



TOWN OF
PEACE RIVER
ALBERTA

 Family and Community Support Services

2016 Annual Report

Family and Community Support Services celebrates 50 years in Alberta!

Family & Community Support Services (FCSS) changes lives and communities across Alberta and to this day no other province or territory has legislation similar to FCSS. For 50 years, FCSS has supported people and communities to build their skills and resiliency to prevent challenges such as poverty, homelessness and domestic violence. FCSS is a highly effective partnership between the Government of Alberta, municipalities and Métis settlements – with outcomes that benefit everyone.

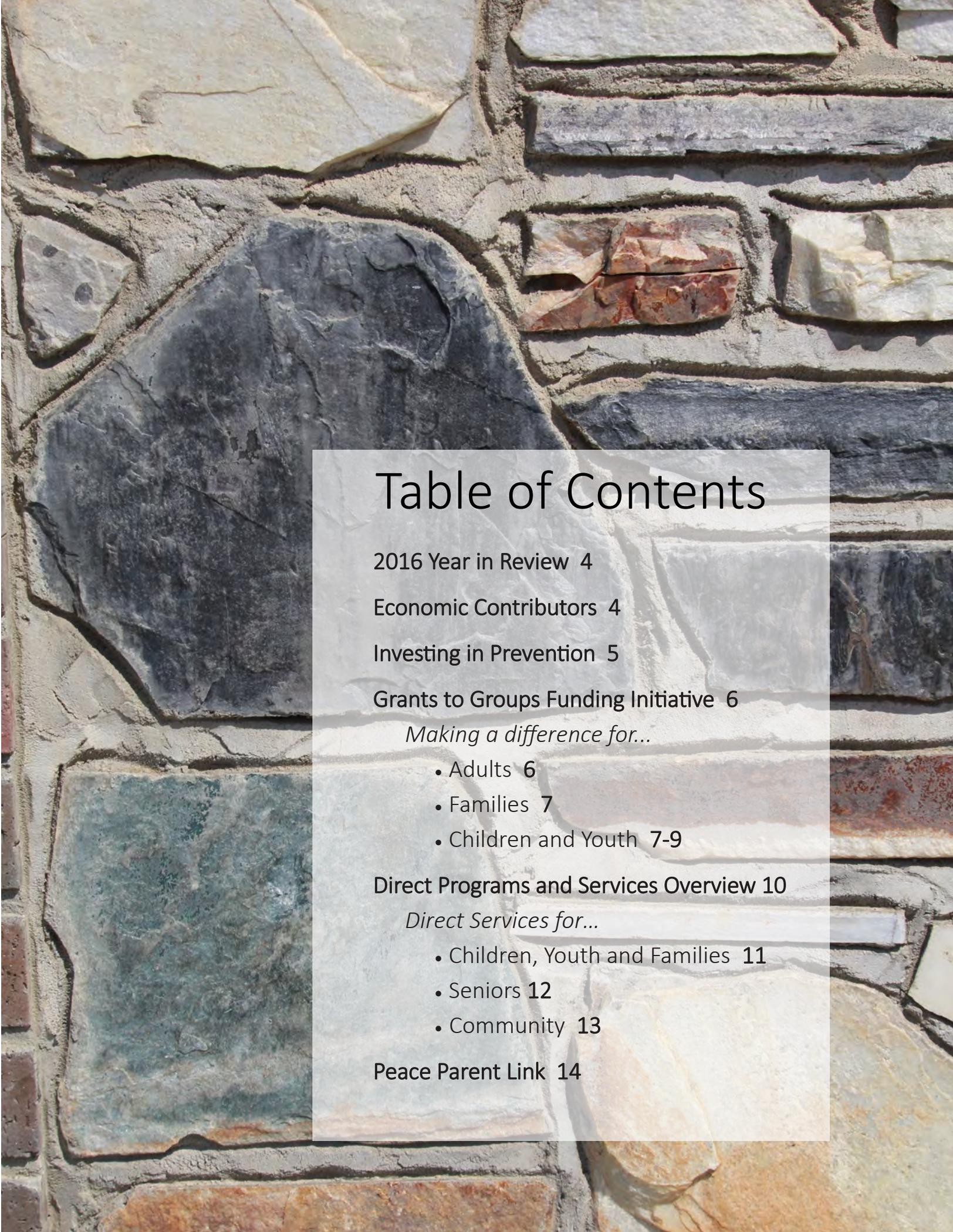


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2016 Year in Review



3,182

Individuals served by Town of Peace River FCSS Programs and Services



273,000

2016 FCSS Budget



1,481

Volunteer Hours Contributed to FCSS Funded Programs



68

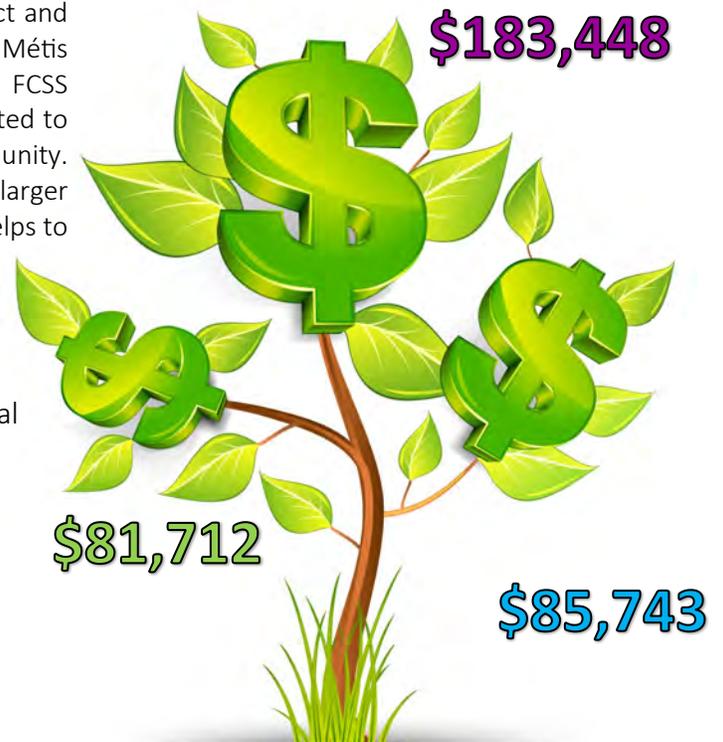
Volunteers Involved in FCSS Funded Programs

Economic Contributors

FCSS funding is provided through the provincial Human Services Ministry. The Province of Alberta provides 80% of the funding, and partner municipalities provide the remaining 20%. The chart below details the breakdown of the total FCSS funding contributions from the Province of Alberta, the Municipality and our Regional Partners. Within the parameters of the FCSS Act and Regulation, each municipality or Métis settlement determines how the FCSS funding they receive should be allocated to best meet the needs of their community. Local FCSS programs are part of the larger provincial program that collectively helps to

ensure Albertans have access to a strong network of prevention supports. Currently, Peace River FCSS projects are funded in one of five funding categories: Adult, Children and Youth, Families, Seniors and Community Development.

- Provincial Contribution
- Town of Peace River Municipal Contribution
- Additional Municipal contributions from Northern Sunrise County, Municipal District of Peace #135 and County of Northern Lights



Prevention through Programs and Services

FCSS Town of Peace River FCSS invests in preventive programs for residents, visitors and newcomers — to provide a sense of belonging, increase access to social supports, and opportunities for mental and emotional wellness. Programs are assessed using a rigorous evaluation system, including pre and post-test surveys or observations to measure their overall impact. Over the past few years, data collected through this assessment process shows positive change in program participants.



2016 Town of Peace River Family and Community Support Services Staff

Community Services Department

Tanya Bell - Director

Robbie Schofield - Administrative Assistant

Laurie Stavne - Community Programs
Coordinator

Amina Usman - Senior Services Coordinator

Myrna Makonen - Home Support Aid

Contracted Services

China Sieger - Project Supervisor, Northwest
Peace Early Childhood Coalition

Peace Parent Link

Wendy Koene - Coordinator

Parent Link, Family and Community Support
Workers

Emily Smith

Melanie Freeman

Lindsay Gauvreau

Dez McCann

Tracey Gerk

Lenore Black

Kyla Lavoie



Supporting Local Programs and Services through **FCSS Grants to Groups** Funding

Town of Peace River FCSS Grants to Groups Program provides funding to groups who provide prevention based services to the community. Programs funded through FCSS funding must provide services that assist communities to identify social needs and develop responses to meet those needs, such as: services that promote, encourage and support volunteer work in the community; services to inform the public of available services; services that promote the social development of children and families; services that enrich and strengthen family life by developing skills; or services that enhance the quality of life of the retired and semi-retired.

2016 Funding
\$50,000

FCSS Grants to Groups Applications are accepted in February each year. Grant applications can be found on the Town of Peace River website www.peaceriver.ca or you can call 780-624-1000 for more

Grants to Groups - Making a difference for **Adults**

\$1,500

Beyond the Heart Clubhouse - Alberta Health Services

Beyond the Heart Clubhouse is built upon the belief that every member has the potential to sufficiently recover from the effects of mental illness to lead a personally satisfying life as an integrated member of society. Mental health service users, through the Anti Stigma Campaign, hope to use their experiences to educate people about the true meaning and experience of mental illness.

-  \$1,500 FCSS Funding Provided
-  15 Participants
-  8 volunteers
-  32 Volunteer Hours

As a result of participating in this project:

100% of clients surveyed have a greater understanding of why eliminating mental health stigma would benefit our community.

100% of clients surveyed see how their booklet could help increase awareness about mental health stigma.

Through FCSS Grants to Groups funding, a book to accompany their 2015 film, *“My life. My story.”* is being created by the members of Beyond the Heart Clubhouse. It will feature stories of hope, strength and courage from members of the Clubhouse, as well as individuals from the community who have faced the stigma of mental illness. This will be a poignant book of their struggles and stories of how they are personally making changes to their lives and overcoming mental health stigma.

Because of the nature of this topic, the book has been challenging to write, however, participants are overcoming struggles and are enthusiastic about writing their own stories. They are also hopeful that their stories will help to reduce mental health stigma.

In 2015, FCSS also funded the *“my life, my story; Beyond the Heart Clubhouse”* video project. This video can be viewed on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kYeuDs3lo20>

Inspiring Stories of Change...
By participating in this project, one participant has since realized that they have an amazing talent for writing. As a result, their confidence has grown so much that they are now talking about going back to school and writing poetry!
People have been connecting over shared experiences and feeling united. Many are realizing that they are not alone and they are reaching out for support and friendship.

Grants to Groups - Making a Difference for Families

\$1,830

Peace Regional Women's Shelter—Building Better Babies, Community Kitchens Program

Building Better Babies Community Kitchens Program brings together pregnant and new mothers who are at risk of low birth weight babies to teach them how to overcome barriers to healthy eating, help them engage with one another to solve common problems, and prepare meals that meet the unique dietary needs of expecting and new mothers. Canada's Food Guide is used as the measure of health (including Canada's Food Guide for First Nations, Inuit, and Metis).



The program is 6 sessions long and 7 hours in length for each session.



\$1,830 FCSS funding provided



10 Participants, 7 completed surveys



1 Staff

As a result of participating in the BBB Community Kitchens Program...

100% of surveyed participants reported that they now know how to budget for meals.

100% of surveyed participants now understand the importance of family eating meals together.

100% of surveyed participants are now more connected to a group of people who share their beliefs and values.

Grants to Groups - Making a Difference for Children and Youth

\$5,670

A Touch of a Horse—Equine Assisted Learning Program (EAL)

Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) is an effective approach to human development through the dynamics of horses. Participants engage in team based objectively driven exercises and find themselves learning valuable life skills in a fun and exciting atmosphere while working through the dynamics of horses.

Some of these skills are communication, confidence, trust, respect, appropriate assertiveness, teamwork and leadership. Equine-Assisted Learning can be a very powerful journey of facilitating participants learning alternative skills to draw from when faced with difficult challenges or negative influences.

Participants of this program had a variety of needs and challenges such as, verbal/written communication, behaviour, motivation and self confidence.

Why horses? Horses are very sensitive, constantly responding to stimulus and they are looking for strong leadership. They respond to confusion, contradictory behaviours, frustration, passiveness; which encourages participants to identify what changes they need to make in themselves for the horse to respond positively. No riding is involved; this is not a recreational, but an educational program.



\$5,670 FCSS funding provided



8 participants, 6-18 years old



Staff must be certified to offer the program, therefore this program does not utilize volunteers



Photos: Youth After School Program 2016

Inspiring Stories of Change...

"This program was really fun! I think I really connected with the horses, particularly with Solo. I learned a bunch of skills like cooperating and [using] clear communication with people, even outside of the ranch. I also met some cool new friends. All of the challenges were fun and everyone was awesome. I hope I can do this again!"

Grants to Groups - Making a Difference for Children & Youth

\$20,000

Outreach Youth Support Services—Peace Regional Outreach Student and Daycare Support Society



\$20,000 Funding Provided



120 Participants and 25 Life Skills Workshops



25 Volunteers



435 Volunteer Hours

640

Student referrals to programs, resources and supports, resulting in increased emotional and physical wellness and resiliency.

Outreach Youth Support Services provides short-term *student counseling and referrals to support agencies, programs and services*. The Youth Support counselor(s) assess the student's supports, strengths and challenges and then quickly provide essential services and referrals, helping to create hope and support for the youth. This engagement of connection in a supportive Counselor/Student relationship is a critical component of the program and increases the possibility of the youth's

Inspiring Stories of Change...

"When I started grade 11 I went through a lot of struggles, I dropped out of school and ran away from home. Soon I discovered I was expecting, fortunately I had already joined the outreach campus and received a lot of support, both emotionally and educationally. Through the outreach campus and the amazing staffs support, I was able to get myself back on track. I learnt so much more than just books, all the extra teaching regarding raising children and surviving in the real world (ie how to cook, budget, etc..) gave me the skills I needed to succeed.

I graduated high school with my darling daughter at my side. After which we moved to Calgary for college where I obtained my nursing degree. I now have a career I absolutely love and 4 amazing children whom I love even more. When I look back on my life I can see that the staff at the outreach campus gave me the stepping stones I needed to succeed and I am eternally grateful to them all."

An example of an Aboriginal male student who was with us for five years and is now in post-secondary begins with a similar story situation; He was AWOL from Child & Family Services (CFS); he had given up on his dysfunctional family of origin; was couch surfing; into drugs, penniless and as often happens had been asked by another high school to go to Outreach. He registered with few basic needs being met; only knowing he did not want to give up on school even if 'society' had given up on him. Counselors quickly advocated and helped him to reconnect with CFS and begin on Independent Living program, finding him a temporary home, food and clothing from Salvation Army. His connection wavered for the first years, as does the spiral of positive change in the TTM model. He was in and out of school with housing, addictions and poverty concerns. However he kept coming back to see the Counselors including the Native Liaison Worker even when he was not doing school work. He gradually made connections with other teachers, peers and became involved in the Youth Support Service programming. He took advantage of occasional opportunities such as Metis in Trade program, aboriginal courses and ceremonies, working with Elders. When he graduated he had choices in his post-secondary future, to either go into an electrician apprenticeship or university. To date he is doing extremely well today at Grant McEwan University while on the Advancing Bursary program which will pay for his tuition and residence. He also has re-established connections with his family of origin. He reflects on Outreach as saying "They have your back" (meaning staff). His younger sister is now at Outreach and has her big brother as a role model, knowing that graduation is a possibility for her too.

Grants to
Groups

Grants to Groups - Making a Difference for

Children & Youth

\$20,000

Sagitawa Friendship Centre—Ground Level Youth Centre

FCSS funding made it possible for Ground Level to keep their doors open and continue offering programs and services to youth for an additional two months. In 2016.



\$20,000 FCSS Funding Provided



106 Participants



Volunteers and Staff (information not available)



Volunteer Hours (Information not available)

Peace River FCSS and our contributing partners are very proud to contribute funding to the Ground Level Youth Centre Project. This valuable resource for youth provides learning opportunities that provide Ground Level youth with opportunities to connect with positive, caring and supportive adult role models who assist them in enhancing their strengths and encourage them to be the best that they can be. All activities are structured so that youth learn strategies for addressing life's challenges in a safe, secure and culturally sensitive environment.

The Youth Centre provides countless positive outcomes for youth in Peace River including but not limited to:

- an increase in positive identity and the ability to make positive choices,
- a safe haven where youth are accepted regardless of gender, sexual orientation, ethnic background or disability,
- increase in confidence, leadership skills and resiliency,
- increase knowledge around healthy relationships, drug

and alcohol awareness, bullying, suicide prevention through presentations and connections with local support services.

The Youth Centre requires a minimum of \$190,000 per year to keep it's doors open and to be able to provide base services. To offer a more complete host of services and provide a more wrap around service the Centre would benefit greatly from a most complete budget of \$250,000 - \$300,000. Ground Level youth are honoured with visits from various elders and volunteers who kindly share their personal gifts and talents with them through traditional ceremonies, teachings and learning opportunities.

The Youth Centre typically sees between 168 – 190 different youth, with upwards of 3000 – 3300 service visits a year. The last few years Ground Level has had to significantly limit their services to only hosting summer events and workshops due to a lack of funding, having to close their doors periodically.

Inspiring Stories of Change...

This year we were able to work with a young man that needed to work off some community service hours. He had a very carefree attitude about his charges and was extremely angry with life, although he hid it well under his goofing-off exterior. By having him work at the youth center to do renovations and cleaning he built relationships with the staff which was the first start to chipping away at his shell. Then we were able to introduce him to Elders at the Youth and Elders retreat. By connecting him to culture and to healthy individuals we saw a drastic but quiet change in this young man. He seemed content, helpful, and started questioning his future. By the end of the summer he had made a decision to enroll in university and has lead a healthy lifestyle since.

We had two youth age out of their family housing. This means they had to find other housing. We assisted them in understanding their rental contracts and explaining their rights and responsibilities as a renter. They signed a 6 month contract and were able to live together meeting their obligations and although one youth left for employment in another town they both received a good reference from their apartment manager. This is a great success as many of our young people are unable to secure housing without a reference. We were able to speak to their character because they attended the youth center for 9 years and contributed in a variety of capacities.

FCSS Programs and Services

FCSS Departments across the province differ vastly on the types of services and programs that they fund. Each FCSS agency is given full autonomy with spending which allows funding to be allocated to where need is greatest. In Peace River, we are very fortunate to have a vast array of services that are provided by local non profit agencies. In addition to our Grants to Groups Funded Programs, our department also provides information and referral as well as various programs and services to residents.

Peace River FCSS programs and services are available to everyone and include the following:

Children	Youth	Families	Seniors	Community Development
 Information and Referral Services 				
Programs and Services provided through Peace Parent Link (ie: Active Playtime, Parenting Supports) (Page 14)	Funding provided to Peace Regional Outreach Youth Support (Page 8)	Funding Provided to Building Better Babies Community Kitchens Program	Government Programs Application Assistance for Seniors	Family and Youth Interagency (Email Network, Resource Sharing and Networking for Non Profits Agencies)
Early Childhood Development Coalition Partner and Funding	Funding provided to A Touch of A Horse Program (Page 7)	Parade of Programs Events	Adopt a Grandparent Program	Non Profit Email Network and Workshops for Clubs, Sports and other non profit Organizations and Volunteers
 Canadian Tire Jumpstart and Community Scholarship Programs Assistance 			Volunteer Income Tax for	Snow Angels Program
Roots of Empathy Program	Funding provided to Ground Level Youth Centre (Page 9)	Parenting Supports through Peace Parent Link	Seniors Fair and Seniors Week Celebration	FCSS Community Directory
	Home Alone Program		Meals on Wheels	
			Home Support	
			Snow Shoveling	



Direct Services

Program	# of Workshops # of Participants/Volunteer Hours	Outcomes
Information and Referral	An average of 25 inquiries per month.	Clients who called, emailed or came into the Community Services Department were directly assisted through information sharing or were referred to local services.
Roots of Empathy Program	3 Classrooms 39 students 3 instructors 3 families 174 hours contributed	Outcomes for this program are collected by Roots of Empathy.
Home Alone Program	3 workshops 33 youth participated	100% of participants passed the Home Alone exam and learned about basic safety for when they need to stay at home on their own for short periods of time.
Early Childhood Coalition 'Super Kids' Event	1 Community Event Over 100 participants	Families that attended this event gained information about the many programs, services and supports that are available for children under 6 years of age in Peace River.
Canadian Tire Jumpstart Program	60 of 98 youth funding applications were processed by the Community Services Department	Community Services Department assisted families with applying for the program which resulted in over \$22,715.00 worth of funding for youth to participate in recreation activities.
Community Scholarship Program	40 youth funding applications were processed	Community Services Department provided over \$2033.00 of funding for youth to participate in arts, culture and recreation based activities.
Parade of Programs Events	2 events were hosted Over 250 families attended each event	Families collected information about program and services and registered for the programs and activities of their choice.

Roots of Empathy Program

Peace River FCSS coordinates the Roots of Empathy Program in local schools and staffing 3 program instructors in 2016. All training is provided through program funding and additional instructors are welcome.

Families with babies that were born in July or August before the school year participate in this program by bringing their babies to monthly classroom visits. Each visit is facilitated by a trained Roots of Empathy Instructor where students are taught about empathy, kindness and anti-bullying strategies. This program is an award winning, internationally recognized program created by Mary Gordon. More information about this program is available at www.rootsofempathy.org.



Direct FCSS Programs & Services

for Seniors

\$113,341

Direct
Services

Program	# of Participants # of Volunteer Hours	Impact
Government Programs Application Assistance for Seniors	61 individuals	Clients who called, emailed or came in to our office received assistance with applying for OAS, Senior's Benefits, and other senior supports.
Adopt a Grandparent Program	Over 90 Grandparents received a gift bag of donated items from individuals, families and organizations 4 staff delivered the gifts	Low income seniors received donated items for the holidays; helping them to feel less isolated from others in their community.
Volunteer Income Tax for Seniors Free income tax filing program for low income seniors and persons with physical/mental difficulties and referrals to additional supports.	139 Seniors 10 Volunteers 96 Volunteer hours	Participants in this program are better able to keep up with their financial commitments and have increased access to government funding programs.
Seniors Fair and Seniors Week Celebration	299 Seniors attended these event combined 20 Organizations shared information about their programs and services	By attending these events, seniors develop independence, strengthen coping skills and become familiar with the support services that are available to them.
Meals on Wheels Clients receive hot, nutritious meals delivered to their door.	9 Clients 1,921 Meals 2 Volunteers 46 Volunteer Hours	Clients report a decrease in feelings of isolation and an increase in connectedness with their community.
Home Support Program	33 Clients Served 1 Staff 720 Staff Hours	Seniors report an increase in their sense of independence because of the light housekeeping and friendly listening services provided through the Home
Snow Shoveling Program	50 Clients 3 Volunteers 288 Volunteer hours	Safety is increased for clients who continue living independently in their own home.

*Direct Programming costs

Program	# of Meetings/Workshops # of Participants/Volunteers	Impact
Family and Youth Interagency (Email Network, Resource Sharing and Networking for Non Profits Agencies)	5 bimonthly networking meetings held 114 Email Network Subscribers	Email network averages 10-15 email shares a month with information about regional non profit programs, services, courses and workshops. Email network is open to anyone to join. Participants are more informed and can also share their non profit information with other network members.
Non Profit Email Network and Workshops for Clubs, Sports and other non profit Organizations and Volunteers	3 Leadership Development Workshops were Hosted in partnership with Northern Sunrise County FCSS 49 Email Network Subscribers	92% of participants in the Social Media Basics Workshop reported that their basic knowledge of social media and its various platforms increased. 100% of participants of the Social Media Marketing and Promotion Workshop reported an increase in knowledge around using social media to promote and increase their organization’s social media reach. Bylaws and Policy Development Workshop - Outcomes for this work shop were collected by Northern Sunrise County FCSS
Snow Angels Program	2 volunteers were nominated for the Award in 2016	Volunteers received a certificate and thank you gift from Community Services and were formally thanked by Town Council.
FCSS Community Directory	700 booklets were distributed free of charge Over 250 non profit resources are listed in this publication.	Residents that acquired a booklet gained knowledge in local resources, clubs and organizations and were able to link with community programs and services. *New in 2017: The Community Directory will be offered as an online service in 2017 and linked to the Town of Peace River website.
Annual Volunteer Event	151 Free hot beverage cards requested by organizations to give to their volunteers	34% (52 out of 151) of the cards provided were returned for free beverage at Java Domain.



Adopt a Grandparent Program

Over 90 grandparents were adopted through our Adopt a Grandparent program! In an unprecedented show of holiday cheer the community of Peace River adopted over 90 grandparents this year setting a new record and nearly doubling the number of adopted grandparents from last year. Each year, Peace River Family Community Support Services pair up donated gifts with seniors in need. Thanks to the kind and generous nature of Peace River’s residents, organizations, schools and businesses there were quite a few more seniors feeling more cheerful this holiday season.

PEACE PARENT LINK

Peace Parent Link joined with Peace River Family and Community Support Services in 2016 and we couldn't be happier!

Early Learning Development and Care:

Parent Link provides early learning programs in *22 communities throughout the Peace Region*. Program activities are designed for children to learn through play and for caregivers to understand that early learning is the foundation needed for children to be ready for school.

Parent Education:

The core education services we provide during the year are **Triple P Positive Parenting** (research based), **Circle of Security** (research based), **Kids Have Stress Too** and **Baby Signs**.

Triple P one on one sessions—34 participants

Other Parent Education Programs—174 participants

Partnerships:

Parent Link currently has over *16 partnerships with other community agencies and services*. Some agencies include multiple partnerships in various areas.

Ages and Stages Screen Tool—29 families

Ages and Stages Screen Social Emotional Tool—27 families

Special Events (members and non-members):

Teddy Bear Picnic Event—June 2016—over 400 participants!

General Event Participants—332 (total children and caregivers)



586 Unique Caregivers

671 Unique Children (0-6 years of age)

106 Unique Children (6-17 years of age)





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