

# EPIC GARDZ



**2019 / 2020**  
*Annual Report*



## Message from the Executive Director

On behalf of the Board of Directors, staff, the youth we serve, and myself, welcome to our 2019 – 2020 Annual Report. As an agency we feel it is important to take the time to share our successes, our struggles, and how as an organization we continue to strive to make lives better for our most vulnerable population. Our job is to put in place the supports and services that offer hope and guidance on each individual's journey. This year one of the many highlights was winning the Governor General Award for Innovation, as we were the first in Saskatchewan to win this award for our Sweet Dreams Project. Another highlight this year was the commitment from the Government of Saskatchewan for ongoing funding of our Sweet Dreams Project, our Retreat Home, and the Fusion 22 apartment living. I need to thank the Board of Directors for your guidance and for supporting the vision of our young people. Thank you to the over 180 staff who provide front line services, administration staff who look after the day to day operations, ongoing funders, and last but not least the clients we serve. Your stories and successes make coming to work every day easy and rewarding. Our commitment to our clients is "by youth for youth". Thank you Government of Canada, Government of Saskatchewan, City of Saskatoon, United Way, Community Initiative Funds, Saskatoon Community Foundation, Canadian Tire JumpStart, Dave Deplaedt Foundation, Colleen and Wally Mah, Conexus and Affinity Credit Unions, 5 Days for the Homeless, Saskatoon Truck Centre, Home Depot-Orange Door Project, and the many donations we receive to assist the ongoing operations of the organization. Every donation is important and needed. As our organization continues to grow, what has not changed is our commitment to producing outcomes that will have the largest positive impact for

the clients we serve. As long as there is a need, our organization continues to be committed to making a difference. We hope you enjoy reading our 2019/2020 Annual Report as much as we enjoyed supporting their journeys.

### *Our Vision*

Every child grows up to become a contributing citizen.

### *Our Mission*

We are a non-profit community based organization that provides programs and services to children, youth and their families in making healthy choices that improve their quality of life.

We are visionary leaders, catalysts and advocates for ensuring that children and youth have a voice in determining the programs and services that best meet their needs.

We accept others unconditionally and without judgment.

We are open, honest and respectful in our communications.

We work collaboratively with our clients, staff and the community.





## Drop in Centre

**The Drop In** is an invaluable resource for hard to serve youth ages 12-18. Providing a safe, comfortable space 6 days a week is essential in facilitating long term benefits for the youth we serve. Youth can access the Centre through a range of structured and unstructured activities, employment assistance, connections to community resources and services to meet all of youth's essential basic needs.

When youths' basic needs are met in a positive way, they are more inclined to make sound decisions surrounding healthy living. The Centre provides youth with access to hot showers, laundry services, clothing, and nutrition. The clothing room provides the youth with warm winter coats, toques, and mittens to get through the long winter months. They can also find pants, shoes, and shirts to assist all clothing needs. Hygiene products can be accessed while youth are at the Centre and hygiene packs are made and distributed to the youth as needed.

<b>Showers Accessed</b>	<b>32 Individuals 72 Times</b>
<b>Laundry Accessed</b>	<b>26 Individuals 36 Times</b>
<b>Hygiene Accessed</b>	<b>172 Individuals 282 Times</b>
<b>Clothing Accessed</b>	<b>365 Individuals 729 Times</b>



The Centre is supervised by two youth workers whose goal is to build relationships with each youth and provide space to speak out about their concerns, interests,

aspirations, and unique individual needs. As relationships are built the staff are able to assist the youth in connecting with community resources surrounding Mental Health and Addictions, counselling and other services as needed. This can include support surrounding housing. The youth workers will assist the youth in accessing social services in order to maintain safe and secure emergency and long term housing.

Empowering the youth in education and employment is a vital component of services offered. Staff assist the

### **Housing Assistance** 11 Individuals

youth in applying for and maintaining employment. Teaching and assisting the youth in writing a resume, obtaining references and finding and applying for employment online occurs regularly on both a group and individualized level. A special section in the clothing room can provide youth clothing for interviews as well as proper clothing when employment is obtained. Many youth have no other options for obtaining the necessary supplies to be successful in a school placement, but thanks to the many community donations that come in throughout the year EGADZ is able to provide the youth with these essential supplies. The Drop In had a volunteer from the University of Saskatchewan Teachers College provide the youth with homework assistance every Tuesday evening.

### **Employment Assistance** 43 Individuals



The Drop in is a known warm up location for youth and young adults who are experiencing homelessness and unfavorable weather reaching -30 and colder. These individuals are provided with a safe, comfortable spot to sit and warm up and offered clothing from the clothing room to stay warm. Access to a phone and a bus ticket are also available.

### **Winter Gear Accessed**

76 Individuals 115 Times

Many of the youths' families are suffering from impecunious conditions beyond their control, leaving the families and youth with little to no access to proper nutrition on a daily basis. In order to ensure that all the youth accessing the center have their nutritional needs met daily, EGADZ received funding support from United Way and the Community Initiatives Fund. This provided the ability to fund a part time cook and essential produce needs according to the Canada Food Guide. The kitchen runs six days a week, providing youth accessing the center the ability to have an after school snack daily and supper nightly.

In addition to this funding, EGADZ still relies heavily on donations from community supports. In partnership with the Food Renew program, the center receives donations from local food businesses to save and renew food that would otherwise be thrown away. A total of 55 meals were donated from Food Renew. The support from community organizations and personal donations is imperative in providing healthy meals for our youth - over 60 donations were made in produce and non perishable food items to support meals and emergency food packs.

Along with meeting the youth's nutritional needs the kitchen allows the youth to establish and foster life skills. Youth have the ability and are encouraged to assist the cook nightly in preparing food, allowing for the youth to develop confidence and a sense of accomplishment. The time spent in the kitchen working with staff allows the youth a relaxed atmosphere to develop strong relationships with the staff. These relationships can aid the youth in many areas of their life.

<b>Meals served</b>	<b>1970- 494 Individuals</b>
<b>Nutritious Snacks</b>	<b>1954-478 Individuals</b>
<b>Emergency Food Packs</b>	<b>224- 131 Individuals</b>



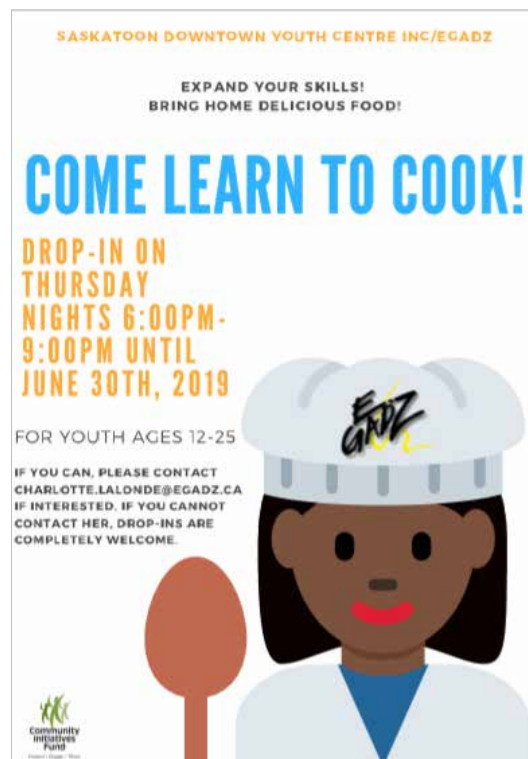
## Drop in Centre **NUTRITION**



The Nutrition for Youth and Their Family grant partnered with Dakota Dunes Community Development Corporation and provided an outstanding opportunity for our youth to obtain fruit daily for an after school snack. Due to the high cost of fruit this is something that the youth do not regularly have access to. Beginning January 1, 2019 this grant allowed \$150.00 a week for 11 months to purchase fruit for the youth. The kind of fruit varied weekly pending on the youths' requests, sales, and availability of the season. The youth had the opportunity to try fruit they had never experienced such as dragon fruit while learning new skills such as how to cut a pineapple.

**“DON'T STOP MAKING SNACKS FOR US THEY ARE AWESOME! THE FRUIT IS THE BEST THING THAT HAS EVER HAPPENED TO EGADZ”**

*Learn to Cook* promotes healthy development for children and youth, made possible with funding provided by the Community Initiatives Fund. This initiative gave the youth the opportunity to participate in cooking classes once a week for a duration of three hours. Youth were able to sign up for classes in advance or participate on a drop in basis. The classes were broken into 4 categories each month; breakfast, lunch, family supper, and baking. Youth had the opportunity to express what they wanted to learn with a focus on facilitating large meals with a low cost, ultimately assisting them in facilitating a healthy lifestyle that they can afford and maintain. Youth were excited to take the leftovers home to their families and share what they learned. A cookbook was made for each of the youth at the end of the 11 months. 85 different youth participated in the classes with a total of 205 youth attending.



<b>Duration</b>	11 months
<b>Total Youth Participation</b>	205
<b>Total Different Youth</b>	85





Physical recreation plays a very important role in overall health in youth both for their physical and mental health. Offering a bright, fun atmosphere, the Drop In ensures that the youth attending have the ability to participate in a range of activities nightly. Board games, puzzles, and art assist the youth in creating a sense of balance, which supports them in reducing stress and anxiety. Youth can enjoy these activities individually or with a friend throughout the duration of the evening. The Youth Workers plan and execute special activities nightly and encourage healthy competition where the youth can win prizes. Some of these activities include; scavenger hunts, pool tournaments, card tournaments, and fun races and games. The City of Saskatoon Cultural Funding is an invaluable funder to EGADZ that makes these recreational activities possible for our youth to enjoy.

### **“I LOVE HOW SLIMY THE PUMPKIN IS, SUPER FUN” (PUMPKIN CARVING CONTEST)**



In order to provide physical activity to our youth EGADZ depends on grant funding through the community. The generosity and community support received from funders allows the youth to attend sporting, cultural, educational, and other fun activities within and surrounding the community.

Each grant provides the youth transportation to a variety of activities from the Centre by a staff member who is specifically running the grant. With all of the activity grants youth can sign up in advance or first-come-first-serve, however we like to give as many different youth as possible the ability to participate at least one time. Supper and snacks are provided to all of the youth before heading out to play.

*Rogers Grant* ran twice weekly from 5pm-9pm. One staff leader was in charge and assisted the youth at the beginning with reviewing the activity for the evening, rules/expectations while out, and time frame for the activity. Each activity allowed for six youth and the one staff member to attend. Youth had the opportunity before, during, and after the activities to provide feedback and

## Drop in Centre RECREATION

suggestions to the staff member. Youth were encouraged to fill out comments on the sign-up sheet after each activity. Activities included paint ball, go karting, Grand Slam batting cages, escape rooms, Sky Rail and Sky Trail, and cultural and seasonal activities.



<b>Total Youth Participation</b>	263
<b>Total Different Youth</b>	109
<b>Total Activities Accessed</b>	67



### HIGHLIGHTS

EGADZ received free tickets to the Blades and Rush games in Saskatoon. Without the staffing wages supported by the Rogers Grant the youth accessing the Drop In would not have had the ability to attend. Many of the youth who attended had never gotten to watch either sporting event and were able to learn the rules of the game while having fun with staff and peers.

Many of the youth have known about activities occurring in the city, such as Taste of Saskatchewan, but have never had the ability to attend due to lack of transportation or funds. The Rogers Grant allowed them to do so and in turn gain a stronger sense of community.

On one particular mini golf outing two youth were a quite a bit older than the rest of the youth. The older youth were so kind, supportive, and encouraging to the younger youth and this assisted them in having fun and being successful. This was a really great opportunity to see how the youth can and will support one another.



**“OMG SO MUCH FUN I COULD THAT FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE” (GO KARTS)**

**“WE SOLVED IT AND GOT TO PUT A KEY ON THE WALL OF CHAMPIONS!” (ESCAPE ROOM)**

**“10/10 I WOULD LOVE TO DO THIS AGAIN” (CANADA VS RUSSIA HOCKEY GAME)**



## Drop in Centre RECREATION

EGADZ Summer 2019 was made possible in partnership with the Saskatoon Community Foundation (YES!), Community Initiatives Fund, and Government of Canada. Running for the duration of 10 weeks, this grant allowed youth a safe supportive atmosphere to play, have fun, and explore new challenges. This healthy engagement minimized the youth's involvement in unhealthy activities that they may face due to peer pressure and influences within the core neighborhood. Activities included archery, camp days at Wakaw and Pike Lake, go karting, and many outdoor activities.



**Duration** 10 weeks  
**Total Youth Participation** 51

Holidays and special occasions are celebrated at the center on every occasion. The staff and youth think outside of the box for every event to ensure that it can be celebrated and enjoyed to the fullest.

This year the youth got to enjoy a Halloween dance where the youth won prizes for playing games and scariest costumes. Valentine's Day was celebrated with treats, music and activities. The staff encourage and join in the fun with the youth, allowing the youth to be fully comfortable and fully engaged in all of the activities offered.



For Thanksgiving, youth and their families came to EGADZ to enjoy a home cooked meal. The support provided by the community ensures that everyone coming is able to have seconds and take home plates for family members unable to attend. Approximately **200** meals were given out for Thanksgiving supper.

Christmas can be a difficult time for many of the youth we serve as they are unable to celebrate the occasion with family and loved ones. Planning the EGADZ celebration is a major focus for months before the special day and is made extra special by the unbelievable support from the community. Youth and the children in attendance receive gifts or stockings with presents. **Canadian Tire** plays a large role in the ability to provide such amazing gifts to our youth and their children. The Saskatoon Inn graciously provided turkey, gravy and dressing for 250 people for Christmas supper. The staff at Conexus Credit Union spent

## *Drop in Centre* RECREATION

a day at EGADZ assisting with wrapping and preparing gifts for the youth and turning the upstairs into a winter wonderland. In total **200 youth** and their loved ones were served supper, **90 youth** and **40 children** received gifts.





## Teen Parent Program

**The Teen Parent Program** is funded through the Public Health Agency of Canada Community Action Plan for Children (CAP C). The program employs a full time coordinator, part time youth worker and a child care worker. After recognizing a continued need, EGADZ was able to make the part time position attached to the program into a full time position, which became the Family Engagement Liaison. Working closely with the coordinator, this position gives the team the ability for further community engagement in more of one-on-one setting.

Becoming a parent is a very exciting time but can come with several ups and downs. Teen parents are often faced with added challenges when coming into parenthood. The Teen Parent Program aims to provide the parents support and guidance through all of the stages of parenting with individualized and group programming. Referrals to the program come from a variety of community agencies and most importantly from the parent themselves. In joining the program an intake is completed to assist the parent in identifying their immediate, short term and long term needs.



**176** Clients accessed the Teen Parent Program with a total of **1497** Services. This includes attending workshops, 1 on 1 work, recreational activities, and accessing emergency services.

Focus is placed on promoting community awareness of the program to ensure that all teen parents have the ability to access this support. The staff prioritize connecting with community resources to form relationships and distributing posters and information in the community as well as on social media. The staff are always promoting the program in unique ways to gain new clientele and assist as many parents as possible.

### HIGHLIGHT

A Parent & Child day was held at EGADZ on May 5, 2019. There were 53 parents & children in attendance. They joined us for food, snacks, games, prizes, and fun while learning what the Teen Parent Program has to offer. This brought new clientele and further awareness of the program.



Individualized programming is tailored to the parent's specific needs. A case plan is completed to focus in on medical needs, required community resources, additional support, day care, schooling and other needs as identified. Scheduling specific one on ones allows the coordinator to assist the parents in transportation to and from appointments as well as attending with them when



## Teen Parent Program

applicable. This also builds rapport and fosters strong relationships between the teen parent and staff.

### **One on One Parenting Support:**

33 clients accessed 63 times

### **Connected to Community Resources:**

71 times



### **HIGHLIGHT**

AS was a 15-year-old mom-to-be who had been attending our program had to move away and returned to the city to have her baby on April 11th, 2019. The Teen Parenting Coordinator became aware that she was going to have her baby and went to the hospital to provide support. She brought her food, some basic baby supplies including a couple newborn outfits, a baby bottle, a soother, some newborn diapers, and a baby blanket. As AS had no family or friends within the city to be with her, The Teen Parenting Coordinator did not leave until family was able to arrive at the hospital. AS was very grateful to have someone there for her. She said "I just needed someone to talk to so that I wasn't so scared, and having you here helps a lot."

Group work is imperative for parents as it allows them the opportunity to gain perspective and insight into new parenting methods from other parents. The social setting encourages new positive peer relationships creating a healthy support network. Group work encompasses two certificate programs: Nobody's Perfect and Positive Discipline. The programs run twice a week for the duration of eight weeks assisting parents in recognizing their individual strengths and developing positive skills to implement these skills in their daily parenting.

As parents become comfortable with the staff and the other group members they begin to identify workshops and training that they could benefit from. The coordinator sets up a range of structured workshops and presentations based off the needs identified. Facilitated in the board room at the Drop In Center, the parents have access to a caregiver to tend to their children in the "baby room" so they can actively participate and engage with the presentation's and workshops.

Workshops throughout the year included; "kids have stress too!", an LGBTQ workshop, "love languages" of children, dental health workshop, co-parenting workshop, child

## Teen Parent Program

grief workshop, traffic safety, a self-care workshop, and a child temperament workshop. A series of workshops on “Family Law Public Legal Education Series,” included sessions on the judicial process, custody and access, child support, and division of family property.

Presentations throughout the year included; a midwifery presentation, potty training basics, swimming and water safety, safe sleep for babies, a postpartum presentation, bicycle ride & bicycle safety, child media usage, a Crisis Nursery informational presentation, and a CHEP nutrition presentation.



Life Skills allow the parent to develop new skills that will support independence and allow them to become self-sufficient. This programs focuses on empowering the parent through a series of life skills offered. Throughout the year life skills included; playground safety, cooking classes, gardening at Wakaw Lake, parent & child – yoga in the park, and job searching as a parent.

### HIGHLIGHT

The parent & child yoga was facilitated by a certified yoga instructor. As a young parent, it can be very difficult to find peace in your life, and it is especially difficult to help your children find this calm. We had many of the moms involved in our program express that the yoga was “very relaxing” and that they want to do it on an ongoing basis. The instructor is willing to teach a parent & child yoga class at least once a month to our parent group at no cost.

### Accessing Workshops/ Presentations

33 Parents



Recreation provides parents and their children the ability to play and be creative with one another facilitating healthy growth and decreasing stress. Playing and having fun together develops a stronger bond and connection between parents and their children at all ages. Every Friday the parents have the opportunity to participate in recreation activities focused on attachment and bonding. Activities include: swimming, playground visits, walks, skating, corn maze, and special seasonal activities. The activities can also be facilitated in the centre and will consist of art, puzzles, board games and reading. This

## Teen Parent Program

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teaches the parents that activities and play can occur at home on a regular basis.



### HIGHLIGHT

The annual Parent and Tots camp at Wakaw Lake ran from July 11th-13th. A total of 8 parents and 7 children attended the camp. They participated in activities including educational scavenger hunts, swimming, canoing and an array of crafts. The childcare worker came out for one of the days of camp and facilitated programming for the children while the parents went to workshops on a variety of parenting related topics such as water safety, child behavior, and outdoor cooking. In the evening group fires took place where the parents engaged with one another for support, guidance and just to relax and form strong positive relationships.

Emergency supplies are accessed by parents when they are unable to purchase the necessary items for their child due to a variety of circumstances. The program not only offers support and security during this difficult time but provides the parent with individual support for sustainability. This includes assisting the parent with child tax forms, creating budgeting plans, and accessing long-term solutions. The program offers supplies in hygiene products, formula, diapers, baby food and essential items such as thermometers, bottles, soothers and medications. When a parent has a specific need the staff ensure to resource and meet those needs.

#### **Formula:**

29 clients accessed 35 times

#### **Diapers:**

43 clients accessed 54 times

#### **Baby supplies**

37 clients accessed 51 times





Holidays are an especially fun and important time for the parents and children. The program ensures that the parents and children can come to EGADZ to participate and enjoy the entirety of all holidays and special occasions. At Christmas, the board room and child care room are set up for the kids and parents to enjoy a smaller, more relaxed crowd. Child care is provided as well so the parents can head downstairs and enjoy some of the games and fun with their peers while their children are having a unique experience upstairs.

**“GREAT PROGRAMMING FOR YOUNG PARENTS. I WOULD 100% RECOMMEND THEM FOR PARENTS STARTING OUT.”**

## *Educational & Employment Support Program*

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**The Educational and Employment Program (EEESP)** is a community-based provider of intervention and prevention services. The program is focused on outcomes-based service delivery for hard to serve youth in conflict with the law. The EGADZ Educational and Employment Support Program is supported through The Ministry of Justice and The Ministry of Corrections and Policing and can accommodate up to 24 youth combined in each program between the ages of 12 and 18.

The program is made up of three elements. **The Day Support Program** aims to support, advocate, educate and serve youth who do not have a school or employment placement. **The School Support Program** offers support and services to youth that have partial or full-time school placement. **The Summer Recreation Program** maintains the youths' support, stability, consistency and structure by keeping the youth on track to re-enter a suitable educational setting.

Referrals for The EEESP Program can come from a range of community organizations including but not limited to: The Ministry of Justice, The Ministry of Corrections and Policing, the Ministry of Social Services, Public and Catholic School Systems, HUB, Mental Health and Addictions Services, and other community supports as well as self-referrals. Youths' needs are gauged through networking with the referring party and community supports. The coordinator holds a motivational interview with the youth to determine their individual needs and put the best support in place for the youth to have those needs met.

**The Day Support Program** is structured to focus on life skills, cultural awareness, community awareness, volunteer work, random acts of kindness, art therapy, physical activity, recreation and education. These services aid in reducing the risk factors related to re-offending, reduces recidivism, and empowers positive behavioral change in youth.

Supports include but are not limited to: wake up calls, breakfast/lunches, transportation, parent/home visits, one on one support, case conferences, medical support, worker contacts, and assistance with community service hours. Youth are also assisted in advocating for mental

health support and accessing addictions services such as detox and/or treatment and personal counselling.

**Education** aims to guide and support youth through social stabilization. An education component is facilitated three mornings a week. Allotted time for daily educational material in program allows for the youth to indicate their educational capabilities. All of the youth who come to the program have either lost their educational placement entirely, have not been in an educational setting over a period of time, or have been asked to take a break. Reasons can stem from a number of circumstances such as being habitually absent/late, family circumstance such as youth having to stay home to take care of siblings/elders, extreme behavioral outbursts, mental health concerns, and addictions. As the youth progress through the program, they are continually challenged to make small changes every day through routine and structure. Learning is supported through a variety of methods. The youth spend time on work sheets to support reading and math comprehension, and they work on journaling, art, and research projects. Learning is augmented through activities like U of S building tours, guest speakers, documentaries, outdoor survival activities, lessons in beading and making dream catchers, forestry farm tours, scavenger hunts, escape rooms, and board games. Through these activities the program can evaluate what progress the youth is making and start the re-integration process back into an educational setting. This transition is slow and only done when the youth is ready, starting with half-day attendance in a smaller classroom setting to allow the youth to work at their own pace and ensure consistent support, check-ins with the youth and the school, and homework help. The remaining half-day is spent with Day Program. The final outcome is a transition into a full time educational placement and to our School Support Program. The transitional phase is often attempted a few times before a successful full transition. These youth have first access to the EGADZ First Avenue Campus.

## Educational & Employment Support Program



### HIGHLIGHT

As a 16 year old young man, BL came to us after he was asked to leave his current educational placement due to extreme behaviors. He had a history of outbursts of varying degrees at school, some resulting in criminal charges. Upon arrival in the Day Program he was very reluctant to engage in structured programming. Staff began creating a meaningful relationship with BL. Fostering this relationship took some time due to severe trust issues. His home circumstance was unhealthy as an absent mother along with a father consistently battling addictions did not create a nurturing environment. His only escape at the time was what he knew, which was substance use. The staff and the youth made the simple goal of attending program every day. It was very clear that accountability was not something this young man knew well nor knew how to react positively too. A few weeks in to programming BL started to open up to staff. He let staff know that he always acted out in school because he was hungover from the night before or angry with his father over an incident the previous evening. He always hoped that during one of these outbursts that his father would step up and show him that he cared. BL's ability to comprehend and complete school curriculum was never an issue. Staff spoke to him about his addictions and jointly submitted a referral to Mental Health and Addictions to seek an outreach worker. After a few meetings with his outreach worker BL started to work on his addictions. There were positive effects in all areas of his life. He began wanting to complete his current grade, trying to stay sober, and even talking to his father about seeking help. 3 months after he was referred to the Day Program we were able to enroll him half days into a mainstream educational setting. Half days for BL proved successful as he tried out for the basketball team and made it. This set a positive outlook on his future. Within a few weeks of halftime school attendance and no behavioral incidents, BL was able to attend school on a full time basis and he transitioned to The School Support Program. During his time with Day Program BL did not breach his court ordered conditions.



## Educational & Employment Support Program

**Random Act of Kindness** is essential to the youths' community connections. The youth want to contribute and connect with their community and these connections allow for the breakdown of barriers caused by negative preconceptions. Random Act of Kindness is a practice that the program implemented years ago. Each week the youth get to decide how they would like to give back to their community with a small act of kindness. Along with the many coffees, cold drinks, warm kits (gloves & hats), and small grocery orders paid for, the Day Support Program was very excited for our building maintenance worker as he had just had a baby girl. The youth wanted to perform a Random Act of Kindness for him. They created a beautiful thank you/congratulations card accompanied with a gift card to help with baby supplies. The also youth completed a different kind of Random Act of Kindness that benefited animals. The youth decided to purchase a Valentine's Day gift basket from the SPCA that benefited not only the animals in the shelter but the dogs that live in the My Homes Program. There have been a few times that when the youth have done RAOK it has really impacted how they perceive the community, especially with groceries when an elderly person says that the youth's kindness has helped more than they will ever know. The youth beam afterwards as they like being able to help the older generation.



### NUMBER OF YOUTH ENGAGED IN SERVICES

Total Referrals .....	89
Total number of youths that received services ..76	
<i>(71 different youth 76 times. 5 youth accessed the program twice.)</i>	
<b>Males Receiving Services .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Females Receiving Services .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Transitions into Educational Placements .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Total Number of Services Provided.....</b>	<b>12,469</b>

**Justice Support and Advocacy** is a major aspect of support within the program. Each youth who is referred to the Day Program either has current justice involvement, past justice involvement or at is risk of future involvement due to different negative influences out of their control. The youth we serve come from different backgrounds. Poverty, trauma, generational hardship, absent parent(s), mental health concerns, urban poverty and addictions are prominent aspects to varying degrees in each youth's life. Focusing in on Justice Support & Advocacy allows for the youth to remain supported while navigating the justice system.

## *Educational & Employment Support Program*

**The Day Program** will aid the youth through applying for Legal Aid, attending lawyer appointments, transport and attend all court dates, assist with communication with their workers from the Young Offenders Program, ensure all appointments and reporting dates to their workers are met, review all court ordered conditions with youth to ensure they have a clear understanding of what is required as well as reminders of said conditions, ensure that community service hours are being completed by the date required, and many one on one conversations to ensure the youth knows there is always someone there to listen and help when struggles arise. Accompanying the youth on this journey allows the Day Program staff to advocate for the youth in regards to their circumstances and progress being made. Assisting with pre-sentence reports, consistent communication with the young offender workers, case conferences, attendance on behalf of the youth due to uncontrollable circumstances, in-custody visits and assisting with communicating information that the youth is not comfortable disclosing are a few ways we can advocate for the youth.

### **“OVER THE PAST FISCAL YEAR THE DAY SUPPORT PROGRAM WAS ABLE TO COMPLETE 517 DIFFERENT JUSTICE ACTIVITIES/SUPPORTS.”**

#### **HIGHLIGHT**

A 17-year-old youth TW came to us from custody. TW was released by mistake, when this was realized he was placed on some heavy conditions with an upcoming court review to decide if he should go back into custody. Facing unstable family support, food insecurity, and no community support system, it seemed to TW that the community had very little faith that he could maintain his conditions and start the change to a positive lifestyle. TW's previous home life was less than supportive; a mother in a constant battle with heavy addiction coupled with a painful verbally abusive relationship, an absent father and immediate family with reoccurring justice and gang involvement. These factors led to heavy trauma. The only coping mechanisms he ever witnessed were substance abuse. Looking to feel like he belonged he eventually turned to gang life and running the streets. This lifestyle led to his incarceration. Upon his arrival to Day Program he had lost his educational placement entirely. Due to his need to avoid conflict with his mother, TW would call program and show up at the centre 2 hours before program started just to get away from his house. It became routine that TW would arrive at EGADZ

when staff did to vent and work through the previous evening's events. It was starting to become apparent that he was coping with substances. TW began to start looking disheveled, angry and generally unwell. Concerned, Day Program staff had a conversation with him and with his permission we looked to connect with community resources. Addictions were the first concern. A referral was made to an inpatient treatment program. TW gave it all he had and was able to complete the 28 day program. Staff was able to visit him daily to ensure he knew there was support for him once he was ready to leave. While in treatment, Day Program staff had a conversation with him regarding housing after which he decided that he would like to stay in his current residence and try family therapy with his mother. Once he returned home, he came back to Day Program full time. After routine and structure were back in place as well as an outreach worker, TW decided that he would rather get a job than finish school. From that point on he did everything he could to self-sabotage his progress towards his education. After about three weeks of the daily struggle of non-attendance or non-engagement paired with a very negative attitude, TW finally gave way and decided that he should give school a try. He did not want to slowly reintegrate, he wanted to rip off the Band-Aid and fully immerse himself in his education full time. TW was transitioned to our school support program. Day after day he attended school, and some days were good and some were bad. His relationship with his mother had not gotten any better but he remained at home to watch over his smaller siblings. Motivational conversations while transporting him to school were what he looked forward to most. He was able to come to the self-realization that his involvement in gangs had ruined his life and he was better off before he entered the life, and there was no previous justice involvement before gang life. He made the extremely tough decision to exit the gang. TW wanted to remain busy so he asked if he could attend Day Program on days there was no school which proved to assist in his success as there were no breaches of his conditions. TW was able to, with the assistance of Day Program staff, advocate for himself at his court review to show that he had made positive changes. The court decided that, since he was doing so well in the community with feedback from various community organizations, he could serve out the remainder of his sentence through community supervision. Throughout the court process Day Program was able to attend 12 lawyer meetings, 16 Young Offender worker meetings, 3 court dates, write 2 letters of confirmation and support to the courts as well as speak on his behalf in person at the review. This young man had never had anyone say anything positive about him. He was brought to tears in the court room. TW remained in full time school and completed his required grade 11 curriculum to be able to move on to grade 12 next year.

## *Educational & Employment Support Program*

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**Life Skills** has become an important component of EEESP through the past fiscal year. Putting Life Skills into consistent practice allows for the youth to learn valuable skills they will need in everyday life. The youth were able to participate in several presentations and activities that focused on important day to day realities they may face: Anger Management through Family Service Saskatoon, Sexual Health presentations, Healthy Relationships, Anxiety presentations, tax information, resume building, mock interviews, logic and planning skills through boardgames, escape rooms and scavenger hunts, three sisters traditional gardening, and numerous community resources. They learned about financial understanding including budgeting and shopping, vehicle maintenance, keeping a calendar, accessing community resources, understanding personal hygiene, making appointments, how to ride the bus, as well as many other crucial life skills that we as adults take for granted. One of the biggest life skills we focus on is cooking and grocery shopping. The youth pick their nutritional meals which they would like to learn how to cook. The process starts with ingredients, looking at flyers, and figuring out the budget per person. The youth will then decide where the best deals are and go shopping with the supervision of staff. The youth also learn healthy substitutions for their meals such as ground turkey for ground beef. Each day the youth prepare and cook their meals with the help of staff when the requirements are tougher. In supporting the youth to create relationships and carry conversations with individuals who they would not normally interact with, the Day Program has preserved a long-term relationship with Sherbrook Community Centre. Every Monday the youth and staff of the program head to Sherbrook to visit and support their residents. A weekly bingo game takes place in the Sherbrook common area for which each youth will pair up with a resident who would like some company and conversation. The youth thoroughly enjoy this volunteer activity and always have heartfelt stories to share after each visit.

**"I NEVER THOUGHT I WOULD BE ABLE TO COOK FOR MYSELF, NOW THAT I AM ON MY OWN THE GROCERY SHOPPING THAT THE PROGRAM TEACHES US ALSO WITH THE BUDGETING HAS HELPED ME BECOME MORE INDEPENDENT. BEFORE I USED TO GET MONEY TO GO SHOPPING FOR FOOD; I AM 16 AND HAD NO ONE TO TEACH ME HOW TO PROPERLY SHOP. THANK YOU DAY PROGRAM FOR HELPING ME."**

**Recreation:** During regular programming months, the youth will have scheduled recreational activities to not only burn energy but to also allow for time to create constructive relationships amongst their peers whom they would otherwise not encounter. Each activity is planned with the youth and voted on. Creating relationships with community businesses and organizations is an extremely valuable opportunity for community education concerning young offenders and their journeys. There are many activities the youth enjoy: the YWCA Gym is rented out every Monday afternoon for structured sport and the Shaw Leisure facility is used every Wednesday afternoon, specifically the weight room where we have had the opportunity to receive informative education regarding the equipment, proper use and safety. Apex, Clip n' Climb, Wilson's Lifestyle Center, Ruckers, batting cages, bowling, skate parks, swimming, MARS Mini Golf, and river walks are among the many activities the youth enjoy. A few special outings happened this past year including the Regina IMAX and Science Center. All of the youth thoroughly enjoyed the educational movie about the rainforest as well as the many different areas of the Science Center. The Day Program youth were able to experience the 306 indoor skate park in Regina free of charge in May. The facilitator built the park with his own hands and believes in giving back to the community. He was able to have all the youth engaged and eager to learn. He spoke about his past and how his choices have shaped his life. He offers



## *Educational & Employment Support Program*

many workshops to show youth how to build their own skateboard, paint it, and use it their creation. The youth were able to relate to the facilitator on many personal levels. The youth are looking forward to returning this coming year to create their own skateboards.



**Cultural Activities** are a regular part of programming. Beading, crafting and cultural tours through various cultural exhibits are among the activities that staff were able to organize. These were very beneficial to our youth, many of whom come from an Aboriginal background. The program was presented with a unique opportunity to access the Saskatoon Police Service's gymnasium. Through 4 different days the youth were introduced to the Cultural Resources Unit. The youth were given an in-depth look at what the unit is responsible for and what the intent of the unit is. The youth were also given open gym time with access to all their equipment.

On the final day the unit arranged for two Elders to join our session to make soup and bannock and share stories over their prepared meal. The youth thoroughly enjoyed their time spent at the station while creating meaningful relationships with the officers as well as being treated to lunch by SPS during Rock your Roots.



## Educational & Employment Support Program

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A friend of EGADZ offered to take the Day Program youth out sweet grass picking. We were taken out near Duck Lake to a special spot full of sweet grass. The youth were taught why sweet grass is picked, why it is braided and its medicinal uses. The proper protocol was followed and explained regarding the tobacco offering and what the offering signifies.



The Cultural Resource Unit reached out to EGADZ to help set up Tipis for the 2019 Rock Your Roots Walk for Reconciliation. The youth were more than excited to help with the construction. Despite the rain all the youth enjoyed their time learning how to properly construct each Tipi according to teachings.



**“I HAVE ALWAYS HAD A HARD TIME WITH POLICE AFTER SEEING MY FAMILY IN JAIL ALL THE TIME, I ALWAYS THOUGHT THEY WERE OUT TO GET US FOR NO REASON, THE GUYS IN THE CULTURAL UNIT ARE “G”, THEY ALRIGHT I GUESS.”**



### HIGHLIGHT

A 15-year-old young man had come to the program for the first time when he was 12. He had recently lost his mother and had no other family willing or able to take care of him. He was placed in the care of the Ministry of Social Services. Living in a group home setting did not go well and resulted in his first conflict with the law. Over the past few years this young man has been struggling to find his way amidst a lack of meaningful relationships, consistency, or accountability. Everything came to a head this past year when he picked up his most serious charges doing a mission for his newly found gang family on the streets. Coming back to the program due to complete loss of educational placement, it was time for him to make a change. He wanted to try but did not know how, as when he is in program he can be himself but on the streets he must be a different person to survive. He struggled heavily back and forth with addictions and wanting to leave the gang. Every 2 weeks or so he would hit bottom and disappear for a few weeks at a time after a blow up. Knowing that the staff treat each day as a new day in line with our vision, mission, and mandate, he would come back and start fresh. After a long conversation with staff and the creation of meaningful relationships with his supports, he decided that it was time to stop re-offending and get back into school. He gave it his best effort but was unfortunately pulled deeper and deeper into the gang life. After a physical altercation at the center with another youth he was unable to access services at the center for a period. While not being able to access the center, he came to the realization that his relationship with the program and our support for him no matter what meant more to him than the gang life. He successfully exited his gang and has been sure to check in with staff at least 3 times a day so we know that he is safe when he cannot make it to program. There were many community resources offered through the past three years, but he was determined to do it on his own as long as we were there for him. He has not re-offended since leaving the gang. He has now successfully enrolled in a half time school placement looking forward to going full time once a spot opens up.

**School Support** The School Support Program is a community-based intervention program designed to assist youth who are subjected to a range of difficulties which present challenges when re-integrating or maintaining an educational placement. The objective of the program is to provide the most comprehensive support while advocating and assisting the youth, family/guardian, community youth workers and educators to enable educational achievement. The School Support Program is supported through the Ministry of Justice. The program can accommodate twelve individual youth between the ages of 12 to 17 at any given time throughout the calendar year. Daily contact with youth is executed through wakeup calls and parent/guardian communication. Breakfast and a ride to school eases the obstacles the youth may face with respect to attendance or location difficulties. Facilitating rides to school allows for the School Support Program staff to have daily check-ins to see what additional supports are required that week. Additional supports can include court attendance, youth worker meetings, case conferences, attendance at school, lawyer appointments, and advocacy to outside agencies and referrals to personal councilors, Mental Health and Addictions as well as treatment and/or detox centers. The goal of The School Support Program is to provide a continuum of care for hard to serve youth.

### NUMBER OF YOUTH ENGAGED IN SERVICES

**Total Referrals.....** 57

**Total number of youth that received services** 54  
(54 different youth 57 times. 1 youth accessed the program 3 times.)

**Males Receiving Services .....** 27

**Females Receiving Services .....** 27

**Total Number of Services Provided.....**2201



## *Educational & Employment Support Program*

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A special gift was given to two young ladies in the School Support Program. CF and PR have been living in a hotel for the past 3 years with their family in a single room. There are a total of 5 kids in the family and a single mother. Both girls have been involved in the School Support Program for the past 2 years with regular attendance throughout the year including summer. Both girls have significant cognitive delays resulting in bullying and a hard time at school. With all their barriers the two young ladies have been able to utilize their community support (EGADZ) when life gets them down. There is no ministry involvement for these young ladies. They have never had an opportunity to buy something for themselves or give their mother a Christmas gift. When they were given the gift, they were in a state of shock and cried tears of joy. They decided to use their gift to buy Christmas Dinner for their family as well as presents for their mother. Both girls did also get themselves what they needed which included hygiene items, undergarments and winter jackets. The youth from the program got into the festive spirit by having a gingerbread house building contest and festive photos when there were days off from school.

**“IF IT WAS NOT FOR THE PROGRAM NEITHER OF MY KIDS WOULD BE ATTENDING SCHOOL, I CANNOT THANK YOU ENOUGH FOR YOUR SUPPORT.”**



## Educational & Employment Support Program

### HIGHLIGHT

A 17-year-old young woman who had a previous relationship with the EGADZ Youth center was sentenced to lengthy incarceration for a serious crime. She was attending school while in custody as well as maintaining her relationship with various EGADZ programs. Upon release she was able to continue attending her educational placement via the School Support Program. She attends school on the opposite side of the city, rendering transportation essential. She was able to complete her grade 11 year without missing a single day. She is from a single parent family which has a cycle of incarceration then rehabilitation. The program was able to take an inclusive family approach with this young lady which ultimately resulted in having her brother, who had been out of school for 2 years due to extreme anxiety, being able to enroll in school part time. The staff took a cautious approach while creating a trusting relationship with this young man. Ultimately the young man was able to attend school on a part time basis consistently while working on his anxiety, he has now begun speaking about the possibility of full time attendance next year.

### Summer Recreational Program

31 different youth participated in the Summer Recreational Program. The Summer Rec program runs from 8am – 4pm July 1st – August 31st, The aim of the program is to keep the youth occupied with positive activities throughout the summer months. The youth were able to participate in numerous recreational and educational activities this summer. Each activity was chosen by the youth, as giving the youth the power to plan their days has proven to create higher engagement. Activities included: Apex, Clip n' Climb, bowling, river walks, day camps at Wakaw Lake, skate parks, swimming, basketball, and the occasional movie on rainy days. Most exciting was the trip to the Exhibition. All youth have the opportunity to attend, allowing for them to just be kids and enjoy the rides and food. The youth always look forward to this outing. There were a total of 15 youth and 4 staff in attendance.

### NUMBER OF YOUTH ENGAGED IN SERVICES

<b>Total Referrals</b> .....	39
Total number of youth that received services .....	31
<i>(6 new referrals, 25 carried over from Day/School Support programs)</i>	
<b>Males Receiving Services</b> .....	16
<b>Females Receiving Services</b> .....	15
<b>Total Number of Services Provided</b> .....	2129

### Wakaw Lake:

The Day Support Program started the garden project at Wakaw Lake and maintain 3 garden plots. In the largest plot we planted watermelon, beans, peas, carrots, spaghetti squash, dill, tomatoes, cucumber and onions. The second plot contains potatoes while the third plot has pickling cucumbers and pumpkins. The youth planted over 500 seeds. They learned about proper planting depths, how to hill seeds, what the watering requirements are, as well as how to weed effectively. The Day Program attended Wakaw Lake twice a week this summer to maintain their garden. Each day out includes a BBQ as well as a fun activity in the afternoon. These trips allow for the youth to be kids while getting away from their daily life stressors and learn valuable life skills. During the season end harvest the youth were able to pick, wash and take home the vegetables they had planted throughout the project. The youth were very proud and excited to share their bounty with friends and family.



Of the 31 youth served over the summer months there were 9 youth who re-offended.

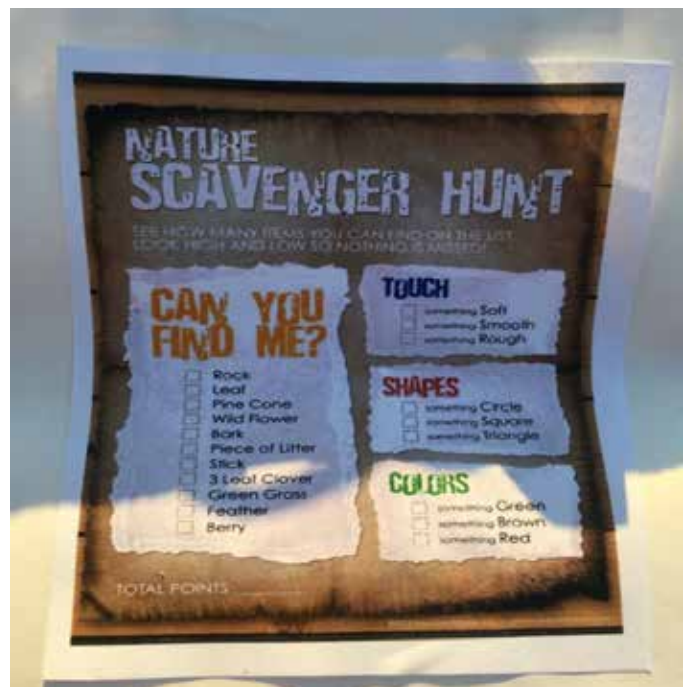


## Educational & Employment Support Program



### Camp:

The annual Day Program camping trip was a success this year. There were 10 youth and 4 staff who camped at Wakaw Lake for 3 nights and 4 days. The youth had a blast participating in Fear Factor, scavenger hunts, gardening, swimming, Man Tracker, stand up paddle boarding, canoeing, kayaking, scary movies after dark, art, a glow stick party, and the coveted giving of the t-shirts.



After camp was all said and done, 8 out of the 10 youth wished that we could go back for another week.



“I WAS HAPPY TO BE OUT OF THE CITY, I HAD A CHANCE TO JUST CHILL AND NOT WORRY ABOUT THE STREETS.”

“THE SCARY MOVIES AFTER DARK WERE EXTRA SCARY BECAUSE WE WERE OUTSIDE IN THE WOODS, I LOVED IT”

“GLO STICKS AND MAN TRACKER WERE MY FAVORITE PART, NO ONE EVER KNEW WHERE I WAS, AND THEY KEPT WALKING RIGHT BY ME. I AM THE CHAMPION”

“I FELT LIKE A KID AGAIN”

Throughout the summer the youth maintained a weekly educational and life skills routine. Reoccurring activities consisted of SCYAP for art, CNYC for wood working, Recycling, and Random Acts of Kindness.

- **73% of youth in the summer program were referred from Justice.**
- **23% of youth in the summer program were referred from Hub.**
- **4% of youth in the summer program were referred from schools as a preventative measure.**

### HIGHLIGHT

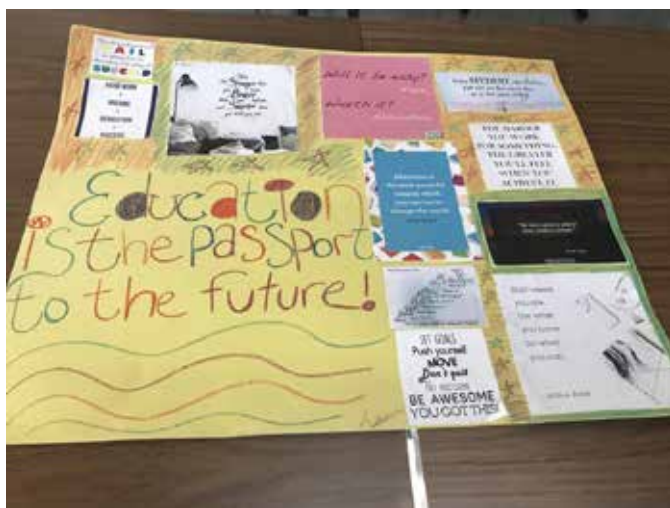
Over the past year the EGADZ Educational Employment Program has been able to assist youth with completing their court ordered Community Service hours. There have been 148 community service hours completed within the program.



## First Avenue Campus (FAC)

In partnership with Saskatoon Public Schools and Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, First Avenue Campus provides a full time education program for youth ages 12-18. Providing an educational program focused on our adolescents who suffer from psychological and behavioral issues due to reasons beyond their control, FAC offers a safer therapeutic environment that allows more individualized attention for our youth involved in the justice system.

FAC is staffed with a full time teacher and a full time EGADZ support worker 9:30am-3pm Monday-Friday, providing the students with 37.5 hours of class time per week. Many of the youth in the program have not been in school for many years as a result of circumstances involving Incarceration, substance abuse, mental health and other underlying factors. A unique and achievable educational plan is developed individually for each youth to enhance success, not only while attending FAC but when transitioning to a long-term mainstream school placement.



An Inclusions and Intervention Plan (IIP) and an Impact Assessment Plan (IAP) alongside individualized case plans are assets in determining the student's strengths, struggles and interests. These tools list specific measurable outcomes for prioritized areas and enable plans for students' short and long-term outcomes.

When a student is ready they have the ability to transition to a mainstream school of their choosing which will best

meet all of their needs. The teacher and/or support worker assist the student by having tours at the school and attending meetings with the new faculty. This increases the student's comfort level while decreasing the anxiety and stress that can occur when making such a large transition. FAC works closely with the EGADZ Education and Employment Support Program to provide the student with continued transportation to the new school placement. This supports attendance and ultimately success in the transition. FAC continues to support and work with all the students as applicable after the transition occurs.



### HIGHLIGHT

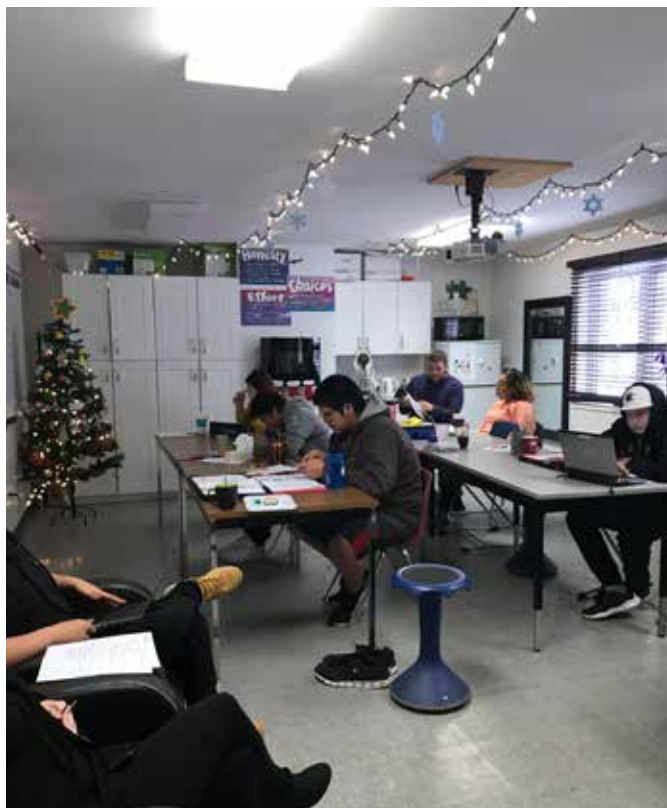
Through individualized courses and having the students take an active role in their education, student engagement has increased across the board. **Five students** have made successful transitions back into mainstream schools of their choosing.



### STUDENT HIGHLIGHT

T.L. transitioned full time to a mainstream school placement early September after attending FAC for a full year prior. Throughout her time with FAC T.L. was able to develop strong relationships with a few staff members. This was not easy for her as she struggles with social anxiety and developing trust. In her transition to the new school her attendance steadily declined along with her desire to want to engage with the teacher. The EGADZ support worker was able to connect with the school counselor and teacher to actively plan with T.L. Throughout the planning process T.L. had the opportunity to go for lunch with the school counsellor and EGADZ support worker to encourage and celebrate her continued improvement. The team was able to support T.L. with attending the school in the morning and the EEESP program in the afternoons. As a result, attendance and engagement improved immensely and T.L. continued to be successful in both programs.

Although education is the focus, the FAC program understands that for youth to be able to focus on their academics the factors listed above must also be addressed. As relationships with the youth are formed and needs are identified the teacher and support worker work closely with the youth to ensure all the applicable community resources are put in place. Transportation to and from appointments is arranged and staff can plan to attend should the youth request support. As a focus is placed on assisting youth with criminal justice involvement, many of the youth attending FAC are placed in Open Custody while attending. FAC assists them in attending court and weekly meetings with their probation officer and facilitate constant communication with social services, family members and the Facility.



## First Avenue Campus (FAC)

### STUDENT HIGHLIGHT

K.R. was primarily raised by her mother however due to addictions and unstable housing she was placed into care on a Section 9. Having faced her own struggles with addictions from a young age, K.R. was placed in Open Custody for a period of four months at Kilburn Hall. As her release date from custody approached K.R. experienced a lot of stress regarding where she would be living as emergency housing was not going to assist with her high level of need. Discussions occurred daily with K.R. and the teacher. In an effort to actively advocate and support her, the teacher explored many avenues to secure long term placement for K.R. The teacher accessed the EGADZ Residential Services Coordinator and through persistence they were able to get K.R. into long term housing within the My Homes Program. After securing placement K.R.'s stress levels decreased allowing her to excel in in school, connect with a personal counsellor, and she has identified taking anger management classes is important for her.

Providing healthy activities is essential for the youth. FAC ensures to provide youth with a vast array of curricular activities throughout each week which enable them to engage within the community and explore healthy expression through art, cultural and physical activities. Throughout the course of the year the students experienced: art at SCYAP, cooking, swimming, working out, beading and an array of seasonal activities.







Informational sessions such as Calming the Volcano (Anger Management), Healthy Relationships, and Sexual Health Education occurred throughout the year. These sessions help enhance student engagement and behavior by exposing them to multiple aspects essential to their everyday life, giving them skills for success both in and out of the classroom.

## HIGHLIGHT

Throughout the year many students have increased their engagement in their academics which was shown through completion of courses and attaining credits when possible. There were a total of **12 credits** attained by **9 students** in the areas of English Language Arts, Math and History. **2 students** have been set up to complete their Adult 12 Diploma and graduate by the end of the 2020-2021 school year.

## STUDENT HIGHLIGHT

D.G joined FAC in February 2019 after being asked to leave community schooling due to behaviors that the school found unacceptable in a mainstream classroom. These included outbursts of anger and damage to school property. FAC program found success in building a positive relationship and finding academic success with the student through one-on-one instruction, getting the student an Educational Psychological Assessment, and advocating for further testing by his doctor into possible disorders. This led to a better understanding of the student educationally and personally for both the individual and the school. By allowing the student to feel safe and cared for, the student was able to complete four credits at FAC and successfully transition to another program based out of a mainstream school where the student is on track to complete the Adult 12 Diploma Program by November of 2020.

**Total Community Referrals:** ..... 9  
**Total Students:** ..... 15  
**Total Full Time:** ..... 10 Students  
**Total Part Time:** ..... 5 Students  
**Transitioned to Mainstream Schooling:**  
 ..... 5 Students  
**Credits Obtained:**..... 12



## Street Outreach

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For over 27 years Street Outreach has been a safe haven for many of those seeking guidance, support, trust, and a safe and welcoming place to turn to in their time of need. The relationships that have been formed in this program are very special to not only the clients, but the staff as well.



The Street Outreach Program works to connect with Saskatoon's most vulnerable, at-risk, or high-risk individuals. This tends to include those who are sexually exploited, those with mental health and addictions concerns, those suffering from abuses, homelessness or struggling with housing.

The program is accessible five days a week during the day 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and seven days a week in the evenings 5p.m. to 1 a.m. During these times the program is able to provide assistance with emergency/crisis support, addictions, mental health, justice, advocacy, referrals to programs, housing, nutrition, personal hygiene, baby supplies, and condoms to name a few.



Street Outreach supports upwards of 100 people each day, including both returning and new clients. Although the numbers are high, the program strives to be a consistent part of each client's life and is dedicated to forming new relationships with anyone who is in need.





A large portion of the Street Outreach program is providing nutrition for the vulnerable populations. During Day and Night Streets, the van is equipped with sandwiches, fruit, and a cold or hot drink. Every weekday the Outreach staff park at Pleasant Hill School and provide the children with fruit when they are leaving for the day. During the summer when school is out, the program covers three core neighborhood playgrounds: Pleasant Hill, Optimist, and Meadow Green Park. One of the many highlights throughout the summer is being able to hand out Freezes on the hot days to the kids.



## Street Outreach



Outreach connects with the majority of the clients during Night Streets. Preset locations and times have been chosen along 20th Street where the van makes consistent stops for clients who are transient. On any given night, Outreach will help between 75-100 people, with the highest amount being 150 in a single night.



### Community Support

In order to assist the vulnerable populations with their immediate and emergency needs, Street Outreach relies on the donations from private community members and businesses.

Individuals from all over Saskatoon and Saskatchewan contribute throughout the year donating handmade mitts and toques, hygiene supplies and more. A local group of young women who call themselves "The Nasty Girls", donated 20 purses each filled with a new towel, shampoo, conditioner, hygiene products, mitts, socks and sweets.





University of Saskatchewan students volunteer their time and energy into the 5 Days for the Homeless, where they do food and clothing drives and spend 5 days and nights sleeping outside and living off of handouts from others to raise awareness about homelessness. This year the students chose EGADZ as their partnering organization and generously donated over 7 thousand dollars and filled the center with clothing and nonperishable food.

Stonebridge Sobeys kept the meals flowing with contributions of meat, bread and blankets.



Hillberg & Berk have chosen EGADZ again as a partnering organization for 2020. 100% of the proceeds from the Venus Pin plus a portion of proceeds from their International Women's Day collection will be given to partner organizations working to dismantle the systems responsible for human trafficking.



The previous year Hillberg & Berk selected EGADZ as one of their partnering organizations and money raised through the sales of their Venus pin went to supporting vulnerable women with feminine hygiene products.

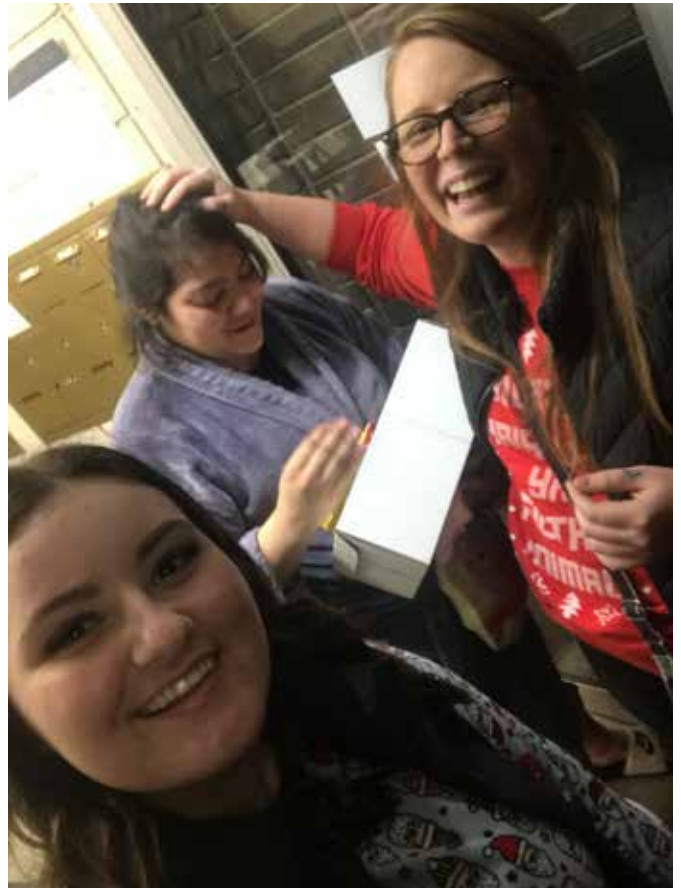


## Street Outreach

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### Christmas in The Van

Street Outreach staff fill the van to the brim with gifts, goodies, and leftover Christmas supper to take out to the clients who they have had the pleasure of building relationships with. During 2019 Christmas, Street Outreach were able to hand out 100 stockings on top of the family gifts that were given out at the EGADZ Christmas Party. These gifts were met with surprise, smiling, and happy faces from all, followed by endless thank you's. Many people expressed how much it meant to be thought of during the holiday season as it can be a very challenging time and they are often overlooked. Christmas is a special time for both clients and staff to come together during the holidays as it always a night spent laughing together, telling stories, giving out hugs and gifts, and spending time with the ones that have made Street Outreach such a special program.





## Cold Weather Strategy and Summer Heat Response

The Cold Weather Strategy is a community partnership with shelters, health, emergency services, police, and housing providers to ensure Saskatoon's homeless and at-risk population have the ability to sleep somewhere safe, and to be warm in the extreme cold. This strategy is in effect when the temperature or wind chill is to reach -30°C or a severe snow fall is to happen. During the Cold Weather Strategy, the Street Outreach van is stocked with jackets, mitts, toques, scarves, and socks. The program also provides transportation for anyone who needs to get out of the cold and it assists with getting placement in shelters when needed. **From April 1st, 2019 to March 31st, 2020 the Cold Weather Strategy was on for a total of 35 days.**

This past summer the Saskatoon Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP), created a Summer Heat Response.

Similar to the Cold Weather Strategy put in place during the winter months, the Heat Response is in effect when the temperature or humidity is set to reach 30°C or higher. During this time Street Outreach works to help people out of the extreme heat, and make sure they are hydrated. Outreach handed out water bottles and Freezes to cool down, drove people to safe spaces, and let them cool down in the van for as long as needed. **In the summer of 2019, the Summer Heat Response was on for a total of 6 days.**

With more and more community resources participating, and a system set in place to notify services when Saskatoon would be reaching extremely hot or cold temperatures, Street Outreach is able to help many vulnerable people stay safe during dangerous temperatures.

## STREET OUTREACH STATISTIC FROM APRIL 1ST, 2019 TO MARCH 31ST, 2020

From April 1st 2019 to March 31st 2020, **2116** people accessed Outreach Services. **448** were males and **1516** were female, **4** identify as trans gender. In total Street Outreach had **53,625** contacts with clients for services.

**262 Addictions Support** including education/information, detox referrals, supplies for treatment, transports to treatment & detox facilities

**1981 Connection** to community resources

**298 Crisis Intervention** including emergency housing, medical emergency

**707 Health Support** including hospital visits, medication support, medical emergency

**184 Mental Health Support** including psychiatric visits, conflict management, self-harm management

**195 Housing Support** including resourcing, application assistance, moving

**76 Justice Support** including attending court and justice appointments

**715 Parenting Support** including emergency diapers, formula,

**3240 Personal Needs** including mitts, hygiene products, winter gear

**25,522 Meals**

**210 Emergency food packs**

**104 Client grocery shopping**

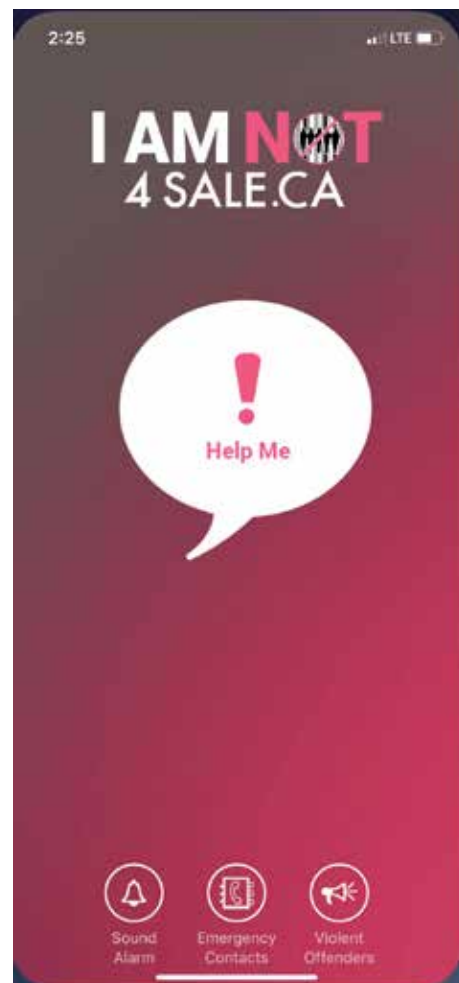
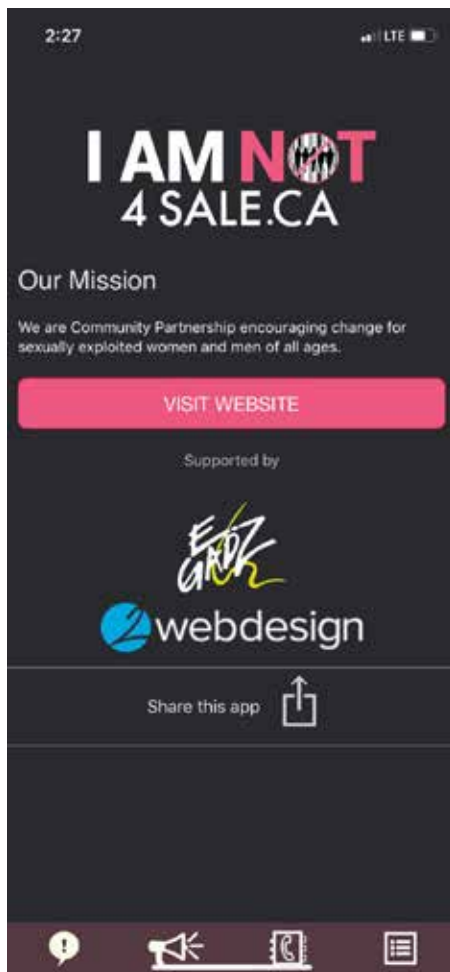
**3386 Transportation Support** including transports to appointments, school, work and food bank

### IAMNOT4SALE Website & App

The IAmNot4Sale app and website was created by an EGADZ Youth Committee and was launched on December 1, 2015. The purpose of the app and website is to provide help and assistance to anyone in need with the focus on people who are involved in the sex trade, and having information and resources readily available to them. Through the app and website, visitors are able to access Blog Posts, Emergency Contacts, Violent Offender Reports, and a Help Me option. IAmNot4Sale is accessed by hundreds of people each month, from countries all around the world.

The Violent Offender Reports are accumulated by Street Outreach and gathered from the women and men who have had a violent or bad experience with a "John". There is also an option to fill one out on the

app/website on your own. These reports are kept anonymous and placed on the app/website as well as in a Violent Offender Book that is handed out to those who are working in hopes to keep them safe from violent customers. When a Violent Offender Report is received, it can immediately be placed on the app/website, and a notification will go out through the app that a new one has been posted. The hope is that this information is shared as quickly as possible to ensure everyone's safety. Most, if not all, of the Violent Offender Reports that are taken by Street Outreach are never reported to the police. Having these notifications and books has become a way for those who are at risk to look out for each other the best way they can.





The Help Me function can be used as either an emergency notification for help or it can be used to ask questions anonymously. If it is being used in an emergency, there is an option to sound an alarm, to call 911 and to leave your location. There is a section to add what kind of situation you are in, options to add pictures and to leave your contact information if you choose. If someone is wishing to just ask questions or seek support anonymously, they are able to do so. Every message that is received through the app and website is read and responded to by a Street Outreach Worker.



### THEIR STORIES

During the summer, Street Outreach received the heartbreaking news that one of their clients was a victim of a homicide on June 30th. "Ron" was a person who was very special to each and every one of the Outreach workers. He was a consistent part of the night that everyone looked forward to. Ron always showed up with a smile every night and almost always had some sort of quote on his hat or shirt he wanted Outreach to read so they could have a good laugh. He was one of the kindest men who would help out anyone in need and would often hang out at the van a little longer to make sure staff were having a good night and were being treated fairly. He was a man who loved his family and friends and always tried to make time for everyone. No matter how busy or rushed he was, if he saw the Outreach van he always made sure to run up and get a quick "Hi" in. His laugh and smile have been deeply missed.

"Marley" is a 26-year-old female who has accessed EGADZ for many years. She lived a very high-risk lifestyle and was homeless for at least 4 years. Outreach would see Marley many times a week, if not every night. They would fill her up with sandwiches and fruit, and make sure she had enough blankets as she usually slept outside. When she found out she was pregnant with her second child, her relationship with Outreach grew. It went from making sure she had enough food for the night to educating her about her pregnancy, making sure she understood the risks her lifestyle would pose on her child and encouraging her to seek medical attention. Through the persistence of Outreach, she finally decided to see a doctor and made the decision to work her way to a sober and healthy lifestyle. In the spring, Marley had found out that there was a possibility of getting her first child back in her care. She hadn't had contact with that child since they were 3 years old, and they were now 11. It was Marley's understanding that her child was with a family that would eventually adopt her, and that she wouldn't be able to have contact

with them again. Unfortunately, the child's placement broke down, but because of Marley's change in lifestyle, the option to rebuild a relationship with her child and eventually have her come home was there. Outreach was there for her every step of the way through this process. They were her shoulder to cry on, her advocate to Social Workers, her transportation to get to family court in North Battleford, and helped her work through all the roadblocks that she faced to have her daughter come home. Marley now proudly has over 2 years of sobriety, and has a home that she shares with her brother, sister-in-law, son, and daughter.



**“Geoff”** is a man in his late 20s who accesses Street Outreach at night when they are on 20th Street. When he first came to the van, he seemed to be cautious and apprehensive of who and what Outreach was, but still came to grab something to eat and drink. Over time he would come and see them more and more, recognizing who was working and unknowingly starting to build relationships, opening up a little more with each visit. Geoff struggles with addiction, mental health and is homeless. Some days are better than others for him, and when he is having his good days he likes to stick around and talk about life. He also enjoys showing off all of his “new” items he found binning. His smile is contagious when he explains with pride the things he has found that other people toss out as garbage. Geoff can usually carry on some interesting conversations, but one evening he seemed to be having a particularly bad night. Geoff didn’t say much when he came to the van other than that his day was horrible. Outreach was able to talk to him a little more and he said that he was detoxing and all of his belongings were stolen. Geoff sleeps outside most nights and everything down to his blanket and shoes were gone. The Outreach staff decided to go back to the Centre to find whatever they could to try and make his night a little easier. Staff made him a food pack and found him some blankets and a few pieces of clothing. When Outreach went to bring him these things they found him curled up in an alley corner trying to stay warm. He was so grateful for all the things that were brought to him and expressed how nice it was to know that someone cares about him. Outreach looks forward to seeing him whenever he is around and try to send some happiness his way, especially on his low days, so they are a little more bearable.

**“Glenda”** is a 16-year-old female who Outreach started working with in November of 2018, when she was only 14 years old. She was living a very high risk lifestyle and sought out support from Outreach as she heard about them through a friend. At the time she was using crystal meth, involved with gangs, getting into relationships with men that were 15+ years her senior, and struggled with self-harm and depression. Street Outreach supported her in finding emergency housing, talking through what was going on in her life, made sure she was eating, getting her to a doctor for when she had infections from missing with her drug injections, and doing First Aid on her self-harm wounds just to name a few. Glenda was not able to be with her family at this time due to the choices she was making in her life, and she relied heavily on Outreach for advice, guidance, support, and to have someone consistently in her life to look out for her. This relationship was crucial as when she overdosed on Crystal Meth, she called Outreach to come and be by her side at the hospital. She spent some time in Secure Detox, went to treatment for a little bit, but always ended up giving in to her addiction. Glenda eventually accumulated charges in the summer of 2019. In February, Glenda called Outreach to tell them that she is proudly 6 months sober. She explained that she had turned herself in for the charges in August and she decided she wanted to change her life. She re connected with her family, became sober, enrolled in school, found a part-time job, and was in a healthy relationship. Glenda has a new life, good family and friends to surround herself with. She is happy and healthy and often sends picture updates for Outreach.



“Joan” is a 55-year-old woman who Outreach connects with during their Night Streets. When she first started coming to the Outreach van, it wasn’t usually a positive experience as she would have very erratic behavior and would continuously have needles (sometimes open) in her hands. This was very unsafe for Outreach, and attempting to have conversations with Joan about her needs seemed to escalate her behavior. One night however, she was standing outside by herself and Street Outreach had complimented how nicely dressed she was and that her hair and make-up looked very good. Joan explained that it was her birthday so she wanted to look nice, but didn’t have anyone to celebrate it with. Outreach gave Joan a donut and a blanket to celebrate her day. From that moment the relationship became increasingly positive. Outreach was even able to have a conversation with her about not having needles in her hands when she is coming to the van and she has respected it ever since. She has also come to Outreach when she has been unable to find a place to stay for the night. The times Joan is in the van, whether it is warming up or taking her to a safe place, she has felt comfortable opening up about her past. She was able to let out some of the pain she feels about being unknowingly infected with HIV from an ex-partner and having her whole life change. Joan has said many times that once she became infected with HIV, her life was taken from her. She said that she was previously a manager, but when she was diagnosed she turned to drugs to deal with what happened, and drugs eventually led to her becoming homeless. Outreach makes a special effort to check in with her and make sure she knows that there is always someone looking out for her.



“Nik” is a 24-year-old female who has been a part of EGADZ most of her life. She has accessed Outreach off and on in the past, but has started consistently working with them since the start of November 2019. Nik has reached out for support in housing, addictions, employment and life advice. Outreach was able to help her apply for jobs and take her to interviews which eventually led to her finding a job as a line cook. Nik enjoys going to NA meetings but finds going to certain areas of the city very triggering and seeks out support in getting rides to and from these meetings. When Outreach isn’t able to transport her to these meetings, often Nik will ask if she can talk over the phone while she walks from her bus stop to the meeting. She has expressed that this helps with her anxiety, encourages her to go the meeting and helps keep her distracted when needing to be in areas that trigger her. Nik recently celebrated 7 months clean and sober, has a home and maintains her job. She continually seeks out advice on how to problem solve issues she is having at work and in her day to day life, and looks to Outreach as someone she can count on and turn to. Outreach continues to connect with her multiple times a week.

**Operation Help** is a program that was created in 2000 to assist those who are sexually exploited exit the sex trade. This is a volunteer program that offers long term support, as it is more than a quick and simple change of lifestyle. A combination of physical, mental and emotional healing is needed and requires a multitude of services and support. Often children, women and men who are entrenched in the sex trade have experienced childhood traumas such as physical, mental, sexual and emotional abuse which have gone untreated. Poverty, homelessness, addiction, mental health and neglect are other factors that leave them vulnerable to exploitation.



As technology advances, the safety of exploited individuals deteriorates. Children and youth who are being exploited are becoming unseen, harder to identify and easier to victimize. Since 2000, **64** Operation Help clients have passed away as a direct and indirect result of the sex trade from murder, disease, suicide and over doses. **5** of these were in the last fiscal year.





### Referrals

Many of the clients who work with Operation Help have involvement with the justice system. Clients are often referred into the program by Probation Officers, Prosecutors, and Court Judges, in hopes of alleviating some of the system-generated charges that occur due to instability and the lack of support and guidance.

Clients are also identified and referred by Educational Institutions, Mental Health & Addiction Workers and Social Services.

**In the 2019/2020 fiscal year**, Operation Help worked with **75** separate clients and an additional **63** individuals who accessed the program as an Outreach services.

**13** of which were under the age of 16

**20** who were 16 to 19 years old

**32** who were 20 to 24 years old

**23** who were 25 to 30 years old

And **39** who were 31 years and over

### Support Services

Operation Help staff are available to assist clients immediately with emergency support for homelessness and health, and ongoing support in the areas of justice, housing, health and addiction & mental health. The hours of operation for the program are Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Street Outreach assisting after hours for emergency calls.

Staff are equipped with supplies ranging from daily hygiene products to everything a client needs to attend detox and treatment programs. Along with goal planning and connecting clients to community programming, staff are able to transport and accompany clients to appointments, treatment programs and court proceedings.

With this transient lifestyle, it is difficult for the vulnerable population to prioritize their health. Operation Help attended hospitals and medical related appointments with clients **131** times over the year.



Operation Help supplied clients with **108 Personal Needs** which included clothing, blankets, personal hygiene and winter gear.

Assisted with **Housing Support 75** times

Assisted clients with acquiring **Nutrition** through grocery shopping, food packs, trips to the food bank **77** times, and provided meals and snacks **225** times.

Created **36 Safety Plans** with clients and **33 Long Term Goal Plans**.

Gave **14** clients **Addiction Support** which included education, referrals for addiction workers and detox, and transportation, support visits and supplies for treatment.

**12** clients utilized Operation Help for **Justice Support** which included attending appointments with probation, applying for lawyers, attending court and advocacy.

**6** clients accepted **Education Support** including resourcing, registration, school visits and school supplies.

### OUTCOMES

Operation Help received a referral for teenager we will name “Tracey” in June of 2019. At that time, she was in a state of psychosis and very transient. Operation Help had minimal contact with her throughout the summer as she had no contact number and had left the area she was in. Staff were unaware that she had been hospitalized in Dubé Center until she reached out for support this September. Tracey was now in a much better mental state but verbalized she still has a long way to go. She is seeking some type of normalcy which includes a stable home, going back to school to complete her grade twelve and not having to live in fear of the unknown. Staff spent many hours with Tracey prioritizing her goals; her first goal is housing. Operation Help have begun working with a My Home Supervisor as there could be a possibility that Tracey is a candidate for the new My Home Retreat.

In the mean time, staff focus on finding safe places for Tracey to sleep. They have also been assisting Tracey with applying for her identifications and transporting her to medical appointments.

### Royal West

Operation Help is in its fifth year of having a satellite office out of Royal West High School to provide students with any non-academic support. Many of the students attending Royal West face barriers that prevent them from attending classes. This includes lack of transportation to and from school, domestic violence, addictions, lack of proper housing and food. Operation Help's role is to help rid the students of barriers that stand between them and success in school.

Less than a year ago Operation Help began working with a 13-year-old Cancer Survivor who we will call “Annie”. At the time of the referral, she was working in the sex trade, using intravenous drugs and also sleeping with older men for drugs.

Staff began transporting Annie to school and used that time to build their relationship. It wasn't long until she began accessing Operation Help for assistance in other areas she needed help.

Annie was attending school regularly and was sober, when she found out she was pregnant. Thankfully she was able to remain sober throughout her pregnancy.

Towards the end of her pregnancy, Annie learned that the cancer she had when she was 10 had returned, and that she needed to deliver her child early so she could begin chemotherapy treatments as soon as possible. Annie gave birth to a healthy but premature baby who had to stay in NICU for a short period of time.

Annie's cancer was very aggressive; she began her chemotherapy immediately after birth and spent her time going back and forth between treatments and NICU 5 times a week. During her treatments, Operation Help were there to transport Annie back and forth between the hospital and home. They also spent many hours giving her emotional support and made sure that Annie had the supplies she needed for herself and her baby. Being a new young mom and having chemotherapy at the same time really took its toll on Annie. Thankfully, her parents were very supportive and looked after both Annie and her child. The next difficult news to hear was that the chemo treatments were no longer working and she would have to go to Winnipeg for a stem cell transplant.

Sadly, the cancer was too aggressive and she lost the battle. Throughout and until the end, Annie remained positive and would put a smile on everyone's face, and she inspired our team with her courage and strength.



“Cora” is a client who, over the past few years, has become very stable in her sobriety and recently very successful in her life. She grew up in foster care in Prince Albert not knowing her real name or her date of birth, and she struggled with a learning disability and FASD. Cora moved to Saskatoon as a teenager and shortly after became addicted to drugs and began working in the sex trade. She was heavily entrenched in the street life, and was homeless most of the time with her only means of housing being the Lighthouse or Dubé Psychiatric Center. Staff had a hard time connecting with her as she had trust issues and believed they were working for the police. Once staff were able to gain her trust, she would often disclose graphic stories of the bad dates she had, the abuse the men inflicted on her and how she at times had to escape as she feared for her life.

Cora began attending church and she was able to build a strong and healthy support system there. With the support of Operation Help and her church, Cora was able to become

sober. Once sober, she moved into a supportive living program in Prince Albert where she gained health back and learned many life skills.

When Cora was strong enough she returned to live in Saskatoon. Here she began volunteering at local organizations such as the Friendship Inn, the Bridge and the Lighthouse. She enrolled in educational program that taught her to build a resume and assisted her with gaining numerous certificates such as Safe Food Handling, and CPR. When she completed that program, she acquired a job at EGADZ working in the Action to Employment Program. There she gained valuable skills, work experience and confidence. She often speaks at “John” Schools and does presentations about sexual exploitation for various agencies. Cora has overcome many obstacles in her life including addiction, mental health issues and is a survivor of sexual exploitation.

### Day of Mourning – “Remembering the Victims of the Sex Trade”

August 14th, 2019 marked the 20th Annual Day of Mourning, an event held to reflect on the lives lost to the sex trade. This day gives family and friends a place and a time to honor their loved ones with a ceremony, candle light vigil, march, as well as a feast.

The Day of Mourning is brought to life by a committee of youth who care strongly for their community. The youth along with assistance of Operation Help staff, begin planning early on in the year, meeting monthly to discuss which dignitaries to invite, gifts the youth want to create and give the elders and dignitaries, and who they would like to have perform.



## Operation Help

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For 2019 the youth wanted to make a few changes that would really reflect for them what this day is about. This year there were multiple performers who were young First Nations men, and all who are trying to make a difference in their communities. The Rap and activist group Brown Can Shine specifically wrote a song for the Day of Mourning. The lyrics were about the struggles that the First Nations woman face in today's society. All of the members of this group have been affected by the sex trade. One in particular has lost his mother, two sisters, one cousin and a close friend from the effects of the sex trade.

Dakota Bear, who is the Co-Founder of a project called *Protect our People*, gave an educational speech which included the statistics of First Nation women in human trafficking. There was also a full line of dignitaries including the Minister of Justice Don Morgan, Superintendent of the Saskatoon City Police Randy Huisman, Missing Person's Liaison Adeline Lewis, and the Coordinator of



Victims Services Saskatoon Dorteia Swiftwolfe. Each gave a speech filled with kind words of encouragement, empathy and support for individuals and families affected by sexual exploitation. Elder Melvina Eagle from White Cap First Nation and Pastor Collin Clay both said prayers for the victims their and over 300 family and friends in attendance.



**Operation Runaway** is an integrated service program which brings together supports and services offered by community partners. Community partners involved in the program include Mental Health & Addictions Services, Saskatoon City Police – Missing Persons Unit, the Ministry of Social Services and EGADZ. The purpose of the program is to identify at-risk runaways to engage them in a discussion in a Support Circle to: a) ask the youth what needs to change to stop the running? and b) offer positive supports and services to help the youth stop running and begin a more stable and positive lifestyle.

The service begins by identifying at-risk youth who are repeatedly running from their placements, and where their existing supports have been unable to connect with them to facilitate change. They are considered to be “at-risk” as their runaway behavior places them in very unstable and often dangerous circumstances. Over time and with repeated attendance at the support circle, the youth share underlying issues which have contributed to the runaway behavior and are indicative of their risk which include:

- *Family violence*
- *Separation from family*
- *Trauma*
- *Being told that they can't have relationships or contact with their family members*
- *A lack of caring and follow through from workers and people in their lives*
- *Sexual abuse*
- *Drug use*
- *Gang involvement*

Operation Runaway Outreach workers provide support for the youth which includes one on one and group activities, crisis support, connection to community resources, bridging family connections, transportation to and support with appointments, support in areas of justice, Social Services and health.

Communication is a problematic area when it comes to youth who do not return home. No communication often generates Missing Persons reports and Police action that could be avoided by caregivers knowing where their children are and whether they are safe. To encourage



youth to communicate regularly with caregivers and supports, Operation Runaway will supply the youth with a cell phone and minutes as long as they agree to stay in contact with their support system. If a youth disregards the agreement, discussion will occur and if the phone is not utilized for the purpose it is intended, the phone will be disconnected and eventually black listed. The cell phones are made possible by Prairie Mobile which collects old and used phones from community members who are in support of the program.

## Operation Runaway



Another piece of the Operation Runaway Program is the Youth Committee. This committee is made up of youth who are, or have been, considered “habitual runaways”. The young people on the committee are very committed to coming up with solutions and ideas to help runaway youth. They are the experts in the field and have a good understanding of what works and what does not work.

To date the committee has been tasked with 4 important projects. The first was reviewing the current Risk Assessment utilized by the government and creating a new Risk Assessment that was functional and beneficial for those working with “at-risk” youth. The Assessment provides caregivers the guidance for when and when not to call youth in missing. The youth successfully completed this project and the new Youth Assessment was first put into place to be tested at the EGADZ My Homes. EGADZ and the Saskatoon City Police have also been to Regina to speak about this program and the impacts it has had and continues to have on the youth we are serving. The Ministry of Social Services is now working with Operation Runaway to implement the Risk Assessment into more group homes in Saskatoon and then throughout the province in the next year.



The next project the Youth Committee was involved in was the creation and implementation of a home for those with Mental Health struggles. The My Home Retreat is a specialized home where youth can work on their mental health while remaining in their community without losing their original placement.

A current project that the Youth Committee is working on is an app called the Safe Zone. Along with University of Saskatchewan students, they are creating an app that will be able to be used by youth, police, supports, and families to connect and assist youth to return home safely. Lastly, the Youth Committee is working on another new housing project; designing and creating policy and procedures for an emergency home for “at-risk” youth.

From **April 1st, 2019 to March 31st, 2020** **40** high risk runaways volunteered to work with Operation Runaway.

**32** of those youth attended Circles **162** times

**68** Safety plans were made with **17** youth

**596** recreational activities took place with youth in the community and at the EGADZ Center

**56** Cell Phones

**51** Phone Cards

**791** Welfare check ins



### OUTCOMES

**Olive** is a new youth in the program and also new to Saskatoon. She is originally from Newfoundland and was introduced to EGADZ by the Saskatoon VICE Unit and the Missing Person's Unit.

She has experienced deep trauma both physically and emotionally and has been exploited sexually through family. She struggles to sleep at night due to what she feels is post traumatic stress and worries always about her safety. Operation Runaway has connected her with a therapist and is also working on helping her create coping strategies. Olive is a bright and delightful young girl who now has a safe home, goes to school and has a personal counsellor. Olive spends time daily with Operation Runaway and is very thankful for all the support she receives through EGADZ. Her hope is that life starts getting better from here.



**Alice** is a 14-year-old girl who had been living with her ex-boyfriend's family for just over a year. This was a very toxic environment for her and she often struggled with her mental health. During this time, she was not enrolled in school and she did not have a positive relationship with her mom. Since joining Operation Runaway there has been a lot of changes. Her mother signed a Section 9 so Alice could reside in a safe home while they work towards rebuilding their relationship. Alice and her mother agreed to attend therapy together and have both stayed committed. Alice also has her own counsellor through Youth Mental Health and is back in school and attending every day.



### OUTCOMES

**Natalie** is in contact with Operation Runaway every day. She is in a very positive space now and continues to strive to be the best version of herself. During a circle meeting she expressed that Operation Runaway has helped her be where she needs to be, see what she needs in life and has helped her realize that she deserves better than the life she was living previously.

Since returning she has attended school every day and has received two awards, one for excelling in her behavior and the other for dedication at school. She has also become the “Welcome Wagon” for Operation Runaway and extends herself to each new youth.



**Liv** was brought forward to Operation Runaway by Mental Health Outreach. Liv was a 16-year-old girl who had previously given birth and felt she was not able to go home to her mother's as she feared her mom's partner. At this time, Liv was living in a tent by the river with her boyfriend. She would often attend the Operation Runaway circles but was apprehensive to accept help. Liv said she was afraid to leave her boyfriend alone and felt she would be abandoning him. Liv eventually ended up checking herself into the Dubé Centre. During her time in Dubé, Operation Runaway staff were able to build their relationship with her. Liv also began making a connection between her other community resources. A week after leaving Dubé, Liv began to struggle again with her mental health, however this time she felt comfortable enough to reach out for help. Operation Runaway was able to secure her a placement at the EGADZ Retreat for Mental Health and she was moved in very same night. She began reaching out to her many supports on a daily basis, returning home every night and going to school.





## YOUTH QUOTES

**I FINALLY FELT LIKE I COULD GET HEARD WHEN I GOT HERE. I COULD TALK TO PEOPLE AND STUFF. WHEN THEY STARTED THE MEETINGS AND STUFF COPS WOULD BE THERE, SOCIAL WORKERS, PEOPLE FROM EGADZ. PEOPLE FROM EGADZ THEY WOULD LISTEN TO ME. THEY LISTENED TO ME FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER. AND, I FELT LIKE I WAS BEING LISTENED TO FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER, FINALLY. AND YEAH THAT'S WHAT KEPT ME, WELL, MADE ME WANNA STAY.**

**As I got more involved with Operation Runaway and EGADZ as a whole they helped me break, not so much break the chain because I still go back sometimes, but they helped me, like, see that the drugs don't really help you. And many people, no matter what they say or do for you, that at the end of the day they see us as just a bunch of people just trying to get high. EGADZ helped me realize that a lot of my old friends didn't care for me and it feels good to like have a better life and have a place to call home. I can just sit at home, be bored now. They're helping me get back into school again. I've been in day programs for a while and the workers keep saying, "Okay well we'll have to try again, don't get yourself down on it" when I can't get back in school.**

**THERE'S NOTHING I DON'T LIKE ABOUT IT...IT JUST...IT'S GOOD. IT'S HELPED ME IN A LOT OF WAYS AND I GOT...IT HELPED STRUCTURE MY LIFE HALF BACK TOGETHER FROM WHAT IT WAS A YEAR AGO 'CAUSE AT LEAST I HAVE A PLACE TO CALL HOME. I HAVE A CELL PHONE. I CAN TALK TO MY MOM TOO WHEN SHE WAS IN JAIL. I HAVE SUPPORTS I CAN CALL IF I REALLY NEED THEM WHEN I WANT TO USE THEM.**

## Wakaw Lake

**Wakaw Camp** was funded through the generous support of Canadian Tire Jumpstart, the Dave Deplaedt Foundation, and the Government of Canada Summer Works program.

The Jumpstart Camp Days 2019 was the main project that utilized the property. From July to August 2019 EGADZ offered 27 day camps, including six overnight trips for the youth in this project. Each youth between the ages of 12-18 who registered had the option to pick 5 camp days. Transportation to and from the camp was facilitated by the staff. Pending availability, the youth registered also had the opportunity to come out additional times. Three days were set aside for 10 and 11 year olds because there was high number of the age group that inquired and wanted to enjoy the experience.



The camp focuses on a number of goals throughout the summer. The main focus for the summer was to implement a variety of sporting activities that promoted health, education, culture, sustainable development and psycho social well-being. Creating strong, positive connections with the youth was a priority to promote healthy lifestyles for the at risk youth utilizing the camp. A total of **38 youth** were able to take part in EGADZ summer camps and were actively able to participate **158 times**.

All programming within EGADZ has the opportunity to sign up and take part in the activities the camp has to offer. This included regular My Home recreation days, a Teen Parenting camping trip, the EEESP summer program

camping trip, an independent homes camping week, and numerous trips to the garden with the day programs and residential supports. In total **97 different** youth have been able to experience the camp property and participate in activities **329 times** throughout the summer.



The Summer Camp property was maintained this summer by a crew of three youth and a supervisor who were instrumental in making the summer a positive experience for the Youth. The summer work crew worked hard each day to keep the camp operational. The youth learned new skills in the areas of mowing and trimming grass around and between structures and trees, chopping and hauling wood and small maintenance projects. The youth learned about tool maintenance procedures, safety in the workplace while experiencing how to use a variety of tools and working as part of a team. The youth's confidence rose throughout the summer within the crew as they worked together to accomplish the different tasks. Every one of the youth commented how much they appreciated the experience and that they learned a lot over the summer.





## Residential Services **MY HOME**

Since opening the doors to the first My Home twenty-three years ago, EGADZ has provided residential housing for hard to serve youth and their children and has grown to operate 11 separate homes. This has been made possible through ongoing partnerships with the Government of Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan Health Authority. In addition, there are many dedicated and invested community members and private donors who continue to provide support.

The My Homes is based on the youth centered model, allowing the youth to be in control of their own case plan while staff assist in supporting each of their individual needs. The youth have the power to voluntarily establish the case plans best suited for their growth, with a focus on progress over perfection. The My Homes meet their basic needs and teach life skills, while providing a home that allows them to have a sense of family. They provide support in various aspects related to education, employment, addictions, parenting, family, culture, and mental health. This ultimately allows the youth to gain the skills needed to become confident, independent, contributing members to society.

Based on the level of support they need, there are 3 different models of homes to assist the youth and young adults between the ages of 12-23. There are 6 24-hour Staffed homes, one of which is specific to females with high mental health and addiction needs, and one exclusively for males. Additionally, there are 3 Mentored homes, and

2 Independent homes. Each model allows for a different level of independence, with some youth transitioning between all 3 models before gaining independence in the community.



**“THE MY HOMES HELPS ME STAY ON TRACK AND FOCUS ON MY FUTURE. THEY DON’T LET ME FALL INTO NEGATIVE PATTERNS, LIKE ISOLATION.” - RD**



### Male Staffed Home Statistics

From **April 1st 2019 to March 31st 2020** we provided housing for **13** male youth.

Transitioned to family **1**

Transitioned to Community Placement **4**

Transitioned to Intense Stabilization **2**

Maintained Employment **2**

All Attended Educational programming

### YOUTH HIGHLIGHT

QB found his place at the My Home in August 2018. He had primarily been raised with his family members where he was subjected to their high-risk lifestyles. His mother was in and out of prison and his father struggled with alcoholism. He took on the care-giving role, often sleeping with a baseball bat to defend himself from intruders entering his home. Upon moving into the My Home, he started coming out of his survival mode and different behaviours began to surface: aggression, regular frustrations, intense anxiety, and isolation. QB was able to identify that he needed some support and with the assistance of staff he was connected to a counsellor, a new family doctor, and an Outreach worker. Now, for the first time in QB's life, he was open to utilizing additional community supports. In June of 2019, QB was diagnosed with autism, severe ADHD, and anxiety. With the new diagnoses QB participated in a Psychological Educational Assessment. As a result, QB was connected with a FASD worker whom he utilizes on a regular basis. He also completed the anger management course "Calming the Volcano Within." QB had always been opposed to taking prescribed medication, but through all the support he received he was able to gain a clearer understanding of the benefits medication may have for him. QB made the decision to try medications and started to feel the positive effects immediately in helping with his anxiety. He also set his focus on his physical health and attended kickboxing and Muay Thai on a regular basis which allowed him to positively release his anger and frustrations. As a result of the stability he has gained through these steps, he has been able to focus on acquiring important government IDs, gained employment with the EGADZ Action to Employment program, and maintained his school placement. These are all essential pieces as this young man moves toward independence.



### Female Staffed Home Statistics

From **April 1st 2019 to March 31st 2020** we provided housing for **78** female youth and **4** infants/children in the staffed homes.

Transitioned to family 9

Transitioned to EGADZ lower risk home 9

Transitioned to Community Placement 30

Transitioned to Intense Stabilization 4

Maintained Employment 5

Babies Born 1

All Attended Educational programming



### YOUTH HIGHLIGHT

XS spent the majority of her childhood residing in between foster homes and several emergency placements after being apprehended from her mother's care. XS moved to the My Homes in July 2019. She was extremely shy and unsure of herself, displaying a lot of self-doubt and struggling with anxiety, depression, and self-harm. She had previously been diagnosed with ADHD and ODD but had not taken her prescribed medication in months. As XS started developing relationships with staff and other youth her confidence and self-identity grew. Through these relationships XS was able to identify needing additional support to work through her past trauma. Staff assisted her in connecting with a personal counsellor and family doctor. She started taking her medication again which assisted in regulating her mood. She began opening up, making friendships both inside and outside of the home, and attending school. With the encouragement of staff, XS pushed herself out of her comfort zone by attending training to receive certificates for: First Aid/CPR, WHMIS, Health and Safety Awareness, and Food Safety. This allowed her to gain knowledge and skills to add to her resume. XS continued to show a tremendous amount of growth over the next several months, becoming a social butterfly, developing her own personal style, and letting her brilliant sense of humor shine. In March 2020 XS took her new found confidence and made the transition to a mentored home where she continues to reside today.

**“THE MY HOMES MEANS SUPPORT AND THE FEELING OF FAMILY IN EVERY WAY, ALL THE TIME. IT MEANS LIVING IN A CARING AND POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT THAT ENCOURAGES GROWTH AND A PATH TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE.” -P.F**

### YOUTH HIGHLIGHT

AP, at the age of 14 years old, made the move into the My Homes in November 2019. Prior to moving into the My Homes she was residing with her ex-boyfriend and his mother, as she had a very toxic relationship with her biological mother. Upon moving into the My Homes she was connected with the Ministry of Social Services and signed into care. Since moving into the My Homes she has been dedicated to working and rebuilding her relationship with her mother. Together they have been attending weekly counselling appointments, and also attending weekly sessions with strengthening families. Having the opportunity to live at the My Home has allowed her to slowly work on the relationship with her mother. They are now at the point of hanging out together as mother & daughter, and having weekly overnight visits on the weekends, with the future plan to be successfully transitioned home.

**"I GET MORE SUPPORT THAN I HAVE ANYWHERE ELSE SINCE MOVING INTO THE MY HOMES. I FEEL LIKE THE PROGRAM ENCOURAGES ME TO HAVE A ROUTINE IN MY LIFE, THAT ALLOWS ME TO BE SUCCESSFUL" -A.I**

### Mentored Homes Statistics

From April 1st 2019 to March 31st 2020 we provided housing for 37 female youth and 10 infants/children in the mentored homes.

Transitioned to family 7

Transitioned to EGADZ supported Independent Home 4

Transitioned to Independent Living 12

Graduated 1

Attended Post-Secondary schooling 2

Maintained Employment 9

All Attended Educational programming



## **YOUTH HIGHLIGHT**

Growing up CM lived in a home that often lacked basic necessities. She was surrounded by family who had their own struggles with addictions for most of her childhood. She was often providing care for her younger siblings, and was exposed to physical and mental abuse for years. This led to CM starting to use substances at the age of 12, which quickly led to increased usage of harder drugs and alcohol.

In April 2018, CM left her home reserve and came to Saskatoon to complete detox and treatment. She was introduced to My Homes for the first time after completing the treatment program. She was initially placed in a staffed home and then transitioned to a mentored home. Throughout her stay at the mentored home CM continued to struggle with her substance use. Staff continued to try and support CM through this but ultimately had to obtain a secure detox warrant and encourage CM to attend treatment following detox. Despite 3 successful completions of the youth treatment program, CM continued to struggle with her substance use, which eventually led her down the path of gang affiliations and ultimately she decided to leave the program and return to her home community. She

was again exposed to watching her family continue to fight their battles with their addictions. During this time CM lost close family and friends to addictions. Being able to see how heavily addiction was affecting her family helped her realize she wanted to change her life in order to be successful.

In October of 2019 CM admitted herself into treatment. While there, CM worked closely with the counsellor and supports in place. Once on the verge of completing treatment, CM reached out to the My Homes to seek placement, recognizing that returning to her family would not be feasible for successfully maintaining sobriety. CM moved into a staffed model My Home at the beginning of December 2019. She had continued support from staff when she was feeling triggered to use. She attended NA meetings on an almost daily basis and surrounded herself with positive recreational activities. As a result of her addictions, CM had not attended school regularly for most of her life. With support from staff CM was able to successfully register at a mainstream high school and attend regularly. At the end of February 2020 CM achieved a major goal and transitioned back to a mentored model My Home where she just celebrated 6 months' sobriety.

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### **Independent Home Statistics**

From April 1st 2019 to March 31st 2020 we provided housing for 18 female youth and 4 infants/children in the Independent homes.

Transitioned to family 3

Transitioned to EGADZ supported Independent living 1

Transitioned to Independent Living 4

Graduated 1

Attended Secondary Education 3

Maintained Employment 11

All Attended Educational programming

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**“I’VE ALWAYS FOUND THAT THE MY HOMES HAS WORKED VERY WELL FOR ME BECAUSE EVERYTHING IS BASED ON MY CHOICES AND DECISIONS, WHICH HAS GREATLY HELPED ME LEARN A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY AND BETTER DECISION MAKING. THE MY HOMES HAVE ALWAYS DONE A GREAT JOB OF SUPPORTING ME AND HELPING ME BECOME A RESPONSIBLE ADULT, AND I FEEL AS THOUGH I’M TREATED AS SUCH. I DON’T THINK THERE’S A BETTER PLACE I COULD BE THAN WHERE I AM NOW.” - HN**

### **YOUTH HIGHLIGHT**

AR suffered severe physical, emotional, and sexual abuse throughout her childhood. From this trauma arose long term mental health struggles. At the age of 18 AR moved into the My Home with her 2 year old daughter, initially residing in a mentored home. Staff was able to quickly identify that AR was in need of additional support, as due to her past traumas she had developed a severe eating disorder which was affecting her ability to parent. She was connected with a Dietician, Mental Health and Addictions Counsellor, EGADZ Parent Support, and an Elder. AR started attending regular sessions with her support team and focused on enhancing her independent skills. She and her daughter successfully transitioned into an Independent home in May of 2019. AR started working with EAGDZ Action to Employment which allowed her to purchase a new vehicle, enabling her to independently transport her daughter to and from daycare. While AR actively sought out the support of My Home staff and her community supports, and made successful strides in working through past trauma she identified that her eating disorder was becoming more unmanageable. It was at this point AR researched with staff and admitted herself into BridgePoint treatment program to combat her disorder. After completing BridgePoint, she was determined to obtain further support with her eating disorder. She researched different programming and decided that she wanted to attend the Calgary Eating Disorder Program. AR worked alongside her counselor in sorting out the details surrounding the treatment program. With the assistance of staff she was transported to Calgary as she was required to meet with the treatment team, and doctors to discuss her specific needs. After 3 separate trips to Calgary for consultation surrounding her treatment AR was accepted into the program and successfully transitioned there in January 2020.

### Residential Retreat

Over the past several years, the Saskatoon Downtown Youth Centre has continued to notice a drastic increase in the number of youth who struggle with high mental health and addiction needs. Data collected from April 1, 2018 to January 15th, 2019 showed **269** incidents with **74** different youth within the My Homes.

After much consultation, in partnership with the Ministry of Social Services and the Saskatchewan Health Authority in August of 2019 the Saskatoon Downtown Youth Centre was granted funding to convert one of the current Staffed Homes into the Residential Retreat.

The Retreat Home was opened on October 1, 2019 with staff spending the first week taking part in training which included Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST), CPR & First Aid, and a seminar with a Clinical Supervising Counsellor on the Neurosequential Model Therapeutics Assessment. On October 7, 2019 the first youth officially moved into the Retreat and by October 16, 2019 all five beds in the home were occupied with youth receiving services. The Retreat is an opportunity to support youth with high mental health and addictions needs. It allows the youth a chance to focus on safety and build important developmental skills while maintaining placement within their community. Within the Retreat Home each youth has the opportunity for individual hangouts with staff at a minimum of 5 times a week, focusing on engagement and safety planning. In building strong positive relationships with the staff, the youth are more inclined to communicate with staff, expressing where they are at and what their needs are. In order to provide the youth with a high level of support there are two staff members working within the home at all times.



### YOUTH HIGHLIGHT

Prior to moving into the Retreat, BN was experiencing a pivotal time in her life. She was in the middle of a mental health crisis where she was starting to experience trauma induced pseudo-seizures and auditory/visual hallucinations. All of these were physical manifestations of her severe trauma and anxiety. She was also suffering from an eating disorder, severe depression, and crippling anxiety, which resulted in 22 incidents, 5 hospital visits, and 2 admissions to Dube in a period of 60 days. Retreat staff engaged her in many different in-house activities to keep her busy and also had multiple individual hangouts with staff a day, with the focus of building strong relationships. As BN was in crisis mode on a daily basis, staff continued to try different grounding exercises, mental health activities, adjusting safety plans, and focusing on emotional-regulation. While at the Retreat BN was also connected with much needed supports such as a mental health counsellor, dietician, and adult psychiatrist. In the first 3 months she had 38 incidents, 14 hospital visits, and 2 admissions to Dube. Through her admission at Dube she was connected with a mental health nurse who facilitated ART Therapy sessions which were beneficial for her recovery from past traumas. Following this there was a shift in behaviour. BN was motivated to focus on her mental health and bettering her quality of life through following a regular daily routine, incorporating healthier eating, and utilizing her community supports. Over the next 2 months no incidents occurred. She was able to utilize the skills she had learned at the Retreat and successfully transitioned to an EGADZ lower risk home, where she has since applied to post-secondary education in hopes of becoming a youth care worker.



### Residential Retreat Home Statistics

From October 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020 **7** youth resided in the Retreat Home.

**4** youth were taken to hospital on **41** separate occasions for incidents involving mental health

**2** youth were admitted into Dube on **11** different occasions for mental health

Transitioned to family **2**

Transitioned to EGADZ lower risk home **3**

Mental Health Warrants Obtained **3**

Secure Detox Warrants Obtained **6**

Connected with mental health, addictions, and/or psychiatrist health service provider **7**

Struggle with both mental health & addiction issues **6**



### My Retreat Plan

The Health Region has provided the program a Clinical Supervising Counsellor, who assists the youth in completing a Neurosequential Model Therapeutics Assessment (NMT) upon moving into the Retreat. This assessment outlines how the brain has developed based off individual past traumatic experiences and inconsistent family/peer relationships. The assessment then provides the Retreat staff with different recommendations in the following fields: Sensory Integration, Self-Regulation, Relational Development, Cognitive Development, Community Support Implementation, and a recommended educational plan. The recommendations are taken and reviewed with the youth who ultimately create a "My Retreat Plan", which integrates the recommendations from the assessment into their day-to-day routine and safety plans.

The youth identify visual, verbal, and sound activities that are beneficial for their sensory stimulation. In order to self-regulate they outline calming exercises they are able to do alone and additional exercises they can do alongside others for their relational and emotional development. In working on understanding their cognitive development and how they process information they find brainteasers, puzzles, games, and fun learning activities that they can integrate into their day-to-day routine. The "My Retreat Plan" gives youth the control to implement what will work for them in achieving success and having a greater understanding of how their brain operates.

### Soft Room

A neutral soft room is located in the home and provides the youth a relaxing safe space where they can participate in sensory soft play. It is a calm space where they can regain control of their emotions and work through their reactions. Within the soft room, staff members assist youth in building their self-regulation skills through different soothing methods. The youth have regular daily access to items such as kinetic sand, playdoh, fidget spinners, weighted blankets, hammock, bean bag chairs, and art supplies. Elements within the room are also integrated

into safety planning and can de-escalate a youth who is in a heightened emotional state, preventing potential crisis situations.



## *Residential Services* **RETREAT HOME**

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### **Retreat Companion**

Two years ago the My Home program became the forever home to their first dog Buddy after he was rescued by one of the youth. Soon after 2 additional puppies joined the My Home family after being adopted from We All Need a Rescue. The youth quickly named the brother and sister duo Mufasa and Mikita. The dogs provide companionship in turn decreasing behavioural outbursts, encouraging youth to return home each night, and giving them a sense of responsibility in caring for them. With all of the positive effects the dogs had on the youth, it was decided that one of them would live within the Retreat home.

In providing companionship, Mikita helps prevent isolation and loneliness. With just her presence, she can help make youth feel cared for and take the focus away from their stress, aiding the youth with their self-regulation. Mikita provides comfort that eases anxiety, while building self-confidence for youth who are anxious about day-to-day activities, appointments, and new environments. Mikita is at the front and centre of emotionally supporting the youth while they are in distress. During an incident with a youth who was experiencing a series of pseudo-seizures, Mikita could sense them occurring. Between each seizure, Mikita would lie on the youth to show her love and attention to what was occurring in the moment. Mikita also rides along with the Residential Crisis team, visiting other homes, and providing company to youth in the van. Often times Mikita is joined by Mufasa and Buddy for trips to the dog park and play dates between different homes. All 3 of the dogs have truly grown to be essential members of the Residential family.

### **Residential Crisis Support**

Along with the opening of the Retreat home funding was also provided by Medavie Health Services to allow for EGADZ to purchase another



van for the Residential Crisis Support. This funding in conjunction with funding from the Ministry of Social Services and Saskatchewan Health Authority allowed for another full time staff member. There is now a three person full time Crisis Support team that supports the Retreat as well as the My Homes. The hours covered in a 24-hour period increased from 8 to 18 hours with a 6-hour overnight overlap. As Crisis Support is predominantly mobile they were supplied with a tablet with data capabilities so they can provide updates and documentation as they go.

The team provides prevention support in working with a youth before they reach the point of a crisis through engagement with community supports and frequent hang outs. They also provide transitional support in helping youth make the move into the Retreat home. Crisis support continues to provide after-care support that follows youth as they transition out of the Retreat and back into the community or into a My Home. This provides wrap around support for the youth from the time they enter into the program, and as they find their footing outside of the home.

## **YOUTH HIGHLIGHT**

Growing up in a toxic, unhealthy family environment JJ was exposed to high-risk lifestyle behaviours before being apprehended at the age of 12. Once in the care of the Ministry of Social Services she resided at several placements for intense stabilization, each placement breaking down due to her high mental health and addictions. At the age of 15 she was diagnosed with: PTSD, Reactive Attachment Disorder, ADHD, Major Depressive Disorder, and Generalized Anxiety. During the fall of 2019, JJ fell very deep into high risk substance use and attempted to take her own life, surviving a jump off a city bridge. In October 2019, after living in the community and being unable to keep herself safe, JJ found her home at the Residential Retreat. The Retreat worked closely with JJ's support team which included: Ministry of Social Services, Psychiatry, and Mental Health and Addictions to continue planning with JJ, with the focus of harm reduction and safety. It was evident that her substance abuse, coupled with her mental health and past trauma, were having a significant impact on JJ being able to keep herself safe. She was initially very skeptical of support from staff due to her history in prior placements and with all the abandonment she has suffered in her life. She could not rationalize why anyone would care for her, and why

nobody could understand her commitment to want to end her life. Over time and with consistent support from staff in attending appointments and ensuring her basic needs were met, JJ started to identify the Retreat as home. This is something she has never done in previous placements. Her time at the Retreat hasn't come without struggle - she has been admitted into Dube on 9 separate occasions, 3 times after mental health warrants were obtained. This has been due to intense critical incidents related to attempts to end her life, and severe intravenous drug use. Secure detox warrants were obtained on 3 separate occasions to combat her substance use, but due to her high level of violence the secure facilities were unable to assist JJ and she was transferred from detox to Dube. Throughout her periods of intense stabilization, Retreat staff was always there to support her, often spending hours each day with her in Dube, planning for how to best assist her in the community to keep herself safe. It was during these times JJ was able to see the dedication, love, and support surrounding her, and although she still hasn't fully overcome her fear of trusting, she continues to return to the Retreat day after day. JJ continues to reside in the Retreat home, where staff works closely with her entire support team in an effort to stabilize her mental health and plan towards her long term success.



“After living in the My Home program for two months, I was moved to the new Mental Health Retreat Home. This program helped save my life.

At the time of moving my mental health was at an all-time low. Due to having the support of extra staff, I was able to get the help I needed. Having another staff member in the home allowed me to go to the hospital more often which kept me safe. In going to the hospital more often I was able to get connected with a counsellor, new psychiatrist, and a dietitian.

Having extra staff in the home also allowed for support when another youth was in crisis. For me, witnessing another youth in crisis was very triggering. With the mental health retreat home, there was extra support when this would happen.

Having two staff members allowed for more one on ones. Going for a drive with someone and talking really helps me unwind and calm down. Having this form of support often prevented me from going into crisis.

The mental health retreat home helped my mental health significantly. I was very supported and I believe it will be a great program for many more youth.

-J.M



Each year the youth residing in the Staffed and Mentored homes take part in a 5 day camping trip. This trip provides the youth with an opportunity to kick back, unwind, and have fun with each other and staff, ultimately allowing them to be kids and experience new things. This year the Youth Committee recommended Echo Valley Provincial Park, situated on the Qu'Appelle Valley.

**29** youth in total attended the camping trip where they took part in a variety of activities. They experienced zip lining, horseback riding, go-karting, hanging out at the beach, and shopping in Regina. Back at camp the youth enjoyed taking part in games such as volleyball, bocce ball, badminton, scavenger hunts, and even doing hair and make-up on some of the boys. The average cost per youth for the trip was \$105.



## Residential Services **RECREATION**

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The EGADZ site at Wakaw Lake hosted **4** of the Independent My Home ladies along with **1** child for a 2 day camping adventure along with staff in August. Although the weather was dreary, they were able to spend great quality time bonding with one another while crafting, making bracelets & necklaces, and customizing their own jewelry boxes. The highlight of the trip was when the sun came out they were able to spend time on the water kayaking and utilizing the paddleboards.







Halloween was celebrated throughout the My Homes with their annual pumpkin carving contest with the winning house being awarded a pizza party. The youth also explored the Rosthern Corn Maze, stopping for pictures at the pumpkin patch.



## *Residential Services* **RECREATION**

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Over the holiday season the My Homes make every effort to ensure Christmas is a special time for the youth in the homes. One of the highlights for the youth is attending the EGADZ annual Christmas Party. On December 19th, 2019 a total of **28** My Home youth and **3** children came out to celebrate. They joined in on supper, games, and a visit from Santa. There was also a movie that was shown upstairs for the younger children to enjoy, while the older youth competed in games, winning tickets, and purchasing prizes for themselves and family members.



The My Homes received incredible support from the community in facilitating activities for the youth that they would otherwise not have had the opportunity to experience. Throughout the year tickets were donated for several events, including the Judas Priest concert, Saskatoon Blades, Saskatoon Rush, and the Harlem Globetrotters.



The staffed homes hit the road to Table Mountain with 18 youth on February 18th, 2020 for their annual skip trip. The extreme cold could not stop them from taking in a day of excitement hitting the slopes. Between skiing, snowboarding & tubing they took the opportunity to warm up in the Chalet, bonding with one another, and sharing many laughs. 6 of the mentored and independent youth, along with staff participated in their annual Table



Mountain ski trip on February 21st, 2020. They enjoyed a beautiful afternoon letting loose and having fun with one another.



Throughout the MyHomes all of the youth are encouraged and given the opportunity to take part in any activities they may find beneficial. These activities allow them to gain new skills, develop new relationships, and increase their self-confidence all while taking part in something healthy and positive. Youth have joined hockey, basketball, dance, music lessons, art classes, kickboxing, horseback riding and swimming just to name a few.

### **YOUTH HIGHLIGHT**

AJ was apprehended from his family home in the fall of 2019. At the age of 13 he joined the My Home. Prior to moving in he was struggling with managing his anger and being able to self-regulate, especially within his school environment. He was often lashing out at his teachers, resulting in him being sent home on almost a daily basis. Upon moving into the My Home staff were able to meet with the supports within the school, working together to develop a safety plan to support him in managing his anger and preventing further incidents from occurring. As AJ is a very energetic young boy, he communicated that sports and physical activity really help him. During his lunch hour, he started staying at school to play in the basketball club. As his behavioural plan was working, he was also able to join his school's hockey team. AJ had a lot of pride being in hockey and it was always a dream for him to be part of a team. He was often found out into the community practicing his skating or playing hockey on the driveway of the home. AJ loved that he had My Home fans, he was so proud to have staff attend his games and cheer him on. As AJ continued to take part in physical activity his behaviours decreased and he started having visits with his mother. These visits increased over time and in February 2020 AJ successfully transitioned back to his family home, upon leaving he said "The My Homes felt like my home when I couldn't be at home."



## *Residential Services* **RECREATION**

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**THE PLACE...** *For New Beginnings*

**The Baby Steps Program** gives mothers the opportunity to reside with and parent their children in a safe and supportive environment, while continuing to work through the barriers and concerns that the Ministry of Social Services has regarding the parent's abilities and the safety of the children. There is no time restriction for a mother in the program, which allows them to work on their healing journey at a pace that gives opportunity for long-term success.



The Baby Steps home can provide care for up to 8 children and allows for 2 mothers to live within the home. 24-hour staff are able to support and teach the mothers in the day to day caring for their children, as well as be supports for the mothers on their personal journey. The program offers a family-style atmosphere and building relationships free of judgement is the key to its foundation. Parenting is all encompassing and in order for a mother to be able to parent her children, she needs to feel safe and healthy herself. Often times mothers who enter the Baby Steps program have a history full of extensive trauma and have had little support in their life to work through

those experiences. This trauma enhances the mental health struggles of the mother which often results in a high risk lifestyle which can include but is not limited to, addictions, domestic violence, gang-involvement and homelessness. The in-house staff provide quality care to both the children and the mothers, and encourage progress through client-led case planning by valuing and validating the uniqueness of each individual and their family.



When a new mother moves into the home staff are given the opportunity to observe and assess the mother's parenting skills, the bond that she has with her children, as well as other life skills the mother has. From there, a case plan is built by the mother with staff, focusing first on the mother's strengths and moving towards areas that the mother would like to improve on. Just like any home, no two days at Baby Steps are alike and the staff's ability to be flexible in their approach helps foster success for both the children and the mothers.





## Baby Steps

When spots are available, Baby Steps will provide the Ministry of Social Services with the option to place emergency sibling groups in the home who are at risk of separation immediately following an apprehension.

### Mah's Place

Mah's Place is located right next door to Baby Steps and is supported by the Baby Steps Outreach workers. Often considered second stage housing, this home provides placement for up to two mothers and their children. Typically, when a mother is residing at Mah's Place and her children are in care at Baby Steps, she will spend time between both homes caring for her children. When the mother is close to having her children returned to her care, a slow transition will occur with visits at Mah's Place. This process allows the mother to identify what is going well for her, as well as areas she may still require support in before having her children returned to her fully. At times, mothers who are at risk of having their children apprehended will move into Mah's Place without starting at Baby Steps. This approach allows mothers and their children to avoid the traumatic experience of an apprehension by wrapping intensive support services around them. Staff are able to spend time with the mothers to assess areas of concern that the Ministry of Social Services may have, and provide immediate intervention to the family to ensure that the children can remain in their mother's care.



### Cameron House

Cameron House is the final stage housing within the Baby Steps Program. This home is designed as two completely separate suites and allows for two families to reside in a safe and comfortable home. Here mothers have their children in their care and continue working on their educational or employment goals as they progress through their journey towards independence.

**From April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020 21 mothers were active in the Baby Steps program residing either in the Baby Steps home or at Mah's Place. 2 additional mothers resided at Cameron House with their children.**

**39 children resided within the Baby Steps Program.**

**10 of these children were cared for at Baby Steps on an emergency placement basis.**

**A total of 17 children were either returned to, or remained in their mother's care.**

**2 families are currently residing at EGADZ Fusion 22.**

**6 mothers were able to keep their children in their care upon entering the program through preventative case planning and are now living independently in the community.**

**As of March 31, 2020 5 mothers and 7 children were currently active within the program.**



**OUTCOMES:**

“Lana” is the 28-year-old mother to K & V and is a very strong and insightful woman who has survived a lifetime of trauma inflicted by sexual and physical abuse. This family has been a part of the Baby Steps Program in varying capacities for the past 4 years. Lana was the second oldest of 7 children and at a young age she quit school to care for her younger siblings. The children watched their mother come in and out of their lives, always bringing a new partner into their home. Lana’s mother struggled with her own addictions which impacted her ability to care for her children. Lana’s first memory of sexual abuse dates back to her toddler years when she was sexually abused by one of her two uncles. In waves, both of her uncles sexually abused her for 8 years before someone intervened to stop the abuse. Unfortunately, this set the framework for how Lana viewed and entered relationships during her adolescent years. Every intimate relationship she entered into involved drugs, alcohol and violence, the worst of these relationships being that with the father of her children, who was significantly older than her. When she was 22 years old she gave birth to her oldest child K, and she remembers feeling she was successfully parenting him at the time. She was committed to creating a good life for her child, and had moved from the reserve to the city. However, her relationship with his father was extremely toxic and she could not find a way to get herself out of that situation. 2 years later she gave birth to her second child V and was able to care for both children until one night when V was 10 months old. Lana and her children’s father had been struggling with their addictions and in an alcohol infused argument, the children were assaulted and subsequently apprehended. For the next four years Lana worked incredibly hard to overcome the obstacles that put her children at risk. She was determined to better her life to get her children back into her care.



The family came into the Baby Steps Program in an unusual way, and on two occasions. The first time the children came they had been living with a paternal relative after being apprehended from their parents. Both the children had been neglected physically and mentally. K struggled to regulate his emotions and was quick to tears and violence. V was extremely ill with multiple ear and sinus infections and was so malnourished that he could not walk. They had been abandoned by the family member and the Ministry of Social Services was unable to find a placement for the boys to live together in. Baby Steps agreed to care for the children for two weeks until a placement could be found. That two weeks turned into 4 months and in those 4 months both boy’s development had drastically improved. K’s behavioral challenges had subsided and he was no longer harming himself, and V’s health had improved and he was meeting all of his milestones of development both cognitively and physically. Eventually K & V were able to move to a foster home together in August 2016.

In February 2018 Baby Steps received a call from the Ministry of Social Services requesting care for K & V again. One of the children had disclosed that the

foster parents were physically abusing them. The Social Worker did have a family member who wanted to take custody of the children, however needed Baby Steps to facilitate a proper transition to family which included visits and overnights in hotel for the duration of a month. Unfortunately, after three months of missed visits by the family member, the plan fell through and the children were left as emergency placements at Baby Steps. However, it was imperative that the Ministry find an appropriate long-term home for the boys and the Ministry felt that their mother was not an appropriate caregiver. Unbeknownst to the program, this information was inaccurate, and despite the many barriers Lana was facing, she was successfully working with community based supports, was attempting to go to counselling and meeting with her probations officer. She had also completed several community-based programs around domestic violence, addictions, anger and violence, and parenting. Lana was also very consistent with her visits with her children and over the next 8 months began to build a relationship with the staff from Baby Steps during drop offs and pick up's for visits. Lana had also connected with the Coordinator of Baby Steps and the two of them were beginning to build a relationship. Lana was losing hope that she would ever get the opportunity to parent her children again and wanted to see if the program could care for the children long-term if this ended up being the case.



In September 2018 Baby Steps was still caring for K & V. Both boys entered school and were doing extremely well. The children attended play therapy and were meeting their development milestones in strides. They were happy and had become a staple in the home. One day in November 2018, a Baby Steps in house staff member approached the planning team about Lana. She had spent time at the visiting suites getting to know Lana and had frequently observed her positive interactions with her children. After another meeting with mom, it was evident to the planning team of Baby Steps that this mom just needed the opportunity to utilize her new skills, and the support and help to gain some more healthy coping skills. Though it took extreme measures of advocating, along with the approval from her children, mom moved into Baby Steps that December.

Lana observed and respected the relationship that the staff had with her children as she had missed out on 3 years of their lives. She co-parented successfully with the staff and looked to them for personal support to work through her trauma. Lana had many “ah ha” moments while at Baby Steps and was making a lot of progress towards bettering herself. She was attending school and remaining sober. She was being open and honest with staff about her struggles and was attending counselling with her boys to repair their relationships. Unfortunately, in May 2019, something in Lana's mindset changed and she began to withdraw from her children and the staff. The effects of this shift in Lana was evident in both K & V's behaviors and they began to act out. Lana in turn became increasingly agitated and was refusing to continue to participate in the program and parent her children. At this time, she walked away from Baby Steps and her children. This was a very confusing time for the boys as they struggled to understand why their mother was no longer living with them. Baby Steps communicated with the Ministry of Social Services and agreed to care for the boys until a new plan was created.



One month after leaving the program Lana connected with the program supervisor. She had regrets about leaving the program and how she was influenced by unhealthy family members to leave the program. She said they had offered support and help to her, but once she moved back to the reserve they only wanted her money and to party. Through phone discussions Lana began to utilize the program again for emotional support and guidance and was in contact with her children and the supervisor daily. She had asked if she could have another meeting to discuss moving back into the Baby Steps Program. However, Lana was injured the day before the meeting and required emergency surgery to repair her broken leg. This incident was a turning point in this part of her journey. During her hospital stay nobody from her family had gone to see her or check in on her. She was in an immeasurable amount of pain and reached out to Baby Steps to help her through that time. This fast tracked Lana moving back into the program as she was physically incapable of caring for herself let alone her children for the foreseeable future. She was grateful for the opportunity to come back and started participating in the program with a new outlook on her situation. K & V were receptive to their mom coming back into their home, but they made her work for their trust. Mom and her children spent the summer bonding and getting to know one another again. Lana was extremely successful in her case plan, despite her physical limitations, and at the end of August 2019, almost exactly 4 years after the apprehension, K & V were returned to Lana's care. The family continued to reside at Mah's Place until November of 2019 when they moved into their own suite at Fusion 22. Lana, K & V continue to work at healing their family with the support of Fusion 22 outreach. They have had their struggles, but their bond is strong. They remain connected with Baby Steps and frequently call and come visit.

"Penny" is a young pregnant mother to a beautiful 6 year old boy. She also has a 15 year old son, who has always been cared for by Penny's mother. Throughout her adult life she has struggled off and on with alcohol use. She has always felt she has been able to manage her alcohol use and parent her youngest son appropriately. Penny has always been the main caregiver but she also had a good co-parenting relationship with her son's father, that is until tragedy occurred. In the spring of 2019 her son's father was shot and killed and Penny and her son were witness to the event. Since that day her son became increasingly attached to his mother and fearful to be without her. This mother was also fearful of people close to her circle who were involved in this incident. Unable to cope with the trauma and fear, she began binge drinking. In the fall of 2019, while heavily intoxicated, she attempted suicide in front of her son. Thankfully, she was able to receive medical intervention to save her life, but due to her instability, her son was apprehended. This led to Penny identifying that she was not coping with the death of her child's father in a healthy manner and she stopped drinking and immediately sought out addictions support. She also connected with a trauma counsellor and was doing work on herself so that she could regain custody of her son. This mother was struggling to work with Social Services as her worker was not connecting with her or returning her calls. Penny decided to take matters into her own hands and did a self-referral to the Baby Steps Program. She was moved directly into Mah's Place and her child moved into Baby Steps two days later. Staff were able to assess the bond and connection that mother and child felt and it was evident that the apprehension was due to an isolated incident and her son was quickly put on an extended visit with his mother at Mah's Place. In order to reduce the growing anxiety of both mother and child being separated, supporting the return in this manner was appropriate. The family was able to spend Christmas

together at Mah's Place and at the end of January 2020 Penny's son was returned to her care. Penny and her son transitioned to living at Fusion 22 where they currently reside and are supported by Fusion Outreach. Penny is due to have her baby this upcoming summer.

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This past summer the Ministry of Social Services connected with Baby Steps to request an emergency placement for two weeks of a sibling group of 4 children, ages 3, 2, 1 and a 1 month old. The mother of these children was very young and had never had the opportunity to enhance her parenting skills and she was continuously getting pregnant after each child she had. The mother and father of these children both struggled with addictions but resided in a home with other family members who "showed" them how to parent. Unfortunately, this was poor advice for this young family and it was clear that mom and dad struggled with their parenting given the poor health and cognitive delays of the children. The incident that led to the apprehension was the one-year old falling off the couch and being knocked unconscious. When first responders attended to the emergency, the condition of the home was extremely unsanitary and the children were all caring for themselves in the basement. Once the children arrived at Baby Steps it was immediately found that the two oldest children did not know how to eat solid food and drinking milk out of bottles was their main source of nutrition. Neither child could speak but they had their own form of nonverbal communication. All of the children were malnourished with sunken in eyes, visible rib cages, and decayed teeth. The oldest was parentified and cared for

her younger siblings. The 3 oldest children knew how to change their own diapers and were very independent.

Two weeks turned into two months at Baby Steps as the Ministry struggled to find a permanent placement where all 4 children could be together. The growth and changes that occurred in those two months was incredible to watch. The 2 oldest children had almost caught up to their age level in language development, their fine motor skills with using utensils was on par as to where it should be, the oldest child was almost fully toilet trained and the 2-year old was showing signs of readiness. Both had undergone significant dental surgeries to repair some of the damage to their teeth, which in turn supported their weight gain as eating was no longer painful for them. The infant, who upon arrival was small and dehydrated, had gained significant weight and was meeting all of the public health milestones.

When the children first arrived at Baby Steps they were a very active family, but that tended to put them in situations that were dangerous where they were at risk of getting hurt. Staff helped teach the children about healthy play and safety and when they left Baby Steps, they were still active but aware of boundaries and their limits.



“Randi” is a young mother who entered the Baby Steps Program in February 2020. She herself was a youth in care and has also had significant history with the Ministry of Social Services as an adult. Randi comes from a very close knit family, who has always been there for one another, both as positive and negative influences. She has two young children, F & B who are spitting images of their mother.

Unfortunately, due to Randi’s substance use and history of unhealthy relationships, the children had spent their entire lives being in and out of care. This has taken a serious toll on them and creates some confusing times. The most recent apprehension occurred after the mother had re-entered a relationship with the children’s father. Unattended domestic violence became even more volatile as their addictions to alcohol, cocaine and crystal meth grew.

The children were fortunate enough to be placed in a foster home together, and the foster parents became a really big support to Randi. Knowing that her children were being well taken care of gave Randi the opportunity to work on herself without feeling overwhelmed or rushed. She completed detox and connected herself with a Mental Health and Addictions worker. She found full-time employment in which she was so successful she moved into a supervisory role within the first two months of working. RJ advocated for herself to come into the Baby Steps Program, and a few days later F & B moved in.

Randi has successfully parented her children with the support of staff. She has strong parenting skills and although she struggled initially to prioritize work and parenting, with the support and guidance of staff she

quickly found a routine for her and her children. Randi has remained sober and has decided to start personal counselling. She has voluntarily asked to sign another section 9 with the Ministry of Social Services as she feels she needs more support before having her children fully returned to her care. She currently resides in the Baby Steps home.

## Sweet Dreams

**The Sweet Dreams Program** opened its doors to young mothers in June of 2014. This project came to fruition by means of a funding model known as a Social Impact Bond which was the first of its kind in Canada. The partnership which included the Ministry of Social Services, Wally and Colleen Mah, Conexus Credit Union and EGADZ, successfully surpassed all expectations and outcomes and has proven to be a good investment for the mothers, children and the community. This cutting edge program and funding model was recognized in 2019 and the partners were awarded the Governor General's Award in Innovation.



This program has been able to provide mothers and children who are at risk of separation the opportunity to reside in a home that is safe and healthy. Homelessness, addictions, domestic violence and mental health are the most common barriers that the mothers face. With support from Sweet Dreams Outreach, the mothers are able to work towards their goals whether that be education, employment, parenting, life skills, addictions support or working on their personal journey of healing.



Sweet Dreams allows the mothers to build a community of like-minded people where they can support each other in achieving their goals. Family suppers and group activities occur on a weekly basis and provides the mothers and the children the chance to grow and learn from one another in a variety of ways.





## OUTCOMES:

“Disa” is a 32 year old mother who had previously resided at Sweet Dreams in 2015-2016. At that time she was struggling with her mental health and addictions and was reluctant to receive the help that the program was offering her and decided to move out into the community where she briefly lost custody of her daughter. Disa attended treatment and began working on her mental health and was able to regain custody. Even with all of the work she had done to overcome her barriers, she continued to struggle in the community and returned to the Sweet Dreams home in November 2018.

Throughout her life Disa has struggled with depression, anxiety and suicidal ideation. She has never had a healthy supportive family as many of them are involved in high-risk, criminal lifestyles. Disa is a caregiver by nature, at times to a fault, and despite her own struggles is always the first one to come to the rescue of those she loves. Her healing journey has been an ongoing process for most of her life. She has endured abuse of every form by those that she loves and has always buried her trauma. Crystal meth, crack and alcohol have been her go-to coping mechanisms. Disa has a pattern of starting to work on her healing, but when it starts to get too difficult, she

quits and goes back to wanting to numb her pain. All of this has contributed to many years of self-harm and very intense suicidal ideation. This past year at Sweet Dreams was different for her. She still had her struggles, however she was more open and honest with supports than she had ever been before. She continued to struggle with the boundaries with her family, but it was evident that she was actively working on this area of her life. She was working regularly with her addictions worker and attending counselling and beginning to work on Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing therapy. While residing at Sweet Dreams she also began seeing a specialized trauma counsellor who she had bonded with instantly. Her daughter, a natural athlete, was enrolled in gymnastics and excelling. Disa also began work at the Sweet Dream Early Learning Centre where she thrived working with the children. Although Disa still has a long journey of healing ahead of her, this past year she has used more tools and coping skills than ever before, and has grown as an individual and a parent. In December Disa decided that she was ready to move on with her life and transitioned to independent living with her daughter. She remains connected with EGADZ Street Outreach and the Parent Support programs.



### OUTCOMES:

"Angel" is a 19 year old mother to a very sweet 2 year old boy. She has resided in Sweet Dreams since July 2018 with the exception of 3 months in the summer of 2019, when she had thought she was ready to live independently in the community. When Angel left the home she was very distant and struggling with her mental health. She was not participating in any of the house programming and not contributing to maintaining the home. She was not taking her medication and she was spiraling. She has always exhibited exceptional parenting skills, but has a had a life long battle with severe mental health, which when at its peak, begin to impact every area of her life. Angel does not have many healthy or supportive family members and setting her boundaries with them is something that she had to work on every day. Unfortunately, her family preys on her vulnerabilities and historically she falls into the trap of using drugs when she lets them get too close to her. When Angel re-entered the home in the fall of 2019, she was in an extremely low point in her life and was

feeling defeated. She created a case plan for herself which included maintaining contact with community support workers and started attending counselling on a regular basis. She began to actively participate in house activities and became a leader within the home. She is attending school and is on par to graduate from grade twelve this summer. One area that has posed a significant challenge for Angel throughout the past year is her suicidal ideation. She has daily thoughts of ending her life and although she has developed very strong coping skills for these thoughts, this past winter she attempted suicide by taking a bottle of her anti-depressants. Thankfully, Angel was instantly regretful of her actions and reached out to staff and received medical intervention immediately. Angel continues to reside in the home with her son and is actively working on her case plan. Throughout the year she has become more communicative and more engaged with her house mates. Her healing journey is continuous and she is growing into a strong and brave young lady.



**From April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020 13 mothers and 21 children were supported while living in the Sweet Dreams home.**

**8 of these families moved towards independent living in the community.**

**2 of these families are currently residing at Fusion 22.**

**3 families are currently still residing in the home.**

## OUTCOMES:

"Karen" is a 23 year old mother to a very busy 1 year old boy. She has had a very difficult and tragic past growing up in the foster care system due to her mother's drug use. Since she was a young girl Karen has struggled with depression and severe anxiety, which only escalated as she got older. By the age of 11, she became exposed to the most horrific side of care and her experience was very traumatic as she was institutionalized in protective residential care. Growing up in a care setting where physical restraints, isolation and punishments were present continues to have an effect on Karen to this day. When she became a teenager she moved into the My Homes Program and was doing quite well, however frequently visiting her family and her mother made her more vulnerable to drug use and an extremely high risk lifestyle. Karen began escorting and using crystal meth daily and was extremely transient across parts of western Canada. She became pregnant with her son, yet this did not stop her from continuing on with her lifestyle. Karen did not receive any medical care for her pregnancy until 2 weeks before her son was born. At this point she was hospitalized for other health concerns and this is when her sobriety journey began. The Ministry of Social Services became involved with Karen as a parent when her son was born and they gave her the opportunity to be a part of their new prenatal pilot project. Karen's son

was born perfectly healthy and did not need to spend any extra time in hospital following his birth. She was able to maintain custody of her son while residing at the Infinity assessment suites, where she was receiving support with her mental health and addictions. With support from EGADZ Parent Support program and Operation Help, she received education and support to help her develop healthy parenting skills. After 8 months of stabilization at the assessment suites, with only one relapse in her addiction, Karen and her son moved into the Sweet Dreams home, where they currently reside today. She works every day to maintain a healthy and sober lifestyle, which is very challenging for her. Since becoming sober, her anxiety has heightened as she finds herself easily triggered in the community. She has also attempted several times over the past year to return to school, but she found it difficult to feel comfortable and calm. Karen is currently working on finding healthy friends and groups to attend with her son. She attends weekly NA meetings and continues to see a counsellor regularly. Through her counselling, many of the traumatic experiences of growing up in care have begun to surface for her and she finds it very difficult at times to differentiate between her current life and her past. She plans to start Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing therapy as a means to continue to work through her healing journey.





## *Fusion 22*

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**Fusion 22** is an independent living program that provides vulnerable families a safe and sober home with ongoing support, knowledge and life skills to help them become successful. Fusion 22 has 22 suites available to single and dual parent families, or youth who have aged out of care and are needing some extra support in the transition of interdependent living.



Fusion 22 was made possible through a partnership between EGADZ, Saskatchewan Housing Corporation and the Ministry of Social Services. Donations and support from individual community members and agencies has largely contributed to supplying each family with furnishings, linens, small appliances, kitchenware, curtains and other household needs. Through support from Conexus Credit Union each resident was provided with a fresh, new bed.



The program has 2 umbrellas of focus. The first is to provide homes that are supported and where the residents can continue to work on their barriers and prepare themselves for successful independent living. The Outreach Staff at Fusion assist with this by providing a healthy emotional support system to residents and teach the families the tools and knowledge they need to be successful in all areas of their life.



Goals and outcomes for the staff to achieve with the families include, educational success, stronger family units, strengthening community support systems, emotional and spiritual healing and acquiring parenting and life skill tools.

The second umbrella of focus is employment training and opportunities. Part of the Fusion 22 Program is that each

family works 50 hours of sweat equity to pay for their damage deposit. The damage deposit money is put into a savings account and once they are ready to move out and there is no major damage to their apartment, they will be given the money from their savings account. This helps the family to create a sense of investment in their home and community, experience work safety and skill training, and also begin a financial savings. Residents also have the opportunity to continue employment through the EGADZ Action to Employment Program.



Fusion 22 opened to residents on November 3rd, 2019.



### OUTCOMES

"Brad" is a 22-year-old hard working young man who takes care of his 2 younger siblings. He also has a 2-year-old daughter who he has half time. "Brad" had a rough life growing up; his mom and dad both struggled with addictions and so he was often left to care for his siblings beginning at a very young age. His father passed away when he was 13 and his mother recently passed away in their home in June of 2019. After Brad's mother passed away, he took on full responsibility of his brother and sister. Unable to complete his final year of high school due to the circumstances, Brad began working a fulltime job making minimum wage. Still living in their family rental which was substandard, Brad struggled financially to pay the \$1200 rent, the utilities and to put food on the table. The fear of losing his siblings to the foster care system stopped him from reaching out for help. Intervention from the Saskatoon HUB brought this

young man and his siblings to the attention of EGADZ. After a motivational and family meeting, Brad and his siblings were fully moved into the Fusion 22 Program 2 weeks later. Assistance from the Catholic School Division made for a smooth transition for his younger sister, and his younger brother was thankful that the family would be able to have a fresh start.

Brad was hesitant at first to accept any help from the staff at Fusion 22 because he was so used to trying to do things on his own and felt that if he couldn't, he was failing his family. In time he began to feel more comfortable, and soon he realized that with a little support he did not have to struggle so hard. He was able to get onto the Social Income Security Program and go back to school to complete his grade 12. His goal is to graduate high school and apply for secondary education to become an electrician.



**From November, 2019 to March 31st, 2020 Fusion 22 has provided 15 families with housing**

**6 of the families are 2 parented families**

**9 are single parented families**

**1 is a single male taking care of his child and his siblings**

**In total there was 21 adults and 25 children in the program.**



## OUTCOMES

“Kyle” has had to experience a lot of loss in his short life, the majority of which has been due to chronic addiction in the family. As a teen he soon found himself going down that same path with alcohol and high-risk behaviors. Tired of the pain and the fear of ending up like a lot of his family has, he decided that he needed and wanted to quit drinking.

When Kyle moved into Fusion 22 with his partner and infant child, he was a shy and quiet guy who had a hard time holding his head up or making eye contact with people. Once he began his sweat equity hours and getting to know staff, he became a different person. The more he learned while working and being around staff, the more his confidence grew. He began to make eye contact and interact, and he began reaching out for support. When Kyle experienced yet another loss in his family, he found himself back to drinking to cope. He was not proud nor was he happy with how he handled the situation. He was ready to accept professional help to deal with his grief and loss and so staff connected him to a grief and loss counsellor. Kyle is trying to break the family cycle of addiction and the hardships that come with it. He is a hard-working young man who holds a fulltime job at EGADZ and eventually hopes to go back to school in the future to take a culinary course. He would like to be a chef one day and get a house on his reserve for him and his family.



### OUTCOMES

“Bree” is a strong resilient young mother who fled a domestic violent relationship. She and her children moved into Fusion 22 in December of 2019 with nothing but a few clothes and toys. Staff helped gather food and necessities to help alleviate some stressors. Bree had never had her own source of income before and had been dependent on her ex-partner for many years. She was afraid and scared and didn’t know she was going to take care of herself and her children. Bree applied for the Social Income Security Program however ended up having to wait 3 months until she received any financial support. She stretched every dollar from her child tax and accessed the food bank to help her get by. Through all the new changes and hurdles in her life, Bree still managed to go to school every day and get her 2 children to daycare. She is doing well in her new home and is excited that she only has one more class to upgrade and then she will be able to apply for the Nursing program at the University of Saskatchewan.



### OUTCOMES

“Buddy” is a 23-year-old male who grew up in and out of the foster care system for the majority of his life. Like many youths who experience deep trauma, Buddy turned to drugs to ease the pain, which led to a deep and long addiction to crystal meth. In a moment of clarity, he was able to identify that that he didn’t like where his life was going and wanted to make a change. Buddy completed 30 days in treatment before moving into Fusion 22 with his partner and their baby. He has been clean and sober for 6 months and continues to work on his recovery by meeting with his addiction worker and seeing a personal counsellor. Buddy is anxious to continue working on his life plan and is eager to find a job. Unfortunately, because of the instability during his life, Buddy had no identification. He hadn’t had a Saskatchewan Health Card since he was a child, had no Birth Certificate and has never had a Social Insurance number. With help from Fusion staff, Buddy immediately applied for his Saskatchewan Health Card in December of 2019. It proved to be a long and difficult process, but after over 3 months he finally received his health card and applied for his Birth Certificate. Once his Birth Certificate arrives, he will be able to apply for a Social Insurance number and begin applying for construction jobs.

**The Parent Support Program** provides support to young parents who live in EGADZ housing, or who have lived in EGADZ housing and are now living independently in the community. Being able to continue to have this support available to families as they move towards greater independence allows them the opportunity for smooth transitions in their lives. Two parent support workers provide a variety of services to the families on a strength based approach. With one-on-one appointments the workers are able to assess both the strengths and struggles that a family identifies, and assist them with creating an individualized case plan that best suits their family. Services include, but are not limited to- modelling of parent-child interaction, educational information and resources, community based referrals, and support with attending child-friendly activities. Case plans are client-centered and support is provided with an approach that celebrates the successes, big or small, of both parent and child.



**From April 1st 2019 to March 31st, 2020, Parent Support worked with 35 parents and 50 children.**

Areas of support included Attachment & Bonding, Basic Parenting Skills & Coping, Relationship Building, Safety Planning, Goal Planning, connecting to Community supports, Health & Wellness Support, Life Skills including meal planning & Nutritional Education and Visitation Supervision and Advocacy.





### OUTCOMES

“Harmony” is a 23-year-old female who spent a large portion of her childhood in and out of different foster homes. She experienced abuse of many forms while in growing up and this created a skewed sense of what healthy intimate relationships are. Harmony has a pattern of entering relationships very quickly which are fueled by drugs, alcohol and physical violence. Due to her struggles with addictions and involvement in an abusive relationship, her 2 children have been apprehended by the Ministry of Social Services three times and are currently still in care under a section 9 agreement. When Parent Support connected with her, Harmony had finished an addictions treatment program and she and her children were living in the Baby Steps Program.

At the time of her entering into the Baby Steps Program, Harmony was working full-time and this contributed to her struggles with managing her children's behavior. She had difficulty prioritizing the needs of her relationships with her children over her job. She was often working long hours and coming home too tired to parent her children and in turn had little patience for them. Another struggle for her was parenting her children consistently and being able to manage their behaviors outside of the home.



Parent Support assisted Harmony in addressing these issues by teaching her to nurture a mutually respectful relationship with her children. This promoted behavior corrections and disciplining strategies in a positive manner. Harmony also received education around potential causes for the children's behaviors. Harmony continues to reside at Baby Steps, is working part-time and enjoying being a family again.

## OUTCOMES

“Quin” is a 25-year-old female, and her partner “Bo” who is a 29-year-old male, became connected with Parent Support upon entering the Fusion 22 Program.

Quin and Bo both grew up in chaotic homes with very little structure. As children they grew up with their behaviors being modified via corporal punishment and thus as parents they were accustomed to yelling, threatening or spanking to correct their daughter’s misbehavior. Although they both knew that this was not an appropriate way to manage their frustrations, having never had the support, resources or information to cope another way, they were unsure of a solution to their parenting struggles.

Parent Support began working with the family, first providing information on the biological and cognitive developmental stages of children. The next step was teaching mom and dad positive discipline strategies and helping them to implement these strategies into their lives. Throughout this process, Quin and Bo have worked diligently to gain the knowledge and skills to be not only better parents, but a more cohesive and close-knit family unit.

## OUTCOMES

“Tanya” is a 34-year-old mother of 8 children. Growing up in a home with a mother who was a heavy drug user and dealer, Tanya was exposed to many horrific things and in turn started using crystal meth as a teenager and gave birth at a very young age. Her first child grew up to reside with family in Alberta and she currently has a healthy relationship with her adult son. Five of her other children have spent the majority of their life in care and are permanently placed with a family member.

Parent Support became connected with Tanya when she entered the Sweet Dreams Program in the summer of 2019. At this time her one year old son was in care, and she was 4 months pregnant. Tanya had successfully completed an in-patient treatment program and was actively working towards getting her son back and keeping her unborn child in her care.

Tanya exhibited a lot of anxiety regarding worries about the birth of her baby and the idea of bringing her home. Although she had experienced birth many times before, she had never been sober during any of her previous children’s birth. Parent Support helped ease some of Tanya’s anxiety by preparing her for labor and delivery as well as new born care.

Parent Support appointments also focused around infant and childhood development as parenting young children was never something Tanya ever had the opportunity to do because of her addictions. Parent Support assisted her during her transitional visits with her son, and helped establish a routine for them in preparation of her baby’s arrival.

Parent Support supported Tanya through her labor and delivery and she gave birth to a beautiful baby girl.

## Sweet Dreams Early Learning Centre

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**Sweet Dreams Early Learning Centre** is located directly adjacent to the Sweet Dreams home. The center was created and designed to alleviate childcare hurdles that a majority of the EGADZ clientele face. Staff at the ELC have a good understanding of the sensitive and personal struggles that the parents and children may have had, or be going through. Different traumatic events in their lives have burdened some of them with anxiety, distrust, or the fear of judgement, and so the staff make an extra effort to ensure the environment is not overwhelming but welcoming, and an emotionally safe and comfortable place for all.



The Early Learning Centre is a licensed daycare and is separated into 2 areas, the Infant Room and the Toddler/Preschool Room. It is open from 7a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Friday and provides childcare services and education for up to 6 infants ages 6 weeks to 17 months old, and 12 toddler/preschool children ages 18 months to 5 years old.



## *Sweet Dreams Early Learning Centre*

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The program approach is one of learning opportunities and social/emotional growth at age appropriateness. Staff create an environment that is loving and safe where the children are able to express their feelings and frustrations. The toddlers learn to find their voice by attaching words to their feelings and the babies are given love, care and attention to their every need.





Along with formal education and life experience, the staff attend various training to equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to help them assist the children and parents. In the past year staff members attended *Trauma in Children and Helping Children with Anxiety*, *ASK – Detecting signs of suicide in children and how to process those feelings and engage parents*, *Grief and Loss* and *Ages & Stages- Social/Emotional Component* (This is an assessment tool to support children with delays in all aspects of the whole child).





## Sweet Dreams Early Learning Centre

The Early Childhood Educators work closely with parents in an open communication style which helps build trusting relationships with the parents and children. If the parent trusts you, the child trusts you too.



In the last fiscal year, the Sweet Dreams Early Learning Centre was full to capacity at all times and provided services for **35 children, with an ongoing waitlist.**

As transiency is perpetually high in daycares, 35 is a relatively low number and tells us that the families we are working with are stabilizing. With the stability comes consistency and reliability, all which are essential for the children in becoming contributing citizens.



## PARENT QUOTES

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**MY BOYS CAN'T WAIT TO COME TO DAYCARE EVERY DAY, EVEN ON WEEKENDS MY 3-YEAR-OLD GETS UP SAYING 'DAYCARE.' - AB**

“

**We are so happy with everything at this daycare for our daughter.” - VP**

“

**I CAN'T WAIT TIL MY BABY STARTS DAYCARE THIS FALL.” - KV**

“

**I love that I can come and see my daughter anytime during the day” - AC**

“

**THE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES AT THIS CENTRE EXCEED MY EXPECTATIONS & THE LOVE FROM TO STAFF TO MY BABY IS SO BEAUTIFUL” - GS**

**Action to Employment** was developed thoughtfully in 2011 after a youth living in the My Homes expressed a desire to find a way to give back to the community. As a multi-partnered project, Action to Employment has completed its ninth year and with continued support, the crew has been able to fulfill their original purpose of supporting the health, wellbeing and continued stability of community members. Action to Employment provides a service that assists senior citizens with year-round yard care. This is inclusive of snow removal, lawn mowing, weeding and gardening.



By providing this service, Action to Employment assists community members to stay in their homes. Because of this aid, community members are able to maintain independence and a sense of security by avoiding the need to commit to the often prohibitively high costs associated with assisted living facilities. The ability to remain at home tends to improve quality of life which in turn can aid in improving physical and emotional health.

**“THE CREW IS VERY BENEFICIAL. I HAVE A NUMBER OF HEALTH CONDITIONS THAT PRECLUDE STRENUOUS ACTIVITY. THEIR HELP HAS MADE IT POSSIBLE TO CARRY ON MY LIFE AND YARD WITH ONLY MINOR ADJUSTMENT.”**  
-M.R

**“BECAUSE I’VE HAD TWO JOINT REPLACEMENTS IN LESS THAN A YEAR MY MOBILITY IS VERY LITTLE AND HAVING THE YARD MAINTENANCE HAS BEEN A BLESSING – MOWING, SHOVELING, RAKING, TREE CUTTING ETC.”** -J.J

This project gives youth and young mothers who struggle with social anxiety, addictions and mental health issues the opportunity to maintain employment and develop fundamental skills in order to further their independence. The youth who are involved in the program have proven to be passionate and hard working, and have been able to find fulfillment in their positions.

## Action to Employment

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The Action to Employment Program is able to continue this invaluable service thanks to the generous contributions of the Saskatoon Community Foundation, Quality of Life grant, and the support and donations from individuals and businesses within the community. The Saskatoon Truck Centre continues to provide Action to Employment with support through provision of vehicles and equipment to run the program safely and effectively.

**“SUCH A GREAT PROGRAM, THE GIRLS ARE WONDERFUL AND DO SUCH A GREAT JOB. I WANTED TO CALL AND PASS ALONG MY THANKS. I’M ABLE TO GET OUT AND GET FRESH AIR WHEN MY DRIVEWAY AND SIDEWALK ARE CLEARED, THE PROGRAM IS SO GREATLY APPRECIATED.” –D.N**

Action to Employment maintains a community crew that works year-round, providing complete seasonal care to the clients. Our year-round crew has become a cohesive team of dedicated, hard-working individuals. Whether they report to work daily or on a casual basis, they come prepared and eager each day. The crew completes their tasks in a timely manner and enjoy their time while completing their work with lots of laughing and positivity. The youth strive to build positive relationships with the clients they serve.

**“I WAS VERY SATISFIED WITH ALL THE HELP I GOT FROM ACTION TO EMPLOYMENT YOUTH. THEY ARE PLEASANT, HELPFUL AND A JOY TO HAVE AROUND.” L.M**

**“VERY MUCH HELPFUL AND GRATEFUL FOR THE HELP! AS SAID IT IS A VERY GOOD PROGRAM AND HOPE TO SEE THEM RETURN.” -C.H**

Between April 1, 2019 and March 31, 2020, the Action to Employment crew employed a total of **30 youth**. Throughout the year there were 10 full-time employees, 10 part-time employees and 15 casual employees. The program has been able to accommodate youth working full time positions in the summer months when school and other obligations end for the season. The hours worked were inclusive of our year-round crew and our two additional summer crews for a total amount of **6153.75 hours**.



An extensive cleanup occurs in the spring and fall to ensure the yards are free of weeds and debris. Throughout winter, the crew is kept busy shoveling properties and ensuring they are safe for our clients, which includes ice chipping and applying ice melt to make certain that the clients have safe access to their homes. The properties with ramps are always first on the list to be completed. The summer months are spent ensuring the yards look presentable and can be enjoyed to their full potential. The crew maintains the lawns, trims trees and shrubs and keeps the yards weed free. Upon request the crews will assist the clients with flower beds and other tasks as needed.



**“YOUR SERVICES HAVE REALLY TAKEN THE STRESS OUT OF MY LIFE, BEEN ABLE TO STAY IN MY HOME, EVEN HAVE MY FRIENDS IN WHEELCHAIRS AND OTHERS WHO FIND IT HARD TO CLIMB STEPS. THANKS TO EGADZ.” C.H**



As the summer months often include more extensive work, two additional crews are added from the beginning July until the end of August. The added community crew assists the regular crew with maintaining the community properties. Working Monday-Friday 8am-4pm, the properties are divided between the two crews to ensure each property receives proper care and attention.

## Action to Employment

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A My Homes crew focuses on maintaining and providing care to all of EGADZ Residential homes. This year, the homes were in need of general house maintenance which included cleaning gutters, pressure washing the outside of the homes and decks, and providing general lawn care to the homes. The youth had the opportunity to help lay sod at Cameron House and really loved watching their hard work pay off for the rest of summer each time they went back to mow. The crew was able to learn different hands-on tasks with the help of the crew leader. The 8 youth who were employed on this crew learned how to properly complete these tasks safely, as well as other important skills such as how to work in a team. Through this they gained more experience for future employment opportunities.



The My Homes crews were able to participate in a few recreational activities throughout the summer months including Wilson's Stoked Centre to do the high ropes course and zip lining. They also went go-karting. All of the crews got together at the end of the season to Wakaw Lake for a wind up party.







**“THE 4 GIRLS DID A TREMENDOUS JOB IN FRONT OF MY HOUSE, THE STEPS, ALONGSIDE THE TRUCK IN THE DRIVEWAY AND THE SIDEWALK. THEY DID AN AWESOME JOB, AND THEY ARE SUCH NICE GIRLS; SMILEY AND JOKING! YOU ARE SO BLESSED WITH SUCH NICE GIRLS. THEY DID A WONDERFUL JOB, AND I AM JUST TOTALLY IMPRESSED. I WANTED YOU TO KNOW THAT I AM SO PLEASED. IT WILL BE SO NICE TO SEE THESE GIRLS EVERY MONDAY, BECAUSE THEY ARE SO TERRIFIC AND IT TAKES SO MUCH STRESS OFF OF ME. I WANTED TO THANK YOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART, PLEASE THANK THEM FOR ME.” –SM**

**“I FEEL LIKE IT’S BENEFICIAL TO ME BECAUSE IT’S LESS STRESS ON MY BACK. AWESOME KIDS, GREAT JOB!” – L.W**

**“I CANNOT SAY HOW GRATEFUL I AM FOR ALL YOUR YARD WORK AND SNOW SHOVELLING YOU ALL DONE, THANK YOU.” -P. F**

**“I’M SO PLEASED WITH THE WORK THEY PROVIDE, PLUS ARE ALWAYS SO PLEASANT.” - V.D**

**“I AM VERY, VERY PLEASED WITH THE SERVICES I RECEIVED FROM THE YOUTH. THEY REALLY DO A GOOD JOB KEEPING SNOW FROM UNDER MY WHEELCHAIR LIFT, MY GARBAGE CONTAINERS AND DECK RAILINGS. PLUS, DECK AND DRIVEWAY...” C.H**

Action to Employment crews provided services to a total of **51** clients from April 1st, 2019 to March 31, 2020. This included snow removal and yard maintenance. We provided services to **51** clients throughout the winter months, and **47** properties over the summer months.



### YOUTH HIGHLIGHTS

BT moved into the EGADZ My Homes Program in October 2017 and gained employment with the EGADZ Action to Employment crew in November 2017. Since this time, she has been a dedicated employee who consistently works hard, is punctual and very reliable. Throughout her life, BT experienced both verbal and psychological abuse from her mother. This negatively affected BT's self-esteem and her sense of self-worth was very poor. ATE enabled her to recognize the importance of addressing these areas for herself and it became a large focus for her to work on. Through the help of her team members and crew leader her self-esteem developed and she now fully believes that she has a lot of potential. As a direct result of the abuse that she endured, BT has notably struggled with social interactions. BT sought out employment through Action to Employment as another way to further gain skills in social settings and experience in the work force. As BT focused on developing new skills in employment and interactions, Action to Employment proved to be very beneficial in opening her up to new experiences and relationships. As she has maintained employment, BT's support team have noticed incredible strides in general engagement and have seen an increase in her self awareness and ability to recognize when she needs to reach out for support. With her hard work in developing these skills, BT has flourished both as an Action to Employment crew member and on a personal level. BT was asked to speak at the Annual Fundraiser that was held in November 2019 as a valued crew member with Action to Employment. She expressed hesitation and anxiety surrounding this task, but decided that she would take this step. Once the day came, BT pushed her fear aside, was very poised and gave an absolutely phenomenal speech to support Action to Employment. This has impacted not only BT positively, but left an impression on everyone that attended. Just one year ago her anxiety would not have allowed her to speak in front of a crowd of such a large size.

### *(Youth Testimonial)*

**"ATE HAS HELPED ME GET OUT OF THE HOUSE AND STAY ACTIVE WHILE HELPING OUT IN THE COMMUNITY. ALL WHILE BUILDING UP MY WORK EXPERIENCE!"**

### YOUTH HIGHLIGHTS

In June of 2019, RM set the goal to obtain full-time employment throughout the summer months. RM completed his resume, applied for the Action to Employment Program, and participated in an interview. He was offered a full-time summer position with the My Homes crew. RM attended work almost every day throughout the month of July. His main goal in obtaining employment was to purchase his own television and gaming system. Although he had struggled with motivation and follow through in the past he attended work regularly and was able to reach his goal.

### YOUTH HIGHLIGHTS

CY worked regularly with Action to Employment increasing her hours to full time in the summer of 2019. In striving for independence, CY was dedicated to saving enough money to purchase a vehicle. Working for the summer assisted her in reaching this goal, allowing her to independently transport her daughter to and from daycare as well as to and from her appointments and other daily obligations.

**"I REALLY APPRECIATE THE WORK THE YOUNG LADIES DO. THEY ARE JUST WONDERFUL."**

**-R.B**

**"I CANNOT SAY HOW GRATEFUL I AM FOR ALL YOUR YARD WORK AND SNOW SHOVELLING YOU ALL DONE, THANK YOU." -P.F**

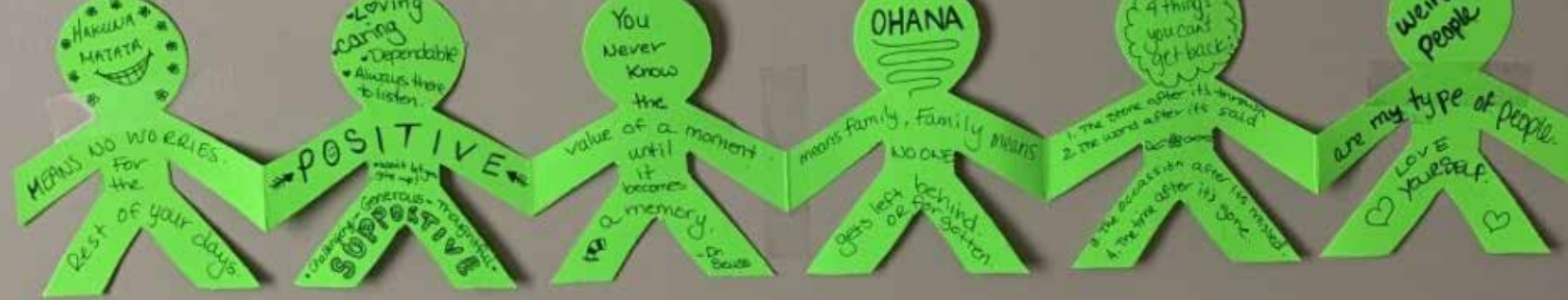
The Action to Employment fundraiser is essential in providing funding to run the crews for the following year, including wages for our youth and staff. On November 7th, 2019 we held the 4th annual fundraiser at the German Concordia Club. Our youth are the leaders in setting up and facilitating the event, spending countless hours in the months prior selling tickets and obtaining live and silent auction items within the community. The youth take pride in spreading the word about the event through a variety of media outlets, hanging posters, and engaging with community members. An evening of food, live music and passionate speeches raised a total of **\$64,665.13** for continued success of this necessary program.











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