



ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021

"When it rains look for rainbows, when it's dark look for stars."

- Oscar Wilde

The 2020-2021 program year was one of perseverance and learning for ABC Head Start Society. Pandemic working conditions for our employees included high-stakes cleaning procedures and the constant change of moving between in-person and remote learning. Our staff stayed creative in their modes of instruction and flexible to the needs of children and families. In the difficult context of the pandemic, they showed us what true grit and dedication to our mission looks like. As we look back on this program year, we can see the seeds we sowed for a strong recovery:

1. Prioritizing health and safety protocols, the pandemic acted as a catalyst for improvement. We are proud of our resulting Health and Safety program and everyone at ABC who fulfills it every day.

2. Strengthening relationships with core partners, we made our spaces inclusive and culturally responsive. Additionally, our long-term relationships in Fort Saskatchewan blossomed into the Heartland Community Commons when we were granted funding through Alberta's Civil Societies Fund. ABC Head Start is hard at work with Fort Saskatchewan Boys and Girls Club, Bridge Church, Fort Saskatchewan Families First Society, Fort Saskatchewan Family and Community Support Services (FCSS), and Inter Pipeline to envision a community hub that supports children and families in the Heartland.

3. Recognizing the contributions of our staff, everyone at ABC Head Start demonstrated incredible resilience this year. As we begin to see light on the horizon, we have an opportunity to rebuild the strength and heart of this agency by believing in each other and working towards a shared goal. Our staff, volunteers, donors and supporters are all here to help children and families reach their full potential; because we have faith in each person's capacity to overcome hardship.

At ABC Head Start we give children, families, and communities tools and strategies that change their lives for the better. With the passion and dedication each person brings to the 35-year legacy of this agency, I know we will see a strong recovery by continuing to learn from one another, by empowering families to realize the future they want for their children, and by embracing different ways of thinking, doing, and communicating in strong and inclusive classrooms.

With gratitude and hope,



April MacDonald Killins
Executive Director

Board of Directors

- Scott Cuthbert, Board Chair
- Aileen Campbell, Treasurer
- Chase Moreira, Vice-Chair
- Chaylene Gallagher, Secretary
- Rita Melo, Director
- Michelle Plaizier, Director
- Ajit Saley, Director
- Johana Zuluaga, Director
- Adebayo Oyeniyi, Director
- Wendy Gnenz, Director

For more information please
email: volunteer@abcheadstart.org

We respectfully acknowledge that ABC Head Start Society operates within Treaty 6 Territory, the traditional gathering place of diverse Indigenous Peoples and the homeland of the Métis Nation; whose contributions continue to enrich the fabric of our society. We recognize our role in creating a just and prosperous future for every child.

In Memoriam - Faith Page

It is with sadness that we share the loss of a longtime friend to ABC.

Faith Page worked with us for many years in various roles. Faith was ABC's very first administrative assistant which meant she was the first person to greet anyone who entered our doors. She truly embodied the welcoming and inclusive spirit of the agency and made everyone feel at home. She also worked as an Educational Assistant, and stayed connected to the agency as a volunteer. Faith will be deeply missed at ABC Head Start Society by her colleagues, and the children and families she worked with. She touched so many lives. It is people like Faith who make ABC special, dedicating so much of their time and passion to supporting children in the early years.

We dedicate the 2020-2021 Annual Report to Faith, the 2021 Aleda Patterson award recipient.



Centre for Community Inclusion

Expanding Through Collaboration

In the spirit of collaboration and achieving efficiencies for non-profits, on April 27th, 2020, ABC Head Start Society and the Winnifred Stewart Association signed a partnership agreement to expand programming opportunities to the individuals and families we serve. Our partnership has already enabled us to provide enhanced services to children and families but more critically, it is a step towards better integration of lifelong supports for the disability community.

In August 2020, ABC opened a new Head Start program space, co-located with Winnifred Stewart Association and Community Options in Westmount's new Centre for Community Inclusion. With support from the Stollery Charitable Foundation and many individual donors, we created a welcoming and inclusive space for children and families. This new location houses 5 preschool classrooms, a parent and caregiver lounge, an intercultural reading room and library, a multi-sensory therapy space, a gross motor play area, and an outdoor green space. This space was designed using a multi-disciplinary approach of research and best practice. Our goal is to create spaces where all individuals feel safe and supported to realize their unlimited potential, in order to foster enhanced social connections and learning among children and families.



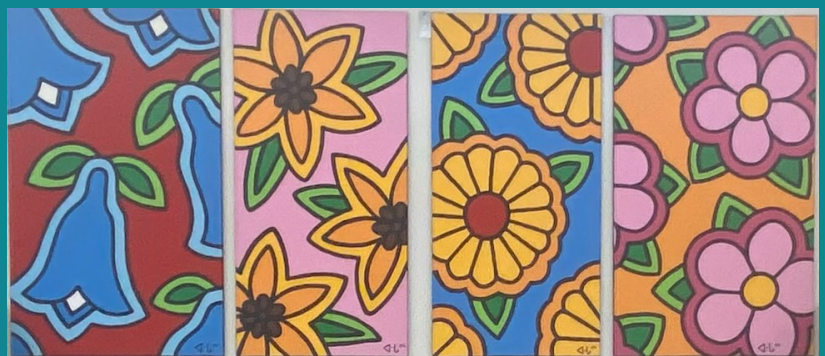
"My daughter needed extra, and that is exactly what ABC provided. Because of this program I believe my child is off to a successful start in life!"

-ABC Head Start Parent

Art & Culture



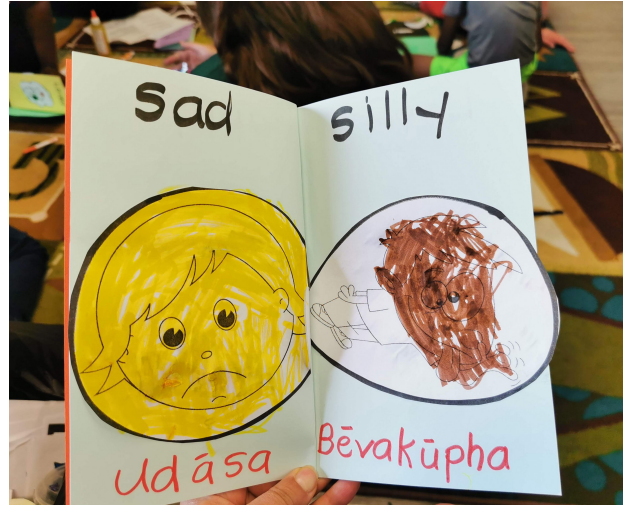
We were thrilled to work with local artists Matthew Cardinal (above), Dana Belcourt (left), and Lance Cardinal (below) to bring Indigenous imagery into our Westmount space! Lance Cardinal's collection, titled 'Indigenous Flowers of Alberta', brings Métis and Cree beading influences into our Intercultural Reading Room at the Centre for Community Inclusion.



Partnering with the Multi-Lingual Families Lab

ABC's long-time dream to support children's heritage languages in the classroom finally began coming to life in 2019 with an introduction to the [Multilingual Families Lab](#). Dr. MacLeod heads up the Multilingual Families Lab at the University of Alberta, where she and a team of researchers, including Catrine Demers, study and implement supports for families using multiple languages between home and school. Since 2019, the lab has supported ABC with children's programming, sessions for parents and caregivers, and resources and modeling for staff; all of which promote pride and confidence in multilingualism while strengthening relationships across language barriers.

Funded by a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) we have been able to explore research questions such as, "What are the bilingual strategies and language utilization across contexts and interactions of a multilingual family?", "What are preschool staff and parents' perspectives on barriers and facilitators to supporting all languages of multilingual children?", and "What are multilingual children's attitudes towards bilingualism?" This project will culminate in staff training through the 2021-22 program year and has already empowered us to introduce multilingual teaching tools and strategies in the classroom.



Visit our YouTube Channel to watch
["Promoting Heritage Language at ABC Head Start"](#)

"Different languages in the classroom can help the children to feel that they belong to the classroom, because when they hear stories in their languages they feel represented there."

-ABC Head Start Employee

Practise As Ceremony



[Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society's Practise As Ceremony Team](#) supported us to provide virtual Indigenous Cultural Teachings to children at our Head Start sites. Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers worked diligently to engage and relate to the children and classroom staff through cultural stories, songs, drumming, and teaching materials such as colouring sheets, arts and crafts, smudge kits, and drum-making. Each presenter joined the class in their community role as uncle, aunt, or kokum; creating a warm approach to relationship with the children. Delivering teachings to pre-school age children with complex needs on a virtual platform is certainly not an easy task. We greatly appreciate Bent Arrow's flexibility and support. It was heart-warming to see the interactions and connections and we know that these relationships had a positive impact on the children and the classroom community.



Year At A Glance...



724



CHILDREN
HAVE A
BRIGHTER
FUTURE

64%



FAMILIES SERVED HAD
INCOMES LESS
THAN \$42,000.
WITH AN AVERAGE OF
3 CHILDREN PER
HOUSEHOLD



95%



PARENTS SAW
IMPROVEMENT IN
THEIR CHILD'S JOY
FOR LEARNING

1175



PARENTS
& CAREGIVERS
ARE MORE
PREPARED TO
SUPPORT THEIR
CHILD'S
DEVELOPMENT

611



FAMILIES
ARE READY TO
REACH THEIR
FULL POTENTIAL



81%



CHILDREN SHOWED
IMPROVEMENT IN
THEIR LANGUAGE &
COMMUNICATION
SKILLS



ABC Parents...



COME FROM

55

DIFFERENT COUNTRIES



SPEAK

43

DIFFERENT LANGUAGES

TOP 6 LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH: Arabic, Somali, Punjabi, French, Urdu, Tigrigna

ABC Head Start Society is a registered charity which has been committed to promoting and supporting strong children, families, and communities in the Greater Edmonton area for over 35 years.

Lowe's Canada Heroes

Throughout the month of September, Lowe's and RONA stores in the Edmonton area raised funds for ABC Head Start Society, a local Edmonton charity. Fifty percent of the amounts raised were matched by Lowe's Canada, up to a maximum of \$2,000 per store or distribution centre. Exceptionally this year, in recognition of the greater needs of hero organizations, which have had to face new challenges and adapt to a new reality, Lowe's Canada also provided an additional \$800,000 donation, which was allocated in proportion to the sums raised by participating sites. Remarkably, the total donation came to \$78,859.33.

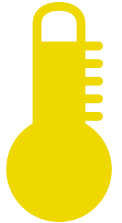
"Because it has a very local aspect to it, this campaign is an initiative that is very dear to our associates. Each year, they dedicate tremendous efforts to raise funds that will go directly to their community and spread awareness about their selected organization", says Ronald Tremel, District Manager for Lowe's Canada. "This year, 12 of our stores in the Edmonton area decided to join forces to support ABC Head Start. Together, and thanks to the generosity of our customers, they were able to present the organization with the largest donation ever made as part of the Lowe's Canada Heroes campaign. This is a testament to the amazing work our network can do by working together."

Across Canada, Lowe's Canada presented over \$2.1 million to more than 235 organizations across the country.



[To donate visit abcheadstart.org/donate.](https://abcheadstart.org/donate)

TOTAL AMOUNT RAISED
\$78,859.33



"I can't say enough about how much ABC has done for us and how supported I feel. I needed something flexible to meet the needs of my kids and the team at ABC changed our lives!"

- ABC Head Start Parent

Thank you to our supporters

7-Eleven
A. Yaggey
ABC Head Start Society Endowment Fund
Adebayo Oyeniyi
Aileen Campbell
AIMCo Foundation For Financial Education
Ainsley Williams
Alberta Education, Government of Alberta
Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis (AGLC)
Alex Chau
Ashley Morgan
ATCO Employees
ATCO Energy Ltd.
Audrey Wittmeier
Audrey's Books Ltd.
Babb / Murchison Fund
Bill Elzinga
Bonnie Coskey
Bruce MacGregor
Buchkowsky Fund
Butler Family Foundation
Camille Gregoret
Canada Alberta Job Grant
Canada Summer Jobs Grant
CanadaHelps Covid 19 Fund
CanadaHelps Partner Giving Fund
Canadian Tire Jump Start
CAPC, Government of Canada
Catherine Block
Chase Moreira
Cheryl Knol
Chrissy McAnally
City of Edmonton Family & Community
Support Services (FCSS)
Civil Society Fund, Government of Alberta
Crestwood Cobs Bread
Cole Cooper
Craig Hamaliuk
Crystal & Blair Willie & Annika
Cynthia Soneff
Dale Short
Darlene Kowalchuk

David Patterson
Deborah Hatch Professional Corporation
Debra Wooding
Diane Sinclair
E. Mirth Professional Corporation
Echo Promotions
Edmonton's Food Bank
Edmonton Northgate Lions Club
Edmonton Transit Service
Eldon & Ann Foote Fund
Estate of Aleda Patterson
Esther Ondrack
Frances Coughlan
Gamma Chapter - D K G Society
International
Germaine Chau
Gerry Sinn
Gold Bar Properties Ltd.
Goodmorning.com
Gwen Harris
Institute for Cross-Cultural Exchange
J. Mikula
Jack Woolings
James Drinkwater
Joan Lynch
John Hegedes
John Walter Lidster
Jordan's Principle Grant
Joyce Purdy
Kasandra Rosko
Kathy Lenihan Fund
Keith Lumby
Kevin Biggar
Kids Up Front Foundation
KPMG LLP
L & J Anderson Learning Resource Fund
Laurie Kanerva
Lea Storry
Lowe's Canada Heroes
Margaret McDonald
Meaghan Dyke
Meera Dave

Michael Seneka
Michael Zurawell
Mike Donoff
Natalia Gallardo Cano
Nichol Babiak
On-Site Rehabilitation Services
One World Montessori
Patricia Hartnagel
Paypal Giving Fund
Priority Mechanical Ltd.
Raywalt Construction Co. Ltd.
Rio Terrace Moravian Community Church
Robert Proznik
Rochelle Wilson
Rona Inc.
Rona Inc. Patrons
Rosemarie Dowie
Royal Alex Hospital Employee Charity Fund
Safeopedia Inc.
Sandra Barnes
Second Harvest Grant
Sharry Hodgkinson
Shirley Guest
Shores Jardine LLP Barristers & Solicitors
Surabhi Dave, in dedication to Deepak Dave
T. Paul Nichol
Taylor Kisilevich
The John & Dianne Storey Family Foundation
The KPMG Foundation
The Seven Eighty
The Stollery Charitable Foundation
Unbelts Canada
United Way - Emergency Community Support Fund (ECSF)
Valerie MacDonald
Willowridge Construction
...and many more.

3 Ways to
GIVE

1 Make a donation online at
abcheadstart.org/donate

2 Mail a donation to
12122 68 St. NW
Edmonton, AB
T5B 1R1



Or use the QR code.

3 Provide goods & services
giving@abcheadstart.org

ABC Head Start Society is a registered charity which relies on the generosity of the community to be responsive to the needs of the children and families we serve. Please consider becoming a supporter today.

2020-2021

FUNDS RECEIVED & DISBURSED

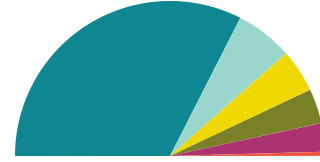
FUNDS
RECEIVED



TOTAL: \$10,652,214

- Alberta Education
- Government Assistance
- City of Edmonton - FCSS
- Foundation Grants & Endowments
- Donations, Fundraising, Service Fees & Other Revenue
- Public Health Agency of Canada
- Other Government Funding

FUNDS
DISBURSED



TOTAL: \$8,360,508

- Staffing
- Program Costs (Supplies, Services, Equipment)
- New Investment in Reserves
- Client Transportation
- Rent & Building Maintenance
- New Investment in Capital Assets

- ABC Head Start Society is fortunate to report a surplus at the end of our 2020-2021 fiscal year, a portion of which our Board of Directors has restricted for planned projects. Ending this difficult year with financial stability gives us assurance to continue bringing innovative and flexible programming to the community. Thank you to all our donors and supporters for investing in our work and inspiring bright futures for children and families.
- Investment in reserves (\$2,045,868) and Investment in capital assets (\$159,930) are funds set aside to provide a contingency for unexpected expenditures and to provide support for the purchase of long-term tangible capital assets.
- A complete set of audited financial statements is available upon request.

Central Office:

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Charitable No: 137044962RR0001



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