



# ANNUAL REPORT 2018/2019



# OPENING DOORS **FOR CHILDREN** AND FAMILIES

Since 1985 ABC Head Start has been an equalizer helping children and families with learning challenges and limited resources access the support and skills they so greatly need to become successful learners and resilient families.

ABC Head Start Society is so much more than a preschool program, as it is fundamental in breaking the cycle of poverty, improving family literacy and creating an overwhelmingly positive social impact within our community well beyond preschool programming. ABC Head Start has always received a tremendous amount of community and government support, but it has not been without our fair share of challenges.

Our resolve to support our society's most vulnerable children and their families remains. We intend to forge a new service delivery model to address the issues which impact early learning such as poverty, infant mental health, trauma, intercultural and inter-generational support.

It is for these reasons we are extremely excited to announce the ABC Head Start 2020 Capital Campaign and our plan to build the ABC Head Start Centre for Family Learning to ensure our vision and the vision of our founder Aleda Patterson remains a viable and sustainable part of our community for another 35 years.

To do this, we need your continued support. You can get involved with ABC Head Start Society by volunteering your time in one of our programs or for one of our initiatives, donating to our mission, or sharing your talents.

Sincerely,

Scott Cuthbert

Chair, Board of Directors

## Board Of Directors

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For more information please  
email: [volunteer@abcheadstart.org](mailto:volunteer@abcheadstart.org)



ABC Head Start Society respectfully  
acknowledges that we are situated on  
Treaty 6 territory, traditional lands of  
Indigenous and Métis peoples.

## In Memoriam- Aleda Patterson

**In late September, our founder and inspired leader Aleda Patterson passed away peacefully in her sleep. During her 84 years, Aleda lived her life fully and left a legacy of commitment to family, community and to caring for others. This past year she received the honour of having a new school named for her that is scheduled to open in 2021. Her daughter in law, Tammy Patterson, gave us the gift of an interview she did with Aleda about her life, her accomplishments and her vision.**

**Aleda's leadership created ABC Head Start Society in 1985 which grew from a small program in a church basement to the multi-site program serving between 900 and 1000 children & their families each year.**

**We are fully committed to continuing to realize her vision that every child should get the best start possible to achieve their potential. We recognize that by supporting vulnerable families and engaging the community, remarkable outcomes can be achieved.**



Follow the link to hear Aleda  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ioY-9w-jNW0>

# Inter-generational Family Programming



Healthy families help children thrive. Anchored in this belief, ABC Head Start Society provides wrap-around services that support families to meet their goals. Service delivery includes weekly family groups where social workers and visiting facilitators provide workshops and social connection for adults caring for children in our communities. During the 2018-2019 program year these family groups were open to any relative involved in the life of a child attending our programs.

Creating barrier-free, inclusive spaces is essential for head start sites, as we welcome staff and families from a variety of cultural backgrounds, languages and lifestyles. Our Delwood School location took active steps to support inclusion and diversity when families requested support with English language learning. A partnership was established with Catholic Social Services to bring the LINC program to our Delwood ABC Head Start site. This weekly language group was open to anyone from the community. It was well-attended and made English-language learning accessible in an environment where families were already comfortable. Additionally, we saw local parents build new relationships with neighbours and peers.

Our Mill Woods location also extended the social inclusion of their programs by forming a partnership with the South Terrace long-term care facility, bringing local seniors together with head start children and creating a weekly grandparent's group that prioritized inter-generational play. One participant said, "It's fun and relaxing to have fun. This is my time."



## Guarding Minds at Work

In November 2018 ABC Head Start Society launched the Guarding Minds at Work survey with all employees. This is a tool used nationally and across sectors to assess, protect and promote psychological health and safety at work, based on the Mental Health Commission of Canada's national standards for psychological health and safety. As a part of our overall wellness strategy, the data, tools and resources provided by Guarding Minds allow us to see where our strengths and weaknesses can be built up to create the best work environment possible and support the resiliency of our employees in both their work and personal lives. We discovered our employees are 25% above the national average in employee engagement!

Guarding Minds describes this area where they "enjoy and feel connected to their work, and where they feel motivated to do their job well". Areas for improvement were also revealed by the survey, allowing us to devise an action plan and implement improvements such as additional core training delivered to employees, revision of policies, and new safety processes for employees working in vulnerable situations. The data we received informed the work of our wellness committee and also mobilized a new committee for diversity and inclusion at ABC Head Start Society. We are now completing annual staff surveys on psychological health and safety as a cornerstone to our human resource strategy and agency capacity building objectives.



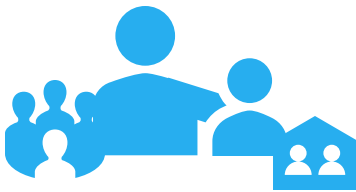
# ELCC Grand Opening 2018



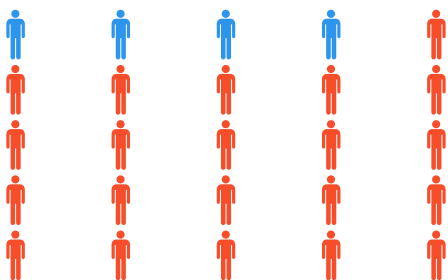
We are proud to announce the opening of our 123 Grow Child Development Centre in September 2018! Thanks to support from the Ministry of Children's Services we've been able to provide quality, affordable childcare at \$25/day in Fort Saskatchewan. We can accommodate 30 children at 123 Grow, and since opening our waitlist has grown to over 100 families.

Some core services provided at 123 Grow are early learning childcare, hot nutritious meals, support with food security and other issues, family engagement through monthly Family Fun Nights, and resources and referrals to other community services.

The creation of the centre would not have been possible without support from Mayor Gale Katchur, Fort Saskatchewan Families First Society, FCSS Fort Saskatchewan, and local businesses and agencies. Since opening, ABC Head Start Society has become an active member of local inter-agency and community planning groups, formed strong partnerships, and created opportunities for collaboration with local oil and gas industry partners.



All ABC Head Start Society programs offer family engagement groups, community resources, peer support groups and a safe and supportive environment for family members to share their needs and challenges while building on their strengths and personal goals.



Each year we have more applicants than we can accommodate. For every family we accept we turn away 2 families.

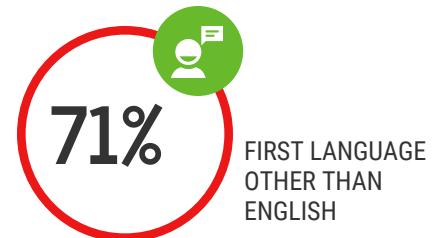
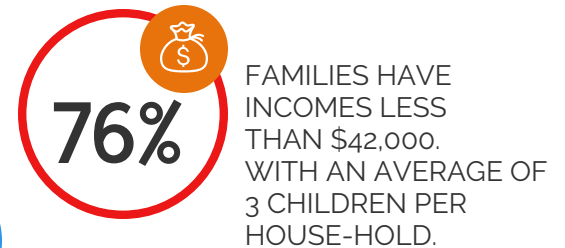


We support children by providing early learning programs that help young children develop the critical thinking, language, social/emotional and physical skills they need to be successful.





## Year At A Glance...



Children we serve are experiencing developmental delays, social, emotional or behavioral problems.

To meet the growing complexities of children's needs, we reduced our class sizes to ensure every child gets the individual attention, therapies and resources they need.



"My daughter has autism. Her communication was very little... She has greatly improved since she has started ABC Head start. I am so excited to be communicating more with my daughter and watching her flourish!"

- Parent

## ABC Parents...



COME FROM

64

DIFFERENT COUNTRIES



SPEAK

46

DIFFERENT LANGUAGES

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

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 34 years.



# Tiny Shoe Project

The genesis of the Tiny Shoe Project began on a cold day in fall of 2018 when most children were outside enjoying the fall weather and playing with the leaves. Three of our children were not able to join in because they did not have suitable shoes. When asked, staff and volunteers from all ABC locations came forth with stories of children with ill-fitting shoes that either fell off, caused blisters or didn't allow the child to participate in the activities that other children enjoyed. A staff member recalled an interaction with one child, "I was trying to glue in the insole of his shoe, just so he could enjoy and participate in the learning happening that day." Another staff member said, "For the past ten years I have been hoping to get shoes for our children that fit, and were appropriate no matter the season."

With seed money from the United Church of Canada, ABC began the Tiny Shoe Project, we developed the project objectives including:

- Provide seasonally appropriate new shoes to any child attending ABC
- Increase public awareness about child poverty in Edmonton

With the support of individuals, Rio Terrace Church, and corporations such as EPCOR, we have been able to give many more children the right shoes to play outside. We also received support from Levi and Maggie Photo and Film, local videographers who documented our project:

<https://vimeo.com/317593740>.

**Our goal is to collect 4000 pairs of new shoes each year, ensuring every child has the right footwear to play outside in all four seasons. You can donate on our website at [www.abcheadstart.org/donate](http://www.abcheadstart.org/donate).**

**\$12,000**   
Funds Raised in First Year

**800** Pairs   
Shoes Collected For Children in Need



## Research Partnership

Over the past decade we've heard growing concerns that classrooms are changing, the needs are greater, and children's behaviour is more complex. In 2018 we formed an interagency collaborative to create a research plan focused on causes of challenging behaviour and determining the best response to support children's resilience and overall success.

With funding from the Community Action Program for Children (CAPC Canada), ABC Head Start Society has joined E4C and Oliver Centre in contracting the University of Alberta's Community-University Partnership (CUP) to examine the growing complexity of children's experience in the early years. This research is part of our commitment to building strong, resilient communities for children and families and we anticipate that this multi-year research project will yield findings that can benefit all early learning and child care programs in Alberta.



**"ABC has very friendly and caring staff. It feels like our own family."  
– Parent**



# Thank you to our 2018/2019 supporters



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Tracy Mills  
Trent Peacock  
Trevor Blasco  
Vanessa Davis  
Walter Lidster  
Wendy Bryan  
Wintergreen

## Addition Community Support

Alliance Church	Julie and Rogelio Barzabal
Blizzard Cloggers	Karen Labour
Brenda Chilmilar	Keeanna Harper
Brenton Construction	Kevin De Battista
Cobs Bread	Kris Pierce
Cobs Bread,	Laina Neudorf
Country Chic	Larissa Slaney
Edmonton's Food Bank	Leona Hodgson
EPCOR South Service Centre	Levi & Maggie Photo & Film
EMCN Welcome Centre	Lindsay Priebe
Fort Saskatchewan Families	Mary Jupe
First Society	Melanie LaMontagne and
Fort Saskatchewan Food	Francisco,
Bank	Neji Isaac
Fort Saskatchewan Library	Red Robin Restaurants
Indigo Kingsway	(Edmonton Region )
Jennifer Maldondo	Shoppers Drug Mart
Jennifer Peebles	Stephanie Glazer
Jennifer Medos	The Home Depot Fort
	Saskatchewan
	Usborne Books
	WIN House

**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.**

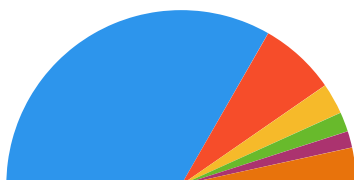


2018 - 2019

# FINANCIAL STATEMENT



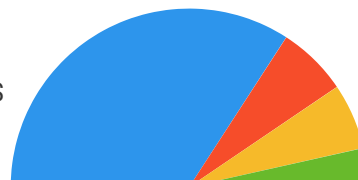
REVENUE



TOTAL: \$5,739,039

- Alberta Education
- Children's Services
- City of Edmonton F.C.S.S
- Public Health of Canada
- Grants
- Donations & Fundraising

EXPENSES



TOTAL: \$5,695,535

- Staffing
- Client Transportation
- Rent & Building Maintenance
- Program Costs, Supplies & Equipment

\*A complete set of audited Financial Statements are available upon request.

**Help us realize this vision and strengthen our communities.**

## 3 Ways to GIVE

**1** Make a donation online at  
[abcheadstart.org/donate](http://abcheadstart.org/donate)

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

**3** Provide goods & services  
[giving@abcheadstart.org](mailto:giving@abcheadstart.org)

By supporting ABC Head Start Society, your donation will give children the skills they need to be successful in their educational journey and support families to transition out of poverty, become healthy and self-reliant.

Our priority is to find new and creative ways to reduce our wait lists and support vulnerable children and families.


### ABC Head Start Society


Opening Doors For Children & Families

Central Office Located at:  
Jerry Forbes Centre for Community Spirit  
12122 68 St. NW  
Edmonton, AB  
T5B 1R1

Charitable No: 137044962RR0001



 780.461.5353

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