

ALBERTA HUMAN SERVICES
2013-14
ANNUAL REPORT
HIGHLIGHTS



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GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Ministry Overview

The Ministry of Human Services works to foster a society in which families are safe and resilient; where vulnerable Albertans have the opportunity to fully and actively participate in all aspects of life and community; and Alberta has fair, safe, healthy and inclusive workplaces, as well as a skilled labour force that contributes to economic prosperity.

Human Services Mission

To assist Albertans in creating the conditions for safe and supportive homes and communities so they have opportunities to realize their full potential.

Human Services Core Business

To work collaboratively with government, community, partners and stakeholders to deliver citizen-centred programs and services that improve quality of life for Albertans.

Social Policy Framework

Alberta's Social Policy Framework was designed by and for Albertans. Social policy is about how we meet human needs - needs like housing, employment, nurturing, safety and security, and child care. Alberta's Social Policy Framework reflects a clear vision for Alberta's future, identifies outcomes and strategies to achieve them, and guides how we will work together to achieve the results Albertans expect. More than 31,000 people helped create the framework, through conversations in communities across the province. It is guiding the development of all Human Services policy options and the everyday work performed by Human Services staff.

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER HUMAN SERVICES



The 2013-14 fiscal year was full of challenges that called for greater support for Alberta's children, youth, and families. Through community collaboration and government support, we have addressed these important issues and are helping Alberta's most vulnerable. We listened to Albertans, consulted experts, and introduced legislation. Guided by our

goals and principles, these actions have helped contribute to building a better Alberta.

Two of the Government of Alberta's goals are investing in families and communities and living within our means. In keeping with these goals, Human Services' mission is to assist Albertans in creating the conditions for safe and supportive homes and communities so they can reach their potential. To fulfill this mission, Human Services focused on achieving three business plan goals.

Our first goal was to ensure vulnerable Albertans were protected and supported in times of need. The Five-point Plan was created to strengthen and improve the Child Intervention system. Hundreds of Albertans participated in the Child Intervention Roundtable to explore best practices in the Child Intervention system and determine how to strike the right balance between transparency and privacy. Together, participants also envisioned an enhanced system for Alberta's children.

Our second goal in the Human Services' business plan was to ensure Alberta has fair, safe, healthy and inclusive workplaces and a skilled labour force. Though some related actions are now the responsibility of the new Ministry of Jobs, Skills, Training and Labour, Human Services continues to support under-represented labour groups in finding and maintaining employment. Much support was delivered through Alberta Works Centres, where Albertans made over two million visits for their employment needs.

Human Services' third goal was to create opportunities for Albertans to succeed while collaborating with communities and stakeholders. This fiscal year, Human Services began recruitment for Alberta's Family and Community Engagement Councils to build relationships and conduct meaningful engagement with communities. Through the councils, we will understand what is working, where more support is needed, and where we can work better together to solve social challenges at the local level.

One of the greatest efforts this year was our response to the southern Alberta flood. Human Services employees staffed evacuation centres and issued emergency flood relief payments. Working with Alberta Treasury Board and Finance, Human Services disbursed over \$63 million in immediate support to more than 56,000 Albertans.

Throughout this annual report, you will find that collaborating with communities has been essential to achieving the positive outcomes mentioned above. I would like to thank the staff in Human Services and our community partners and stakeholders for their commitment, passion, and hard work in helping achieve our goals.

I look forward to the upcoming year and our continued efforts to improve the lives of all Albertans.

[Original signed by Manmeet S. Bhullar]

Manmeet S. Bhullar
Minister

MESSAGE FROM THE
ASSOCIATE MINISTER
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SAFETY



This past year, I was honoured to receive the Family and Community Safety mandate that supports the creation of safe and respectful communities and relationships. Through the active participation of Albertans and our community partners, we are working to prevent bullying, family violence and sexual exploitation in Alberta.

This year, Human Services released Family Violence Hurts Everyone, a framework that focuses on the prevention of violence and strengthening existing protection services. One of the top priorities is helping children, youth and young adults recognize the importance of healthy relationships to prevent the next generation from experiencing the pain of abuse.

Bullying is a challenging issue that no single person, group or law can prevent. We can, however, work together to put an end to bullying. With this in mind, the government believes the best way to address bullying is through prevention, awareness, and creating a sense of responsibility and accountability in our communities. Our goal is to empower Albertans to prevent bullying, and to create healthy, respectful relationships in our communities. This year, the Government of Alberta also hosted the interactive Bullying Prevention and Healthy Relationships Webcast during National Bullying Awareness Week (November 17-23, 2013). This webcast educated participants and raised awareness about the serious effects of bullying. The webcast also provided resources to support those who have been affected by bullying. In addition, the Government of Alberta also released new and updated resources to help address sexual minority and gender minority bullying.

In addition to these efforts, the Government of Alberta is demonstrating its commitment to safe and respectful communities by investing in family violence prevention services. They include women's shelters, sexual assault services, mandated treatment programs, counselling, and collaborative community response programs and services to address sexual exploitation.

This has been an exciting year and I look forward to helping address the challenges ahead. I will continue to work closely with government staff and our community partners to create a better future for all Albertans.

[Original signed by Sandra Jansen]

Sandra Jansen
Associate Minister



MESSAGE FROM THE
ASSOCIATE MINISTER
SERVICES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES



As the new Associate Minister of Services for Persons with Disabilities, I am pleased to report on the work that has taken place over the past year to create more inclusive communities for Albertans with disabilities.

This year's activities included continuing to implement the Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) transformation that will establish a consistent, person-centred approach to service delivery across the province. As part of this, nearly all of the service providers that contract with PDD have signed on to outcome-based contracts, PDD Boards have been replaced with a Regional Delivery model, and there is a greater focus on employment for individuals who are able to work. In addition, I spent a great deal of time visiting communities across Alberta in order to meet with individuals and families who access our services, as well as service providers about these changes. The themes we heard will be captured in a report that will be released shortly.

Human Services released the second version of the Employment First Strategy, intended to help more Albertans with disabilities enter the workforce and realize their potential. This Strategy, currently open to public feedback, outlines approaches to supporting persons with disabilities so they can secure and maintain meaningful work. Two Employer Advisory Councils were created – one for private sector employers, and one for public sector employers – to help understand and address challenges employers face in hiring persons with disabilities.

Human Services continued implementing the Disability Innovations Assessment and Supports Initiative. This venture is intended to support individuals with disabilities who are not eligible for existing government services, as well as to learn what is needed to create a one disability system.

All of these accomplishments were made possible by the great work and support of our staff and community partners. Thank you for your continual efforts to create inclusive communities, where everyone can benefit from Alberta's thriving economy. I look forward to continuing this important work and working with you in the coming year.

[Original signed by Naresh Bhardwaj]

Naresh Bhardwaj
Associate Minister



MESSAGE FROM THE
DEPUTY MINISTER
HUMAN SERVICES

In just a few short months, I continue to be impressed by the hard work of the more than 7,000 staff province-wide. I can see how we are working together to transform Human Services to provide exceptional service and do what is right for Albertans.



We are undergoing a transformation that is all about putting those flashes of brilliance into practice. It is about providing services based on a person's unique needs rather than based on programs. It is about making that happen by collaborating within the ministry, with communities, and other ministries. It is also about cleaning up red tape and knocking down barriers to providing service.

One strong example of how our ministry worked better together was during the biggest crisis our province ever faced – the southern Alberta flood. Our ministry worked together in an integrated way across the ministry, with community providers and other ministries to provide support. Our efforts demonstrated that by working together we can make even more progress for Albertans.

While there is still work to do, Human Services has come far. We have tried new things, challenged the process, and found new opportunities to collaborate. I would like to thank our staff and community partners for their professionalism, dedication, and hard work.

I look forward to another successful year.

[Original signed by David Morhart]

David Morhart
Deputy Minister

BUSINESS PLAN GOAL

ONE

**VULNERABLE ALBERTANS ARE
PROTECTED
AND SUPPORTED
IN TIMES OF NEED**

Overview

The Ministry of Human Services protects and supports vulnerable children, individuals and families. Through collaborative efforts with Albertans, partners and stakeholders, the ministry endeavours to enhance the ability of families and communities to provide nurturing and safe environments for all Albertans. The ministry works with contracted agencies, key stakeholders and community partners and other levels of government to improve outcomes for vulnerable Albertans and their families through prevention and protection programs and services.

Together We Raise Tomorrow

Through the Together We Raise Tomorrow public engagement sessions between June and October 2013, Human Services gathered input from community stakeholders across the province to create a Children's Charter, move forward on the Alberta Approach to Early Childhood Development, and develop a provincial Poverty Reduction Strategy.

More than 17,000 Albertans participated through 302 in-person community conversations and online tools. Contributors shared ideas to support the well-being, safety, security, education, and health of all children in Alberta. The input received through these engagement events supports Human Services, the broader Government of Alberta, and individual communities to improve services for young children and their families.

Children First Act

The *Children First Act* was passed by the Legislative Assembly in May 2013. The Act amendments were designed to improve the well-being, safety, security, education and health of children. It also enhances the tools, processes and policies that impact how government and service providers deliver programs and services for children and youth. The Act aligns with and supports the work of other initiatives including: Alberta's Social Policy Framework, Early Childhood Development Focused Agenda Item, Poverty Reduction Strategy, and Alberta's Information Sharing Strategy.



"We will move quickly to implement our plan to increase protections for every child in this province and we will push for continuous improvement of supports for vulnerable children and their families. At the same time, we will ask all Albertans to join us in fostering better environments for our children because we know that it takes a village to raise a child and that we're all in this together."

~ Manmeet S. Bhullar, Minister

Five-point Plan for Improving the Child Intervention System

In January 2014, Human Services announced a new Five-point Plan for improving the Child Intervention system. The Five-point Plan focuses on enhancing information sharing, addressing the root causes that bring children into care, and supporting collaborative research to guide improvements to services for children and their families.

The Five-point Plan includes:

1. Fulfilling the government's commitment to bringing experts, policy makers and stakeholders together at a Child Intervention Roundtable (held January 28-29) to discuss best practices in reviewing all child deaths in Alberta, and striking a balance between transparency and privacy.
2. Appointing a team of professionals to accelerate activity on the Five-point Plan and prioritize responses to previous recommendations for improving the Child Intervention system. The team will also use the final report from the Child Intervention Roundtable to support its work.
3. Consistently sharing information on the Child Intervention system with the public to ensure ongoing improvement.
4. Enhancing education, training and support for Child Intervention workers to strengthen casework practice.
5. Focusing on the root causes of many of the issues that affect the safety and well-being of children, such as poverty, addictions, sexual abuse, mental health concerns and family violence.

The plan aims to improve outcomes for all children; apply a quality assurance and continuous improvement lens to supports and services provided to children and families; and support work underway to achieve the goals outlined in Alberta's Social Policy Framework. It also supports government's focus on improving outcomes for children by implementing the *Children First Act*, developing Alberta's Children's Charter and addressing child poverty.

Child Intervention Implementation Oversight Committee (Five-point Plan)

The Child Intervention Implementation Oversight Committee was appointed in January 2014, for an 18-month period. The committee guides the implementation of the Five-point Plan actions and outcomes from the Child Intervention Roundtable held on January 28 and 29, 2014. The committee is also responsible for prioritizing responses to recommendations made in previous reviews regarding improving the Child Intervention system.

Foster Care

In November 2013, the Government of Alberta improved supports to children in foster care by increasing financial help for foster families and giving them more access to training and services. Enhancements included: an increase to basic maintenance rates; additional reimbursements for infant equipment and supplies; training regarding children's mental health; increased access to children's mental health supports; and policy revisions to reduce administrative burdens for recreation and vacation funds and for travel within Canada.

Outcomes-based Service Delivery (OBSD)

Strength-based approaches to delivering Child Intervention services, such as Outcomes-based Service Delivery (OBSD) and Signs of Safety, are resulting in more children remaining at home with their families instead of coming into care. OBSD processes and practices have led to a significant cost savings for the province as well.

There continues to be a decrease in caseloads for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children in the Child Intervention system because of intentional shifts in practice. Staff have been using strengths-based, outcomes-focused approaches and are re-assessing the way they work with families. In 2013-14, there were 7,842 children in care compared to 8,492 in the previous year, a reduction of eight per cent. This includes a reduction in the number of Aboriginal children in care: in 2013-14 (on average each month) there were 5,391 Aboriginal children in care compared to 5,769 in the previous year, representing a seven per cent reduction.

Early-years Play-based Curriculum Framework

Human Services and Education funded the development and implementation of an evidence-based, early-years, play-based curriculum framework in eight child care programs and in two Early Childhood Services programs. The curriculum framework is designed to support child care practitioners in their interactions with young children in order to improve early childhood outcomes.

Ages and Stages

To increase developmental screening training capacity in early childhood settings, 125 individuals from across Alberta who work with children and families participated in five train-the-trainer sessions for the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) and the ASQ Social-Emotional screening instruments. These individuals have since trained more than 190 individuals employed in early childhood settings on how to administer the questionnaire and screening instruments. The ASQ and ASQ Social-Emotional screening instruments facilitate regular developmental screening in the early years by: ensuring that children are on track developmentally; providing opportunities for the early detection of developmental delays; and enhancing caregivers' awareness of developmental milestones and realistic expectations of their children at each developmental stage.

Early Learning and Care Demonstration Project

Human Services and Education funded an Early Learning and Care Demonstration project in 2013-14. Six demonstration sites were identified and supported in implementing innovative approaches to co-ordinated programming in licensed preschool and Early Childhood Services programs.



Alberta Approach to Early Childhood Development

Human Services, Education, and Health are working together to improve child health and development measures of success by age five. The Alberta Approach to Early Childhood Development was approved by the Government of Alberta in 2013 and has four priority areas: improving maternal, infant and child health; enhancing parenting resources and supports; enriching early learning and care; and supporting safe and supportive environments for children.

Parent Link Centres

In 2013-14, Human Services invested an additional \$3.5 million for enhancements to early childhood initiatives across the province, including enhancing funding for existing Parent Link Centre outreach services and creating four new Parent Link Centres in Northeast Edmonton, Southwest Edmonton, North Calgary, and High Prairie. Those enhancements also included creating two satellite Parent Link Centres in Grande Cache and Fox Creek and developing training for Home Visitation practitioners to screen for family violence and to enhance home visitation practices through a parent coaching model.

Family Violence Hurts Everyone

Family Violence Hurts Everyone, a framework to end family violence, was released by Human Services in November 2013. The framework emphasizes the importance of public awareness and early intervention in ending violence in the next generation. The framework is built on a strong foundation of protection and intervention services and was developed based on the latest research and best practices. Current research suggests that addressing complex issues, such as family violence, must involve all members of the community and focus on changing attitudes and behaviours. The framework enhances the current response and services to better provide supports to individuals and families at risk and to prevent the recurrence of violence.

“Family violence strikes at the heart of our society. A person’s home should be a place of warmth, safety and security. Through Family Violence Hurts Everyone, a framework to end family violence, the Government of Alberta renews our commitment to ending violence within the home, and between intimate partners.”

~ Sandra Jansen, Associate Minister



DID YOU KNOW?

FASD is a lifelong disability resulting from prenatal exposure to alcohol. Individuals affected by FASD may experience a complex range of brain injuries and developmental, physical, learning and behavioural conditions.

Family Violence Death Review Committee

The Family Violence Death Review Committee was established in February 2014, as part of the *Children First Act*. Governed by the *Protection Against Family Violence Act*, the committee is tasked with enhancing legislation, tools, processes and policies to improve the security, education, health, safety and well-being of children and youth in Alberta. The committee is a multidisciplinary, expert body, composed of individuals who have extensive knowledge or experience in the area of family violence.

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)

Reducing the incidence of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) in Alberta is a priority for Human Services. More than 36,000 Albertans are affected by FASD.

Four pilot sites delivered training to their staff in addictions and mental health, which will increase professional skill and expertise with respect to FASD. This Treatment Improvement Protocol training is designed to increase effectiveness of programming to prevent FASD and enhance the delivery of supports for those affected by FASD.

Ten FASD Learning Sessions were delivered in 2013-14 and FASD Learning Series videos continue to be added to the FASD website each month to support ongoing learning. Over 600 members of the public, including service providers and individuals and families affected by FASD, attended the November 2013 FASD Provincial Conference that was partially funded by Human Services. The FASD website (fasd.alberta.ca) was revamped with a discussion forum to encourage conversation between cross-ministry members and stakeholders.

Bullying Prevention

In November 2013, Human Services hosted an interactive webcast that kicked off National Bullying Awareness Week. Participants talked about the effects of bullying and were given tools to promote healthy, respectful relationships. The event featured guest panelists who answered questions from Albertans, provided advice and discussed bullying prevention solutions for children, adults and seniors. In November 2013, the SpeakOut.alberta.ca student discussion forum promoted conversations about bullying prevention and healthy relationships.

As part of National Bullying Awareness Week, the Government of Alberta released new and updated resources to help address sexual minority and gender minority bullying (homophobic and transphobic bullying). These new and updated resources help Albertans understand the effects of sexual minority and gender minority bullying, and offer practical tips to make schools and communities safe and caring for everyone.

Office of the Public Guardian

The Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) provides information and education with respect to substitute decision-making (i.e. making decisions on behalf of individuals who are unable or not old enough to make legal decisions on their own). Individuals with complex needs may have a family member or friend appointed to act as their private guardian to make decisions on their behalf. The OPG delivered 126 presentations across the province to over 3,800 individuals about substitute decision-making options. Additionally, the OPG delivered six private guardian symposia across the province in 2013-14. The symposia provided over 400 private guardians with information and education to assist them in their role, including information about government and community services in their area.

Common Approach to Support for Families of Children with Disabilities

A team approach was found to be effective in providing specialized services for families of pre-school children with severe disabilities. The approach involves implementing a collaborative single-service team across the school and home to ensure that severely disabled children and their families receive streamlined, integrated, effective, and efficient services. The approach was expanded to nine of ten former Child and Family Services Regions across the province in 2013-14.

Community Support Teams

Community Support Teams (CSTs) were established in the Northern Alberta, Edmonton, Calgary and Central regions in 2013-14 to offer specialized mental health and behavioural consultation services for individuals with complex needs. This increased availability of CST services will reduce the probability of service breakdown and enhanced staff knowledge and capacity to serve individuals with complex needs.

Children's Mental Health

Human Services provided Mental Health First Aid training in 2013-14 to foster parents, contracted service providers, Human Services staff and Delegated First Nations Agency staff. The training included information on recognizing mental health problems, providing initial support and guiding individuals to seek appropriate professional help. The ministry also funded the development and delivery of a Children's Mental Health Learning Series to increase the knowledge and awareness of Human Services staff, foster parents and caregivers about mental health issues. Access to mental health/behavioural specialists at Parent Link Centres was also expanded in 2013-14.

Parent-Child Assistance Program (PCAP)

The Parent-Child Assistance Program (PCAP) has provided evidence of being an excellent model of wrap-around service delivery. The primary goals of PCAP are to assist substance-abusing, pregnant women and parenting mothers in obtaining alcohol and drug treatment, staying in recovery and resolving complex problems related to substance abuse. A modified version of the PCAP program was introduced on the Siksika First Nation in April 2013. The Siksika program focuses on providing supports to the whole family, in addition to the woman at-risk.



DID YOU KNOW?

Wrap-around service delivery means that supports and services are in place to address the needs of an individual in multiple areas of their life, such as home, school, and in the community. Services could include basic needs, housing, social, emotional, educational, and cultural needs. Wrap-around services are based on the needs of each individual and are community-based and culturally relevant.

TWO

ALBERTA HAS FAIR, SAFE HEALTHY
AND INCLUSIVE WORKPLACES
THAT CONTRIBUTE TO

ECONOMIC PROSPERITY



Overview

The Ministry of Human Services continues to implement targeted strategies and initiatives to increase labour force participation of under-represented groups, including Aboriginal people, youth, immigrants, persons with disabilities, low-income earners and mature workers.

Alberta Works Centres

In 2013-14, Alberta job seekers made almost 2.18 million visits to Alberta Works Centres. The centres assist Albertans in need with assessment, employment preparation, job placement and retention services to improve self-reliance and employability, which assists them in finding and keeping a job.



DID YOU KNOW?

Alberta Works Centres are part of a multi-channel network that includes a Career Information Hotline, the Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) website, and Human Services print and electronic resources.

Alberta Works Centres are designed to serve Albertans, including employers, who require information and assistance to meet their career, occupational, learning, work search and business needs and help them make labour market decisions.



DID YOU KNOW?

Adults, with low income, participating in employment and training programs may be eligible for Alberta Works Income Support. Tuition, books and supplies, and income support may be available.

LISO Application Processing Improvements

Application processing time for Alberta Works Income Support at the Learner Income Support Office (LISO) has decreased from eight weeks in 2010 to four weeks in 2013 as a result of enhancements to business processes.

Alberta Employment First Strategy

In May 2013, Human Services announced the second draft of the Alberta Employment First Strategy at the Disability Innovations Learning Symposium on Employment Technology. The strategy was developed to help more Albertans with disabilities enter the workforce and realize their full potential. It also outlines approaches to support persons with disabilities to secure and maintain meaningful employment. Public feedback on the strategy was collected through Alberta's Social Policy Framework wiki site between May and August 2013.

Learning Symposium Focusing on Employment Approaches for Persons with Disabilities

On May 9 and 10 2013, Human Services led a two-day Learning Symposium that focused on employment approaches for persons with disabilities. The symposium featured technologies that assist persons with disabilities to access employment, participate in their community, and live independently. The symposium also included a trade show and featured presentations covering many disability types, including developmental, cognitive, behavioural, physical, learning, and related issues. Over 200 people attended the event in person and over 2,260 individuals tuned in to watch the symposium over the two days.



“EMPACT is different from other programs, where you keep wishing something would happen... it was a godsend. Game changing right from the start. EMPACT helped me become part of a team, helped me with tolerance... and I am now employed full time.” ~ EMPACT Program Participant

EMPACT Pilot

EMPACT is an innovative new pilot program in Calgary for individuals on Income Support who have traditionally experienced barriers to employment. The name EMPACT is an amalgamation of Employment and Impact. The training model teaches skills in a non-traditional manner through community-based outdoor and art activities. These structured group projects are designed to enhance employment skills while engaging, challenging and motivating participants. A total of 55 clients attended the program from August 2013 to January 2014.

Junior Achievement Trade Fair and Company Program

Through funding provided by Human Services, Calgary's Junior Achievement Trade Fair and Company Program for high school-aged youth has enhanced the skill levels and labour force participation of youth. Through this program, 600 youth marketed their products and in the process learned business, entrepreneurial, workplace readiness and leadership skills.

Employment Information for Individuals with a Criminal Record

In partnership with the Calgary Public Library and community agencies, Human Services hosted two information sessions on assisting individuals who have a criminal record to attain employment. Fifty-two employers and career practitioners and 100 job seekers attended the session which highlighted myths and facts behind criminal records and considerations in the hiring process. Job seekers in attendance learned effective strategies to connect with employment despite their criminal record.



DID YOU KNOW?

On December 6, 2013, the Government of Alberta created the Ministry of Jobs, Skills, Training and Labour which is tasked with the responsibility for ensuring fair, safe, healthy and productive workplaces that improve the quality of life and well-being for Albertans.

Aboriginal Interpretive Guide Training Program

Human Services, in partnership with the Treaty 7 Management Corporation, the Ministry of Tourism, Parks, and Recreation, the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations, and the Ministry of Jobs, Skills, Training and Labour, funded an Aboriginal Interpretive Guide Training Program. This training provides essential skills, employability skills, occupational training, work exposure, job placement and employment retention services to on and off-reserve Aboriginal Albertans to help them train as Interpretive Guides in hospitality and tourism-related industries. Upon completion, successful participants can work in both provincial and national parks. In 2013-14, 19 Aboriginal Albertans completed the training program.

Innovative Training and Employment Partnership and Pilot

With the support of Human Services, the Ministry of Jobs, Skills, Training and Labour, the federal government, the Fort McKay First Nation (Northeast Alberta) and the Blood Tribe (South Alberta) completed an Innovative Training and Employment Partnership and pilot project which trained 75 members of the Blood Tribe to work on projects in Fort McKay resulting in 71 individuals being employed.

Aksis – Aboriginal Business and Professional Association

Aksis, an Aboriginal business and professional association, was launched on October 15, 2013. The association is an advocate for Aboriginal businesses and professionals, and allows Edmonton's Aboriginal business community to connect, collaborate and flourish. Aksis is funded by Human Services, the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations, the Ministry of Jobs, Skills, Training and Labour, and the City of Edmonton.



BUSINESS PLAN GOAL

THREE

**IN COLLABORATION WITH
COMMUNITIES AND STAKEHOLDERS,
OPPORTUNITIES
ARE CREATED
FOR ALBERTANS TO SUCCEED**

Overview

Improving outcomes and creating opportunities for Albertans to succeed requires that communities, government, the private sector, and not-for-profit sector work closely together.

Information Sharing Strategy

Human Services led the development of Alberta's Information Sharing Strategy (ISS). Implementation of the strategy began in July 2013. The strategy ensures information sharing practices within government and with social-based service providers support the best possible outcomes for the health, education and safety of children and families. In addition, the ISS informed the subsequent development of information sharing provisions legislated within the *Children First Act*. Human Services is now leading the implementation of the strategy with its partners in the Health and Education sectors.

Human Services is facilitating the enhancement of the information sharing environment within the Government of Alberta, as well as with external delivery partners by promoting collaboration and integration of services and a variety of tools including guides and tip sheets.

Family and Community Engagement Councils – Under Recruitment

Family and Community Engagement Councils were created under Bill 30: *Building Families and Communities Act*. The councils will transform the way Human Services engages with Albertans and communities to identify social issues, opportunities, challenges and co-create potential solutions at both the local and provincial levels. They will build on the relationships, cooperative spirit and common purpose that more than 31,000 Albertans developed when Alberta's Social Policy Framework was created.

The councils will involve community partners such as Health Advisory Councils, school boards, municipalities, Aboriginal agencies, social service agencies, the private sector and other agencies or groups. Councils will work collaboratively with Human Services to offer advice, make recommendations and report on social-based issues, needs, solutions and outcomes.

Nine Family and Community Engagement Councils will be established across the province and will include Albertans from all areas of interest and capabilities. Aboriginal co-chairs will be part of each council to reflect the social and cultural perspectives of First Nations, Métis and Inuit. Recruitment to the councils began in January 2014

Aboriginal Engagement Plan

The ministry is committed to building and maintaining relationships with First Nations and Métis leaders and communities to facilitate improving outcomes for Aboriginal children, youth and families. Meetings with First Nations and Métis leaders occurred between July and October 2013. Additionally, the ministry participated in major events such as the Alberta First Nations Opportunities Forum, the Northern Leader's Summit, the Assembly of Treaty Chiefs, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Alberta National Event in Edmonton.

Atoske Career and Counselling Centre

Human Services, in partnership with Bigstone Cree Nation, Métis Local 90, seven resource-based companies, three levels of government, and the Northern Lakes College, assisted in the establishment of the self-sustaining Atoske Career and Counselling Centre that opened in Wabasca in January 2014. The centre helps Aboriginal people take advantage of the increased local labour market demand within the oil and gas sector in the Wabasca area. The centre also provides training, career counselling and employment opportunities to community members.

Poverty Reduction Strategy Engagement

The Government of Alberta has made a commitment to eliminate child poverty in five years and to reduce overall poverty in ten years. Poverty reduction is about improving the well-being and quality of life of people living in poverty and ensuring a strong and prosperous future for Alberta. Input gathered by Human Services through the Together We Raise Tomorrow community engagement initiative will inform the development of the Poverty Reduction Strategy.

Alberta's Promise

Alberta's Promise works with businesses, communities, and non-profit organizations to leverage investments in five promise areas that contribute to helping young people becoming successful, productive citizens: healthy start; caring adults; child and youth friendly communities; lifelong learning; and opportunities to contribute.

In May 2013, the Government of Alberta formally re-launched Alberta's Promise and a new Premier's Council for Alberta's Promise was appointed. Between April 1 and March 31, 2014, Alberta's Promise partnered with non-profit and charitable organizations, businesses, communities and research organizations. As of March 31, 2014, there were approximately 1,700 promise partners located throughout Alberta.



DID YOU KNOW?

Alberta Supports provides information on social-based supports offered by the Government of Alberta, either online (myAlbertaSupports.ca); by telephone (the Alberta Supports Contact Centre); or in person (at Alberta Supports Centres).

New Alberta Supports Centres

Between June and July 2013, Alberta Supports Centres opened in Fort McMurray, Medicine Hat, Lethbridge and St. Paul. Two additional centres opened in March 2014 in Edmonton and Red Deer. Alberta Supports Centres provide information on social-based supports offered by the Government of Alberta.

Alberta Mentoring Partnership

Human Services, Education, and the Boys & Girls Big Brothers Big Sisters Society of Edmonton and Area co-lead the Alberta Mentoring Partnership. Research shows that children who have mentors do better in school, have higher self-esteem and are less likely to be involved with crime or drugs. Human Services and Education announced funding of \$750,000 over three years to support the Alberta Mentoring Partnership to: raise the profile of mentoring in Alberta; increase the number of mentors across the province; continue to provide research, provide training and resources for existing mentors; and work with communities and organizations to develop and enhance mentoring programs in Alberta.

Additionally, the Alberta Mentoring Partnership and Big Brothers Big Sisters Canada co-hosted the First National Mentoring Symposium in November 2013. Over 260 delegates and youth attended. In March 2014, funding was provided to Boys & Girls Big Brothers Big Sisters of Edmonton & Area, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Calgary and Area, and Volunteer Youth Centre Red Deer to support the initial expansion of mentoring supports for children and youth in care.



Family and Community Support Services Program

Through the Family and Community Supports Services program, Human Services provides funding to partnering municipalities and Métis Settlements for direct or indirect design and delivery of preventive social programs that promote and enhance the well-being of individuals, families and communities. Approximately 99 per cent of Albertans reside in communities that provide Family and Community Support Services programs and services. In 2013-14, 207 programs served 322 municipalities and Métis Settlements across Alberta.

Persons with Developmental Disabilities Community Conversations

In the spring and fall of 2013, the Associate Minister for Supports for Persons with Disabilities travelled across the province to talk about changes to the Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) program with individuals with disabilities receiving services, their families, and contracted PDD service providers. The changes will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the PDD program to ensure that adults with developmental disabilities are included in community life and are as independent as possible. Wherever possible, the Associate Minister visited local service providers and met with individuals and families who receive services. This process enabled the Associate Minister to hear directly from stakeholders regarding their thoughts about important changes to the program. They provided input on changes that included the dissolution of the PDD Boards and establishment of the Family and Community Engagement Councils, establishing a consistent approach to service delivery across the province, and a greater focus on employment for persons with disabilities.

Child Care Programs

To strengthen its provincial delivery system, the child care subsidy program was centralized within Human Services. The aligned policy and procedures enable the provision of services more consistently to all clients in Alberta. Additionally, the child care subsidy program reduced the number of documents that clients need to submit, further streamlining access to supports.

In 2013-14, Human Services reduced the administrative complexity of the accreditation process for licensed or approved child care and early learning programs by streamlining standards, criteria and indicators across all child care program types (day care, family day homes, and out-of-school care). Accreditation is a voluntary process that enables licensed or approved child care programs to assess and continuously improve the quality of care offered to Alberta families.

HOW WE'RE DOING

PERFORMANCE MEASURES AT A GLANCE



Goal 1: Vulnerable Albertans are protected and supported in times of need

	Target Result	Actual Result	
1.a	Percentage of children and youth who received child intervention (family enhancement or protective) services and did not require protective services within 12 months of file closure	88%	88%
1.b	Percentage of Albertans who have information to better help in situations of family violence or bullying (biennial survey)		
	- Family Violence	75%	69%
	- Bullying	75%	70%
1.c	Percentage of Aboriginal children in foster care/kinship care who are placed with Aboriginal families	50%	39%
1.d	Service providers' satisfaction with supports and decision making services provided by the Office of the Public Guardian (biennial survey)	95%	93%





Goal 2: Alberta has fair, safe, healthy and inclusive workplaces and a skilled labour force that contributes to economic prosperity

		Target Result	Actual Result
2.a	Percentage of clients reporting they are either employed or in further education or training after leaving a skills training program	77%	80%
2.b	Percentage of participants employed after leaving Income Support	70%	57%
2.e	Percentage of Client Support Services clients with potential for child support who have an agreement or order when their file closes	85%	83%

Note: As a result of the Government of Alberta re-organization that occurred on December 6, 2013, responsibility for performance measures 2.c and 2.d transferred to the Ministry of Jobs, Skills, Training and Labour.



Goal 3: In collaboration with communities and stakeholders, opportunities are created for Albertans to succeed

		Target Result	Actual Result
3.a	Percentage of families accessing the Family Support for Children with Disabilities program who indicate the services provided had a positive impact on their family (biennial survey)	N/A	91% (2012-13)
3.b	Percentage of AISH clients accessing Personal Benefits who agree that these benefits help them live more independently	83%	82%
3.c	Satisfaction of families/guardians of adults with developmental disabilities with PDD-funded services (biennial survey)	N/A	87% (2012-13)
3.d	Percentage of youth receiving Advancing Futures Bursaries who successfully completed their planned studies during the fiscal year	84%	80%
3.e	Percentage of licensed day care programs and contracted family day home agencies that are accredited or participating in accreditation	97%	96%



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