Saskatchewan Boys & Girls Club  
Fort Saskatchewan Families First Society

Free Play for Kids Inc.  
Fulton Child Care Association  
Gateway Association  
Governing Council of the Salvation Army, The  
iHuman Youth Society  
Inner City Youth Development Association  
Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services (iSMSS), The  
Islamic Family & Social Services Association (IFSSA)  
Jasper Place Child and Family Resource Centre  
Jasper Place Wellness Centre  
Jewish Family Services  
KARA Family Resource Centre  
Lansdowne Child Care & Family Centre Society  
Leduc & District Food Bank Association  
Linking Generations Society of Alberta  
M.A.P.S. (Mapping and Planning Support) Alberta Capital Region  
Métis Child and Family Services Society  
Mill Woods Seniors Association  
Momentum Walk-In Counselling Society  
Multicultural Family Resource Society  
Next Step Senior High II - Fort Saskatchewan  
North Edmonton Seniors Association  
North West Edmonton Seniors Society  
Norwood Child and Family Resource Centre  
Old Strathcona Youth Society  
Oliver Centre Early Learning Programs for Children & Families Society  
Operation Friendship Seniors Society  
P.A.L.S. - Project Adult Literacy Society  
Parents Empowering Parents Society  
Parkland Food Bank Society  
Pride Centre of Edmonton, The  
Riseup Society Alberta  
Riverbend Reaching Out to Community & Kids Society  
Saffron Centre LTD.  
Sage Seniors Association  
Senior Citizens Opportunity Neighbourhood Association  
Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton  
South East Edmonton Seniors Association  
Spinal Cord Injury Alberta  
St. Albert Community Village and Food Bank  
St. Albert Family Resource Centre  
Strathcona Place Society  
Strathcona Shelter Society Ltd.  
Terra Centre for Teen Parents  
The Shaama Centre for Seniors and Women  
Today Family Violence Help Centre (Today Centre)  
United Way of the Alberta Capital Region  
Volunteer Program Association  
Westend Seniors Activity Centre  
Women Building Futures  
YMCA of Northern Alberta  
Youth Empowerment and Support Services  
YWCA Edmonton