



Supporting children in reaching their potential

Your Donor Impact Report

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United Way
Alberta Capital Region

January 2018

Impact of Early Childhood Development *Serving the Children of Our Community*

United Way helps fund the Early Start program at Norwood Child & Family Resource Centre. Early Start is a free program for children one to five years old that provides low-income families with a creative, positive play environment to support and enhance their child's skill development and learning.

Meagan Hight and Kathy Burgett, both Children's Program Managers at Norwood have seen firsthand the impact that early childhood development care has on a child's life.

During the Fort McMurray wildfires, a single mother and her three-year-old son accessed Norwood respite services. Sara*, the mother, had been worried about her son's development and his interactions or lack thereof with other children. He made little to no eye contact with anyone and was also nonverbal.

While Sara's son was in the respite program, the team at Norwood quickly realized that the child had some complex needs. He would often try to run away from the activities. Because of that, the Early Childhood Educators had to be on high alert, and ensure that they were supporting him the best that they could.

The team saw the many needs that the family had when caring for the child. "Norwood recognizes parents as their child's first and most important teacher. We knew we had to pay close attention to what this parent was sharing with us about her child," says Meagan. The main thing Sara was

concerned about was development. She had taken her son to her physician, but the physician wasn't supporting what she was sharing and seeing, and wasn't able to validate her concerns. "We recognized right away that was something that she needed – us on her side to support her and to respect what she was saying."

"We were able to have conversations around what the mom saw for her child's future, what she would define as success for him. We were able to connect them with a few different programs, specifically those that support children with identified learning needs," says Meagan.

All this led to Sara finally being able to get a diagnosis for her little boy. She had the confidence she needed to keep pursuing answers because Norwood validated her concerns and further supported her family. The family was connected with a community service provider, receiving ongoing support as well as programming for Sara's son.

"It really highlights what we do, supporting families in getting the services that they need, and really connecting them to the right place," Kathy Burgett commented. "We always say, every door is the right door. Although we didn't have services that spoke to his particular needs, we were able to provide the family with enough support to be successful in getting the funding that he requires to be successful."

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"Without the investment from United Way and from donors, we at Norwood wouldn't be able to provide the level of service that we can now," says Meagan. "We are so grateful for all of the support in allowing us to continue helping children and families within the community."

**Name has been changed to protect the privacy of the individual.*



Harnessing Early Opportunities

A word with Ilene Fleming, Director of Community Building and Investment for Children and Youth

In my role at United Way, I have seen how important it is to promote the wellbeing of children and youth, and that we all benefit when children become all that they can be.

United Way's overall focus is creating pathways out of poverty. Completing high school is a key milestone that opens doors to future opportunities and increases the likelihood of financial security. We want to set children up to realize their full potential, from the very beginning.

Research tells us that some of the most important factors that contribute to high school graduation actually start in early childhood. Communities have a role to play in building a strong foundation for young children, prior to entering school, as we know that when children start behind, they often have difficulty catching up.

We fund a range of programs throughout our community that support families and children prior to school entry. These programs provide access to environments that enhance child development, family literacy and healthy parent-child relationships.

I've worked with young children for much of my career and I continue to be inspired by their incredible potential. We want to make the most of the opportunities the earliest years provide. Today's children are tomorrow's parents, leaders and innovators, and we each have a part to play in ensuring that all children get the best start to life.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ilene Fleming".

Ilene Fleming
Director, CBI Children & Youth



Here's the Impact You are Making

Supporting the Early Years: Success by 6

Helping children succeed from the early years to graduation.

Communities have an important role in supporting young children's development and creating a strong foundation for future learning. That's why United Way ensures your donations are helping families, neighbours and friends in your community. Together, we're helping children succeed from the early years to high school completion.

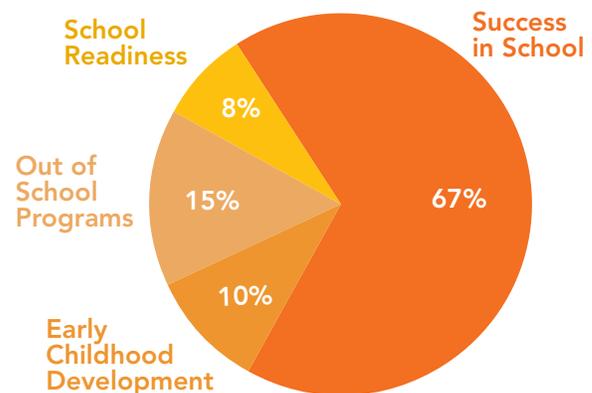


Education

Over **57,000 children and youth** will get the support needed to succeed in school and work toward reaching their full potential.

The Early Years

Helping parents connect with mentors and supports that build valuable skills and meet the developmental needs of their newborns, infants and toddlers.



2017 Target 2,500

Goal exceeded!

2,843

Success in School

Providing mentors, success coaches and healthy nutrition for children and youth, and support for parents of students who are struggling.

2017 Target 1,750

Goal exceeded!

2,500



Program Highlights

13,473 participants accessed Early Childhood Learning and Development programs:

- **1,321 participants** demonstrated age/developmentally appropriate skills in the following areas: personal/social skills, gross motor skills, fine motor skills, appropriate problem solving skills and coping skills.
- **975 parents** identified strategies they can use at home to provide a nurturing environment.
- **65 school age participants** demonstrated school readiness skills (e.g., age appropriate literacy and numeracy)

A Good Fit for the Oil Kings and United Way

A growing Coats for Kids & Families partnership

The Edmonton Oil Kings have partnered with United Way's Coats for Kids & Families initiative to collect winter outerwear to distribute to families in need.

As the Director of Business Operations for the Oil Kings, I've had the privilege of seeing the good United Way does in the community. Coats for Kids & Families is doing such great work among families and the Oil Kings primary demographic is families. It was such a natural fit, especially since at our core we are community-minded.

Many Oil Kings fans were already investing in United Way. A season seat holder family regularly donated coats because they saw that many immigrants coming to Canada came with very little and didn't know to expect such cold weather.

I personally know how fast kids grow, and can appreciate how families struggle to keep up with clothing them. My two girls grow like crazy, and every winter I'm amazed at how nothing fits. In response to the need in our community, we asked fans to bring their gently used and simply outgrown items to a hockey game in December.



When we did our first campaign last December, there was such an overwhelming amount of coats that United Way couldn't transport them that night and had to plan to bring the truck the next day. I quickly made emergency plans to store the items.

It is going to get cold in Edmonton. We want to make sure that everyone has the supplies they need to stay warm in the cold months. No one deserves to be cold.

Sincerely,

Kevin Radomski

Director, Business Operations, Edmonton Oil Kings

Upcoming Events

Red Tie Gala

2017 Awards of Distinction

Please join us at Red Tie Gala to celebrate campaign achievements and the impact we've made together to help people create pathways out of poverty.

Thursday, February 22nd, 2018

Location: Edmonton EXPO Centre, Ballroom 7515-118 Ave

5pm - 6pm Cocktails

6pm - 8:45pm Dinner & Awards Program

Performances by the top three contestants of the My United Way Voice contest.

Winner announced live at the end.

Early Bird \$130/Ticket \$1200/Table

After January 31st \$140 Ticket \$1300/Table

Coats for Kids & Families Collection

With the cold weather upon us we need outerwear to provide to families in our community who can't afford the items needed to survive our harsh winters. Donations can be dropped off at any Page the Cleaner location.

High Need Items:

- Men, women and children's winter wear
- Toques, mitts, scarves and snow pants - adult and children's