

2021 FCSS Annual Report

Investing in social inclusion

In partnership with



Calgary





Background

Since 1966, The City of Calgary has partnered with the Government of Alberta to jointly fund the Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) Calgary program. FCSS Calgary supports non-profit organizations that provide preventive social services to tens of thousands of Calgarians and leverages millions of dollars through fundraised dollars and volunteers' contributions.

FCSS-funded programs help people develop independence, strengthen coping skills, and become resilient to crisis. Investing in FCSS programs means:

- Children and youth develop interpersonal and group skills.
- Community members are actively involved in decisions and actions which affect them.
- Residents are active participants in their community and work together to address social issues.
- Families are stronger, cohesive, and more encouraging of one another.

FCSS Calgary also invests in organizations to build their effectiveness, increase their programs' impact, and address emerging social issues and trends that are impacting Calgarians.

2021 – Year in review

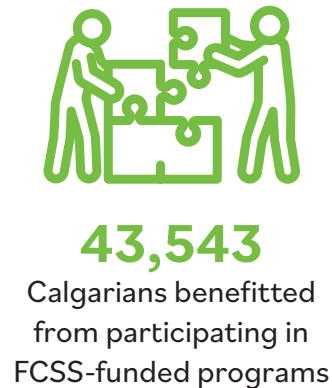
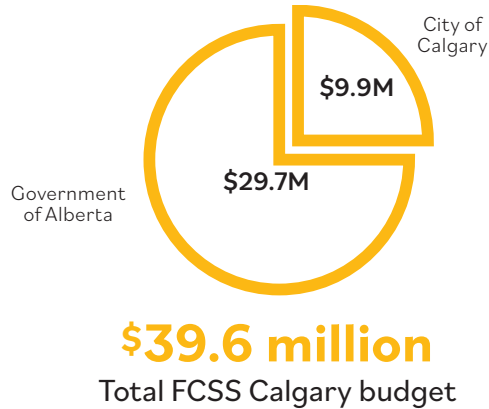
2021 continued to pose challenges for many Calgarians, due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the public health measures to contain it. Lack of access to basic needs, mental health and addiction challenges, and social isolation have affected the lives of many Calgarians. In response, organizations refined their service delivery to include both virtual and in-person approaches. The continuous adjustment of program delivery ensured the availability and accessibility of programs and services to Calgarians during one of the most challenging times in history.

FCSS Calgary has also undertaken a number of initiatives for continuous improvement to ensure its continued use of evidence-informed funding practices. KPMG Management Services was contracted to conduct the independent review of FCSS Calgary. The review concluded that FCSS Calgary is well-aligned with the mandate, policy, and stated strategic intentions, with clear governance. The review included **nine recommendations** to The City including pursuing alignment with other major funders and creating opportunities for new organizations to engage in FCSS through more open funding calls. The recommendations from the review will be implemented starting in 2022.

In addition, FCSS-funded organizations were engaged to provide input on the FCSS Social Inclusion Indicators (FSII). The review of the FSII also included an analysis of the reliability and validity of all surveys as compared to other existing measures. New reporting tools will be made available in 2022. Finally, a research brief focused on policy and systems change was developed to provide FCSS-funded organizations and community partners access to research-based information on policy development and change, as well as systems change.



2021 year at a glance

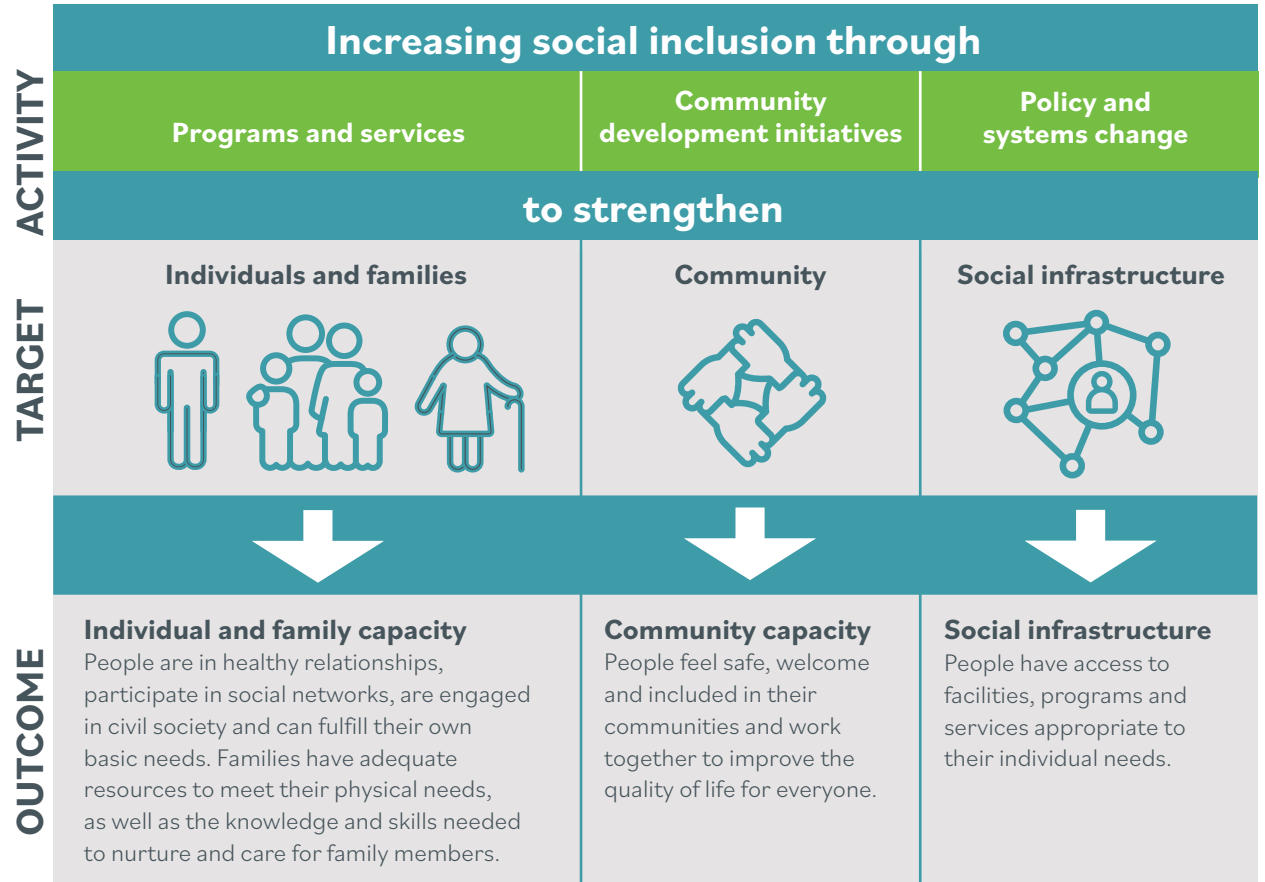


FCSS Funding Framework

The FCSS Funding Framework provides a strategic direction to guide FCSS funding in a way that's responsive to emerging trends in the community, while also being flexible to incorporate new knowledge in the area of prevention. The Framework's long-term outcome is to increase social inclusion, which is the ability of Calgarians experiencing vulnerabilities to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from all aspects of society. Research demonstrates that social inclusion is linked to improved social and economic outcomes, as well as increased civic participation.

FCSS Calgary uses three approaches to increase social inclusion:

- Programs and services for individuals and families
- Community development initiatives
- Policy and systems change initiatives



Increasing social inclusion through programs and services

Evidence-informed preventative programs and services contribute to the following five mid-term outcomes:

- Increased positive child and youth development
- Enhanced economic self-sufficiency
- Growth in social capital/social participation
- Improved family functioning and positive parenting
- Enhanced Indigenous healing and wellbeing

The impact of these programs is assessed using a rigorous evaluation system, including pre- and post-test surveys to measure their impact. Change between pre-test and post-test is analyzed for statistical significance.



Positive child and youth development

4,187 participants in child and youth programs

**Organization: Calgary Bridge Foundation for Youth
Program: NxtGen**

Faiyaz had long struggled to feel like he belonged. Feeling isolated at school, at home and in his community was compounded by the anxiety he felt when witnessing the global adversity shared in the media. When he joined the NxtGen team, he was met with an environment that was safe and inclusive. Over the course of the school year, he began to feel comfortable sharing challenging experiences with the group and found creative ways to unwind with his peers. In addition to newfound peer connections and social confidence, Faiyaz was able to realize his unique strengths and support others in doing the same.

14 per cent more youth reported feeling that overall they have a lot to be proud of.



Positive social ties

13,212 participants in positive social ties programs

**Organization: Kerby Assembly
Program: Volunteer Program**

Amy contacted the Kerby Centre to request food support in response to challenges experienced as a result of Covid-19. Through the Food Rescue Program, she was provided with free bi-weekly deliveries by a team of committed volunteers. While involved with the program, Amy was also connected to opportunities for peer-to-peer connection by way of regular phone check-ins and socially distanced walks. These points of connection became a core part of her week when opportunities for socializing were hard to come by.

Even though Amy no longer requires food supports, she has continued to work with staff to explore long-term housing options and remains actively involved in programming. Amy has increased her social connections and knows where to turn if she needs support overcoming a problem.

30 per cent more people reported they have someone to turn to for suggestions about how to address a problem.





Adult personal capacity and economic self-sufficiency

10,452 participants in adult personal capacity and economic self-sufficiency programs

Organization: Arusha

Program: Calgary Dollars

When Dave first came to live in affordable housing, he was isolated and depressed. Without a job or a community to support him, he was beginning to feel hopeless and suicidal. However, after getting involved in the Calgary Dollars program, his outlook and mood began to change. He was able to fulfill a community ambassador role, and earned Calgary Dollars for his work taking care of the community garden, coordinating the Good Food Box program, and helping with events and other tasks. As he states, these engagements began to give him purpose, and important connections within his community. Through his role as a community ambassador Dave was able to earn supplementary income and gain new work experience to improve his economic situation.

34 per cent more people reported that they are better able to save some money.

Family cohesion and positive parenting 2,555 participants in family cohesion and positive parenting programs

Organization: The Further Education Society of Alberta

Program: Family Literacy Program

Parents Nguyen and Mai were struggling with stress, anxiety and fear from the Covid-19 pandemic. Through the Family Literacy Program's learner outreach, the family learned about sessions being offered on the topics of healthy relationships, coping with stress and anger management. They were provided a family learning kit which listed additional Covid-19 resources and supports, books for their toddler and supplies for activities they could do as a family. Together, they completed all of the sessions and were quick to share the difference the program made in their lives. Mai shared that she was surprised to learn how the small activities helped them work through uncertainty. Coming together in the face of adversity to read, play and learn together made the world of a difference.

25 per cent more caregivers report that their child(ren) see an adult in the house do something kind, friendly or very much appreciated by another adult in the house daily.





Indigenous healing and wellbeing

1,570 individuals participated in Indigenous healing and wellbeing programs

**Organization: The Calgary John Howard Society
Program: Ksisskstaki Ikamotaan**

Kaedon is a recent graduate of the Ksisskstaki Ikamotaan (KI) Youth Outreach and Advocacy Program. He was referred to the program to address difficulties he was experiencing and later, to restore family, community and cultural connection. Kaedon did not go to jail and worked very hard to complete all his probation orders while working towards a brighter future.

In addition to the one-on-one support Kaeden received, the staff looked for ways to support his family system and helped his father access addictions treatment. When Kaedon became the first in his family to graduate high school. His father, along with the rest of his family, proudly cheered him on.

Kaedon continues to attend the Indigenous Youth Mentorship program weekly to regain his traditions, and educate other youth about Indigenous history as a proud Cree member from Morley.

40 per cent more clients reported they can access culturally appropriate and knowledgeable resources such as Elders, speakers or traditional people.

Increasing social inclusion through community development

FCSS investments are used to support community development initiatives so that people feel safe, welcome, included in their communities and work together to improve the quality of life for everyone. Community development initiatives contribute to the following three outcomes:

- Increased leadership capacity
- Increased sense of belonging
- Improved economic participation



543

volunteers

6,999

volunteer
hours



316

resident
projects



23

priority
neighbourhoods



19,061

contacts with
citizens



Increasing social inclusion through community development

Organization: City of Calgary

Program: Community Social Work

Mariam, a newcomer to Canada, began volunteering in her neighbourhood with the Community Social Work program for an International Women's Day event. It was Mariam's first taste of being a partner in a community development initiative. By providing a space for Mariam to share and grow her skills, the community of women benefited, as well as Mariam as she built confidence to share her thoughts and ideas. Through Mariam's continued involvement in neighbourhood strengthening work, the Community Social Worker (CSW) learned of her personal goal to pursue art in Canada. The CSW connected Mariam to an opportunity through a Public Art grant that could act as a vehicle for Mariam to expand her leadership capacity and continue strengthening community. After securing funding and implementing several successful community art projects, Mariam noted she has developed a newfound confidence in her ability to lead and feels excited to take on opportunities in the future.

92 per cent of volunteers feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and ideas in the neighbourhood.

84 per cent of volunteers feel they can make a difference in their neighbourhood.



Increasing social inclusion through policy and systems change

Policy and systems change is a strategy for increasing social inclusion. Change is influenced at the local, provincial and national levels through outreach, issue advocacy and research. These initiatives are most effective when organizations work together to advance, and act with/for, populations experiencing vulnerabilities.

Policy and systems change initiatives contribute to the following three outcomes:

- An equity-based social policy agenda
- Integrated service coordination
- Evidence-informed policy and systems change



policy and system
change initiatives



Organization: Action Dignity Society
Program: LEAD for Change

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on essential workers, particularly workers in sectors like the meatpacking industry. In the days that followed the loss of a local woman due to what was among North America's biggest workplace outbreaks, Pat (a local artist) was commissioned to create a memorial banner. However, Pat wanted to do more to support the safety of vulnerable workers. They connected with Lead for Change to understand the larger policies at play and hear workers' firsthand accounts.

The work led to the creation of images for a safety and resource pamphlet for meatpacking workers. Later, Pat partnered with others to create a visual journey map which linked a temporary foreign worker's migration story to the underlying policies and structures that lead to vulnerabilities for immigrants, refugees, and temporary foreign workers. Pat's work will support community-based research and story collection to improve the lives of essential workers experiencing vulnerabilities.



Capacity building

The Capacity-Building Fund supports one-time initiatives that build the capacity of organizations to effectively address the emerging needs and interests of Calgarians experiencing vulnerabilities. Funds are used to strengthen an organization's effectiveness or service delivery, so it can better respond to the changing needs of Calgarians.

Emerging issues and organizational effectiveness

In 2021 this was accomplished through a call for funding proposals for initiatives that strengthen a non-profit organizations' effectiveness, increase their programs' impact, and address emerging social issues that are affecting Calgarians experiencing vulnerabilities.



Looking ahead

The successes from initiatives that received funding through social services support for Covid-19, the Emergency Resiliency Fund, and the Anti-Racism Capacity-Building Fund have highlighted the importance of grassroots and community-based organizations. Supporting the capacity of these organizations will continue in 2022, through a collaborative funding model with other funders.

FCSS Calgary strives for continuous improvement. FCSS Calgary plans to implement a number of continuous improvement initiatives based on the feedback from FCSS-funded partners and the Council-directed program review. Updates will be posted on calgary.ca/fcss.

As we move to the endemic phase of the Covid-19 pandemic, FCSS Calgary and its partner organizations will play a critical role in supporting Calgarians experiencing vulnerabilities by building their resiliency and social connections.

For more information on FCSS, including a list of partner organizations, funded amounts and success stories, visit calgary.ca/fcss. If you have questions, comments or suggestions, contact us by **email:** fcss@calgary.ca, **call:** 311 or **mail:** P.O. Box 2100 Stn. M (116), Calgary, AB T2P 2M5

**Names in this report have been changed to maintain confidentiality*

