



THE  
TODAY  
CENTRE

# ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021



# Message From Leadership

“In the middle of every difficulty lies opportunity.”

– Albert Einstein



There is little doubt that, globally, dealing with COVID-19 this past year, has been difficult, especially for families faced with multiple stressors, including isolation and loneliness, physical and psychological health risks, school closures, loss of employment and loss of financial resources. Incidents of family violence have skyrocketed across the world and here, at home in our community, lock downs and public health restrictions have made it exceptionally difficult for victims of family violence to reach out for help despite available services. In the face of this shadow pandemic, new light has been shone on the prevalence of family violence, resulting in more individuals reaching out for help on behalf of someone experiencing abuse at home.

As The Today Centre shifted to remote work, Family Violence Specialists met with individuals over the phone or virtually while workshops moved away from in-person delivery to virtual platforms. “Going Digital” saw The Today Centre capitalizing on many service enhancements, such as implementing a Secure Chat feature on our website to allow individuals another form of access to services, serving clients outside of Edmonton with greater ease, and broadening our workshop and training reach into rural communities within Alberta and across Canada, at times with international reach.

“Staying Connected” took on new meaning as we delved into joining new networks, developed new partnerships, created new opportunities for community engagement and improved our communication platforms.

The opportunities and accomplishments of the past year would not have been possible without the amazing support of our funders and donors, both new and existing. Board members, volunteers, supporters and community partners have been instrumental in furthering the work of The Today Centre and staff have demonstrated resilience and leadership, as they continue to offer outstanding support, education and service to those interested in, and affected by, family violence.

Connect and stay in touch with The Today Centre by signing up for our newsletter, joining us on social media, becoming a volunteer, or donating to The Today Centre. Together, we can make a difference TODAY for a healthy community safe and free from family violence!

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**Richard Ouellet**  
Board Chair

**Cindy Furlong**  
Executive Director

## Vision

A healthy community  
safe and free of family  
violence



## Mission

The Today Centre raises  
awareness and builds  
capacity by providing  
immediate, inclusive,  
integrated services for  
those impacted by family  
violence



## Values

Partnership  
Diversity and Inclusion  
Compassion  
Integrity  
Self-Determination  
Knowledge & Education



# Journey to Safety



Rihanna's journey through abuse began when she met her husband in Africa. Despite family encouragement to take her time, they married after six months. Leaving behind her family, friends, and a well-paying job, Rihanna joined her husband in Canada. She arrived having limited supports and little knowledge of English. These barriers provided her husband with opportunities to economically and financially abuse her. He fully controlled their finances and wouldn't allow Rihanna access to their joint bank account and income. Her husband isolated her from the outside world, forcing her to stay home to raise his son from his previous marriage. Rihanna was prevented from taking English lessons and obtaining employment. Each time Rihanna confronted her husband about her needs, she was subjected to physical, verbal and emotional abuse. Enduring endless put-downs and name calling, Rihanna's husband also threatened to have her deported from Canada.

In the last incident of physical abuse that Rihanna would experience, she called the police. Sustaining a head injury and being strangled, Rihanna was immediately taken to hospital while her husband was charged. One of the many resources Rihanna was provided by police was The Today Centre. Through the support of a Family Violence Specialist, Rihanna learned more about abuse and available supports in the community. Together, Rihanna and the Family Violence Specialist worked on determining her risk and planning for her safety. Rihanna was connected to financial resources, immigrant support services and shelter. She received a Lives on the Line cell phone to help her more easily connect to services and to help meet her basic needs, a food hamper and grocery gift cards were provided.

When Rihanna's time with The Today Centre ended, she was well on her way to forging a different path for herself. A new chapter to Rihanna's story was just beginning...

## Strategic Directions

### Service Delivery

- A.** Enhance client-centered support and services to those affected by family violence
- B.** Strengthen collaborative partnerships to strengthen client services

### Education & Training

- C.** Advance education and training opportunities for practitioners and individuals impacted by family violence through partnerships

### Financial Sustainability

- D.** Increase and diversify revenue streams to maintain operational effectiveness and service delivery

### Awareness & Advocacy

- E.** Promote awareness of The Today Family Violence Help Centre and its services with service providers and the community
- F.** Advance the work of The Today Family Violence Help Centre by developing and maintaining strong relationships with other service providers, funders, donors, and all levels of government

# Service Delivery

**346** Clients Served

facing **9** different types of abuse

Confinement

45%

Emotional

97%

Financial

66%

Immigration

8%

Physical

74%

Sexual

41%

Spiritual

22%

Stalking/Criminal Harassment

52%

Technology

60%



## Inclusivity



**8%**

of clients identified as LGBTQ+

## Secure Chat

Implementing Secure Chat allowed our services to reach individuals affected by restrictions or who were unable to leave their home

**110** people utilized our secure chat

## Services Provided

**220** safety plans developed

**128** risk assessments conducted

## Impact of Culture

We are approaching conversations with newcomers, immigrants, refugees, and Indigenous persons in a culturally sensitive and culturally appropriate way



**2198** 

referrals made to **168** agencies & programs



**43** clients identified as **Indigenous**

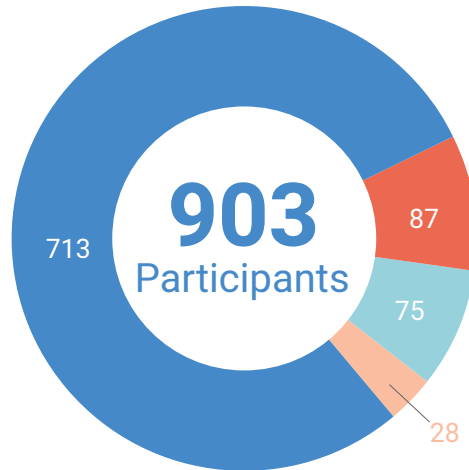
**91** **Ethno-cultural** clients from 38 different countries



**37** Cellphones Provided

For clients with little or no safe access to a phone, The **Lives On The Line** Program is an invaluable safety resource.

# Education & Training



64 workshops or training sessions delivered

- Introduction to Family Violence
- Family Violence Across the Lifespan
- How to Help a Friend
- The Today Centre Information Sessions

## #SalonChallenge

Through the "Cut It Out" program, connected salons to resources and education to support their clients

“ This workshop has helped me to have a broader view of what is considered family violence and changed how I believe I should respond to others' situations. ”

-Workshop Participant

## Workshop Outcome



99%

of participants said the workshop will enhance their work with clients



## Hosted Our 1st Book Club

Julie Lalonde, author of **Resilience Is Futile: The Life and Death of Julie Lalonde**, was in attendance to discuss her book.

# Financial Sustainability

## 1 COVID Response Funding

Seeking help in managing the impact of COVID-19, we appreciated receiving **\$92,040** to support The Today Centre and its programs.

## 2 November Campaign

Although we were unable to host our Help Today, Hope Tomorrow Breakfast, **our supporters showed their support digitally** through this campaign. We exceeded our goal and raised **73 donations**.

## 3 Small Business Collaboration

We were grateful to partner with two fantastic businesses, **Whimsical Cake Studio** and **Biera**, to raise donations for The Today Centre.

# Awareness & Advocacy



The Today Centre's blog post on applying for Emergency Protection Orders (EPOs) is easily the simplest, yet most informative guide of its kind that I have come across...having all of the information they (people) need available and easily understandable, helps make the (EPO) process less intimidating for them.

-Kyle, Community Partner



## Facebook

# +12%

increase in followers (646)

## Twitter

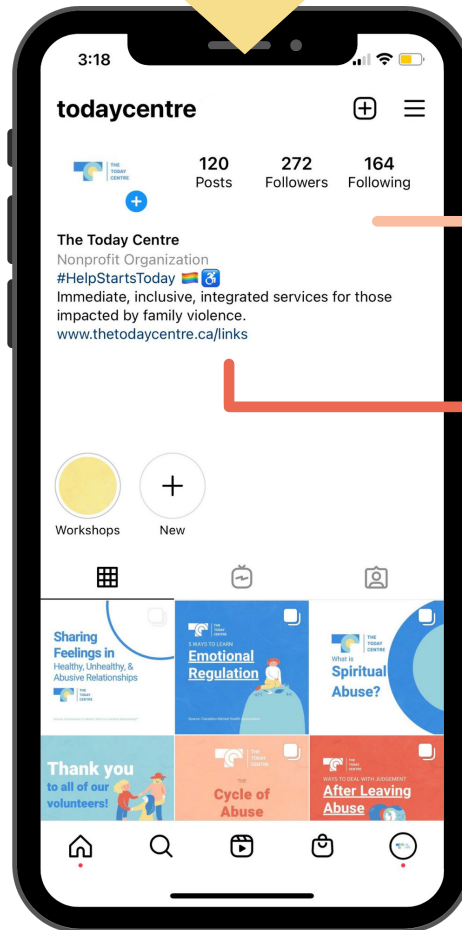
# +14%

increase in followers (493)

## Newsletter

# 1469

people subscribed to our newsletter



## Instagram

# 236

new followers since account creation in August

## Blog

# 2371

views generated from blog posts on our website



## Photography Contest

To honour Family Violence Prevention Month in Alberta, we hosted a successful photography contest which yielded 26 creative submissions centred around the theme "Hope".

# 16

## Active Volunteers

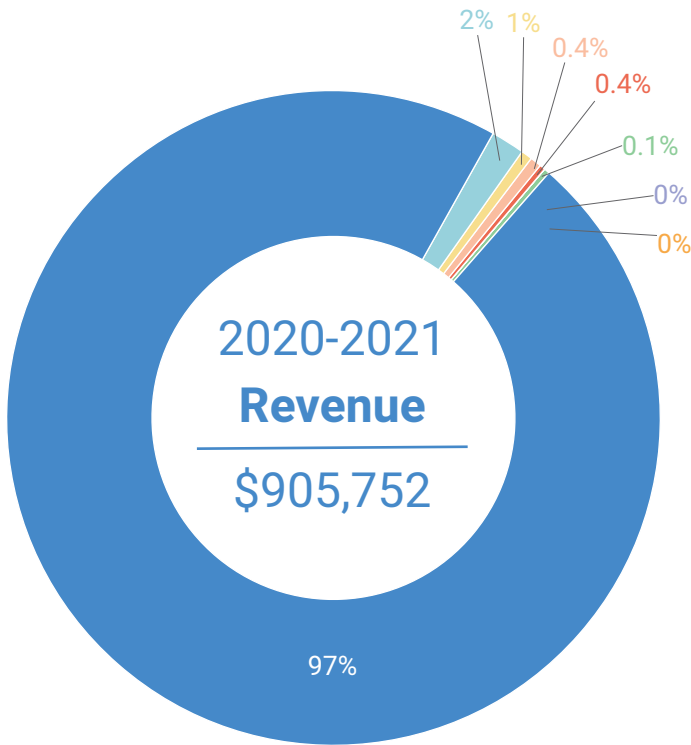
We can't thank our volunteers enough! Bringing a diverse skill set and expertise in areas like Fund Development, Marketing and Communications and Human Resources, our volunteers strengthened The Today Centre.

"Volunteering with The Today Centre has given me an opportunity to engage with the complex issues of family violence. From spreading awareness at events to administrative tasks and client interaction, the experience I have gained from being a part of The Today Centre has been pivotal for my professional journey."

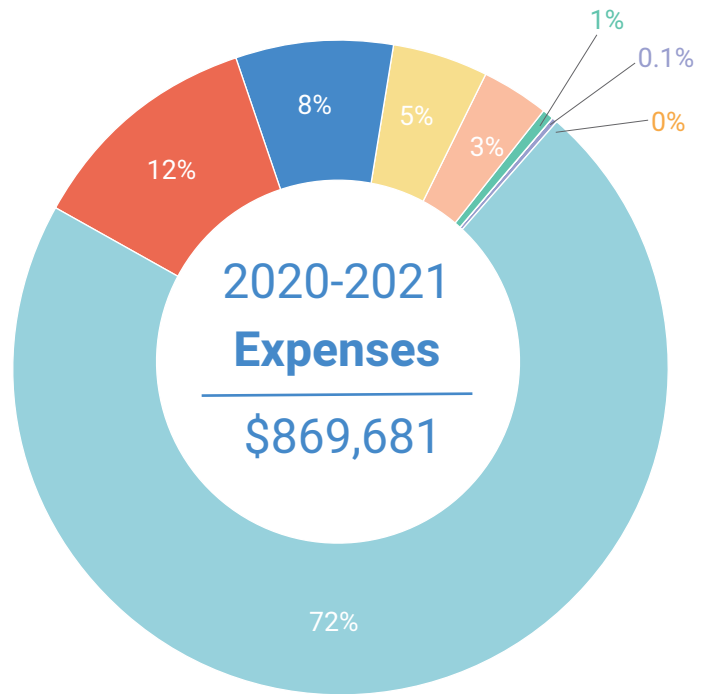
-Michaela, Volunteer



# Financials



- Grants
- Donations
- Rent Recoveries
- Interest
- Honorariums
- Amortization
- Memberships
- Fundraising



- Wages & Benefits
- Building & Occupancy
- Office Material & Supplies
- Administrative & Support Services
- Program Expenses
- Staffing Expenses
- Fundraising Expenses
- Travel & Subsistence Expenses

# Supporters

Government of Canada  
 Government of Alberta  
 City of Edmonton  
 City of Spruce Grove  
 United Way of the Alberta  
 Capital Region  
 Edmonton Community  
 Foundation  
 Minerva Foundation

Canadian Women's Foundation  
 REALTORS® Community  
 Foundation  
 Edmonton Public Teachers  
 Charity Trust Fund  
 Federated Co-operatives Ltd.  
 Daam Galvanizing Ltd.  
 Canadian Red Cross  
 Telus Community Ambassadors



Thank you so much for walking with me through the most difficult times and conversations about my life. I am glad I called The Today Centre in the midst of the confusion and that I made the right choice by myself and for myself and the kids.

All the information you sent me over our many conversations were timely and God-sent, and came just when I needed it. **I am a survivor of domestic violence against women.**



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