



Building Strong Families
YOUR GIFT AT WORK



I want to share with you how critical your support has been as we work together to build strong families.

Our programs and services respond to the challenges that threaten families and leave them vulnerable. Although all families have the same function—to provide for the well-being of another person—we all know that every family does that a little differently. For our work

to be effective, we must reach beyond the individual to understand the workings of their family, and our services must continually evolve in response to our clients' needs. We can only do that because you support us.

Thank you for empowering us to offer a rich portfolio of evidence-based services that helps families in ways that speak to their unique circumstances and needs. With your support, we are enhancing the mental health and well-being of our clients, empowering parents, nurturing children's healthy development, and enabling success in school. By supporting families and children, we can have a positive impact on current and future generations.

Thank you!

In a few weeks, we'll reach out again, asking you to include us in your year-end giving plans. Our annual campaign is a significant part of our fundraising efforts, and your support will ensure that we can continue to build strong families.

I'd love to hear from you about why you choose to invest in families. Please contact me any time at 403.205.5200 or at patricia.jones@cfs-ab.org. Thank you for your support.

Patricia Jones CEO
October 2019

Our Evolving Services

We can change how a child's life unfolds into adulthood and have the most impact on intergenerational change when we provide a range of services to children and their immediate caregivers – their families.

Our evidence-based programs and services address the underlying root cause of many pervasive social issues, such as poor mental health, addictions, domestic violence, poverty, and homelessness. We can reduce the societal impact of these issues when the programs we offer are readily available and responsive to diverse families and the evolving needs of an ever-changing world.

We know that emerging political, economic, social, and technological trends will impact the well-being of individuals, families, and whole communities. Building strong families means we need to become better in all we do. We need to consider new services, different ways of delivering those services, new strategic alliances with community partners, and new ways of understanding family systems.

This Gift at Work report briefly highlights some of the innovative changes we're implementing. Each evolution responds to real client needs and is an opportunity to support the individuals and families we serve better. We are reducing the barriers that prevent clients from accessing services and empowering them to take positive steps and identify supports they can lean on during periods of stress. You who support us, and the individuals and families we serve, deserve nothing less.



Never Too Late

Catholic Family Service's Never Too Late program provides no-cost academic, social, and emotional support to adult learners who want to earn their GED (General Education Development). Earning a GED

opens doors for jobs, more school and training, and can help build a stronger self-image, courage, and resiliency. Skills improved through education also help in everyday life and can change the perceived value of learning within a family system, encouraging other family members to pursue education.

The Never Too Late programs in Bowness and the Greater Forest Lawn area have shown consistently strong outcomes. A recent retrospective study showed that 89% of the students who completed Never Too Late indicated that they had increased income, job opportunities or went on to pursue further education. For those students that reported an increase in income, the average increase was about \$13,000 per year!

Thanks to your support and the overwhelming success of the 2019 UP & Away Charity Gala, we're launching a third location for Never Too Late. The third site will launch early next year and is an incredible partnership with Calgary Urban Projects Society (CUPS). We know that a lack of stable housing, job loss, and physical and mental health challenges are significant obstacles for those trying to learn. Thanks to our partnership, learners will experience seamless access to a range of services offered between Catholic Family Service and CUPS. Services, including healthcare, childcare, and housing support, will empower participants to stay invested in learning and building their future.



Fathers Moving Forward

We believe children are entitled to responsible and committed parents. Many young fathers want to be involved in their children's lives but lack the skills, maturity and emotional well-being to be strong

parents. When provided with the support they need, they can make healthy, positive choices for both themselves and their families. Fathers Moving Forward is an evidence-based program for young dads or dads-to-be aged 26 and under. The program supports them to be involved parents, to co-parent effectively with the mothers—whether they are together or not—and to be positive role models for their children.

Fathers Moving Forward offers co-parenting groups and dad groups. In partnership with Momentum, financial literacy classes are also available. The program began in 2015 as a three-year pilot and research study. The study served 181 individuals, including 59 fathers, 61 adolescent mothers, and

61 children. A six-month follow-up showed that more than 50% of participant fathers felt that their emotional well-being, parenting beliefs, and co-parenting relationship skills had improved as a result of the program.

The study was rigid to ensure valid data but created barriers, including limiting how and when clients could access the program. We're evolving the program so dads can enter the program when they're ready and through courses or groups that interest them. As we build a relationship, we can encourage them to invest in more intimate conversations, and we'll be better positioned to support them during emotionally challenging groups.

We're still offering the same evidence-based programming, but in a way that is more client-centred and with reduced barriers. As a result, we're seeing more dads access the supports they need to become the fathers they want to be.



Counselling on Demand

There are times in everyone's life when a little extra support is needed. Catholic Family Service's Affordable Counselling program offers a suite of services to help people deal with a full range of

life events from coping with job loss or relationship problems to addressing mental health issues and breaking intergenerational cycles of abuse. One of those services is bookable Single Session Counselling.

Catholic Family Service began offering bookings for Single Sessions back in 2017. This year we launched an online booking platform, the first of its kind in Calgary for counselling services. Whenever a person is ready to take that next step—even in the middle of the night—they can go online to see the available appointments and book the one that fits their schedule. We are empowering people to choose what works best for them when it works for them. In the process, we are changing the business model of counselling to be more client-centric and barrier-free.

The reduced barriers offered by the platform are making a difference. In 2017 and 2018, we provided 252 and 220 Single Session appointments, respectively. From January to September this year, we had already delivered 364 sessions. What's more, we're also able to offer Single Sessions via video conference, further reducing barriers for clients who can't make it into our office.

The outcomes for Single Session Counselling are particularly compelling, with 75% of clients reporting reduced degrees of hopelessness, anxiety, and distress as a result of just one Single Session appointment.

Try it out! You can book a session here:
<https://bookingsinglesession.cfs-ab.org>



250, 707 10 Avenue SW
Calgary, Alberta T2R 0B3
Tel: 403.233.2360
Email: info@cfs-ab.org
www.cfs-ab.org | [@CFS_Calgary](https://twitter.com/CFS_Calgary)



The Unlocking Potential (UP) Foundation is the fundraising arm of Catholic Family Service of Calgary. UP ensures the sustainability of innovative programs that build strong families and have a positive impact on future generations.