

**THE  
TODAY  
CENTRE**



**Annual Report 2019 – 2020**

## VISION

A healthy community  
safe and free of family  
violence

## MISSION

The Today Family  
Violence Help Centre  
raises awareness and  
builds capacity by  
providing immediate,  
inclusive, integrated  
services for those  
impacted by family  
violence.

## VALUES

Partnership  
Diversity and Inclusion  
Compassion  
Integrity  
Self-Determination  
Knowledge & Education



# Message from Leadership

“Today’s accomplishments were yesterday’s impossibilities.”

— Robert H. Schuller

The past year held many accomplishments for The Today Centre. We broadened our reach in the community, forged new partnerships, strengthened our community presence and enhanced program areas to better meet the needs of those who seek our support. We honored our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and Family Violence Prevention Month by holding our first Help Today, Hope Tomorrow Breakfast in November. We invested in a new brand, affirming where we came from, where we are now and where we are going. This culminated in a well-attended, successful Brand Reveal Party.

*Many of these accomplishments seemed impossible at one time.*

When we think about those who are subjected to family violence and abuse, it may seem impossible for many to consider reaching out for help. Imagining anything different can seem insurmountable. Success, no matter how small, must be recognized and celebrated.

From the moment a victim of family violence reaches for the phone and asks for help, The Today Centre recognizes success. This past year **456 victims of family violence and their 570 children** reached out for help. Another **814 friends, family, neighbors and service providers sought help** on behalf of someone they knew was experiencing family violence. As we reflect, we need to remember the challenges behind turning yesterday’s impossibilities into today’s accomplishments.

We are incredibly grateful to new and longstanding funders, donors, partners and supporters who continue to invest in making a difference in the lives of hundreds of people. We are deeply appreciative of our Board of Directors, who tirelessly give their time, energy and commitment to the vision of The Today Centre, and of The Today Centre team, who makes our successes real on a daily basis. Even in the face of many challenges, staff members remain dedicated and passionate about The Today Centre and the individuals we support.

As we head into a new year, we are faced with COVID-19 and the many challenges arising from this global pandemic. We must strengthen our resolve to ensure that now, more than ever, victims of family violence have the supports and resources they need to be successful in living lives free from violence and abuse. A year from now, we hope to look back on this coming year and see our many accomplishments as the impossibilities they might appear to be today.

To all that support us, **THANK YOU!**

**Richard Ouellet**  
Board Chair

**Cindy Furlong**  
Executive Director

# A New Path Forward

Tracy's journey to a life free from violence began in 2016 when she called The Today Centre, asking for help in understanding the qualities of a healthy relationship. Gaining information and feeling empowered, Tracy began a new path knowing it was her right to live free of violence.

Three years later, remembering the support she had received while here, Tracy called again. Enduring horrific violence at the hands of her partner, and a lifetime of trauma across generations, Tracy feared for her life as her partner's release from prison became imminent. Tracy spoke these words when she reached out... "If I don't make it to my first appointment, call the police. He has me. I could be dead."

Tracy and her Family Violence Specialist focused on developing a safety plan and ways Tracy could empower herself, including establishing boundaries, giving herself a voice and intentionally practicing self-care and emotional well-being. For Tracy, this meant she took time for herself, connected with her culture and created goals for herself, all things she had not been able to do for as long as she could remember.

With her time at The Today Centre drawing to an end, Tracy expressed feeling listened to, valued and not judged. With demonstrated strength and resiliency, Tracy's path to living a life free from abuse was forged.

"I'm forever grateful for your help and support."

"I have so many resources to help me and it was good to have a safe place to talk about my problems."

"I have felt extremely safe here. I am very amazed that you were able to see me quickly (I really needed that) and free of charge."

"This service was an amazing support when I felt that I had no ability to access the right information."



## Strategic Directions

**Service Delivery**

1

**Education & Training**



2

**Financial Sustainability**



3

**Awareness & Advocacy**

4



# #1 Service Delivery

## A. Enhance client-centered support and services to those affected by family violence.

With ATB Financial supporting our **Toys for Tots with Trauma** project, we outfitted our childminding room with sensory and educational toys to help children coming to The Today Centre.

We established our **Safety in Motion** and **Safe at Last** initiatives to help alleviate transportation barriers as well as other barriers that keep individuals in unsafe and abusive relationships. Both initiatives as well as **Lives on the Line**, providing cell phones and minutes, have helped support individuals, with no other financial means, with transportation, gift cards and hotel vouchers.

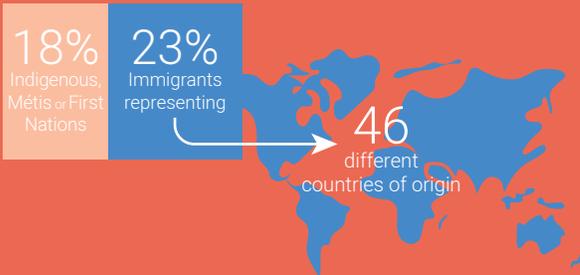
Valuing inclusivity, safety plans were updated to include gender-neutral language and to consider exceptionally vulnerable populations, such as newcomers and immigrants, Indigenous persons, those who identify as LGBTQ2S+ and individuals with disabilities.

## B. Strengthen collaborative partnerships to strengthen client services.

Partnerships and community collaboration took on many forms this year. Touring other agencies helped bridge clients to and from The Today Centre.

For those individuals unable to come to The Today Centre, staff were able to respond to their needs by conducting appointments at new and existing partner organizations within the client's community. A new relationship with St. Francis of Assisi Language Instruction for Newcomers (LINC) allowed immigrant women, in a safe and supportive environment, to attend presentations on healthy relationships.

22 organizations attended Group Case Consultation



2295 (176 supported) referrals made to 208 community partners

88% report being better able to cope with stress

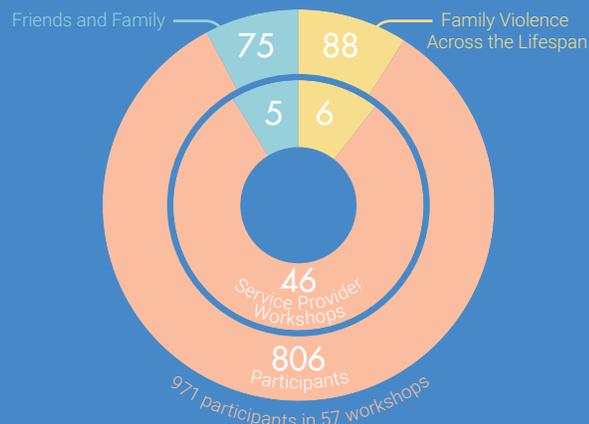
demonstrated an increased awareness of risk to self and/or the children 84%



# #2 Education & Training

## C. Advance education and training opportunities for practitioners and individuals impacted by family violence through partnerships.

Collaboration on training opportunities for front line service providers continues with Community Initiatives Against Family Violence's **Public Education and Awareness Raising Committee**. **Family Violence Across the Lifespan** training is possible due to ongoing partnerships with City of Edmonton, Children's Services and Islamic Family and Social Services Association. With United Way of the Alberta Capital Region, the **Cut It Out** program is co-facilitated to salon professionals, teaching them how to recognize signs of family violence and skills to effectively respond. Contributions to **Trauma Informed Edmonton** and **Diverse Voices Conference Steering Committee** ensure additional opportunities to explore topics related to family violence.



"I am so incredibly thankful for this course. I feel so much better equipped and this learning will affect my social work practice in a huge way."

"Because of this workshop I will create more awareness to people who might be facing violence but are not aware."

"This workshop taught me how to be a better listener, more supportive of people without providing answers before people are ready."

# #3 Financial Sustainability

## D. Increase and diversify revenue streams to maintain operational effectiveness and service delivery.

Additional financial support for our services came through new partnerships with the City of Spruce Grove and the Masonic Foundation of Alberta. With support from Women and Gender Equality, we have been able to build our organizational capacity in the area of community engagement and fund development. Thrilled to host our first **Help Today, Hope Tomorrow Breakfast**, over 150 guests attended and helped reach our goal of 50 individual donations. Our sponsors, Coast Plaza Hotel, SC Systems, Latitude Family Law, Servus Credit Union & Wild Orchid Boutique Florist, helped make our breakfast a success. Special thanks to Telus Community Ambassadors, Alberta Blue Cross Hearts of Blue, Edmonton Food Bank and Jessalyn King Studios for their generous in-kind support throughout the year!



36 new donors

48% ↑ fundraising revenue

donor revenue 40% ↑

# #4 Awareness & Advocacy

1590 e-newsletter subscribers

28%↑ subscribers

followers on Facebook 14%↑



1060 volunteer hours

22%↑ volunteer hours

active volunteers 78%↑

## E. Promote awareness of the Today Family Violence Help Centre and its services with service providers and the community.

The Today Centre is proud to be involved in many networks and initiatives, including **Community Initiatives Against Family Violence**, **Ethno-cultural Family Violence Committee**, **Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies** and **IMPACT**, the provincial collective impact initiative to eradicate domestic and sexual violence.

Through a variety of strategies, including social media, newsletters, events, community gatherings, inter-agency collaboration, public education and resource fairs, we continue to increase awareness of The Today Centre. We look forward to the year ahead as we seek to build our capacity in multi-media communication and reaching more broadly into the community.

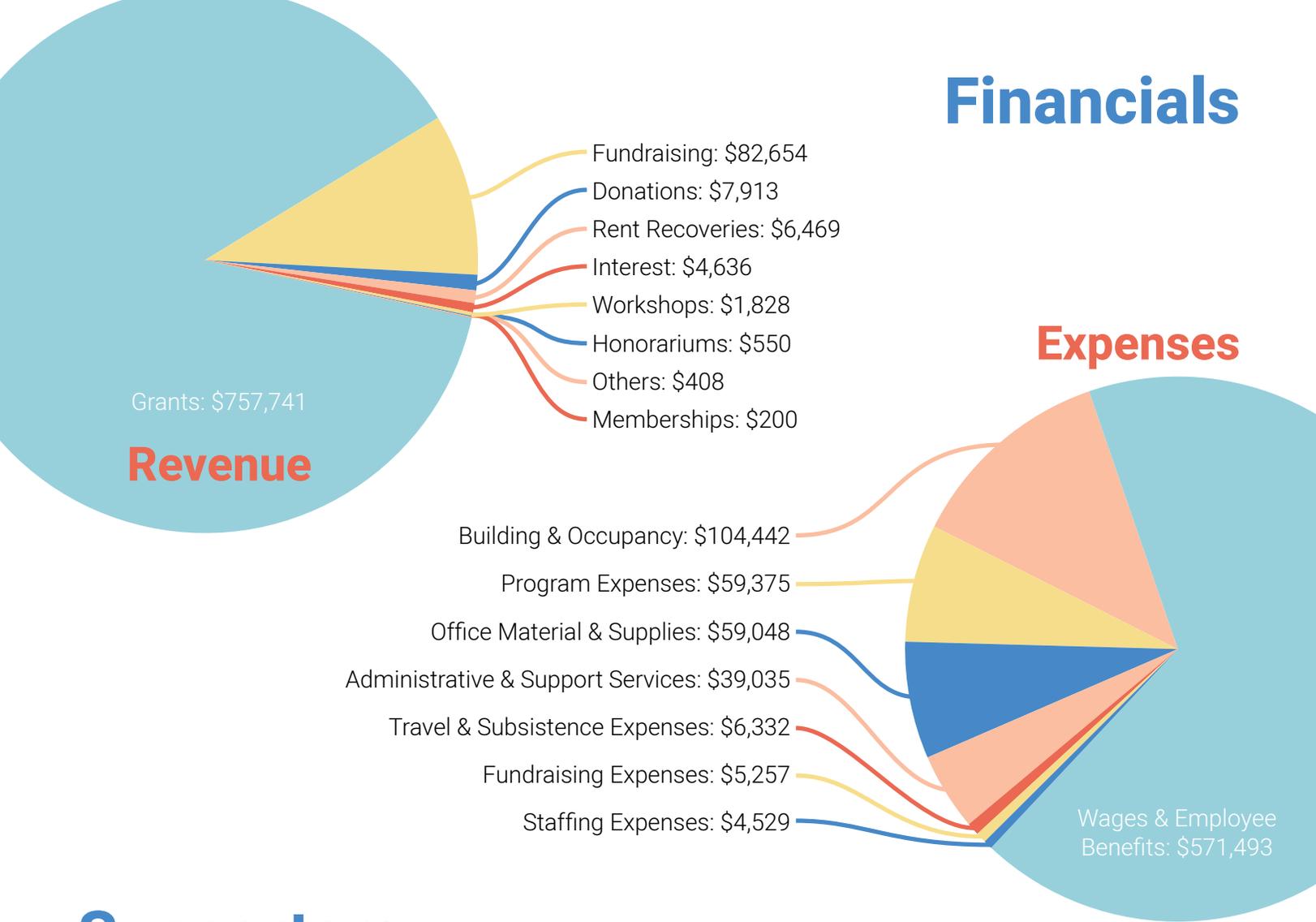
## F. Advance the work of The Today Family Violence Help Centre by developing and maintaining strong relationships with other service providers, funders, donors, and all levels of government.

Working with The Met Agency, The Today Centre invested in rebranding, resulting in a new visual identity and website. We hosted a successful Brand Reveal Party and were humbled to have many community partners, donors, volunteers and supporters come out to share this milestone. Our easy-to-navigate website and print materials, including TODAY booklets, resource cards and pamphlets, are helpful tools for those seeking information on services and community resources.

**This year, as always, The Today Centre was incredibly grateful for the support of its many wonderful volunteers and ambassadors of the agency.** Board members, committee members, program and Casino volunteers all played a vital role in the work being done to support victims of family violence.

“Everyone deserves to feel safe. The Today Centre ensures that everyone can get the support they need. Supporting this organization is just a small way I can give back to help prevent family violence.” --- Kristen

# Financials



# Supporters

With appreciation and gratitude, we thank our individual, corporate and in-kind donors and funders for your continued support and generosity!



Government of Canada

Gouvernement du Canada



# Support Today

www.thetodaycentre.ca



**Safe. Confidential.**  
**Supportive.**

The Today Family Violence Help Centre offers a safe, inclusive place for adults of all genders who have been victimized by family violence to access free, confidential, emotional and practical support.



Registered Charitable Business Number:  
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