



Year at a Glance 2021:

# Realize the Power of Human Connection



Over 4000 individuals reached out to CFS for support in 2021. The pandemic's impact on mental health and well-being continued to be significant, and Calgarians faced complex and compounding issues.

It takes a great deal of courage anytime someone asks for support, and we're proud of how CFS responded. The team made countless adaptations,

ensuring CFS maintained uninterrupted, virtual offerings in all programs and provided safe in-person services where needed.

CFS's team members' inspiring commitment to those we serve made our response possible. Their capacity for innovation kept CFS flexible and nimble in supporting individuals and families.

We know that for each person who reached out to us, another did not or could not. For some, our name signalled comfort and welcome; for others, our name kept them from engaging with us. Sometimes it was a false association with a particular religious mandate or a misperception that we served only those who identified as having a biological nuclear family.

In conversations with many of you, we heard how the pandemic has brought difficult choices, challenges, and clarity about who you are, what matters to you, and what needs to change in your life. The thoughtful reflections you shared affirmed that we needed to evolve the message of who we are and what we do.

In May 2022, we renamed the organization Kindred. "Realize the power of human connection" is our newly stated purpose. While this report features Catholic Family Service's work through 2021, it also shows that connection has always been our focus.

Our connections with you make us stronger. We are grateful for the bravery, work, and resilience of our clients, staff, volunteers, board members, funders and donors, agency peers, and supporters. As we look toward our next chapter, we can only begin to express our appreciation for how you connected with us in 2021. Thank you!

Byron Chan & Jessica Cope Williams,  
Co-CEOs



# It was always about connection

To us, “family” describes a relationship that endures over time, through which a responsible commitment has been made to provide for the well-being of another. And while the relationship can be messy, the love is unconditional.

Whoever is this kind of family to you, the genuine connection we find in these relationships is critical to our health and well-being. It can heal wounds and lift spirits. It lets us believe that who we are is enough, reduces anxiety and depression, and increases our self-esteem and empathy. We all need connection.

Throughout 2021, we built strong families. We supported them to forge and sustain the connections they needed to thrive. We listened to them and responded. Together, with individuals and families, supporters, and our agency partners, we worked to realize the power of human connection.





## Young Family Connections

The parent-child bond is critical. Children's experiences with parents and caregivers significantly affect how their brains develop and have implications for the rest of their lives. Young parents, in particular, can face barriers and challenges that can get in the way of developing a healthy parent-child connection.

Our Early Parenthood and Infant Mental Health services help reduce these challenges by supporting young parents to have positive mental health and experience safe and caring relationships. We also provide childcare and infant mental health services for families through the Parent-Child Learning Centre, encouraging healthy development and strengthening attachment.

In 2021, we began an extensive evaluation to explore how to evolve these services to meet changing client needs and reach more young parents. When the redesign is complete, our Family Support Program will help more expecting and parenting youth to

- strengthen their family connections;
- increase their well-being and resilience;
- access basic needs support;
- advance their educational goals; and
- build their parenting capacity.

*The Parent Child Learning Centre supports building connection and a sense of belonging.*

*One family has been attending Louise Dean School for the past two years. When they first arrived, the infant son was having difficulty self-regulating. The Learning Centre educators began working with the mom to set social and emotional goals. The team and family have worked on those goals together.*

*Two years later, he is confident and happy interacting with his peers, caregivers, and family. He has found a sense of belonging and has grown his social-emotional skills. Mom has also grown in her interactions and comfort with the educators. We were delighted when she attended a family event last summer and brought her mom along.*



# Connection to Self and Others

Rapid Access Counselling (RAC) provides prompt access to change-focused and solution-oriented conversations. Counselling sessions are delivered online, over the phone, and in person. The pandemic kept RAC services virtual during most of 2021, so our counsellors expanded their skill set for working with clients, especially children, in virtual settings. This focus on professional development helped clients significantly as counsellors found new ways to create connections and facilitate change.

## Across Alberta

Our strategic intent is to become better in all we do. Even as the pandemic wanes, the team's ability in virtual settings continues to be immensely valuable. We worked throughout last year to expand Rapid Access Counselling province-wide.

Our Rural Rapid Access Counselling program provides Albertans with access to professional support, typically within 3-4 days. Wherever you are in the province, you can get the help you need if you have an internet connection or phone service.

*"If you decide to talk to someone and you have to wait a month, you can lose hope. With Rapid Access Counselling, it's nice that it can just happen. When the help is there and is reliable and accessible, you don't give up!"*

*I can't take a whole afternoon to travel to see someone, but this was easy. I didn't have to juggle the kids and get a babysitter. I just had to find an empty room and be near my iPad, and it was such a positive and hopeful experience. The strategies the counsellor gave me are simple enough to do, and they work! I've gained a new outlook."*

*A mother from Okotoks*

## For the Most Vulnerable

Our Rapid Care Counselling (RCC) program, a partnership with CUPS Calgary Society and supported by the Calgary Homeless Foundation, was launched in early 2021. The program is geared toward providing rapid, responsive, and tailored mental health services to those with lived experience of homelessness.

Homelessness is often related to mental health and addiction challenges. Individuals exiting homelessness typically need additional support to help them build their ability to manage their mental health and reconnect with the community. But it can be particularly challenging for individuals experiencing homelessness to access those supports.

We designed Rapid Care Counselling to serve this community specifically, reducing barriers and ensuring that how we deliver the support works for the individuals we're supporting.

*2021 was the first year of the Rapid Care Counselling program. Through it, we were able to connect with and support 369 new clients on their journey to exit homelessness.*



## Collaborative Connections

Community Connect YYC (CCYYC) is transforming how individuals and families access affordable counselling and more. The website makes it easy to access support by allowing direct online booking for a wide range of services from multiple agencies across Calgary.

CCYYC first launched in late 2020 with five agencies: Canadian Mental Health Association – Calgary Region, Catholic Family Service, CUPS Calgary Society, Centre for Sexuality, and YW Calgary. Since then, our focus has been on expanding the range of connected agencies and services.

Early in 2021, four new agencies joined the network, including carya, the Centre for Newcomers, Sagesse, and The Alex. Continued work led to seven more agencies joining in early 2022. Our newest partners include Calgary Immigrant Women's Association, Canadian Centre for Men and Families, Hull Services, Lionheart Foundation, The Immigrant Education Society, Trellis, and Vecova.

As of spring 2022, Calgarians can visit [www.communityconnectyyc.ca](http://www.communityconnectyyc.ca) to book appointments with more than 30 different services from 16 agencies.



*Since the CCYYC platform was launched, the network has booked more than 6,000 appointments. Client testimonials praise how easy it is to connect with the support they need.*

*"This was the easiest way I have EVER received services of this nature. This website is amazing!"*

*"I appreciate how simple the online booking was to navigate and being able to see a counsellor on the same day was a huge bonus...."*





## Connection to Opportunity

The Never Too Late program gives no-cost academic, social, and emotional support to adult learners working to earn their GED. Classes are led by qualified educators and supported by volunteer tutors. Program coordinators work with students to identify and overcome any barriers to completing their education.

The program offers more than a pathway to a GED. The support participants receive increases their socio-economic well-being. They are empowered to participate in society fully and feel connected to their community.

In 2021, we made it easier for adult learners to connect with the program. We empowered participants to choose an in-person evening class or a virtual daytime class. This shift enables individuals to work according to their learning style and balance family scheduling needs.

We also launched a new option called "Steps." Knowing that some participants learn more effectively alongside a smaller class, the Steps option provides opportunities for one-to-one learning and extra time for students to understand the concepts needed to complete their GED.

*58 adult learners crossed the virtual stage in 2021, receiving their GED.*

*"Like many who come from a background of poverty, I spent my childhood simply surviving and could not maintain school attendance. This led to me eventually dropping out and working a full-time job to escape my family's cycle of homelessness and abuse. But without my education, I could never reach a livable wage, which left me feeling depressed, anxious, and working jobs that did not make me feel emotionally or financially successful. Finding Never Too Late was genuinely a moment that changed my life.*

*Being around a group of people working towards a greater goal was inspiring. Without their support, I don't think I would have finished my education. The program gave me all the tools to pass my exams with amazing marks, and it made me grow so much emotionally. It gave me the confidence to better myself in all aspects of my life. I have accepted a job offer that is the highest wage I have made yet and offers much more emotional freedom for me to have the work-life balance I was desperately seeking. I realized how important community is to me and am working towards taking courses that will allow me to be self-employed in the future. I want to build my own business and have dreams of giving back to the community around me."*

*Never Too Late Graduate*



## What's in a Name?

Although we branded this Year at a Glance as Catholic Family Service, we could brand it as Kindred with little other change. Everything that made us “us” in 2021 is still true today. Our programs and services will continue to realize the power of human connection to deliver real and lasting change.

While we are evolving, our commitment to those we serve remains the same. Being barrier-free has been a part of that commitment since the very beginning: Catholic Family Service was founded by a social worker-priest who wanted to make affordable counselling services available to all Calgarians—regardless of where they come from, where they pray, who they love, or how much money they have.

Changing our name to Kindred keeps us true to our commitment. It ensures that our name doesn't unintentionally create a barrier for anyone who would benefit from our support.

kindred

# 2021 in Numbers

4,012 clients served, including

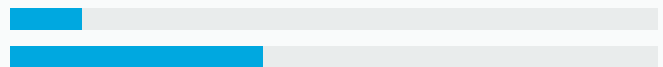
359  
children

523  
youth (age 13–17)

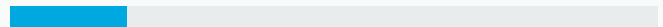
804  
families

## Demographics

11% Indigenous clients; 39% Indigenous young mothers at Louise Dean Centre



18% of clients born outside of Canada



36% of clients reported household income less than \$45,000 per year; 7% between \$45,000 and \$60,000; 19.5% over \$60,000 (not all clients report income)



## Top Concerns

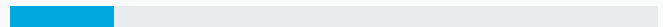
65% Emotional Distress



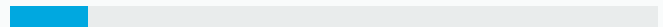
48% Family Relationships



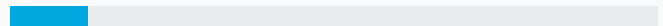
16% Basic Needs, Legal, Housing, and Financial



12% Interpersonal Violence

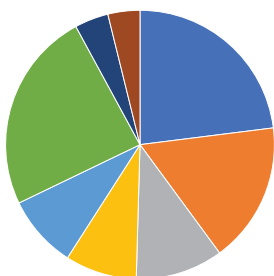


12% Employment



# 2021 Financial Snapshot

## Funding Sources



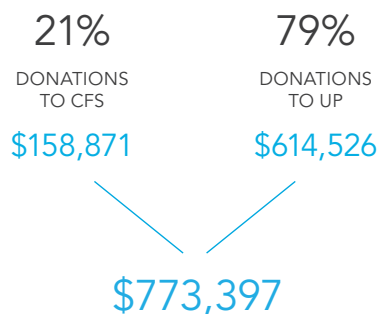
- Provincial Government
- Family & Community Support Services
- United Way of Calgary and Area
- Federal Government
- Donations
- Other funders
- Provincial Daycare Subsidies & Grants
- Children's Services & Fees



## Significant Supporters

CFS acknowledges the Ministry of Children's Services, Calgary Board of Education, Calgary Homeless Foundation, 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 2021.

For a full list of our funders and supporters, please visit [www.cfs-ab.org/give/donors-supporters/](http://www.cfs-ab.org/give/donors-supporters/).



Total donated to Catholic Family Service and UP in 2021 to realize the power of human connection.

## How You Can Realize the Power of Human Connection in 2022

Contributing to Kindred and the Unlocking Potential (UP) Foundation will allow us to continue supporting individuals and families to forge and sustain the genuine connections that are critical to our health and well-being. Please consider a one-time, monthly, or legacy donation and visit [www.cfs-ab.org/give/donate/](http://www.cfs-ab.org/give/donate/) or contact [loana.valdez@cfs-ab.org](mailto:loana.valdez@cfs-ab.org) to find out more about how you can get involved.

*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.*



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.



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