Messages

Message from the Chair

Closer to Home’s mission of uniting children, youth and families is brought to life in Calgary and area through our early intervention, in-home and residential programs, as well as abroad through our international dissemination efforts. Our continued growth and the successes of the children and families that we serve is a testament to both the Teaching-Family Model that guides our programs and the exceptional staff and volunteers who make them a reality.

Closer to Home’s finances, as our annual audit shows, continue to be well-managed with appropriate controls. In this past year, we have taken advantage of new funding sources, and continue to grow our capacity to raise funds. In particular, the Board is taking steps toward acquiring a larger, permanent space that is more accessible as well as to enable Closer to Home to further expand its programs in the community and serve even more vulnerable children and families.

As a Board, we are excited about the opportunities that lie ahead for this organization, and look forward to working with all of you in building stronger communities.

Kate Andrews
Board Chair

Message from the Executive Director

Picture this.... Parents and children sitting around a dinner table, chatting about their day; a young boy attending his first overnight camp; a teenager earning an A on her math test; a dad sitting down to proactively solve a problem; a new mom attending her first parenting class.

These are pictures of success. Everyone has their own definition of success, their own personal picture of a good life. As an agency that works with many children, youth and families, Closer to Home can be part of the picture and part of the journey. We join with families and teach them the skills they need to stay together. We encourage, support and advocate for families to take the first steps towards changing and healing.

Picture this.... New staff members joining the Closer to Home team; a senior staff member presenting at her first conference; a foster parent receiving his first professional certification; a teaching parent receiving an international award; an administrative assistant proposing an innovative solution; a volunteer making a difference for a child.

These are pictures of determination. Compassion, dedication, ingenuity, focus and perseverance are the characteristics and qualities of our team - the practitioners, staff and volunteers who are the foundation of the agency.

The vision for our work with children and families is made up of a thousand snapshots. From mission statements to program development, from teaching homes to families who can teach, from fostering children to reunifying families, from cultural experiences to understanding, from hurting to hoping....this is the Closer to Home photo album of the past year. I hope you will enjoy reading the pages of our Annual Report and feel part of the many success stories. Join us in any way you can and become part of the bigger picture that makes a difference for the vulnerable children and families in our community.

Karen Olivier
Executive Director
About Closer to Home

Our Mission
Uniting vulnerable children, youth and families

Goals and Values
• Humane Practices *(safe, respectful, positive)*
• Effective Systems and Outcomes *(act with integrity, excellence, accountability)*
• Individualized Approaches *(strength-based, child and family-centered, flexible)*
• Diversity *(cultural sensitivity, dignity, tolerance)*
• Consumer Satisfaction *(family-centered, inclusive, responsive)*

Who we are
Closer to Home is a Calgary-based non-profit charitable society. We are passionate about keeping families together and providing individualized, effective services. Closer to Home was founded in 1995 as an organization focused on children, families and communities and is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors.

Who we serve
Closer to Home serves vulnerable children and their families, many of whom are at risk of family breakdown and require supportive intervention services. We have evolved into an essential community and family support service offering programs in Calgary, Airdrie and surrounding rural areas.

What we do
Closer to Home
• Provides programs designed to meet the needs of vulnerable children and their families
• Delivers culturally appropriate services where and when families need help
• Builds community and social supports, teaches parenting skills and gives families the tools they need to make positive changes
• Provides a therapeutic family environment for at-risk children in crisis situations until they are able to return home with their parents, or move to a normalized family environment

Total Clients Served by Closer to Home Programs
April 1 – March 31

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Clients Served</th>
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Our Programs

**West Central Resource Centre (WCRC)**
Delivers services for children, youth and families through a variety of programs and services that meet presenting needs and celebrate individual differences and cultural diversity within the community. The WCRC is a “one stop shopping” approach to resources and help.

**Early Childhood Development/KIDS**
Focuses on parents and non-regulated caregivers of children from infancy to six years old, providing support and resources through access to parent training and support groups.

**Critical Hours (FCSS)**
Operates between the critical hours of 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. when many parents are working and youth are unsupervised. This program provides opportunities for vulnerable youth to connect with positive peers and teaches children valuable life and social skills.

**Family Diversionary (FCSS)**
Delivers social programs that are preventative in nature to promote and enhance well-being among individuals, families and communities.

**Domestic Conflict Response Team (DCRT)**
Proactively addresses issues faced by families affected by domestic conflict once they have come to the attention of major intervention systems including Calgary Police Services and Child and Family Services.

**Family Matters**
Provides six to eight weeks of intensive in-home support for families in crisis in the rural communities of Airdrie, Cochrane and the Bow Corridor. The goal is to preserve families and keep children in their community.
Aboriginal Services

Provides a continuum of culturally sensitive services including early intervention programs, in-home support for mothers and babies in high-risk situations, and a specialized family reunification home.

Kiwehtata - Offers a child/parent development program and in-home support for Aboriginal families living in Calgary with children from infancy to three years of age.

Pekewe House - Facilitates the preservation and reunification of Aboriginal families involved with Child and Family Services by helping them to develop parenting skills, increase family functioning, access cultural events and ceremonies, connect to community resources and decrease child protection concerns.

Home Visitation (Calgary Healthy Families Collaborative) – Provides long-term individualized support, resources and parent training to families with infants from birth to three months old (at time of referral).

Foster Care

Offers a supportive family environment to children who have been removed from their families and placed in the care of Calgary and Area Child and Family Services Authority (CFSA). Fostering focuses on reunification, kinship or adoption.

Community Teaching Homes

Provide individualized treatment with specialized support services for each youth that is referred by CFSA in order to meet their individual needs. Professional Teaching Parents live in the home to create a normalized yet therapeutic environment that helps youth develop the necessary skills and competencies to return home.

Specialized Community Supports (SCS)

Provides innovative and effective programming to meet the complex needs of specific children and families who are referred to Closer to Home Community Services by CFSA.
Closer to Home Foster Families

Closer to Home Foster Families work collaboratively and tirelessly with biological and adoptive families and case workers to either reunite children with their families or prepare them for adoption.

The Stocktons have had a great deal of experience as foster parents. In their 12 years of fostering, they’ve had 43 children become part of their family, with six of those children eventually being adopted, two moving in with grandparents and 35 returning home to their parents. Their favourite part of fostering is “when these little guys don’t need us anymore because a family member has stepped up to take them, or when a stranger comes forward and says, ‘I want that child to be mine forever.’ Fostering isn’t a long-term job, rather, it’s the bridge for a child from a crisis situation to permanency. The shorter that bridge is, the faster the child moves to permanency.”

Although the bridging process that fostering encompasses can, relatively speaking, seem like a short period of time, the Stockton family often find themselves captivated and completely enamoured with the children who have entered their lives.

A child they fostered was recently adopted and they said, “Our favourite things about him evolved from when we received him at our front door late at night, wearing a sleeper that was at least three sizes too big for his little form, until he left on a balmy August day in the middle of the afternoon. Overall he was a very happy baby who loved to squeal, travelled well in the car, had the most amazing red hair and a grin that would melt anyone. His giggle was infectious as he got older. Making funny faces and noises at him would set him off into ‘giggle land’.

The Stockton family believes the best part of fostering is when they see a foster child transform from an anxious, fearful, angry and confused individual into a “trusting little person who just wants a home.” Ultimately that is what the Foster Care Program at Closer to Home is about: the healthy and positive transformation of children and their biological, foster and potential adoptive parents.
70% of all children discharged from Foster Care were returned to family, or adopted

94% of all children reduced or maintained risk factors
Community Teaching Homes Support Reunification

Community Teaching Homes provide a supportive, therapeutic environment where live-in Teaching Parents help youth work toward their goals.

Young people who are placed in Closer to Home’s Community Teaching Homes create individualized treatment plans with the Teaching Parents, identifying important skills that help them achieve their personal goals. One of the goals for all youth in care is permanence. The Teaching Parents and staff at one of the Community Teaching Homes recently had the opportunity to support the reunification of a young woman and her mother.

Jane*, a 17-year-old high school student who is one of the biggest supporters of the Community Teaching Homes, was asked what she liked most about living at Achievement Place 2 (AP2), one of Closer to Home’s community homes. “I really like to learn new things, and the staff at AP2 gave me the opportunity to learn new skills,” she said. “[Living here] has taught me how to be with other people, how to listen and talk. I wanted to go home and be with my parents, so I made the effort to improve my behaviour. Controlling my anger is important. I used to get angry about little things. The people at AP2 taught me [appropriate] behaviour.”

In discussing the impact AP2 had on Jane’s behavior, her mother said, “I see a lot of change in her. She is growing; the way she is talking is more mature. She used to get really mad and upset, but not anymore. Closer to Home did a really good job. My relationship with Jane has improved. She used to sleep in and be late for school. She doesn’t do that anymore. She cleans around the house now too.”

AP2 staff worked closely with Jane and her mother to ensure they both developed the skills they needed to live together and manage challenges in a supportive, solution-focused manner. After Jane’s return home, her mother said “I have nothing but good thoughts. I do feel very positive and confident about the future.”

The time she spent at AP2 has had a positive effect on Jane’s life, and it played an integral role in reuniting her with her mother and the rest of her family. Uniting children, youth and families is the mission of Closer to Home, and it is clear that the programs and services offered by Closer to Home are not only valuable, but also effective in achieving that mission. Through their involvement in this program, children and youth are encouraged to discover their full potential to be conscientious citizens and contributing members of their communities.

*name has been changed
100% of youth discharged from Achievement Place 2 were reunified with their parents
Closer to Home Teaching Homes use a Teaching Parent Model

Former Closer to Home Community Services client Shayla* has achieved success and independence with support and guidance from the Airdrie Teaching Home.

Shayla is a great example of how Closer to Home impacts the lives of those they assist in a meaningful and lasting way. Shayla had been in and out of group homes in Calgary for several years before moving into the Community Teaching Home in Airdrie when she was 15. Shayla says that she got to experience a more supportive and encouraging environment in the Airdrie home than she was used to in the past. She was encouraged to set goals and accomplish things she had been told she couldn’t achieve before.

Closer to Home Teaching Homes use a Teaching Parent Model with two live-in Teaching Parents and up to six children. Shayla remembers how the parented model differed from her previous experiences in group homes, as it provided a much higher level of consistency for children living in the home. The family-style setting, which included other younger kids, provided Shayla with a steadier and more nurturing environment than her previous living situations.

Shayla also notes that having two permanent parents in the home provided a much higher level of individual attention and interaction between kids and parents, resulting in caregivers who knew exactly what was going on in the lives of each individual child. In addition to the extra attention and individualized care in the parented-model home, Shayla stated that the increased level of patience shown by her Teaching Parents was very helpful to her at that time, after dealing with different circumstances in the past.

“It was a place where no matter what I did, I was still there at the end of the day,” she says.

That increased level of patience and support enabled Shayla to stabilize and grow as an individual in a structured and nurturing environment. Shayla believes that because of her experiences with the home, she has been able to become independent to the point where she has since been able to provide similar stability and support to her younger sister.

Shayla is now engaged to be married and the proud mother of her seven-month-old daughter, Sierra*. As she looks forward to building a new lakeside residence in the near future, she aspires to be a children’s advocate, hoping to work with high needs children. Now volunteering with Boys and Girls Clubs, Shayla says working for the benefit of children is something she would like to continue to make a part of her life, helping kids as she was helped as a youth. Shayla still stays in touch with her former Teaching Parents, talking with the couple regularly, and forming part of a large extended family of the Teaching Home’s success stories.

*names have been changed
61% of Teaching Home youth came from residential treatment programs

The other 39% were placed due to breakdowns in previous placements

71% of youth discharged from Teaching Homes went to less restrictive placements
Closer to Home has successfully assisted in the development and dissemination of the Teaching-Family Model to community-based not-for-profit agencies throughout North America. Most recently, Closer to Home sponsored Tennessee Family Solutions of Nashville, Tennessee to achieve certification after two years of hard work and dedication. The staff of Closer to Home worked tirelessly to support this certification for Tennessee Family Solutions and ensured the development and implementation of the Teaching-Family Model was carried out in an effective and timely manner.

International agency development begins

Closer to Home has also recently embarked upon its first agency development program outside of North America. This foray into international agency development began in Auckland, New Zealand at a youth and family services agency called Youth Horizons. Arlene Oostenbrink, an Associate Director at Closer to Home, believes this is an important milestone since the Teaching-Family Model has not been developed outside of North America until now. “It’s exciting to see how the Teaching-Family Model works in other contexts,” she said.

Staff members from Closer to Home, in conjunction with the personnel at Youth Horizons, are currently implementing the Teaching-Family Model there, and are already seeing results with regard to more effective care for youth in group homes as well as better quality service delivery for youth in need of social services.

The staff of Closer to Home Community Services believes in the effectiveness of the Teaching-Family Model, and is passionate about and committed to the development of new Teaching-Family sites. It is the application of this passion and devotion on the part of Closer to Home that has supported the organizational development of Tennessee Family Solutions and the improved services of Youth Horizons during the last year.

Teaching-Family Model Services

- Treatment Foster Care
- In-Home Family Support
- Community Programs
- Schools
- Early Intervention
- Residential Treatment
- Services for Adults with Developmental Disabilities
going international

The staff of Closer to Home Community Services believes in the effectiveness of the Teaching-Family Model, and is passionate about and committed to the development of new Teaching-Family sites.
Pekewe House Facilitating Preservation and Reunification

Pekewe House, located in the northwest Calgary community of Rosedale, is designed to facilitate the preservation and reunification of Aboriginal families involved with Child and Family Services. The program focuses on helping parents to develop skills, increase family functioning, access cultural activities and ceremonies, connect to community resources and decrease child protection concerns.

The families who reside at Pekewe House live together with their children in a safe, nurturing and highly supportive environment. It is during this time that both parents and children work on developing the skills and support networks they need to reside successfully in their community.

Leah* is a 23 year old mother of two who has lived at Pekewe House for the past 10 months. Leah was on a very long waiting list for another program and was in danger of losing both of her children when she was referred to Pekewe.

“If it wasn’t for the program and the staff at Pekewe, I wouldn’t have my five-year-old at all,” she said. “I’ve learned about positive praise and the need to highlight the positive actions of my children to teach them positive skills. I am working on getting my five-year-old to sleep in her bed through the whole night. It is a work in progress that will take some time, but she is getting better. I’m also using different techniques with my 11-month-old to help her meet her age milestones. She is a little behind with crawling and walking, but is making great progress and is a healthy and active little girl.”

Leah feels that Pekewe House is an important part of the community. “There are so many women struggling to raise their children and many of them don’t know about community programs and services like Pekewe. If parents don’t know where to go for support, it can be hard to meet the requirements [for Child and Family Services]. These parents need to know what resources are available to them and that there is help if they just know where to look for it.”

The families that engage in the Pekewe program reduce their reliance on emergency services, such as police intervention, accessing shelters and involvement with Child and Family Services. The Pekewe program facilitates family reunification and creates an environment for families to learn necessary skills that increase long-term family stability, the ultimate goal of Closer to Home programs.

*name has been changed
100% of parents reported increased knowledge of community resources that help address family concerns.

100% of children were discharged to family.
Family Matters

“We used to squash everything down. Now we deal more logically with problems. It never escalates the way it used to.” – Jim*, Family Matters Participant

Family Matters is an in-home support program that helps families in crisis set goals, learn skills and stay together. Family Specialists assist the families in communicating more effectively, addressing behaviours, increasing confidence, managing crises and achieving their own goals.

Jim, his partner Cheryl* and their children came to Family Matters for help with behavioural issues. They had tried different approaches without much success before choosing Closer to Home’s Family Matters program to get back on track as a family.

Their Family Specialist helped the family learn how to communicate effectively and listen to each other instead of reacting. Both parents were soon able to better listen to their kids, which helped them conduct themselves in a more open-minded and rational manner. They were able to talk about their issues as a family and reach conclusions calmly. The Family Specialist helped the parents come up with a checkmark system to help the youth earn and lose privileges based on their behavior, which became more motivating for the children than being grounded. This meant the family could create solutions to problems that arose instead of “squashing” them down.

Jim and Cheryl learned how to talk to each other and their children openly and honestly, take responsibility for their actions, as well as give each other credit when it was due. Jim was able to become more involved with the kids and both parents were successful in forming a cohesive parenting unit.

Overall, Jim liked “watching everyone come together” while Cheryl liked “meeting our goals [and] being able to see the kids laughing and enjoying themselves.” One of their teenagers learned about honesty and telling the truth as well as the importance of doing a good job. The other teen also learned about honesty, to think about other people, and to be conscious of the reasons behind his actions.

The family is now able to say “I love you” to each other and show affection, which has become a regular part in their lives. They know to slow down and not miss important times in each other’s lives. Both parents were able to learn to acknowledge and reward great behaviour and everyone learned to communicate more effectively.

Where are they now? The whole family recently went on their first family vacation in six years and were happy to enjoy each other’s company. They acknowledged that without the Family Matters program, their successful trip would not have been possible.

*names have been changed
Family Matters served the families of 57 children.

85% of those children were discharged to family.
Certification

We celebrate the exceptional commitment and perseverance of our practitioners who have been certified in their implementation of the Teaching-Family Model and recognized by the International Teaching-Family Association.

April 1, 2011 – March 31, 2012

First Annual Certification
Krystina Daly (Alternate Teaching Parent)
Debbie & Brian Cooper (Foster Parents)
Jennifer Herman (Family Specialist)

Second Annual Certification
Sylvia & Edward Boyd (Foster Parents)
Rufina & Ian Sleight (Foster Parents)
Sandy Smokeyday (Family Support Worker)
Sonia Lopez (Foster Parent)

Third Annual Certification
Cheryl Hanley (Family Support Worker)

Seventh Annual Certification
Minoush Rafie (Family Support Worker)

Ninth Annual Certification
Lori & Don Snell (Foster Parents)

Tenth Annual Certification
Gwen Stewart (Foster Parent)
Accreditations and Memberships

Accreditations

Teaching-Family Association (2013)
Closer to Home was initially certified in 1999 and recertified annually thereafter.

The Teaching-Family Association (TFA) provides a best-practice framework of integrated practices that is:

- Evidence-based and grounded in continuous quality assurance practices
- Focused on strength-based, consumer-driven services
- A cognitive behavioral approach for teaching critical skills

Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) (2013)
Closer to Home achieved accreditation for the first time in December of 2010.

CARF is an independent accrediting body of health and human service providers.

- Promotes the quality, value and optimal outcomes of services through a consultative accreditation process that centers on enhancing the lives of the persons served

Memberships

Alberta Association of Services for Children and Families
- Works to strengthen member agencies and promotes attitudes, practices and conditions that contribute to quality services for vulnerable children and families

Alberta Home Visitation Network (AHVNA)
- Supports quality home visitation programs across Alberta for children and families, which focus on strengths and support families by building trusting relationships, teaching problem solving skills, encouraging positive parent-child relationships and supporting healthy child growth and development

Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations
- Promotes and strengthens the nonprofit and voluntary sector by developing and sharing resources and knowledge, building connections, leading collaborative work and giving voice to critical issues affecting the sector

Child Welfare League of Canada
- Provides leadership and support to its members, including timely information on research findings and best practices, as well as opportunities for networking

Family Resource Programs Canada
- Promotes the well-being of families by providing national leadership, consultation and resources to those who care for children and support families

Foster Family-Based Treatment Association
- Strengthens agencies that support families caring for vulnerable children
Uniting vulnerable children, youth and families is the mission of Closer to Home Community Services, and it is the goal our staff and volunteers keep in mind as they develop cultural and social programs for our clients. One of the results of this emphasis on children, youth and family is our Family Café program.

The Family Café was established with the intention of creating a warm and friendly environment for families where they could participate in activities such as games, crafts, educational sessions and parenting forums. The Family Café provides children with new avenues for learning and imparts parents with knowledge and tools that enable them to be more successful in raising their children.

The success of Family Café can be attributed to parents like Oleg, who is a supporter and proud participant of this program. After immigrating to Canada from Moldova a few years ago, Oleg found that meeting new people was challenging both for himself and his children, then aged two and five years old. The Family Café provided Oleg with a warm and inviting forum to meet other parents and families. New immigrants and locals alike who wish to create new friendships are welcome at Family Café. The program also gives parents and their children the ability to engage in educational sessions that broaden their horizons. The children participate in group activities that enhance their socialization skills, while the parents take part in forums that allow for the free exchange of ideas and help them learn new parenting techniques.

Oleg reported that the parenting lessons taught at Family Café remind him of the need to spend a lot of time talking with his children, and that communication between parents and their children, parents and other parents, and children and other children is very important. “Family Café has helped me feel better about my parenting skills. Different parents have taught me different things. We have learned much from each other.” His favourite part of Family Café has been meeting people from all over Calgary. His children love Family Café because they have made many friends. He said his two year old child especially enjoys Family Café simply because it is the only place for him to meet other children.

Helen, another parent who brings her family to the Family Café program, likes the fact that she can meet many unique people there. “Family Café has taught me it’s okay to meet different people from different cultures. It’s made me more open to new ideas and attitudes.” Helen also believes that the Family Café program has made her a more confident, knowledgeable and capable parent. “Family Café has taught me how important it is to read to your child every single night. It’s also important to have play dates with other kids and to find someone who is age appropriate for your child.”

Although Oleg and Helen come from different walks of life and have children of varying ages, one thing they have in common is their appreciation of Family Café. In fact, they both frequently recommend the program to other parents. Whether the family consists of stay-at-home parents with young children or mature parents with school-aged children, Family Café has a little bit of something for everyone.
something for everyone

23 families have connected through Family Café
WCRC Women’s Group is a place where women can increase their social network by providing them with the opportunity to connect with other women and families in their community. Women’s Group acts as a forum where women from diverse social and cultural backgrounds can come together to exchange ideas and experiences and learn about the community resources and social support structures available.

Heather, a recent immigrant from Iraq by way of the United Kingdom, has nothing but good things to say about Women’s Group. “I have made lots of friends because of Women’s Group. I met my first friend in Canada at Women’s Group and she is now my best friend. The ladies [at Women’s Group] give me advice. They direct me to other associations that can help me. They give information in a kind manner. They encourage people to know more about Canada.”

The Women’s Group has become a resource for health and educational information in Canada. It’s also a meeting place where people understand and support new Canadians and help them manage the challenges and obstacles they face.

Vidya, another member of Women’s Group, believes Women’s Group is “a valuable and useful resource. New immigrants need jobs, and Women’s Group helps us find them. Women’s Group has given me confidence to overcome some of the challenges I have faced since I moved to Canada, and I feel more empowered. I learned English very well because of Women’s Group.”

Not only are Heather and Vidya incredibly enthusiastic about participating in Women’s Group, they both highly recommend that all women, from all walks of life and social backgrounds, come and participate in Women’s Group. The group fosters a spirit of friendship and sense of community among its members. Both Heather and Vidya experienced a profound sense of isolation immediately after they arrived in Canada. Yet, despite their different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, they’ve not only made many friends among the members of this culturally diverse group, but they’ve also become good friends with one another.
Women’s Group has helped 46 women access resources and develop a social network
Part of Closer to Home’s vision is “that children, youth, and families will recognize and achieve their full potential.” Closer to Home developed the Homework Club program to help kids do just that.

Homework Club enhances the learning potential of children and builds their educational abilities and capacity. It also assists children in achieving success in their home, school and community through enhanced socialization and teamwork skills. The ultimate goal of Homework Club is to keep children engaged in school and decrease their likelihood of dropping out or failing.

Swarah*, a grade 10 student who attended Homework Club from grade three to grade six said, “I think [Homework Club] helped me to do better in school. I noticed an improvement in my grades. It reinforced some of the things I learned many years ago. Interacting with other kids also really helped me to be more outgoing. I made two really close friends when I attended Homework Club.”

Swarah added that she has started volunteering at the Calgary Public Library with the Reading Buddies Program. “Volunteering at Homework Club made me want to volunteer at other places and to help other people. Teaching the little kids at Homework Club really made me want to become a teacher.”

Not only does Homework Club keep youth engaged in important school subjects like math, science and English, it gives them the confidence and important social skills they need later in life. Community volunteers give graciously of their time and academic expertise to make these neighborhood clubs so successful.

For many young people like Swarah, Homework Club has inspired their career choices and changed their lives for the better. Homework Club has taught numerous young people that when it comes to helping others, it’s important to pay it forward.

*name has been changed
Homework Club served 136 children in the Shaganappi, Rosscarrock and Glenbrook communities this past year.
Award Recipients

“**We have never met a person with such compassion and dedication.**”

“You are like my big sister and I want to keep you in my life.” - 12-year-old girl whose life was positively impacted by Closer to Home Volunteer of the Year

This note was written in a handmade thank-you card from a young woman whose life has been touched by Jocelyn (Jodi) Wright, the 2012 Closer to Home Volunteer of the Year. Jodi has been volunteering as a mentor with this young lady for almost two years, and though it has taken some time, she has made an amazing impact on the life of 12 year-old Katelyn*.

The individuals who nominated Jodi for this award said: “We have never met a person with such compassion and dedication. She truly cares for Katelyn and goes above and beyond to bring quality to her life. Jodi gives so much to us, and never asks for anything in return, and we really feel she deserves acknowledgement.”

Katelyn and Jodi started getting to know each other slowly. It took a while to build their connection, but now, almost two years later, the difference is apparent. “I’ve definitely seen a lot of changes in Katelyn since we started working together. She has opened up and become a much softer person,” says Jodi.

Being selected as this year’s recipient of the Closer to Home Volunteer of the Year Award makes Jodi feel “completely under-qualified and extremely fortunate and blessed. It’s an honour to be chosen. I am very humbled. I choose to volunteer because I like the connection it gives me with the community. Making a difference in the world is really important to me. This is my opportunity to give back,” she said.

Our community, our agency and our Katelyn are very fortunate to have Jodi in our lives. Congratulations to Jodi for receiving this award; the work you do as a volunteer with Closer to Home is remarkable and priceless, and the impact you have made is a lasting one.

*name has been changed

“Donates because ‘it’s just the right thing to do.’”

He views donating as trying to do his part, because “it’s just the right thing to do,” and he is involved with “quite a few” charities. His name is Nick Rafie, and he is the Closer to Home Donor of the Year.

In difficult and emergency situations, Nick has directly helped many families served by Closer to Home. For example, he has provided the money to fix vehicles so families have what they need to take care of themselves, when otherwise life would be much more challenging. And Nick knows these families do not need more challenges.

When discussing this award, he said, “It is quite the honour and I am humbled by it. I am privileged to be involved with an organization that I feel is really achieving its purpose.”
Humble.
That’s the best word to describe this year’s Practitioners of the Year, John and Betty Mostert.
Despite fostering more than 25 children over the past decade, they feel every foster parent deserves an award.

“Every foster parent works so hard. This award is a little humbling because we know everybody deserves it equally,” Betty said.
The Mosterts, who have been married 42 years and raised five children of their own, love the Teaching-Family Model of child-rearing. They say they wished they had the Teaching-Family Model training program when they were raising their own kids.
“The process you use with the kids is scientifically proven to change behaviour in the long run,” John said.
The Mosterts are now retired and figure this is the ideal way to spend their time.
“[Fostering] is the perfect thing for retired people who still have their health, have raised their own families and want to make a difference in the world,” John said. “It gives us all the freedom we would ever want to enjoy, and we love these kids. They’re great.”

When they were younger, the couple often travelled due to John’s work. Now, they are content to provide exceptional care to foster children in their Crossfield, Alberta home.
The Mosterts may shy away from awards and speeches, but they enjoy being foster parents, seeing the joy their foster children express, and the positive changes happening in their foster children’s lives.
“Their raw enthusiasm for life is infectious,” John said.
And it’s in those little day-to-day experiences - the spontaneous hugs, the moments of pure joy - where the Mosterts find their reward.
Closer to Home is proud to recognize John and Betty for their unending commitment to the children and youth they have cared for, their passion for the work they do, and the wonderful way they work with these children who need them so much.

Nick has been involved with Closer to Home for many years, and is impressed with the organization’s mission. “I think Closer to Home is an agency with spectacular goals and a vision that I’ve witnessed in action. I’ve seen Closer to Home serving families and children and that service results in positive outcomes. They don’t just help those in the community; they help those in the community learn to better help themselves.”

And helping communities is a big deal for Nick, as he sees a growing need for help and support.
“It is our duty to respond to that need, helping to build a stronger, more enriched community for all of us.” Nick thinks we should treat the communities where we live the same way we treat ourselves.
Perhaps this is why he is involved with “quite a few” charities. It is Nick’s unending commitment to families and the community that makes him this year’s Donor of the Year.

“The kids’ enthusiasm for life is infectious”

Practitioners of the Year
John and Betty Mostert

“[The kids’] enthusiasm for life is infectious”
In 2011-12, Closer to Home received $214,000 to support our work.

Closer to Home is grateful for our major funders including the Calgary and Area Child and Family Services Authority, Calgary Family and Community Support Services and HomeFront. We also welcomed support this year from Heritage Canada, the Alberta Government through its Community Initiatives and Community Spirit programs, the Cohen Foundation and corporations including First Calgary Financial and Devon Canada.

Individuals and community organizations that provided financial and in-kind gifts, as well as those who were involved with our Adopt-a-Family program, made a difference by:

- Helping families to reunite and stay together in healthy environments through support and care
- Connecting Aboriginal youth to their cultures and helping them to become confident leaders in their communities
- Supporting youth in accessing community programs and activities including summer camps, day trips and Special Olympics

- Increasing organizational capacity through information technology enhancements, leadership training and organizational strategic development
- Contributing to a Family Assistance Fund for those accessing emergency support through the West Central Resource Centre
- Making the holiday season brighter for 340 people by providing basic needs and many special Christmas gifts through our Adopt-a-Family program

As we look forward, we picture an even brighter future with the help of our supporters. As part of our long-term strategic vision, Closer to Home will be developing strategies to acquire a new Community Resource Centre building as a means to increase and improve our ability to provide valuable services to the community. The Community Resource Centre needs to have a street front presence to ensure accessibility and visibility to the community.

Thank you to our current and past supporters for being a part of our picture. Please consider joining our family of supporters or renewing your current gift by visiting our website at www.closertohome.com.
supporting our mission
**Balance Sheet**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>As at March 31, 2012</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
<td>68,635</td>
<td>78,924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-term investments</td>
<td>377,542</td>
<td>424,359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts receivable</td>
<td>224,533</td>
<td>271,226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepaid expenses</td>
<td>36,507</td>
<td>41,205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>707,217</td>
<td>815,714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital assets <em>(note 3)</em></td>
<td>1,189,964</td>
<td>1,265,817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,897,181</td>
<td>2,081,531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Liabilities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current liabilities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts payable and accrued liabilities</td>
<td>247,943</td>
<td>245,615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred revenue</td>
<td>30,960</td>
<td>30,962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current portion of mortgages payable within one year <em>(note 5)</em></td>
<td>62,043</td>
<td>60,317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>340,946</td>
<td>336,894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortgages payable <em>(note 5)</em></td>
<td>1,309,851</td>
<td>1,371,791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred capital contributions <em>(note 7)</em></td>
<td>156,594</td>
<td>182,434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred contributions</td>
<td>14,119</td>
<td>12,844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,821,510</td>
<td>1,903,963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrestricted</td>
<td>75,671</td>
<td>177,568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,897,181</td>
<td>2,081,531</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Contingencies and commitments (notes 9 and 10)*

*Approved by the Board of Directors*
## Statement of Operations and Changes in Net Assets

For the year ended March 31, 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revenue</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract</td>
<td>$4,027,886</td>
<td>$3,787,669</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service fees</td>
<td>$1,121,328</td>
<td>$1,281,278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donations and donations in-kind</td>
<td>$118,690</td>
<td>$106,680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental</td>
<td>$13,600</td>
<td>$15,281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>$5,297</td>
<td>$5,565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenue</strong></td>
<td>$5,286,801</td>
<td>$5,193,473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Program expenses</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salaries and benefits</td>
<td>$3,110,946</td>
<td>$2,690,108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor per diems</td>
<td>$765,535</td>
<td>$967,274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client living (Schedule 1)</td>
<td>$483,906</td>
<td>$465,365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facility (Schedule 2)</td>
<td>$294,463</td>
<td>$356,144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Program expenses</strong></td>
<td>$4,654,850</td>
<td>$4,478,891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Administrative expenses</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salaries and benefits</td>
<td>$408,036</td>
<td>$384,473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other administration (Schedule 3)</td>
<td>$149,953</td>
<td>$146,490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle</td>
<td>$64,631</td>
<td>$76,673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office (Schedule 4)</td>
<td>$47,691</td>
<td>$51,949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Administrative expenses</strong></td>
<td>$670,311</td>
<td>$659,585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amortization of capital assets</td>
<td>$89,377</td>
<td>$94,615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amortization of deferred capital contributions</td>
<td>$(25,840)</td>
<td>$(23,940)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Other</strong></td>
<td>$63,537</td>
<td>$70,675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total expenses</strong></td>
<td>$5,388,698</td>
<td>$5,209,151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deficiency of revenue over expenses</strong></td>
<td>$(101,897)</td>
<td>$(15,678)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net assets – Beginning of year</strong></td>
<td>$177,568</td>
<td>$193,246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net assets – End of year</strong></td>
<td>$75,671</td>
<td>$177,568</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended March 31, 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cash provided by (used in)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Operating activities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deficiency of revenue over expenses</td>
<td>(101,897)</td>
<td>(5,678)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Items not affecting cash</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amortization of capital assets</td>
<td>89,377</td>
<td>94,615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amortization of deferred capital contributions</td>
<td>(25,840)</td>
<td>(23,940)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(38,360)</strong></td>
<td>54,997</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Changes in non-cash working capital</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts receivable</td>
<td>46,693</td>
<td>(70,890)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepaid expenses</td>
<td>4,698</td>
<td>(16,592)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts payable and accrued liabilities</td>
<td>2,328</td>
<td>63,365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred revenue</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>30,962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>15,347</strong></td>
<td>61,842</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Investing activities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of capital assets</td>
<td>(13,524)</td>
<td>(66,493)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale (purchase) of short term investments, net</td>
<td>46,817</td>
<td>(1,395)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>33,293</strong></td>
<td>(67,888)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financing activities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred capital contributions</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>47,625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repayment of mortgages payable</td>
<td>(60,215)</td>
<td>(62,599)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in deferred contributions</td>
<td>1,276</td>
<td>2,563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(58,939)</strong></td>
<td>(12,411)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Decrease in cash for the year</strong></td>
<td>(10,289)</td>
<td>(18,457)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cash – Beginning of year</strong></td>
<td>78,924</td>
<td>97,381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cash – End of year</strong></td>
<td>68,635</td>
<td>78,924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supplemental information</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest paid</td>
<td>43,364</td>
<td>40,992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest received</td>
<td>5,302</td>
<td>2,370</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thank you to all of our corporate and individual donors who directly contribute to exceptional outcomes for our children, youth and families. Your financial contributions have enhanced the lives of many people.

**Individuals**
Andrew McQuiston
Beth Williams & Family
Beverly & Larry Flug
Blair & Marlene Mason
Bonnie & Rick Muir
Closer to Home Staff
Cristin Forbes-MacFarlane
Dan Oicle
Dan Washbrook
Debbi Kellestine
Elmien Wingert
Erin O'Reilly
Florence Starkewski
Geoff & Marilyn McMillan
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Janeen LeBlond
Janice & Dave Besson
Jennifer Head
Jennifer LeBlond
Jim Washbrook
Joann & Rogers Lehew
Julie O'Brien & Family
Jytte Maleski
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Michelle Pont
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Rosamund Soares & Sandra Harty
Roxanne LeBlanc
Samuel Switzer
Sharon Cowie
Sheila Buckley
Shelly Shaw
Stacey & Ryan Morasch
Stacy Wynnyczenko
Tamara Walker
Tina Chapman
Wei (Vivian) Dong

**Organizations and Foundations**
Bethany Calgary Facility Management Team
Calgary Inter-Faith Food Bank
Canadian Pranic Healer's Association of Alberta
Deacons of ECRC
Glamorgan Church of God
Indian Bluffs Community Garden
Kids Up Front Foundation
Kiwanis Club of Northmount Operation Christmas Child
Richmond Hill Baptist Church
Scarboro United Church
Sisters of Charity of St. Louis
United Way of Calgary, Donor Choice Program
Willow Park Preschool

**Corporations**
About Staffing Ltd
Accurate MWD Systems Ltd
Alien Intersport Ltd
Angles Hair Salon
Astro Jump Canada
ATCO Pipelines EPIC Program
Bedrock Consulting Group

We would like to thank the following volunteer writers for their invaluable contributions to our 2011-2012 Annual Report:
Mahmoud Rahim, Jason Ronald, Rohan Somers, Megan Watson

**Grants**

[Logos of Devon, Elf, and Canada]
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Child and Family Services Authority

fcss
Family & Community Support Services

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