

community hubs initiative

WHERE COMMUNITY HAPPENS



2023 Annual Report





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Message from Karen Young, President and CEO, United Way of Calgary and Area



“Communities are places and spaces where we form relationships, feel safe, welcomed and appreciated, and where we can get a hand up through tough times.”

It's tough out there right now. The affordability crisis is putting unprecedented pressure on our friends, neighbours and families. It's impacting our ability to afford basic needs like food, rent and utilities and taking a toll on our mental health and relationships.

We don't know when this crisis will subside or what's around the corner. But I'm confident we can make an important difference by working together in our communities.

The Community Hubs Initiative, now entering its seventh year, is an important partnership between United Way of Calgary and Area and The City of Calgary, with founding partner Rotary Club of Calgary Downtown. It supports six welcoming and inclusive spaces (also known as Hubs) in five priority Calgary neighbourhoods where residents build connections, access supports and services and work together to identify and respond to community needs. Together, we are empowering residents and building stronger neighbourhoods.

Since starting in 2017, we've engaged more than 453,161 Calgarians through this initiative. This engagement takes on many forms, as you'll read in this year's report. Whether it's a sign language program for seniors, an Indigenous carnival to foster truth and reconciliation or a helping hand from a Community Connector, we are mobilizing communities to address immediate needs and advance long-term social change.

This work is possible thanks to generous philanthropists who care deeply about improving lives in our city, and the dedicated staff and volunteers who work in the Hubs to build a brighter future for Calgarians.

Thank you for being an important part of our community. We wouldn't have it any other way.

Sincerely,

Karen Young
President and CEO
United Way of Calgary and Area



Message from the Director of Community Strategies at The City of Calgary



“The City of Calgary is committed to the Hubs and the important role they play in animating community in our city and balancing individual well-being with the common good. Hubs offer a place to be with one another, to feel welcome, accepted and cared for and to reach out a hand to others who might need it. Hubs matter!”

At The City of Calgary, we believe in strong, participatory and inclusive communities. Connection helps break down isolation, stereotypes and loneliness which contribute to a lower overall quality of life, for both the individual and the community at large. We know that when people are connected in community, they do better: overall, they are happier and healthier. Community matters!

Knowing this, United Way of Calgary and Area and The City of Calgary and founding partner the Rotary Club of Calgary Downtown, came together to create intentional spaces for community – Community Hubs.

The Community Hubs Initiative is a wonderful example of community in action. Hubs are safe and creative places where everyone is welcome and anyone can go to just “be” themselves. The partnerships we’ve developed with many agencies and community partners within the neighbourhoods we work in enhance the support, resources and drop-in activities available at Hubs. This all helps to create great places for many reasons, but importantly they are somewhere for folks to simply gather and share their ideas, skills, fears, assets, hopes and dreams.

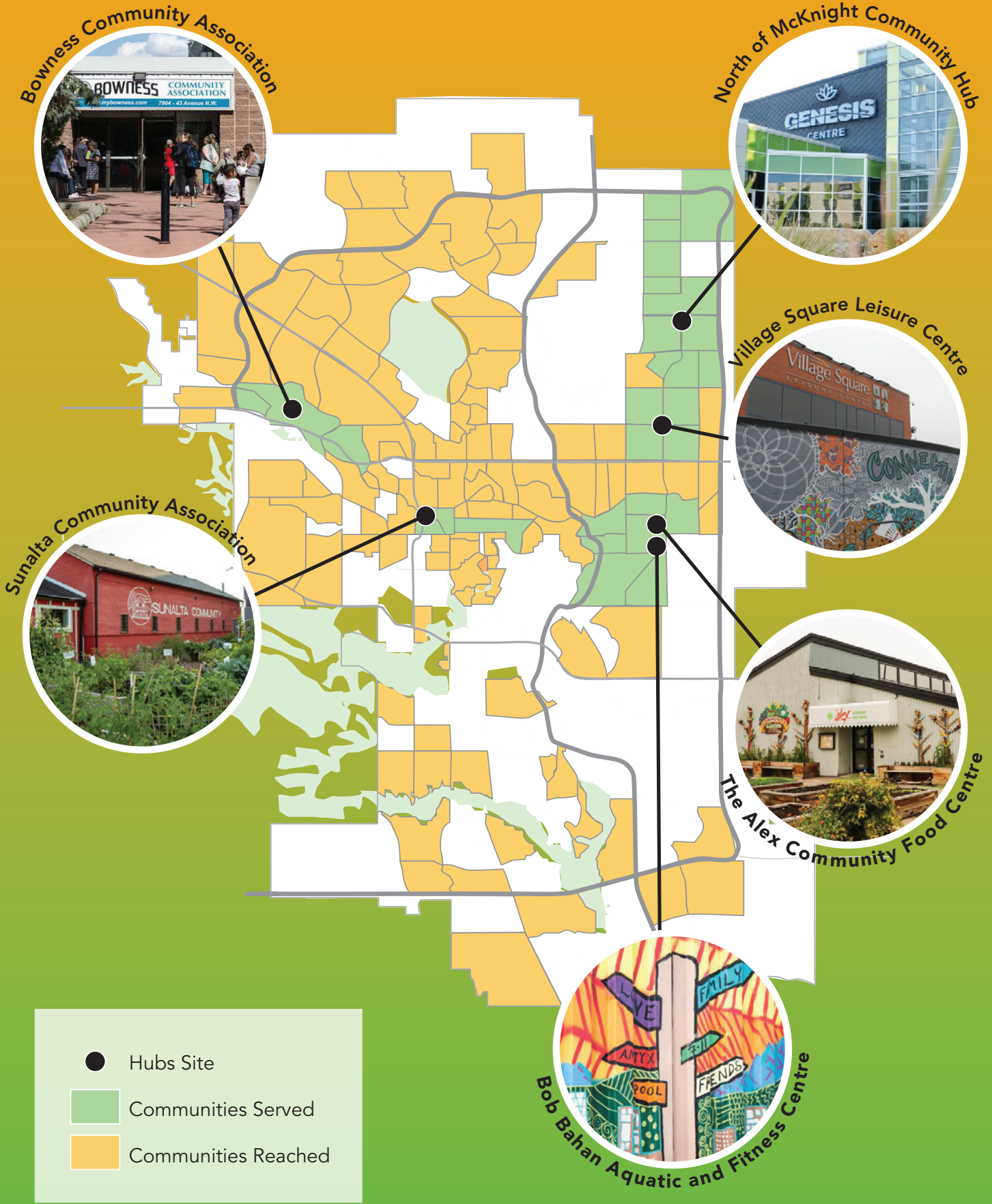
The City of Calgary is committed to the Hubs and the important role they play in animating community in our city and balancing individual well-being with the common good. Hubs offer a place to be with one another, to feel welcome, accepted and cared for and to reach out a hand to others who might need it. Hubs matter!

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eren Cervantes-Altamirano".

Eren Cervantes-Altamirano
Director, Community Strategies
The City of Calgary



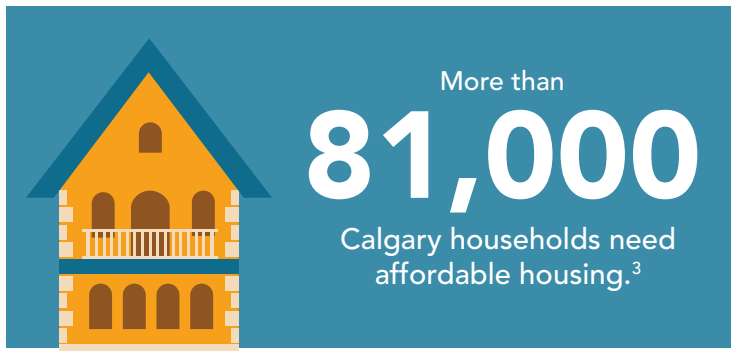
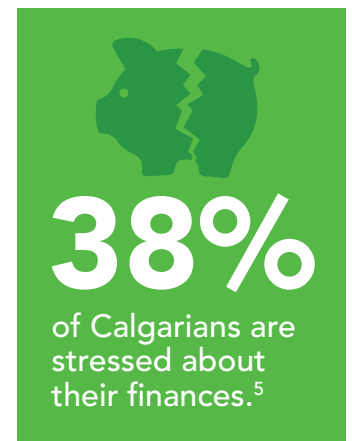
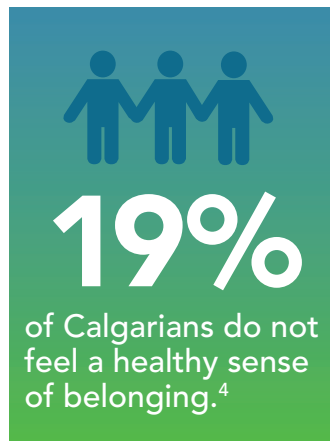
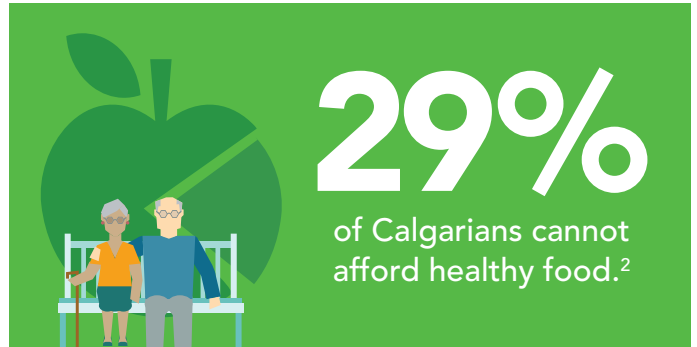


- Hubs Site
- Communities Served
- Communities Reached

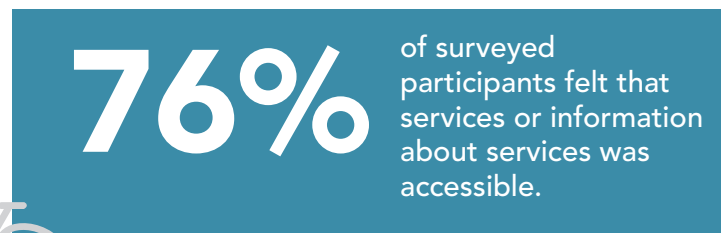
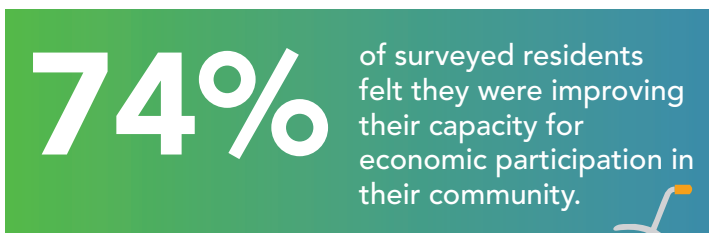
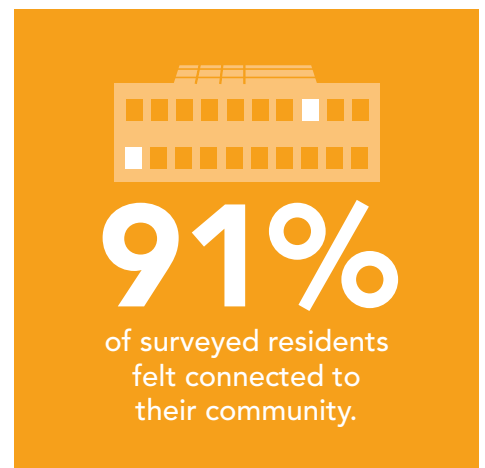


Why Community Hubs Matter

Not all Calgarians get to enjoy all that our city has to offer. Calgary has been ranked one of the world's best and most liveable cities in the world, but statistics show more is needed to address inequalities. Community Hubs are welcoming and inclusive spaces where residents build connections, access supports and services and work together to identify and respond to community needs. These efforts help create stronger neighbourhoods that can advance positive social outcomes through local solutions.



Impact Stats (2023):





Since starting in 2017, we've engaged more than **453,161** Calgarians in the Community Hubs Initiative.



Hubs Impact (2023):

The total reach of Hub sites:

75,039

75,039 residents participated in activities or accessed services across the six sites. Activities and services vary greatly across the Hub sites and target the needs and wants of the community.

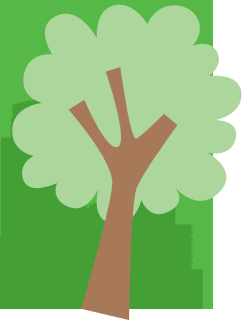
For example, a resident who accesses services in Greater Forest Lawn might connect with the community social worker to enter low-income programming, while a newcomer might arrive at the North of McKnight Hub to seek assistance with a job application.



During the reporting year,


60,924 participants took part in

918 Hub group activities, such as cooking classes, gardening programs or educational workshops.



Here are a few ways Hubs touched the lives of Calgarians over the past year*.


Community Connectedness:
14,792


Accessed Services:
39,042


Resident Leadership:
4,820


Economic Participation:
1,010

*numbers do not add up to **75,039** as these highlights do not include the full scope of Hubs' offerings.

1. Statistics Canada. (2021) Table 11-10-0135-01 Low income statistics by age, sex and economic family type. Retrieved from <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1110013501&pickMembers%5B0%5D=1.19&cubeTimeFrame.startYear=2020&cubeTimeFrame.endYear=2021&referencePeriods=20200101%2C20210101>
2. Calgary Foundation. (2023). Quality of Life Report 2023. Retrieved from https://calgaryfoundation.org/FlipBooks/Quality_of_Life_Report_2023/
3. Enough for All. (2022). Poverty Snapshot: Taking Decisive Action. Retrieved from <https://enoughforall.ca/projects/poverty-snapshot-2021>
4. Calgary Foundation. (2023). Quality of Life Report 2023: What we're missing. Retrieved from https://calgaryfoundation.org/FlipBooks/Quality_of_Life_Report_2023/
5. Calgary Foundation. (2023). Quality of Life Report 2023: What we're missing. Retrieved from https://calgaryfoundation.org/FlipBooks/Quality_of_Life_Report_2023/

COMMUNITY CONNECTORS

**Growing
Connections:
Community
Connectors
serving our
city**

When people are connected in their neighbourhood, statistics show they are happier and healthier overall.



Community Connectors are important Hubs positions. They are leaders who engage and connect with their neighbours and community partners to identify interests, needs and assets in their communities.

Identifying needs and developing opportunities for resident leadership and economic participation in our communities, the Community Connectors program supports the commitment of the Hubs initiative to deepen sustainability and seek long-term systematic social change. The Community Hubs Initiative continues to add important Community Connectors positions to deepen relationships and expand our reach for more social impact.

Three of the six Community Hubs have Community Connectors assigned to them. These dedicated individuals engage with residents to gather valuable insights that help guide programs and initiatives.

Community Connectors build capacity in the neighborhoods they serve—advancing opportunities for community leadership and removing financial barriers to participating in community life. They specialize in food security, mental health, wellness and Indigenous initiatives through engagement activities, programs and education. This United Way-led initiative inspired The City of Calgary to develop their own connector program in neighbourhoods throughout the city, creating opportunity and meeting the needs of more members of our community.

ADVANCING INDIGENOUS RELATIONS

Some Community Hubs are assigned Indigenous Community Connectors to help meet the unique needs of their community. These connectors foster

safety and inclusion by sharing valuable learnings about their culture and practices. The connections they build help break down isolation, stereotypes and loneliness.

Our Indigenous connectors are aligned with United Way's multigenerational Akak'stiman Indigenous Strategy. This strategy, developed with guidance and leadership from local Elders, reflects a commitment to building trusting relationships with Indigenous community members by recognizing and honouring both Western and Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing. It signals United Way's intention to be an ally, leader and relative in reconciliation.

Although each Community Connector has a unique background and set of skills, they all have the same mission—working to support residents in urgent and growing priority areas to create a city where no one is left behind.



GROUNDBREAKING AT SUNALTA

Strengthening Sunalta: Breaking ground on new Community Hub



Strong neighbourhoods are vital to creating positive social impact. This is evident in Sunalta – an inner-city neighbourhood near Calgary’s Southwest downtown – which was chosen in 2017 as one of five communities to be part of the Community Hubs Initiative.

In fall 2023, the Sunalta Community Association broke ground on an expanded Community Hub – a massive step toward meeting the neighbourhood’s growing social, economic and wellness needs. By providing physical space, support and resources to offer in-person programs that serve the community, this initiative is playing a key role in making lifechanging connections.

Food scarcity and addressing isolation are elements of change specifically identified after the community engagement process, with data taking on an important role in the process to ensure the most meaningful outcomes would be possible from the project.

Designed to increase social inclusion, food security and actively lift people in need financially, the expanded Community Hub will help the people of Sunalta address essential needs in the area.

Gathering spaces and free programming, expanded community gardens, a community kitchen, coffee shop and a mini soccer pitch





HIGHLIGHTS

- Toy and games lending library
- Community gardens
- Community activities and programs

2017

Sunalta became one of five communities to be part of the Community Hubs Initiative.

2023

Sunalta Community Association broke ground on an expanded Community Hub.

are all part of a decade of planning. With sustainability at the forefront, the commercial elements of the multi-phase project will feed the proceeds back into the community.

In addition to the vision of an economically self-sustaining structure, the updated Sunalta Community Hub will create prospects for employment, training and community service delivery. It's designed to increase opportunities for social inclusion and food security, as well as economic development.

Sunalta's diversity is also being celebrated with this development, with opportunities created in the kitchen and the gardens to educate community members about the many cultures collectively seeking to improve their quality of life in the neighbourhood.

With the expanded Hub as an additional pillar of strength, locals will enjoy a strong, supportive, inclusive community with access to important services and supports for improved social outcomes.



INDIGENOUS CARNIVAL

Indigenous
Youth
Carnival:
A sense of
belonging

Awareness and understanding are pathways to meaningful connections.



These connections create unity and ultimately lead to inclusivity. This is the very foundation of the Community Hubs.

The Indigenous Youth Carnival, a new collaborative partnership in 2023, was another example of our Hubs at their best in action—supported by United Way’s Natoo’si initiative, Planet Youth Calgary, the Trellis Society and The City of Calgary.

Our **North of McKnight Community Hub at the Genesis Centre hosted more than 400 people of diverse cultures and surrounding communities at the Indigenous Youth Carnival**, offering free food and an immersion into Indigenous music, sports and art.

Already a place for neighbourhood members in Calgary’s Northeast to gather and share common experiences, interests or find support from others, the Hub was alive with engaging Indigenous traditions during the carnival.

The infusion of Indigenous culture at the Hub was an empowering experience for residents, promoting truth and reconciliation and fostering connections with surrounding communities.

The social impact of this event went far beyond its execution. Members of the Trellis Society’s Iiyika’kimaat program—which provides Indigenous youth aged 12-21 years opportunities to flourish through culturally-relevant and leadership-specific activities—were able to expand their own knowledge of Indigenous games through a training session.

Led by game masters from the Dene, Carrier Cree and Blackfoot Nations, Iiyika’kimaat members learned about the history and rules of

13 games, including double ball, hand games, back push and one-foot kick. Participants were then able to run game stations during the carnival, offering demonstrations and sharing their newfound knowledge with guests.

Combining mentorship and leadership in the preparation and execution created a truly inclusive environment, with every visitor welcome to play, learn and deepen community connections through better understanding and awareness of Indigenous culture. These opportunities will continue as the Indigenous Youth Carnival becomes an annual event at the North of McKnight Community Hub and the Genesis Centre.

The outcomes are momentous—giving youth in these communities a sense of belonging and social inclusion, supporting their achievements, providing opportunity and motivation and, ultimately, a positive view of their future in these neighbourhoods and beyond.

21%

of Calgary’s homeless population is Indigenous

1 in 4

Indigenous children in Calgary live in poverty

62%

of those in Alberta’s child welfare system are Indigenous

10%

of the province’s children are Indigenous

Source: Calgary Homeless Foundation. (2018). 2018 Calgary Point-in-Time Homeless Count at a Glance. Retrieved from: http://www.calgaryhomeless.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Calgary_PIT_Report_2018.pdf

Statistics Canada. (2018). 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016173. Retrieved from <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/dt-td/Index-eng.cfm>

Government of Alberta. (2023). Child Intervention Information and Statistics Summary: 2022/23 Third Quarter (December) update. Retrieved from <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/de167286-500d-4cf8-bf01-0d08224eeadc/resource/99ca1767-7da1-48bf-b77e-c1a1aa772dd6/download/cs-child-intervention-information-and-statistics-summary-2022-2023-q3.pdf>

American Sign Language classes closing gap in communication, connection

Isolation can come in many forms.

It's a natural feeling for many aging residents in communities across Calgary—one that can be even more palpable for the city's Deaf community.

But for one resident living at Silvera for Seniors, an opportunity to share her American Sign Language (ASL) knowledge with others has given her an increased sense of belonging and helped create a lasting bond with so many who may otherwise have been unable to communicate with each other.

Eileen Levie's love for teaching ASL is opening doors for the hearing-impaired senior to connect with a larger group through the **Village Square Leisure Centre**.





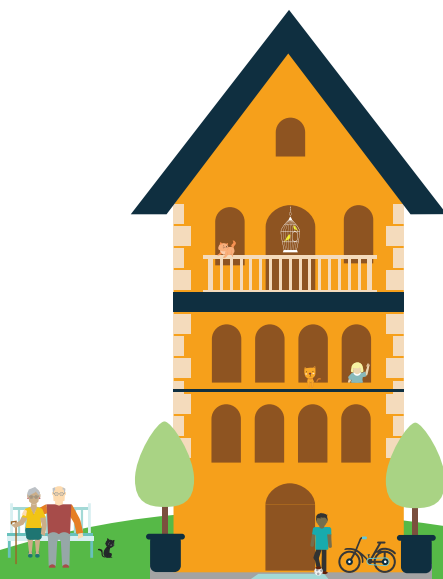
Other residents at Silvera for Seniors had initially asked to learn ASL to be able to communicate with Eileen. It wasn't long before Eileen was teaching them herself. When a City of Calgary social worker met Eileen through a community outreach program, she asked if Eileen wanted to expand the class and run it at Village Square. Today, they run six-week sessions at the Village Square Library with new participants always welcome to join.

The value within the community continues to grow, addressing social isolation in many different forms. Many newcomers to Canada from the Deaf community are learning both English and ASL at the same time. The ASL group is planting seeds of belonging and boosting connectivity.

"When I moved to my neighbourhood in 2022, I met lots of new neighbours and started teaching them ASL. I love teaching ASL to the community. It has helped me feel more connected and has helped me make new friends," says Eileen.

"It has been fun to teach new words to people and have them get to know me more, both to the Deaf and hearing community."

Lifting participation barriers for programs and services for newcomers to the country, as well as those in the hearing impaired and hearing communities, has helped Eileen positively impact her own social isolation while opening those same doors for many others.



FINANCIAL LITERACY

Youth financial literacy for a better tomorrow



Financial literacy is a privilege and learned skill that many of us take for granted. There are many reasons someone may not have financial literacy skills. Perhaps they came from a household where parents worked multiple jobs, or from a low-income household where saving wasn't an option.

This is why Community Hubs offers a match savings program for youth. This course covers topics ranging from consumerism to

budgeting. If students save \$50 per session, they receive \$750 for free to add to their savings!

In a post-event survey, 100% of the 2023 cohort attendees reported gaining new money management skills and 96% stated that they now use a budget and feel more hopeful for the future.

Many of the program facilitators were once students themselves. Take Balbir, for example—after participating in the 2022 cohort,





100%

of attendees reported gaining new money management skills.

96%

stated they now use a budget and feel more hopeful about the future.

2023

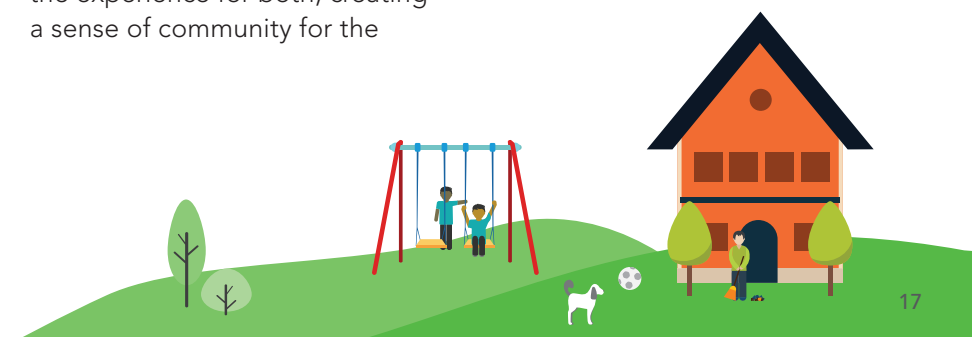
In the 2023 cohort, the average participant's savings grew from \$0 to \$176.

he became a facilitator to share his passion, knowledge and experience, helping local youth make better financial decisions.

Facilitating the program refined Balbir's teaching skills as he guided students in developing their own abilities, passions and understanding. The strong connection and trust between Balbir and the students enriched the experience for both, creating a sense of community for the

entire cohort. One student even said, "They treat you as family and they really care for your future."

The Community Hubs Match Savings Program for Youth exemplifies United Way's commitment to addressing short-term need while equipping people with the skills that drive long-term change.



Corporations Giving Back

We extend our deepest gratitude to our 2023 corporate partners

AltaGas Ltd., CIBC, JPMorgan Chase Foundation, Mawer Investment Management Ltd., Pembina Pipeline Corporation and Shell Canada Limited. Generous contributions from these organizations have been instrumental in strengthening our Community Hubs Initiative and making a lasting impact. Our community is better and stronger for your partnership and support. Thank you!

We are pleased to spotlight Mawer Investment Management for their recent and invaluable multi-year commitment. This generous and ongoing support allows us to expand and enhance our efforts over the short-and long-term, while ensuring the sustainability of our programs and initiatives in underserved communities. This visionary generosity is making a profound difference—and we are truly grateful.



“Investing in the well-being and prosperity of society has always been at the core of who we are—it’s about doing the right thing.”

– Craig Senyk, Board Chair at Mawer Investment Management

Partners

Thank you to all the donors who have supported the Community Hubs Initiative over the years. Listed below are the individual donors, foundations, corporations and government partners who have made a cumulative investment of more than \$100,000 to the initiative.

Founding Partners



INDIVIDUAL DONORS

\$1,000,000—\$4,999,999

Bill & Sharon Siebens
Mike & Sue Rose

\$500,000—\$999,999

Shaw Family Foundation

\$100,000—\$499,999

Gutrath Family Fund
Kanovsky Family Foundation

CORPORATE/FOUNDATION PARTNERS

LEGACY CIRCLE (\$1M+)

Pembina Pipeline Corporation
Rotary Clubs of Calgary
Shell Canada Limited

PILLARS OF PHILANTHROPY

(\$500,000—\$999,999)

CIBC

INNOVATOR'S CIRCLE

(\$350,000—\$499,999)

ENMAX Corporation

CORPORATE PARTNERS

(\$100,000—\$199,999)

BMO Financial Group
Mawer Investment Management Ltd.
NOVA Chemicals
Repsol Oil & Gas Canada Inc.

The following donors contributed \$10,000 or more to the initiative in 2023.

INDIVIDUAL DONORS

\$100,000—\$499,999

Gutrath Family Fund

CORPORATE/FOUNDATION PARTNERS

\$100,000—\$199,999

CIBC
Pembina Pipeline Corporation
Shell Canada Limited

\$10,000—\$99,999

AltaGas Ltd.
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