



Families First Society  
FORT SASKATCHEWAN

# 2018-2019 ANNUAL REPORT



*Safe, strong, healthy future generations*

#thisisourvillage



#thisisourvillage

*Safe, strong, healthy future generations*

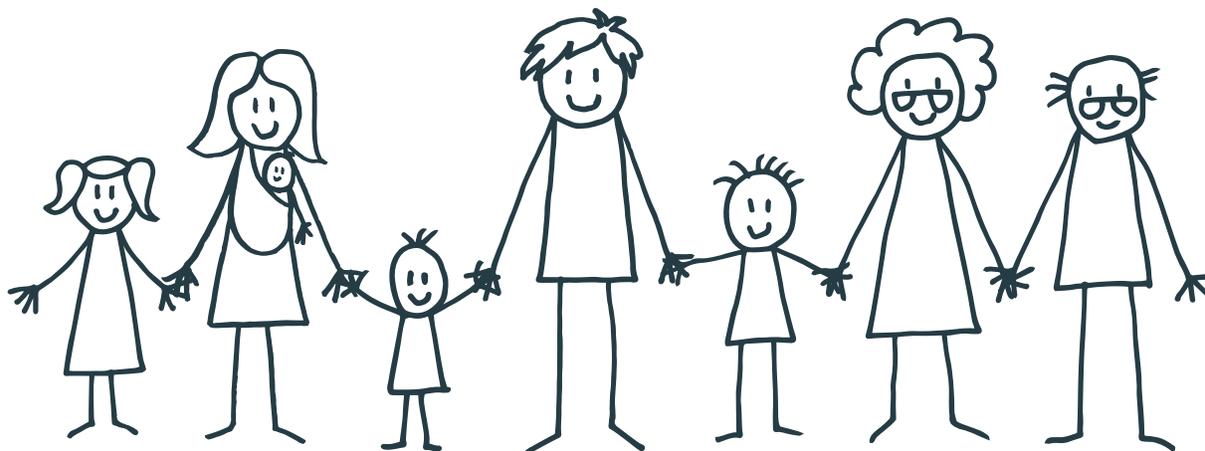
# This is our village

## Hello! Welcome to our story of the Fort Saskatchewan Families First Society for the 2018-2019 fiscal year!

Families First is a grassroots, not-for-profit organization that supports the healthy development of children and families in Fort Saskatchewan, Sturgeon County, and neighbouring communities. Individuals and families come to see us looking for programs in early learning or parenting. Sometimes they also need family support or a helping hand. None of the work we do gets done alone. We have amazing community partners who we work closely with every day, all with the focus of building safe, strong, healthy future generations!

## ANNUAL REPORT CONTENTS:

People .....	2
Our Roots .....	6
GROWTH, LEARNING, RELATIONSHIPS and EVALUATION	
Financials .....	22
Supporters .....	24



# A Message from the Families First Society Board Chair and Executive Director

Energy can be defined as, “The strength and vitality required for sustained physical or mental activity”. It is important to all of us who work and volunteer at Families First that you know our energy comes from you. The momentum that carries us through everything we do comes from you. The inspiration that fuels our imagination and feeds our ideas comes from you! Our growth, our learning, our relationships and our understanding through evaluation, are all because of you.

It is in this spirit that the Families First Board of Directors approved our 5-year Strategic Plan in September of 2018. You - our families, our funders, our community champions – were of vital importance and top of mind in every step of our planning.

Our 5 Year Strategic Plan is composed of 5 pillars:

## **1. Maintain and Build Partnerships**

Families First understands that the best way to meet the needs of our growing population and fulfill our vision of safe, strong, healthy future generations is to work in collaboration with other like-minded agencies and service providers. We will continue to make local, regional and provincial partnerships a priority. This includes continuing to reduce barriers to accessing services by bringing services into the Families First centre, as well as by working with our partners to determine needs and opportunities to bring our programs and supports out to other locations within Fort Saskatchewan and Sturgeon County.

## **2. Advocacy for Young Children and Families**

The first 5 years of a child’s life have a direct and lasting impact on his/her growth and development over the course of his/her lifetime. Early experiences shape our ability to make friends, regulate our emotions, and succeed in school and at work. Families First will continue to engage with and inform our community’s partners and decision-makers to reinforce the importance of the early years and to help ensure that there are quality early childhood experiences available for all who want to access them.

## **3. Community Awareness**

Families First can do all of the planning we like, but if people don’t know about what we have available, then they cannot access it. We are striving to get the word out in new ways, about what we do to reach people who have not yet heard of us, while at the same time, ensuring that those who already know us well are kept actively engaged and informed about what we have to offer. We are also doing our best to share the good work of our amazing community partners! Engaging with existing and potential partners and funders continues to be of utmost importance because, as we stated earlier, we never work alone!

## **4. Board Governance and Organization Capacity**

The Families First Society would simply cease to exist without a dedicated volunteer Board of Directors. The current board is a diverse team, united in their dedication to Families First’s vision and mission and continued role in our community. An effective board must have robust policies, clearly outlined role responsibilities, and an understanding of essential

fiduciary duties. The board will continue to review and refine its administration, provide support and oversight to the Families First Executive Director, and engage in relevant professional development opportunities.

## 5. Data Analysis and Use

Families First places high importance on evaluation, and the analysis and use of the data collected. Evaluation is not only about writing reports, but rather, it is about focused attention and vision. It is human nature to follow what we collectively look at, so we need to pay attention to what we are paying attention to! Families First's vision of safe, strong, healthy future generations and our Strategic Plan goals and actions over the next five years reinforce that evaluation, and use of data will continue as an important part of our road map to fulfilling that vision. Quantitative and qualitative feedback will be collected from Families First participants, staff and volunteers on an ongoing basis throughout the year. The data we collect will be used, along with other markers such as budget, agency capacity, input from community partners, and current research in the field, to determine how effective we are and what programs and supports we should and will offer.

The themes that unfold throughout this Annual Report of growth, learning, relationships and evaluation, are strong and evolving just as our Strategic Plan is strong and evolving. We hope that as you look through these pages, read the testimonials and statistics, and enjoy the photos, you will get a sense of our gratitude for the connections that we have made over the years.

If you are a funder, or someone who has helped us with a fundraiser, or who has donated items to us or are one of our volunteers, we hope that you will understand that every single dollar or minute of time you gift to Families First is precious and makes a tremendous difference in our community. If you are someone who comes into the Families First building, or attends our programs in other locations in Fort Saskatchewan and Sturgeon County, we hope that you know how very honoured we are that you share your lives with us. It is because of all of you who participate with us that Families First has become so solidly rooted in our "village"; and it is because of you that our involvement with Families First over the past 21 years has been such a joy!

Yours in community,



*Karen Sliwkanich,  
Board Chair  
Fort Saskatchewan Families First Society*



*Heather Boonstra  
Executive Director  
Fort Saskatchewan Families First Society*

# Board of Directors

**As a board of directors, we are a group of dedicated, community-minded individuals working to make a difference.**

The four pillars of growth, learning, relationship and evaluation cannot stay strong without the support of our amazing volunteer board. As staff, we are so grateful to them for the time and knowledge that they share with us. They are excited about our future, and have developed a dynamic Strategic Plan to help us fulfill our vision and mission over the next 5 years. For their dedication and wisdom, we are grateful.



*Board of Directors:*

*Back Row Left to Right:*

*Karen Sliwkanich, Laura Schmidt, Doug Rees, Annalise Yuzda*

*Front Row Left to Right:*

*Joanne Dewart, Sandra Koll, Kirstin Lehman*

*Not in photo: Lorraine Hryniw*

## What excites you most about the future of Families First?

### **Karen Sliwkanich, Chair**

"Families First currently has a positive reputation in the community and this will only grow as we continue to meet the needs of families and young children in our communities."

### **Laura Schmidt, Vice Chair**

"I'm excited by the future possibilities that Families First Society has on a regional level."

### **Annalise Yuzda, Treasurer**

"Families First Society has become a community hub. I often see or hear of individuals looking for services or assistance and the response is always to connect with Families First. Even if they don't provide what you need or are looking for they are able to help you find what you need. It excites me that the Families First Society is proactive in thinking about community needs beyond today and planning for that."

### **Joanne Dewart, Secretary**

"I am thrilled to see and hear about the number of families that are positively impacted by the work and programs of the Families First Society. Kindness and caring has a ripple effect - that impact will be felt in our families and in our community."

### **Doug Rees, Director**

"The potential to reduce the society's carbon footprint with the construction of a solar power generation system, the added benefit of reducing our operating costs, and being able to teach the community what is possible with this technology."

### **Kirstin Lehmann, Director**

"I am excited about the future of all the amazing programs and opportunities Families First is creating and how each has the potential to change the lives of an entire generation of children, parents, and community members."

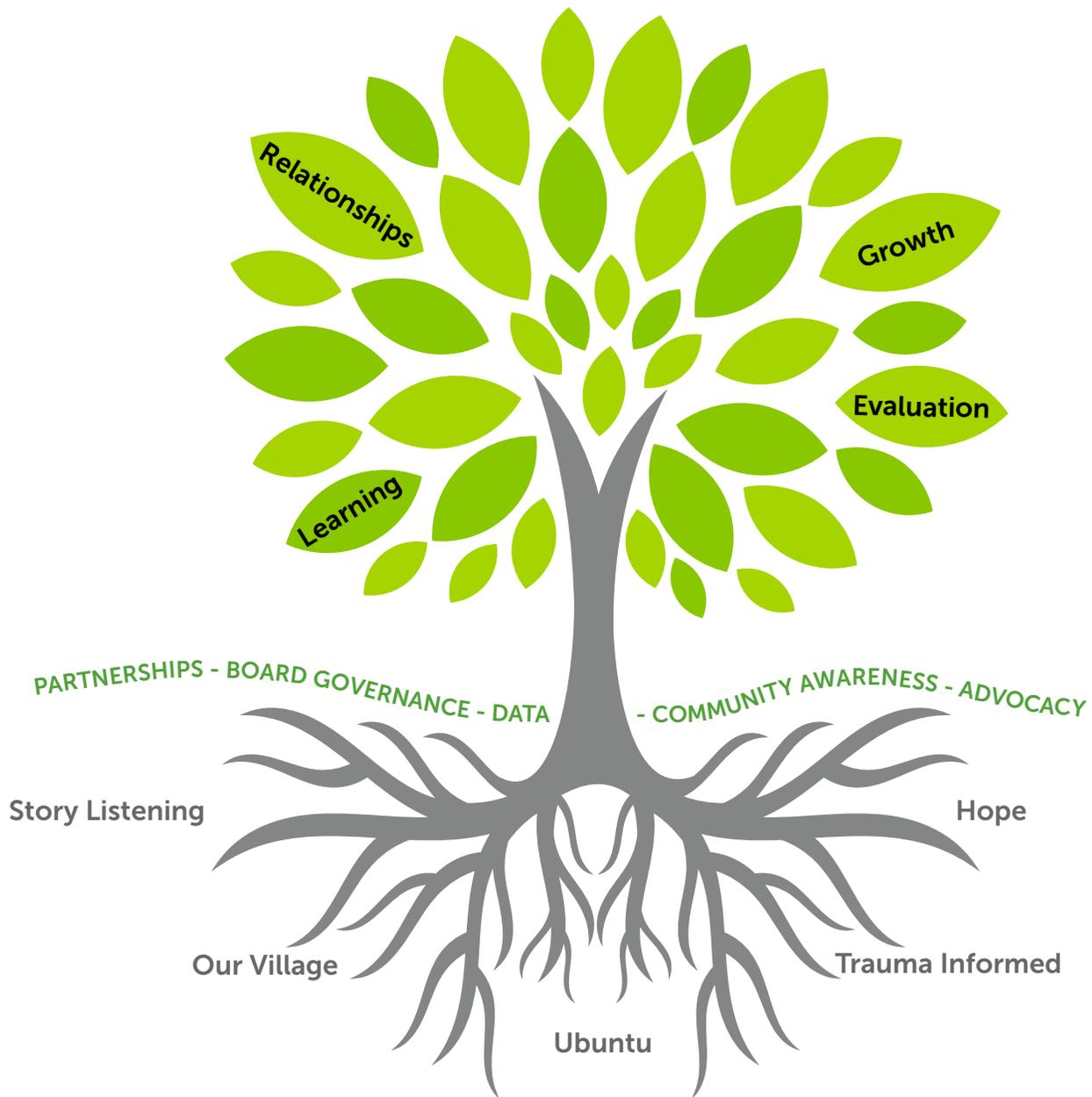
### **Lorraine Hryniw, Director**

"I love the fact that Families First is always growing. We are here to help people which I think is number one. By helping one person, the ripple effect occurs. They, in turn, can help someone or invite friends to be more aware of people in need. We are a very blessed community where people are willing to help people."

### **Sandra Koll, Director**

"What excites me most is the opportunity for Families First Society to meet and support new families and personalities while it is growing with the village and its people."

# Our Roots Sustain Us



# Love Is As Close As Looking Up...

I came to find Families First in Fort Saskatchewan during what was the darkest time in my life. I had just moved here with my husband and my son, who was 3 years old. Antoine had always been "difficult" but it was starting to effect our quality of life. I was just trying to make it through the day and sometimes through the next hour. He was asked to leave several places because of his behaviour. He was only 3 and getting worse. I was crying every day trying to get it together. Antoine was asked to leave another daycare and I cried at the Dow. Someone who worked at Families First saw me and suggested I call or go see someone there.

Everyone who worked at Families First was welcoming and was happy that I came. I never felt judged and they reassured me that I was doing a good job as a parent. It gave me a place to go where I could get help, find someone to talk to when things just were not going well, get out of the house or just go borrow toys and books. I never felt pressure to participate in courses or groups. I did things in my own time and when I felt comfortable enough to join in.

It seemed like all the work everyone was doing just wasn't working anymore. They did not send me away and never made me feel like it was the end. They always gave me hope when I thought there was nothing else to do. They referred me to other resources that were equipped to help me and my son. It was the beginning of a path to realizing that my son has ASD (autism spectrum disorder), ADHD and anxiety. He needed more than I am capable of giving him. He needed medication and extra help and new strategies. Families First is still helping me sort through the large amount of information I have been given.



- Artwork by Pam Carr

I never thought Antoine would be able to function without me. He is now 6 and graduated from kindergarten and on to grade 1. He has many friends, learning how to swim and even learning to speak French. I do not have the words to express how grateful I am to have Families First in my life.

- Pam Carr

# A greater sense of belonging...

It is a great privilege to be asked to share our thoughts and experiences about Families First for this year's AGM! Our family of two boys aged 7 and 5 and one girl aged 2 routinely attend a whole plethora of programs offered by Families First. We moved to Fort Saskatchewan in 2014 and quickly were introduced to the world of Families First by a friend through the Chips program.

Families First has had a great effect of loosening up our parenting, teaching us to allow kids to explore and learn on their own terms. Whether it is a messy craft where kids are encouraged to complete it on their own despite the mess or a sensory bin set up in the corner which eventually spreads itself across the entire room, kids are never hindered in their efforts to learn through doing. Programs are loosely organized to allow for the children to drive the direction "play" goes. Many places take the opposite approach with much more structure which we feel imposes adult limits to children's "play". The structured approaches can often limit a child's learning trajectory whereas uninhibited play like we have found at Families First truly is the driver of learning and development. The Families First approach endorses children to follow their curiosity at their own pace, develop a strong sense of self and internal motivation, while learning collaborative and cooperative tactics that will serve them well into the future.

Any person who has ever attended an EPIC or Play Mob event can describe the overwhelming amount of fun that can be created in one place, and only recently have we discovered the importance of this type of play on the development of children. The last children's program we participated in was Dadventures. Studies have shown that children with

more father involvement with their children produce better-adjusted children when compared to limited father involvement. By facilitating a specific night for only dads and kids, not only are those relationships strengthened, a night of physical play helps provide respite from cold winter nights when kids are usually cooped up inside.

Programs are not just limited to children. Other Families First programs are offered to adults that focus on parenting and life skills. The Positive Parenting Program (Triple P) provides full sessions of tips and scenarios to parents on how to be more patient and encouraging, even when a child is being over the top difficult. This has greatly helped us as when Pam took Triple P: we had two kids under 4, and anyone who has had even just one child under 4 can attest to how far parenting limits can be pushed. This program especially brought patience to the forefront of our consciousness especially when aggravated while dealing with a difficult moment with either or both of our children.

Community Kitchens is another program that our family has had the opportunity to participate. While we were fortunate to have had a lot of cooking and meal preparation experience, many others were never exposed to even basic cooking and meal preparation skills. In a group setting people participated in planning grocery lists for several meals and actually had the opportunity to prepare and cook three ready-made healthy and flavourful meals for their families. What enhances this program and so many others that Families First offers is free childcare which allows parents to learn skills together in a distraction-free environment, knowing that their kids are well-cared for.

Beyond the actual programs that Families First offers is an incredible underlying community enhancement through building relationships among those who participate in the programs. It is in all residents' interest to forge good relationships now while children are young, to play directly into the old adage of "it takes a village to raise a child." Beyond the relationships among our children here at Families First, it has been noted that one of the best ways to forge stronger relationships is through random interaction. Sue Palmer in 21st Century Boys sums it up best that "the more friendly community contact children make outside their immediate circle and across the generations – the more social skills they'll develop." Unfortunately, as we all know, modern living often promotes isolation yet Families First provides a multitude of community gatherings to facilitate random interactions that extend beyond its campus and strengthen relationships among community members. In addition, we routinely run into other families that we have met at Families First around the community, which provides a greater sense of belonging to our community-at-large.

We feel so lucky that when it was time for us to start raising kids we decided to move to Fort Saskatchewan, as without that pivotal decision we would never have met the family that Families First has become for us. Words can't describe how fortunate we feel to benefit from the 21 years of hard work and countless efforts to create this amazing community group that Families First provides.

*- Pam and Mark Lackey*



*- Dadventures Participants*



*- Community Kitchens Participants*

# Project Impact

## **Growth, learning, relationships, evaluation**

As highlighted in the Message from the Board Chair and Executive Director and as reflected in these pages, Families First strives to fulfill our mission through continuous learning and growth, strengthening relationships and ongoing evaluation.

In our 2017-2018 Annual Report we were excited to tell you about Project Impact, a 9-month learning cohort in which Families First was very fortunate to participate. Although this experience was about deepening our understanding of evaluation, the results of the project shone a bright light on each of our four themes.

Every year Families First touches the lives of thousands of individuals and we participated in Project Impact to measure the impact of our work with those who walk through our doors without necessarily attending one of our programs. We were interested to learn the reasons why people come here. What are they getting out of being here? What difference are we making?

What we discovered was how clearly all roads in our questioning lead back to improved mental health. We had been assuming, or hoping, at least, that when people come and see us, they leave feeling better. Leaving feeling more hopeful, if nothing else. But what we uncovered was much more transformative. Parents emphatically told us that because of coming to Families First they have friends, they feel connected, they feel they belong, they feel safe, they feel confident.

Knowing more about the impact we are having on our community was enlightening for us, and made us curious about what impact working at Families First was having on our amazing team of staff. If being involved with Families First was having such a significant impact on the people who come here, then surely it must be impacting those of us who work here...or is it?

The road to discovery, we thought, would not be found for quite some time. However, because of the relationship we have with a wonderful community volunteer who is knowledgeable and passionate about community evaluation, we have been able to undertake Project Impact II – The Families First Staff Version!

We are so grateful to have had the opportunity to participate in Project Impact I. We are thankful for the growth and learning it provided to our agency - without it, we would not have been able to fully appreciate the magnitude and importance of the growth, learning and relationships that families benefit from because of walking through our doors. We would not have had the experience to be able to transfer this knowledge to learning more about the impact Families First is having on our team. We look forward to reporting our findings to you in our 2019-2020 Annual Report!

### **Because of coming to Families First I know...**

- Many new people
- There's help to find help in community

# Families said because of coming to Families First...

## Because of coming to Let's Play I believe...

- It's nice to get out of the house and have a safe and encouraging environment for my daughter to play

## Because of coming to Let's Play I know...

- That my kids are learning, growing in ways that will help develop them in mind and body
- That there is a place where my kids can come and be accepted and have a safe place to play

## Because of coming to Let's Play I am hopeful about...

- My kids being part of a community
- The growing and learning opportunities for both my children as well as myself
- More friends



Food brings people together!

**153** meals were served.

Nutritious snacks are at every program.



"I consider the Family Violence Prevention Program to be an essential support for Fort Saskatchewan."

- Family Violence Prevention Program Participant

# Building Our Village Together

*"Because of coming to Families First I know that I have an amazing group of people who care about my family. Knowing you're not alone on this life journey is an amazing feeling – that you don't have to deal with everything on your own and that it is OKAY to ask for help." - A Families First Parent*

Evaluation of Families First shows us that one of the most common outcomes of being involved with Families First is exactly what this parent writes. Feeling like everyone is valued in our community – a community that it is safe to ask for help from when we need to, and one that we can in turn give back to, is vital to personal resilience and wellbeing. This is just the kind of community that our families have built for each other!

In the spirit of Ubuntu, the South African concept that speaks to our collective connectedness, our families have created a welcoming environment full of acceptance, reassurance and knowledge that is shared amongst each other. They build each other up, and in the process, build us up as well! Adding to our circle of support are our volunteers, community partners, funders and supporters, all who are committed to helping us work toward our vision of safe, strong, healthy future generations. Building our village together – the only way to build!

#thisisourvillage

## What are the most important things you've learned since coming to therapy?

- That I need to speak up for myself, ask for help, and remain positive
- That trauma looks different for each person
- I am stronger than I thought
- Self care, patience



A heartfelt thanks to our Angel Whispers Gala sponsors, donors and volunteers. Thank you to everyone who purchased tickets and came out for an evening of fun. Every dollar raised will help ensure the timely access of support to families grieving the loss of an infant and we are ever grateful for your support.

**"Thank you for helping us accept the feelings and chaos that come with grief. Thank you for connecting us with other parents. Thank you for providing us with a safe environment to share our feelings. Thank you for honoring all of the babies who didn't get to live the lives we wanted them to. Thank you for the support that parents like us need. Thank you Angel Whispers."**

*- Participant of Angel Whispers*

“Non-judgemental, loving, caring, helping me see a light when everything was dark. I owe you my life. Continue doing what you do, because our community needs you. I really have been blessed, grateful and thankful for everything.”

- Participant of Steadfast Connector Program



### Because of coming to the Basic Shelf program...

- I am learning to cook for when I move out of my parent's home.
- I can cook different foods that are good for my body.
- I can chop up lots of different vegetables, like onions, celery, and peppers.
- I know how to use a cook book.

- Participants of Basic Shelf Program

### What are 3 things you do now that you didn't do before being in therapy?

- Self care, journal, talk about it
- Spend time with friends, put myself first, and think about the future in a positive way
- Self care, remind myself I'm not alone
- It's ok to be emotional, not every action needs a reaction, it's ok to let go of things from the past (not dwell)
- Try to put negativity out of my head, speak up for myself, let my spouse know more that I need help



“I now have hope! I did not know what to expect but this is above and beyond what I could have imagined. I no longer feel alone!”

- Family Violence Prevention Program Participant

# Dow Partnership

At Families First we value our partnerships and know that the strength in these relationships is what helps drive our community. When Dow approached Families First with the idea of partnering to hire a Corporate Volunteer Manager, we knew it was a perfect fit.

The Corporate Volunteer Manager role is to engage Dow employees in the community where Dow operates, while also supporting Families First in their volunteer initiatives. Families First welcomed Alana Seymour to the family in January.

**“We’ve been partners with Families First for so long that when we were looking for a partner to hire this role it just made sense to ask Families First for help. This way, Alana is able to work at both our site in Fort Saskatchewan and at Families First to understand where our Dow employees are needed.”**

*- Jess MacDonald,  
Site Public Affairs Manager for Dow Canada*



Alana will help foster a community of volunteerism and build a bridge between Dow employees and our community. Her role will be split between Dow and Families First. Dow created the position of Corporate Volunteer Manager after the company launched their 2025 Sustainability Goal of Engaging for Impact: Communities and Employees.

“We are excited for this new partnership between Families First and Dow, and look forward to the possibilities this role will have on our village,” said Heather Boonstra, Executive Director at Families First Society. “Alana’s already starting to make a positive impact at Families First by coming up with ideas on how we can recognize the invaluable work that our Families First volunteers do.”

# Families First Connections

## Because of volunteering at Families First I believe...

- The world is a better place because of the work you do.

## Because of volunteering at Families First I know...

- There is such good work being done by Families First in all the communities you touch. The support you provide through your diverse range of programs is amazing, with support offered to individuals and groups in very complex situations. You have great flexibility in the ways you provide support, including in outreach. The compassion of your staff and volunteers is evident in every contact.

## Because of volunteering at Families First I am hopeful about...

- Our community and our world. Your work is like a stone thrown into water - the ripples extend forever. Your good work influences others, who influence others, and influence others... and so on. You can't know how many lives your incredible work has improved.

## What do you like about being at Families First?

I like the people there, they are really nice. I love working there and I like meeting new people and making new friends.



## What are the most important things you have learned by being at Families First?

I have learned that Families First helps some families get stuff that they need for their kids who can't get right away.

## Is there anything you do now that you didn't do before coming to Families First?

I do the baking class and the cooking class and I love doing the classes there. The classes help me learn to bake and cook.

## What is your favourite Families First moment or memory?

My first memory of Families First is when I got the cleaning job there. Ever since then I love working there and the people around me.

## How do you or would you explain Families First to other people?

It's a very good place to be and I would tell people to go there when they are going through a hard time and that Families First can help people going through a hard time. That is how I would tell people.

- Brittany, A Robin Hood Association Friend

# Cruisin' in the Heartland

For 13 years Families First has been travelling throughout Fort Saskatchewan and Sturgeon County offering programs to our community. We hold our Exploring, Playing, Inspiring, Connecting (EPIC) program at the Dow Centennial Centre and the The Royal Canadian Legion (Normandy Room), and we are proud to say we have hosted our Play Mobs at almost every single playground in the city!

EPIC and Playmob are two of our largest parented play programs that each focus on community connection while enhancing development in our younger generations. As do most great things, EPIC and Playmob started small with only a few families and a couple Families First staff sharing a space, their time and engaging in play while enjoying a prepared meal with each other. We had no idea how big it would get! In only a year's time the participant numbers doubled and today we see about 100 people at each program. With growing numbers we learned to adapt and get creative. A nutritious meal is a key component in both of these programs so we had to find a way to efficiently cook, safely transport and serve a meal. Transportation proved to be the most challenging aspect. Luckily, one of our Families First staff offered up their brown, well-loved 2001 Chevrolet Astrovan as means of transportation. The good news was that the van was big and had removable seats that allowed us to haul our meals as well as tons of fun toys, and messy activities. The bad news was that the van was already 15 years old and was experiencing its fair share of challenges. Dependability was definitely in question which is why we are so unbelievably thankful to an amazing partner of ours, Heartland Ford for donating

a truly dependable van to us. If a vehicle wasn't already a huge contribution they also took the time to make sure it really represented Families First by putting our name and branding on the van.

Financially, purchasing a new van was a mere dream for Families First. Heartland Ford and their incredibly kind staff made this dream a reality. It opened up so many new avenues of possibilities. Families First talks a lot about removing barriers in our community so that all feel welcome and supported. This new van removed one of our own barriers, and in doing so, allows us to take our programing even further. We will be taking EPIC and Playmobs out into Sturgeon County because this van can certainly handle the Alberta highways. Also, having our own hauler makes preparation for large events such as Santa's Workshop and Right From The Roots that much easier. With our new van we get to spread our name and our message that much farther and we get to look good doing it! Just like the tree in our branding, we are growing - thanks to our village and thanks to Heartland Ford.

“We love working with Families First Society here in Fort Saskatchewan. We believe so much in the work they do, and we were more than happy to have donated a van to show our support. We know it has benefited their programs, with being able to bring all their supplies needed for the programs they run throughout our community. We are proud to be working with such an amazing group of people, a great organization that works tirelessly for the families and kids in our community.”

- Danielle Macarthur,  
Marketing / Merchandising Manager, Heartland Ford



# Learning, Sharing and Advocacy

Continuous learning and growth is something that is woven into all we do at Families First. It can look like formal training, such as Ages and Stages Questionnaire training, Adverse Childhood Experience's Survey training, Kids Have Stress Too training and so many more. It is also about sharing our knowledge and experiences with others. This can be presenting formally to other professionals, participating at meetings and gatherings with our partners, and also talking with leaders about how policies affect our community. It can be the smaller, regular moments – the part of the job moments - like staff meetings, the gatherings after a program to chat about what went right or what we can change moving forward. These are all moments to learn and grow. We strive to build reflection into how we work and “be” at Families First so that learning and growth are embedded into our everyday.

Another piece that encourages the learning and growth is “Ubuntu” – the concept of collective connectedness. The idea of being there for each other, believing every person has knowledge and experience to share. This helps us to learn from each other whether that is learning from staff, volunteers, students, partners, or clients, from everyone who walks in our door, and yes, especially being open to learning from the children. At Families First, we are creating an environment where every person’s knowledge and experience is respected so that we can all learn and grow from each other.



- Leading Change Summit



- Safer Spaces presentation from AltView Foundation

# Learning with our students...

## Reflections from a former first year Social Work practicum student about trauma informed care...

I just love the concept of trauma informed care and everything it stands for, and today at the end of class we all had to sit in a circle and talk about our experience in that class, our learning, the impacts, and so on. And as I sat there reflecting I couldn't stop thinking about you guys and how much you incorporated everything I have learned into your work. Even though you guys were still in the process of training your staff! And it sort of hit me harder than it had when I was your practicum student (probably because it was new to me) but I see how you guys have truly built connections with people and the people there truly value you and you to them. You always offered space and kindness with mistakes and gave opportunities to help them learn and grow when mistakes were made. You created such a safe space from the shape of your building, to the height of your front desk, your spaces for privacy, couches for lounging and friendly staff. You have built such a solid foundation of love in that building and the empathy you all carry with you no matter peoples' circumstances and how you meet people where they are at all the time is admirable. You also are all so collaborative in your work and truly piggy back off one another and you respectfully can discuss clients struggles so that you are aware of their needs and so you do not re-traumatize them in anyway. I have been in many agencies now since my time there and I have seen how many places do not carry those sorts of values and how much it could make a difference to these people. It inspires me to work in a place that is truly trauma informed. Basically I told this to my entire class today, and my instructor wholeheartedly agreed

with all of it, and I just wanted to share this with you as well. So thank you for being the agency you are and teaching me so much in my first year when I was scared of out of mind (still scared, but less haha!).

Anyway, I truly hope you all are doing well and I hope to see you all one day soon!

- Social Work Student

**"Because of my Social Work placement at Families First... I have witnessed through committed, respectful partnerships among staff, volunteers, and community members, society woes such as loneliness, poverty, relationship (breakdown) being eliminated."**

- Social Work Student

### **Because of my social worker placement at Families First I believe...**

- We can make a difference; the first step is relationship.

### **Because of my social worker placement at Families First I am hopeful about...**

- Communities coming together for a greater purpose. I am hopeful that we can make a difference by both challenging the structures as well as joining together.

### **Because of my social worker placement at Families First I know...**

- Myself better and have developed a stronger self-awareness.

- Social Work Student





# Financials

## Report of the Independent Auditor on the Summary Financial Statements

### To the Directors of Fort Saskatchewan Families First Society

#### Opinion

The summary financial statements, which comprise the summary balance sheet as at March 31, 2019, the summary of revenues, expenses and grants for the year then ended, are derived from the audited financial statements of Fort Saskatchewan Families First Society for the year ended March 31, 2019. We expressed a qualified audit opinion on those financial statements in our report dated June 3, 2019.

In our opinion, the accompanying summary financial statements are a fair summary of the audited financial statements, in accordance with Canadian Auditing Standard (CAS) 810, "Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statement".

#### Summary Financial Statements

The summary financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by the Canadian auditing standards for not-for-profit organizations in the preparation of the audited financial statements of Fort Saskatchewan Families First Society. Reading the summary financial statements and the auditor's report thereon, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited financial statements and the auditor's report thereon. The summary financial statements and the audited financial statements do not reflect the effects of events that occurred subsequent to the date of our report on the audited financial statements.

## The Audited Financial Statements and Our Report Thereon

We expressed a qualified audit opinion on the audited financial statements in our report dated June 3, 2019. In common with many not-for-profit organizations, the Society derives revenue from fundraising activities the completeness of which is not susceptible to satisfactory audit verification. Accordingly, verification of these revenues was limited to the amounts recorded in the records of the Society. Therefore, we were not able to determine whether any adjustments might be necessary to fundraising revenue, excess of revenues over expenses, and cash flows from operations for the year ended March 31, 2019, current assets and net assets as at March 31, 2019.

## Management's Responsibility for the Summary Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation of the summary financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

## Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on whether the summary financial statements are a fair summary of the audited financial statements based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with Canadian Auditing Standard (CAS) 810, Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements.

*Givens LLP.*



Givens LLP  
Edmonton, Alberta  
June 3, 2019

**The Fort Saskatchewan Families First Society  
Summarized Balance Sheet**

March 31, 2019	2019 (\$)	2018(\$)
<b>ASSETS</b>		
CURRENT ASSETS	843,156	627,832
CAPITAL ASSETS	157,846	161,571
	<b>1,001,002</b>	789,403
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
CURRENT LIABILITIES	<b>564,476</b>	<b>276,477</b>
DEFERRED CAPITAL CONTRIBUTIONS	111,611	133,999
	676,087	410,476
NET ASSETS	324,915	378,927
	<b>1,001,002</b>	789,403

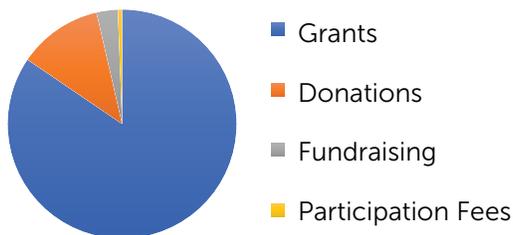
**1 Basis of summary financial statements**

The financial statements of the Society were prepared by management in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations in Part III of the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada Handbook, with the exception of the exclusion of the statement of cash flows, statement of changes in net assets and related notes to the financial statements. The complete set of financial statements with audit report dated June 3, 2019 can be obtained from the Directors of The Fort Saskatchewan Families First Society.

**Summarized Statement of Revenues and Expenses**

For the year ended March 31, 2019	2019 (\$)	2018(\$)
REVENUE	<b>1,141,270</b>	1,144,372
EXPENSES	<b>1,194,533</b>	1,148,322
NET INCOME (LOSS)	(53,263)	(3,950)

**Revenues**



**Expenses**



## Supporters (April 1, 2018 – March 31, 2019)

**Families First Society received many gifts of funding, space, materials, and time this past fiscal year. Warm thanks to the many generous individuals, organizations, and businesses for their donations within our April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019 fiscal year.**

- 9 Round
- 17th Annual Shannon Kimmitt Golf Tournament
- Access Pipeline
- Alberta Heartland Primary Care Network
- Allison Smith Photography
- AVIVA Community Fund
- Bear's Den
- Benevity Giving Platform
- Bethany Lutheran Church Lutheran Women's Missionary League
- Boston Pizza
- Café Bench
- Canada Helps (miscellaneous donations)
- Canadian Brewhouse
- CND Online Giving
- Christ Lutheran Church
- COBS Bread Fort Saskatchewan
- Concrete Blonde
- CO-OP North Central Food Store
- City of Fort Saskatchewan
- City of Fort Saskatchewan Family and Community Support Services
- Clayton Plamondon Professional Corporation
- Dairy Queen
- Double the Fun, Double the Money fundraiser
- Dow iGives
- Direct Energy Emergency Funding
- Dow Chemical Canada ULC
- Dr. Turner Lodge
- E4C
- Early Childhood Development Initiative-Sturgeon
- Edmonton Community Foundation
- Eggcellent P'Eats
- Emily's Legacy Bike Tour
- Engie Fabricom Inc
- Fort Saskatchewan Alliance Church
- Fort Saskatchewan Auto Body Ltd.
- Fort Saskatchewan Community Baptist Church
- Fort Saskatchewan Early Years Coalition
- Fort Saskatchewan Elks Lodge #399
- Fort Saskatchewan Fire Department
- Fort Saskatchewan Food Bank
- Fort Saskatchewan Home Depot 7222
- Fort Saskatchewan Interact Club
- Fort Saskatchewan Lions Club
- Fort Saskatchewan Public Library
- Fort Saskatchewan Royal Canadian Mounted Police
- Fort Saskatchewan Royal Purple Lodge No. 212
- Fort Saskatchewan First United Church
- Fort Saskatchewan Veterinary Clinic Ltd.
- Gallason Industrial Cleaning
- General Mechanical & Contractors Ltd.
- Gibbons Family Resource Centre
- Giggling Buddha Entertainment
- GoodLife Fitness Fort Saskatchewan
- Great Clips
- Government of Alberta
- Government of Canada
- GRM Flow Products
- Guardian Chemicals
- Heartland Ford Sales Inc.
- Home Hardware Building Centre

- Hot Mama Health and Fitness
- Inter Pipeline
- Jason Cameron & Tammy Cameron Professional Corporation
- Ken's Catering
- Keppler Vanderzalm LLP
- Keyera
- KSN Contracting Services
- Legal School
- Little Monkeys Dayhome
- M&M Food Market
- Magic Lantern Theatres Ltd.
- Mantra Salon
- Method 1 Enterprise Software Inc
- Miller's Ice Cream
- Mix 107.9
- Modo Mio Italian Restaurant Inc.
- Noyen Construction Ltd.
- Nutrien (formerly Agrium Inc.)
- Ochre Park School (Redwater)
- Original Joe's HEART Cart
- Our Lady of the Angels Catholic Women's League
- Our Lady of the Angels Roman Catholic Church
- Pampered Chef fundraiser
- Panago Pizza
- Partridge Hill Church Women's Association
- Partridge Hill Community Club
- Perry's 2 for 1 Pizza and Pasta
- Pineview 7-11
- Pots Bar and Grill
- Pumpkin Giveaway BBQ
- Realty Executives Focus
- Remedy Mechanical Services
- Restorative Justice
- Right from the Roots
- Rivercrest Care Centre
- Robin Hood Association
- Roland's Jewelry
- Royal Catering Inc.
- Saffron Centre Ltd
- Salons Against Domestic Abuse (SADA)
- Shell Canada Limited
- Shell Scotford Production
- Shell Employees
- Sherritt International Corporation
- Simply Stunning Hair & Makeup
- Smith Insurance
- SNAP Fitness
- St. Albert-Sturgeon Early Years Coalition
- Straightline Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram
- Straightline Motor Group
- Strathcona County Family and Community Support Services
- Strathcona County Social Framework Community Grant
- Strathcona County Info & Volunteer Centre
- St. Andre Bessette Social Justice Club
- Sturgeon County Family and Community Support Services
- TAB group at Josephberg Community Church
- TD Canada Trust
- Thiel's Greenhouses
- The Hair Corner Ltd.
- The Kanata Inns – Fort Saskatchewan
- The Furnace Ventilator & Duct Cleaning
- The Landscaping Company Inc.

*continued...*

## Supporters continued...

- The Retreat Hair and Esthetics
- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
- Town of Bon Accord Family and Community Support Services
- Town of Gibbons Family and Community Support Services
- Town of Legal
- Town of Morinville Family and Community Support Services
- Town of Redwater Family and Community Support Services
- Tru – West Company Ltd.
- Unifor Local Union 530A
- United Way Heartland Challenge
- United Way of the Alberta Capital Region
- United Way of Calgary, Donor Choice Program
- United Way of Fort McMurray, Donor Choice Program
- United Way Halton & Hamilton
- United Way of Toronto, Donor Choice Program
- United Way of Peel Region
- Walmart
- World Financial Group
- Youth Advisory Committee
- Zoolstra
- Zone 3 Catholic Women's League

Volunteers shared **2195** hours of their time with Families First.

We know this doesn't capture all the support that we receive, from volunteer time to donations of needed items such as diapers and formula.

We are forever grateful to everyone who has generously donated their time, gifts and energy.



Diapers were handed out **261** times.

It can be difficult when writing an Annual Report for a specific snapshot in time, to feel like we have properly acknowledged everyone who is in our corner. Growth, learning, relationship and evaluation, are the four pillars that serve as our inspiration for this report. They are obviously pillars that would not exist without tremendous community support.

This report specifically names supporters who have come forward to us between April 1, 2018 – March 31, 2019. However, we need you to know that if your involvement with us has occurred outside this time, we value it equally.

The assistance we receive, whether it comes in the form of money, time, encouragement, donated items, food or fundraisers, allows Families First to continue to meet the growing demand for our programs and services. Your contribution is absolutely essential and we do not take it for granted. We are grateful for every dollar, every minute, every item, every morsel!

Thank you, village, we salute you!

#thisisourvillage



#### Because of coming to Families First I believe...

- Things will always get better
- I'm not on my own
- That we always have a village in time of need

#### Because of coming to Families First I am hopeful about...

- Where I am going with my life
- Raising my daughter with confidence
- The decisions I have to make for my future

Thank you for taking the time to read our story.  
We hope you feel inspired to come and see us  
in the office, give us a call, or look for us on  
Facebook or Twitter.



Like us on Facebook: Fort Saskatchewan Families First Society



[twitter.com/FSFFSPLC](https://twitter.com/FSFFSPLC)

9901 - 90 Street, Fort Saskatchewan  
[www.familiesfirstsociety.ca](http://www.familiesfirstsociety.ca) • [info@familiesfirstsociety.ca](mailto:info@familiesfirstsociety.ca)



We are the Parent Link Centre for  
Fort Saskatchewan and Sturgeon County.





**Families First Society**  
FORT SASKATCHEWAN

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