Last year marked 62 years of Catholic Family Service (CFS) supporting families. Since 1957, when Fr. Pat O’Byrne’s visionary leadership launched the organization, services have been offered to Calgarians of all faiths and cultures. As many have heard me say, it doesn’t matter where you come from, what you have been through, who you love, or where you pray: we are here for you.

If I were to identify one theme from 2019, I would say, “constant change.” Calgary’s ongoing economic challenges and Calgarians’ changing needs pushed us to respond in real-time and new ways. As we worked to meet those challenges, there were many highlights:

- Our collaborative work – in 2019, we celebrated 50 years serving young parents at Louise Dean Centre in partnership with the Calgary Board of Education and Alberta Health Services.
- Transforming our counselling services through online booking and an innovative single session model.
- Our ongoing partnership initiative with CUPS, inspired by our shared belief that lack of coordination across the sector hinders the achievement of high impact client outcomes.

We are very proud of all we have accomplished, and we are also frustrated that with limited time and resources, we could not attend to all of our strategic goals. We chose to delay a fulsome review of our quality assurance process for the organization to fully commit to our strategic ambition to be a leader in collaboration across the sector. Moving forward, quality assurance and sector-leading outcomes will be our priority as we develop methods to report outcomes relevant to our overarching objective of strengthening the family.

We know that our community’s resilience—already grappling with a challenging economy—has been further tested by COVID-19. Sector transformation, innovation, and rapid adaptation will be required to meet client needs, and no doubt, the constant change will continue. CFS will not waver in our commitment to building strong families. We are eager to be active participants in the exciting transformations ahead that we know are often the silver lining of a crisis.

In July 2020, I’ll take my leave of CFS after 27 incredible years. I leave knowing the deep bench strength of leadership we have developed over the past five years will take this amazing organization to the next level. We are well-positioned to respond to the future with a clear purpose. Our service delivery approach is based on best practices, and our collaborations will lead to better service. With the strong visionary leadership of the next generation of leaders within CFS, with whom I have had the honour of working, CFS could not be in better hands.

To me, humanity above all else, says it all.

Patricia Jones, CEO
We intend to become BETTER in all that we do

We aspire to become a strong leader among not-for-profit agencies delivering social services in Calgary and a committed provider of family-centric service in our community.

1 Setting the standard for collaboration among peer organizations in Calgary’s social services sector

Proud Partnership with the Calgary Board of Education (CBE) and Alberta Health Services (AHS): 2019 marked the 50th year that we have collaborated with the CBE and AHS to serve expecting and parenting teenagers and young adults at the Louise Dean Centre. Together, we have reduced barriers to completing a high school education for young parents, supporting them in developing practical life skills, addressing mental health concerns, and strengthening their young children’s attachment and development.

CFS and CUPS: Together, we embarked on a bold collaboration initiative in our quest to participate in the reshaping of social services in Calgary. This initiative presents a hypothesis for delivering better outcomes through the power of agency collaboration. The hypothesis is straightforward: by formally connecting and integrating programs across organizational boundaries, service providers can meet the holistic needs of clients in ways that could never be achieved by an agency on its own.

In 2019, we co-developed a pilot project to launch in 2020, delivering our Never Too Late Program at a third location to evaluate if our clients are better served by offering both organizations’ services without barriers.

2 Becoming the preferred recipient of funding from organizations focused on serving the needs of the family

Core Brain Story Certified: Over 90% of our staff completed the online course developed by The Palix Foundation and The Alberta Family Wellness Initiative designed for those who seek a deeper understanding of brain development and its link to lifelong health. By understanding how early life experiences impact brain development, we can become better at serving vulnerable families.

Service Delivery Model: We developed and rolled out our Service Delivery Model to ensure that all CFS service providers deliver high-quality service through a consistent framework, aligned with our values. It identifies four principles that shape how we work together with families and highlights foundational constructs that guide our work. This model ensures that those we serve and those that invest in us can be confident that what we do is intentional and grounded in theory to serve families’ needs.

3 Pioneering the evolution of services related to family systems, through research, advocacy, and innovation

F&ST National: A nation-wide initiative led by CFS that is bringing together data from the six sites currently providing the Families & Schools Together (F&ST) Program in Manitoba, Ontario, and Alberta. Capturing what is currently happening throughout Canada will guide the next steps of program evolution. Using our collective history and experience, we will adapt the F&ST program to the Canadian context and incorporate brain science research.

Book Counselling Anytime, Day or Night: In July 2019, we launched the ability to book counselling sessions online, the first in the sector to do so in Calgary. With our online platform, individuals, couples, and families can book a 75-minute counselling session online and receive the help they seek, often within 48 hours. Our newly structured Rapid Access Counselling provides access to support when it is needed—in person or virtually—reducing barriers and eliminating waitlists.

ORGANIZATIONAL RESTRUCTURE: After a thoughtful and consultative process, we rolled out the first phase of our organizational re-design in January 2019. This reorganization at the senior leadership level better positions us to achieve the bold ambitions laid out in our strategic plan and reflected in this section’s four blue headings. These ambitions guide our effort as we seek to become better in all that we do.
Piloting the first delivery of Functional Family Therapy in Canada: In 2019, in collaboration with Carya, we completed a four-year longitudinal, quasi-experimental evaluation of Functional Family Therapy (FFT). FFT is a Blueprints-Certified Model Plus program, a certification identifying the intervention as a program that shows positive outcomes and meets additional independent replication standards.

- FFT targets adolescents aged 12 to 17 years who are at risk of or are currently experiencing school truancy, mental health concerns, substance abuse, family conflict, or criminal involvement.
- The most significant improvements were that families functioned better together. Also improved after participation were youth mental health, and youth behaviours and attitudes associated with delinquency.
- Our research has confirmed FFT’s effectiveness and impact, and we have committed to continue working with Carya to deliver this model as an integrated program between our organizations.

Delivering programs and services that yield sector-leading outcomes

A five-year retrospective study: Past Never Too Late (NTL) participants underscored the high school equivalency program’s value:

- 89% who completed NTL indicated that they had increased income or job opportunities or went on to pursue further education.
- A substantial 38% increased their income after completing NTL, with an average increase of approximately $13,000 per year.
- 92% who completed NTL reported they felt more positive about themselves.
- 77% of parents enrolled in NTL felt that their involvement had positively impacted their children.

By the Numbers

TOTAL CLIENTS SERVED:  9,873
Number of families:  1,978
Number of volunteers:  500+
Number of employees:  100+
Number of donors:  500+

DEMOGRAPHICS:

12% of clients identified as Indigenous
42% of young mothers at Louise Dean Centre identified as Indigenous
26% of clients were born outside of Canada
51% of clients reported that their household lived on less than $45K/year

CONCERNS:

58% faced difficult family relationships
49% felt emotional distress
31% struggled with challenges at school
19% were impacted by domestic violence
Your Support Makes a Difference

MENTAL HEALTH & WELL-BEING
93% of people reported a reduction in anxiety as a result of their Rapid Access Counselling experience.

75% of young mothers at the Louise Dean Centre showed increased awareness of self-care coping strategies.

79% of Mindfulness-Based (MBSR-i) group participants experienced an improvement in their well-being.

EMPOWERING PARENTS
17 young fathers learned parenting strategies and money management through the Fathers Moving Forward Program.

75% of young mothers at the Louise Dean Centre increased their readiness for change.

110 families were served in the F&ST program.

NURTURING CHILDREN’S HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT
95% of young mothers at the Louise Dean Centre reported increased knowledge of positive child development.

95% of parents completed the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (a reliable tool for screening young children for developmental delays) alongside the Early Childhood Educators to promote increased and ongoing knowledge of their child’s development.

93% of the Healthy Babies Network group participants felt more confident in caring for their child’s nutrition.

SUCCESS IN SCHOOL
48 adult learners obtained their GED (High School Equivalency).

186 immigrant and refugee families were supported with cultural adaptation and building connections with their child’s school.

132 volunteers contributed 1,683 hours to support the families from Crew this year.

2019 Financial Snapshot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DONATIONS TO UP FOUNDATION</th>
<th>DONATIONS TO CFS</th>
<th>UP &amp; AWAY CHARITY GALA</th>
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<tr>
<td>$364,677</td>
<td>$289,453</td>
<td>$582,354</td>
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Total donated to Catholic Family Service and UP in 2019 to help build strong families.

The totals listed above include the market value of in-kind donations, such as goods and services. As a result, these numbers may be different from totals reported elsewhere, which only include monetary contributions and/or net totals.

FUNDING SOURCES

- Provincial Government
- Family & Community Support Services
- United Way of Calgary
- Federal Government
- Donations
- Other funders
- Provincial Daycare Subsidies & Grants
- Fees
- Children’s Services
- Other

SIGNIFICANT SUPPORTERS

CFS acknowledges Children’s Services, Calgary Board of Education, Calgary Catholic School District, Calgary Learns, City of Calgary Family & Community Support Services, Government of Alberta, Public Health Agency of Canada, and United Way of Calgary and Area for their significant contributions to building strong families in 2019.

For a full list of our funders and supporters, please visit www.cfs-ab.org/give/donors-supporters.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Contributing to Catholic Family Service and the Unlocking Potential (UP) Foundation will allow us to continue building strong families today and into the future. Funds will help us support your friends and neighbours and ensure we’re here for you if you need us. Consider a one-time, monthly, or legacy donation and visit www.cfs-ab.org/give/donate/.