



United Way
Alberta Capital Region

Change starts here.

myunitedway.ca

2010 Results

Our Community. Our Impact.



An Overview of Results Achieved in the Alberta Capital Region
Prepared by Community Building & Investment

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Give. Volunteer. Act.

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About United Way of the Alberta Capital Region



Since 1941, United Way of the Alberta Capital Region has been working steadily to improve lives and build stronger communities. United Way believes that community matters, partnerships matter and results matter. The philosophy behind our work hasn't changed, but the way we work has.

From child and youth development initiatives to ensuring supports are in place for vulnerable individuals, families and neighbourhoods, our work really embraces the well being of the entire community.

We start with a fundamental belief that together we can do so much more than we can alone. We believe that real change – real community impact - occurs when people from all walks of life connect and rally around a common goal. We help to inspire and make those connections bringing together community organizations, businesses, governments and everyday people who care about the issues we face as a community.

Working together we build an organized safety net of core community services for people in immediate need. We get to the root causes of community issues in order to build solutions for the long-term. And we build the momentum towards fundamental change for our society through education and advocacy.

We're all about people working united as a community, for the community.

It is therefore critical that we better understand our work and the difference it makes in the community. This allows us not only to be accountable and good stewards, but is essential to learning and evaluative thinking. The information we currently gather begins to form the “body of evidence”. The “body of evidence” speaks to the difference United Way makes – it is a measure of our results right here in the Capital Region.

Mission



To improve lives and build community by engaging individuals and mobilizing collective action.

Values



Demonstrate trust, integrity, respect, inclusivity, and transparency



Energize and inspire volunteerism and volunteer leadership



Endorse innovation, partnerships and collective action



Provide non-partisan leadership and embrace diversity

Education

All that kids can be.

From the early years to high school completion, we're supporting the full path of development to help children and youth achieve their potential

Early Childhood Development



There is no doubt that the future of our society depends on the health and well-being of our children. At United Way, we believe that by investing wisely into generations of children, the result will be a lifetime of productivity and responsible citizenship.

Development of a healthy child begins at conception. Without proper nutrition and prenatal care, the child may be born already at a disadvantage. In addition, toxins (e.g. alcohol, nicotine, illicit drugs) are known to affect fetal development causing birth defects and delayed development.

Based on the growing cache of anecdotal and scientific evidence, it is becoming more apparent that the first 6 years of life, starting at day one, are vital to raising a healthy child. For instance, neurobiological studies of children have shown significant physical differences in brain structure between a healthy child and one who has been neglected or abused.

For our children to have an opportunity to achieve their full potential, we need to focus on the early years of a child's life. Parents and educators have observed that the inability to comprehend and retain information, recognize patterns, and empathize with others are good predictors of emotional, behavioral, physical and developmental problems in the future.

The lack of accessible and affordable high quality childcare is of growing concern. Quality childcare facilities are typically quite costly and have long waiting lists. As a result, many are forced to rely on friends and family members for childcare. Ultimately, there is a lack of trained and experienced childhood educators.

Parents, educators and the broader community need to be made aware of the importance of early childhood development and the continuum of services provided by non-profit agencies, businesses and governments (municipal, provincial and federal). The continuum of services includes primary health care, early intervention programs, community programs (recreational, educational and social support), early education programs and childcare. If these programs are available and caregivers access them, we increase the likelihood that children will be healthy and successful in life.

The Difference We Make

Our expertise in community building and knowledge of our community's intricate needs allows United Way to make educated and informed investment decisions in order to maximize the impact of your donations in our community. Here are several examples of your dollars at work through United Way investments in local agencies in the area of Early Childhood Development.

→ In 2010, Success By 6® received a major grant from the Early Learning Branch of Alberta Education to support a proposal it submitted on behalf of the Aligning Early Learning and Care Services Group chaired by Success By 6®. The three year Early Years Continuum Project will identify gaps in the services currently available for children 0-6 and work to build strong collaborations among the service providers to look at how current resources and practices can be better integrated in order that families can make a smooth transition from one service or program to another. The ministries for Alberta Health and Children's and Youth Services are also involved in the project.

Success By 6® is cohosting a series of forums discussing Early Childhood and Care in Alberta with the Muttart Foundation. These forums are being held throughout the province. The first forum was held in Edmonton in 2010. Further forums will be held in 2011 and a summary paper prepared for submission to the government of Alberta.

→ Connect Society's Early intervention program specializes in serving children, between the ages of birth & 3 1/2 years and their families affected by hearing loss. The program helps to strengthen the capacity of parents to nurture their Child's development. 100% of program participants felt that their children's overall communication and social skills were improved as a result of participating in this program.

→ Norwood Child and Family resource Centre's Head Start Program provided service to 64 children. The Head Start Program offers preschool children a program which focuses on learning through play, early health and development screening, intervention programming for children with developmental challenges and parent involvement, support and education. The Head Start program reduces the degree to which children are placed in special education placements and often held back a grade during the elementary years.

→ KARA's Family Support Program provides families with an opportunity to learn about effective parenting strategies, life skills, early childhood development, available community resources and personal development. In 2010, The Family support program provided over 400 parents with traditional learning opportunities as well as hands on, experiential learning opportunities that support early childhood development.

Learn More



United Way of the Alberta Capital Region (myunitedway.ca)
Success By 6® (successby6edmonton.info)
Centre for Family Literacy (famlit.ca)
St. Albert's Parent's Place Association (stalbertparentsplace.com)
Norwood Child and Family Resource Centre (ncfrc.ab.ca)
Terra Association (terraassociation.com)
Community-University Partnership (cup.ualberta.ca)
Inter-Agency Head Start (abheadstart.org)
Edmonton Public School Board (epsb.ca)
Alberta Health and Wellness (health.gov.ab.ca/public/growing.html)
Edmonton Social Planning Council (edmontonsocialplanning.ca)
Alberta Childcare Association (albertachildcare.org)
KARA Family Resource Centre (kara-frc.ca)

Success in School



Province-wide, one in five students fails to graduate and receive their High School Diploma.¹ In the City of Edmonton this becomes one in four. It is therefore critical that we focus on ways to improve the success of children at school. Success is defined not just by academic achievement, but also by positive emotional and social development. There are two primary components to this issue. First, for those that are attending school, how do we assure that they are reaching their potential? Second, how do we ensure that all children attend and finish school?

For a child or adolescent to be successful in school, they must be provided the essentials that become the foundation for success. Intuitively, we know that for any individual to be productive the basic needs of food, shelter and clothing are needed. Logically, what follows is a positive family and social network for the child that encourages and acts as role models. Research has also shown that healthy minds depend on healthy bodies. Recreation and physical activity promote positive growth. These factors are merely the foundations for success in school.

There are many stressors that can hinder a child's ability to learn and ultimately their success. For example, schools consistently deal with the issue of bullying. A child who is bullied and unable to get help can suffer self-esteem issues and begin skipping school to avoid bullies. Other stressors may include physical and sexual abuse, drug and alcohol abuse, gang influences and learning disabilities. Supports need to be in place to identify these issues and provide appropriate resolutions; otherwise, the Edmonton Public School dropout rate of 5.6% will rise.²

United Way's Partners for Kids has continued to be a model for successful community collaboration. Partners for Kids uses a wraparound approach to services, ensuring that children, youth and families have the supports they need to succeed both at school and in the community. As of 2010, the Partners for Kids concept has formally grown to include 13 elementary and junior high schools. The Partners for Kids partnership reaches over 1,400 children and youth through this model.

In the past five years the enrollment of English Language Learners has increased from 3,709 in 2004/05 to 11,216 in 2009/2010.³ United Way is supporting the Transition School for newcomers to Canada. The Transition School is a hub of resources that provides short-term supports for newcomer, immigrant and refugee youth with very limited English and significant gaps in their formal schooling. In addition to providing services to youth, the Transition School engages the entire family to ensure that siblings and parents are supported as well. Through a model of collaboration and student, family and community engagement, and a holistic, strength-based approach, the Transition School supports these students in making a successful transition to an appropriate school program that further meets their needs.

1 Edmonton Public Schools. Annual Education Results Report 2009-2010. High School completion rate is measured as graduation within 5 years of entering grade 10.

2 Edmonton Public Schools. Annual Education Results Report 2009-2010.

3 Edmonton Public Schools. Annual Education Results Report 2009-2010.

The Difference We Make

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- ➔ During the 2009-2010 school year, E4C served 2300 children in 12 Public and Catholic schools a nutritious lunch every school day of the year, ensuring that children had the nutrition they need to focus on learning. Research has shown that children with proper nutrition have better academic outcomes and improved behavior.
- ➔ The Boys and Girls clubs of Edmonton's Neighbourhood Clubs provided a safe place and positive programming for more than 2000 individuals. The program focuses on educational, recreational and life skills through positive and educational role models.
- ➔ United Way Tools for School program filled 9, 468 backpacks with basic supplies for students in need for the 2009-2010 school year, school supplies for children and youth are critical for their academic success.
- ➔ E4C's Kids in the Hall Bistro Program is a social enterprise and helps at-risk youth between 16 and 24 gain knowledge and skills for success in educational or employment settings. In 2010, 272 youth accessed the Outreach Services and 47 youth entered the employment training program.
- ➔ The YMCA's Youth Transitions Program is a free service focused on providing support to youth (aged 13 – 19) who are facing barriers in their life. Since January 1, 2010, 178 individuals have been served by the program to overcome barriers related to school, employment, peers, family, criminal activity, housing, addictions and pregnancy.
- ➔ The Boys and Girls Club of Fort Saskatchewan provided programming to over 500 individuals through their Youth development program. The program provides youth with a safe, supervised place to go after school. Through the program, youth learn valuable life skills and gain skills and experience that will aid them in being successful in life.

Learn More

- United Way of the Alberta Capital Region (myunitedway.ca)
- Big Brothers Big Sisters Society of Edmonton & Area (bbbsedmonton.org)
- Boys and Girls Clubs
- E4C (e4calberta.org)
- YMCA of Edmonton (edmonton.ymca.ca)
- Norwood Child and Family Resource Centre (ncfrc.ab.ca)
- Terra Association (terraassociation.com)

Income

From poverty to possibility.

We're helping community members who have low income and those experiencing homelessness to gain financial stability and independence

Poverty



Poverty is spoken of and understood in many different contexts. Officially, there is no true measure for poverty. However, there is a measure that helps to gauge the incidence of poverty. The 'low-income cut-off' (LICO) is calculated by Statistics Canada and is based upon the amount of money a family will spend on its basic needs (food, shelter and clothing). Although much has been done to reduce poverty across Canada, 7% of Albertans and 7.1% of Edmontonians are still living below the after-tax LICO.⁴ Children are highly affected by poverty. 11.2% of Alberta's children live in poverty.⁵

For most, when speaking about poverty, the first images are of the homeless individuals looking for emergency shelter, the "pan-handlers" on Jasper and Whyte Avenue or the line-ups at the community soup kitchen. The idea that poverty is only a result of not having a job is a myth. There are many individuals and families in the community that are considered to be the "working poor". Often these individuals need to choose between putting a roof over their head or food on the table. Simply put, it's about making ends meet.

However, not having the money to make ends meet is merely the symptom of larger underlying root causes. Multiple factors contribute to poverty. These include, but are not limited to: language barriers, lack of education, mental and/or physical disabilities, increases in cost of living, low minimum wage, lack of transportation, a fixed income, addictions, and/or family violence. Our Member Agencies partner with United Way to tackle these root causes of poverty.

In order to address the issue of poverty, we as a community need to address these factors that perpetuate the cycle of poverty from one generation to the next, from one neighborhood to another, from today until tomorrow.

⁴ Statistics Canada. Table 202-0802 – Persons in low income, annual, CANSIM (database) and Catalogue No. 75-202-X. 2007.
⁵ 2009 Report Card on Child & Family Poverty: 1989 – 2009. Campaign 2000.

The Difference We Make

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United Way works with and provides funding to a network of social service agencies that comprise a “safety net” for those living in, or at risk of falling into, poverty. There are agencies that support mentally and physically challenged individuals, provide counselling, help provide the necessities of life, and provide skills and opportunities to improve their quality of life. For example, United Way invests donor dollars into Food Banks in Edmonton, St. Albert and Leduc. However, having a “safety net” alone will not end poverty. To reduce poverty with the goal of eliminating it, a collective effort needs to be made to address its root causes.

Collaboration and partnership is a cornerstone of United Way and we work alongside many others in a variety of ways in order to achieve impact in this area. For instance, together with numerous partners, United Way is involved with Families First Edmonton. Families First Edmonton is a research project aimed at determining the outcomes achieved through the coordinated delivery of health, family support and recreation services to low-income families. Families First Edmonton seeks to determine the most cost-effective, efficient use of resources to proactively assist families.

Poverty is a complex social issue that will demand energy and resources. There is no easy solution to such issues, but by working together we aim to change lives and improve the social conditions of our community.



Approximately 15,000 people in need receive nutritional hampers from the Edmonton Food Bank or one of its affiliates every month.



United Way's Coats for Kids and Families program and partner Page The Cleaner collected, cleaned and distributed 11,000 donated coats to people in need throughout the Alberta Capital Region in 2010.



Goodwill Industries of Alberta's Contract Services program provides employment opportunities for people with disabilities and other barriers to employment. In 2010, 70 clients felt fulfilled after they secured and maintained employment while they earned a competitive wage.

Learn More



Edmonton Social Planning Council (edmontonsocialplanning.ca)
Families First Edmonton (familiesfirstedmonton.ualberta.ca)
E4C (e4calberta.org)

Homelessness and Affordable Housing



By definition, homelessness refers to the condition of lacking a fixed, regular and adequate residence. This definition covers the broad spectrum of homelessness. The continuum of homelessness ranges from the chronic homeless that are unable to maintain employment and residence to the homeless that have lost their home to disaster (e.g. fire). In between these extremes is a variety of unique circumstances and factors, but the number of stories are ever increasing.

Individuals become homeless for many reasons. Some of these include: leaving an abusive relationship, loss of employment, death of a major income earner, physical or mental disabilities, addictions, disasters (fire and flooding), “runaway” children/youth, re-integration into society after incarceration, increased housing costs and falling incomes.

For the first time since the Homeless Count began in 1999, the most recent Homeless Count actually saw a reduction in the number of homeless individuals in Edmonton. In 2010, the number of homeless individuals was 2,421, which was 658 fewer individuals than in 2008, a reduction of 21%. This reduction speaks to the success that is being seen through the Housing First Model and the work of many partners.

A major factor for homelessness is the lack of employment. For some individuals, finding and maintaining a job can be very difficult. This can be especially true for those who may have either physical/mental health concerns or addictions. There may be stigmatization from coworkers or an uncooperative workplace. Without employment, many individuals rely on government assistance. For those who do find work, the rate of pay is typically insufficient. In Alberta, the minimum wage was \$8.80 per hour in 2010⁶, but a wage of \$12.00 per hour is needed to ensure Albertans have the minimum essentials for living.⁷ With just under half of those with low wages being the major income earners in their family, it's easy to see how those in this situation are homeless or on the verge of becoming homeless.

Latest numbers show that 60.5% of households own their own homes while 38.5% live in rental properties.⁸ A review of the housing market in Edmonton shows that rental vacancy rate is 4.2% (2011)⁹, but the average rent for a 2-bedroom apartment is \$1015 per month (2011).¹⁰ In addition to rent, one needs to consider utilities, transportation, food and clothing.

6 Government of Alberta. Employment, Immigration and Industry.

7 Alberta Federation of Labour.

8 City of Edmonton Municipal Census. 2009.

9 Housing Market Outlook – Edmonton CMA – First Quarter 2011. Canadian Mortgage & Housing Corporation.

10 Housing Market Outlook – Edmonton CMA – First Quarter 2011. Canadian Mortgage & Housing Corporation.

The Difference We Make

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Homeless Connect - Homeless Connect Edmonton is a broad-based community-inspired initiative, providing free appropriate services to homeless people and those at risk of becoming homeless, on one day and at one location. Its mission is to provide services that help open doors out of homelessness, build lasting partnerships, raise public awareness of homelessness in the community, and provide a vehicle for community involvement in addressing the issue of homelessness.

A range of services are provided including mental health assessments, library services, foot care, haircuts, immunizations, birth control, pre-natal support, laundry, housing information, employment and training services and much more.

United Way provided support for various committees including the Steering Committee, Volunteer Committees and Sponsorship Committees. As well, United Way provided a staff person to Co-Chair the event. United Way of the Alberta Capital Region provided care kits and winter coats for each guest.

Homeless Commission - The City of Edmonton created the Homeless Commission to oversee the implementation of Edmonton's Homelessness Plan. United Way's CEO Anne Smith is the Chair of the Commission and the staff for the Homeless Commission is housed at United Way. Over the past year, the Commission has made great strides in the implementation of the Homelessness Plan. The Commission has endorsed a Housing First approach. This model operates on the premise that housing is a prerequisite to economic, social and personal well-being. Once housed, staff will focus on developing the support services needed to address the issues that put participants at risk of homelessness.



Homeless Connect Edmonton provides free services twice a year, in one location for homeless people and those at risk of homelessness. In 2010, a total of 3,000 people accessed dental care, hair cuts, hot meals and medical care. Guests are also given a free "Personal Care Kit" with donated items such as deodorant, shampoo, first aid items and soap. United Way volunteers package the kits at the United Way's InKind Centre.



In the first two years of implementing A Place to Call Home – Edmonton's 10 year plan to End Homelessness, over 1300 people have been found a home and approximately 85% have retained their housing.

Learn More



United Way of the Alberta Capital Region (myunitedway.ca)
Edmonton Social Planning Council (edmspc.com)
Edmonton Coalition on Housing and Homelessness Society (ecohh.ca)
Homeward Trust (homewardtrust.ca)
Bissell Centre (bissellcentre.org)

Success Story - Express Yourself

Sampson's Story



At Boyle Street Community services, workers rushed to check on a coworker counselling a middle-age man who was heard screaming and shouting from down the hall. The man, named Sampson, was angry and let the counsellor hear exactly what was on his mind. He was deeply frustrated in being unemployed and felt that he was being held back by the very systems that were setup to help him.

After several minutes of intensity the man stopped, realizing that he had been allowed to go on without being told to calm down. The counselor had waited patiently, giving Sampson the time he needed to vent. This level of expression had never been allowed in other counselling sessions and Sampson felt, for the first time in a long time, that someone was really listening.

This space of acceptance softened Sampson and he became determined not to miss a single session and he was intent on creating the change he wanted in his life. He admits now that had he not been able to talk freely, his pent up frustrations would have consumed him and he would probably have hurt someone.

With his anger out of the way, Sampson and his counselor were able to work on the underlying issues present in his life.

Sampson is now setting goals for his future and has broken the cycle of poverty he had been trapped in.



Wellness

Healthy people, strong communities.

In working for the overall well-being of community members, we're building the positive environments and social capacity for caring, safe neighbourhoods.

Neighbourhoods



The strength of our communities depends greatly on the health of individual neighbourhoods. Residents want to live in communities that are safe, have places to gather, offer affordable housing and where people know one another. It is important that efforts to revitalize neighbourhoods are led by residents so that the skills and passion for maintaining the neighbourhoods remain in place.

The Difference We Make

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Neighbourhood Empowerment Team (N.E.T.) - The N.E.T. concept has played an integral role in community policing in Edmonton for the past twelve years. As a shared project of Edmonton Police Service, City of Edmonton Community Services, The Family Centre and United Way of the Capital Region, N.E.T. teams are championed as a means of applying nontraditional policing response to common and recurrent community issues.

Assigned to at-risk communities, as determined by escalating crime statistics, N.E.T. teams stabilize environments; reducing and preventing crime and fear of crime. The development and execution of a Community Action Plan, customized to each community's unique needs and opportunities, drives day-to-day activity of N.E.T. teams. Community-specific policing, community mobilization and crime prevention programming are implemented over a two to four year period.

REACH Edmonton Council for Safe Communities (REACH) - REACH is an Edmonton-based non-profit community organization dedicated to building a culture of community safety in one generation. Governed by a Board composed of citizens and representatives from various agencies and levels of government, the vision of REACH Edmonton is a city in which all citizens contribute to a healthy community where they are safe and feel safe. In 2010, United Way supported this initiative with a representative on the REACH Board, by participating in community consultations and being a member of the REACH Schools as Hubs Steering committee.

Jasper Place Revitalization Committee - We are pleased to support the revitalization efforts in the neighbourhood that our offices are located in. The committee's mission statement is to enrich community life by working with others to strengthen individuals, families and organizations, support neighborhood aspirations and engage people in the development of their communities.



In the Britannia Youngstown community there was a 32% reduction in crime between 2007 and 2010, making the neighbourhood a safer place to live, work and play.



In 2010 M.A.P.S Alberta Capital Region worked on creating a Social Atlas of the City of Edmonton, this Social Atlas will be an important tool for collaborative planning and development in human services and other areas of community and neighbourhood development.

Learn More



United Way of the Alberta Capital Region (myunitedway.ca)
Edmonton Social Planning Council (edmspc.com)
Edmonton Coalition on Housing and Homelessness Society (ecohh.ca)
Homeward Trust (homewardtrust.ca)
Bissell Centre (bissellcentre.org)

Healthy People



An important part of building a healthy, resilient community is ensuring that when individuals and families experience challenges that they have a place to turn for support. This “safety net” of services includes programs such as counselling, crisis intervention, food banks, information and referral services, literacy and related programs. These programs come together as part of a healthy and effective social sector.

The Difference We Make

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211 - In times of crisis, it is critical that people in need of help can access the support required. To that end, United Way is working to ensure that all residents of the Alberta Capital Region have access to the 211 Information and Referral Service. 211 is a three-digit phone number people call to access information regarding services in their local community. This service is now available to residents of Edmonton, Strathcona County, Leduc and Parkland County. By calling 211, individuals can access information on basic needs, employment needs, parenting support, counseling/support groups, health care, legal services and much more. In 2010, 211 received over 51,000 calls.

Phona: Keepers of the Flame - Phona is a Gang Intervention and Diversion Program for youth aged 11 to 17 who live in the City of Edmonton. The program works with youth identified by the Edmonton Police Service to create opportunities and alternatives that lead youth away from gang association. The program is based on research findings that demonstrate positive outcomes when a variety of supports and services are “wrapped around” youth to address their unique needs and circumstance. It is also based on research that show the best way to engage youth is to empower them to create change and to surround them with supportive adults.

- ➔ In Alberta there are over 100 new spinal cord injuries every year. Canadian Paraplegic Associations Client Services program helps clients to have the support they need after injury. In the Alberta Capital Region 79 clients received the essential supports and guidance required to transition successfully back into the community.
- ➔ Strathcona Shelter Society A Safe Place Shelter provided safe and supportive accommodation to 350 women and 400 children at risk of domestic violence and abuse. The Shelter received approximately 2,000 calls and provided ongoing community outreach support to 125 clients and 237 children to assist them in accessing supports in their community.
- ➔ 80 adults improved their literacy skills in matches with volunteer tutors through the Literacy Program at Project Adult Literacy Society.
- ➔ The Seniors Association of Greater Edmonton (SAGE), Home Services program acts as a brokering service to connect seniors to screened workers and companies to provide home maintenance services at an affordable rate. Services available include: snow removal, yard maintenance, carpentry, general maintenance, painting, plumbing, companionship, housekeeping, and others. This program was able to assist 1078 seniors to live safely in their homes longer by connecting them to supports for home maintenance.

In 2010 the Canadian Red Cross in Edmonton and Area, Disaster Services program responded to 60 disasters and assisted 368 clients with direct aid after a disaster. Clients were provided with the basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter and personal hygiene items; every client was also given information referrals to seek out long term support.

Additional Highlights

Geographic Service Area Collaborations

United Way of the Alberta Capital Region ensures that resources are strategically invested in surrounding communities of the Capital Region referred to as Geographic Service Areas (GSA). Community participation is key in addressing real and specific community needs so local Community Investment Committees (CIC) comprised of community volunteers, community agency/organization representatives (i.e. Family and Community Support Services, education, law enforcement, youth etc.) who have an in-depth knowledge of the issues, challenges and resources of the community, have been established.

These committees increase the community's influence to direct dollars based on what they feel would be the greatest benefit to their municipality/region. Community needs are identified in a variety of ways and are therefore unique to the community itself. For example, Strathcona County identified supports for youth as a priority need whereas in St. Albert, the need for temporary residential support services which provides rent subsidies for low-income citizens was identified as a priority for the community. Fort Saskatchewan has been supporting multiple projects addressing a variety of identified needs each year.

Families First

Families First Edmonton (FFE) is a ground breaking, \$10 million community- based collaborative research project that arose out of a shared desire to find a better way to deliver existing services to families with low incomes. The research project is based on the hypothesis that a coordinated, targeted and proactive intervention in families with low incomes may lead to healthier, happier, more successful families. This in turn will lead to reduced reliance on social and health services and stronger communities. The service delivery component is almost completed and the partners are ready to implement Phase 2 of the project, which is about putting the research to action.

Shared Services

United Way and the Edmonton Community Foundation received a grant from Tides Canada Foundation in 2008 to explore various shared service models for the not for profit sector in Edmonton. A consultant was hired to get feedback from the sector and to complete some research on models that already existed in Canada and the United States. Additional dollars were provided by Alberta Employment and Immigration and the City of Edmonton. In 2010, the three shared services projects continue to be implemented and agencies are working together to improve efficiency and effectiveness of their organizations. Learnings are being captured through the implementation of an evaluation plan. The three projects are related to human resources, financial management and coaching/mentoring for after school care volunteers.

Today Centre



After several years of planning and work, the TODAY Family Violence Centre launched near the end of 2009. The TODAY Centre delivers a comprehensive, multidisciplinary response to family violence. It offers a safe place for those affected by domestic violence to access timely, short-term services and support. Additionally, The Today Centre links those affected by domestic violence to medium-term and long-term services and supports in the community that further supports their quality of life. In 2010, the TODAY Family Violence Centre averaged 170 clients a month.

The Today Centre is part of a coordinated, collaborative community response that includes the Edmonton Police Service, Catholic Social Services, the Edmonton John Howard Society, Aboriginal Consulting Services of Alberta, City of Edmonton, Alberta Children and Youth Services, and the RCMP. Many existing community-based family violence services are brought together into one centralized locale to offer support to those affected by domestic violence.

Common Outcomes



United Way has been working closely with City of Edmonton, FCSS (Family & Child Support Services), Edmonton & Area Child & Family Services Authority and our funded agencies to develop ways of streamlining the reporting process. We understand that providing reports for funding takes time and energy on everybody's behalf. By developing a common framework, we aim to gather pertinent consistent information that will speak to the collective impact of the work we do.

This workgroup has also been looking at how the spectrum of services being provided in our community contributes to the well-being of children, families and individuals. The programs that promote a healthy lifestyle are just as critical and valuable as the prevention, early intervention and intervention programs. In order for our community to be successful, these programs need to work as an integrated cohesive system. Partnerships between service providers and the funding organizations are key in this effort and we are well on the way to beginning the transformation of the sector.

In the past year United Way continued to work with the City of Edmonton, FCSS (Family & Child Support Services), Edmonton & Area Child & Family Services Authority and our funded agencies to develop ways of streamlining the reporting process. An outputs form developed to capture common statistical information was completed and used by the three funders in 2010. The response from agencies was positive. The information will be aggregated by each funder as well as the collective. As well, this work group has identified a common set of outcomes for the range of program categories funded. Currently indicators are being developed and will be the next steps towards gathering pertinent consistent information that will speak to the collective impact of the work we do.

Community Planning Project



In January 2010, United Way, the City of Edmonton and the Edmonton Community Foundation agreed to put resources towards exploring ways to support and strengthen the social services sector to improve the lives of all children, youth, seniors and families in our communities.

Based on research and community conversations, two streams of work were identified. One is related to the social services sector, how it is structured, how it is aligned or not aligned and how services can be delivered more effectively in a constantly changing world. There are a wide variety of strategies or approaches that community agencies, organizations and initiatives can, and already are, exploring. The other stream of work is much bigger and bolder and is about galvanizing the entire community around a common vision, goal or agenda.