



ALBERTA HUMAN SERVICES



2012-13 ANNUAL REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

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



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MESSAGE FROM

THE MINISTER

It is an honour to serve as Minister of Alberta Human Services. I am pleased to see how well staff who provide a wide range of social-based programs and services have come together to support an integrated, citizen-centred approach that is making a positive difference in the lives of Albertans. Our ministry is all about doing the right thing in the right way and using our resources efficiently to ensure the best possible outcomes for the Albertans we serve.

There were many accomplishments at Human Services this past fiscal year, with the development of Alberta's Social Policy Framework being a significant highlight. This framework will guide absolutely everything we do to help Albertans – whether that is supporting persons with disabilities, helping children, youth and families, providing assistance to those seeking employment, or helping to ensure workplaces are safe and fair.



The highlights that follow reflect Human Services' range of programs and services that are available to support Albertans when they need help the most. You will learn more about our government's commitment to early childhood development. You will see what we are doing to support persons with disabilities and help people find jobs in safe, fair and healthy workplaces. You will learn more about our ongoing conversations with Alberta's Aboriginal people and what Alberta Supports has done to deliver an integrated approach to social-based programs and services for Albertans through its contact centre, web portal and Alberta Supports offices in communities.

All of the successes to date are a testament to the dedication and the synergy that exists within the ministry and between government and community partners who have played a vital role in these achievements. I would like to thank everyone involved for your hard work and overwhelming commitment to make a positive difference in the lives of all Albertans.

(original signed by)

Dave Hancock, QC
Minister

MESSAGE FROM

THE ASSOCIATE MINISTER



As Associate Minister for Persons with Disabilities, I have welcomed the opportunity to work on a more integrated and citizen-centred approach to supporting Albertans with disabilities.

This past year signalled another positive shift within Alberta Human Services as we welcomed the Persons with Developmental Disabilities program (PDD), the offices of the Public Trustee and Public Guardian, and the adult programs that support people with acquired brain injury and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). Bringing all of these programs together in one ministry has provided us with some exciting opportunities to work together across social supports to better meet the needs of the people we serve.

This booklet captures a range of accomplishments that will help improve life for those with disabilities in our province. This work would not have been possible without these committed staff and community partners who consistently go the extra mile to make a positive difference in the lives of their fellow Albertans.

(original signed by)

Frank Oberle
Associate Minister

MESSAGE FROM

THE DEPUTY MINISTER

Over the past year, Alberta Human Services staff have made significant efforts to re-position the delivery of the many programs and services we offer in ways that support individuals based on their specific needs, rather than restricting ourselves to delivering set programs and services.

To get it right, we needed to transform ourselves from a number of separate entities working in silos to a truly unified ministry. We have made great progress on each of the six conditions needed to align our ministry to be successful, which includes: strategy, structure, process, culture, leadership and competency. In this booklet, you will get a better idea about how working better together is making a positive difference in the lives of Albertans we serve.

I thank all Human Services staff for investing their energy into moving our ministry in the right direction. We have tried new things, learned how we can improve and found exciting opportunities to collaborate with others. Human Services will continue to evolve thanks to dedicated people throughout the province and their commitment to innovation, professionalism and supporting individuals, families and their communities.

(original signed by)

Steve MacDonald
Deputy Minister



**CREATING
OPPORTUNITIES
FOR ALBERTANS TO SUCCEED**



SOCIAL POLICY FRAMEWORK

“In Alberta, everyone contributes to making our communities inclusive and welcoming. Everyone has opportunities to fulfill their potential and to benefit from our thriving social, economic, and cultural life.”
Alberta’s Social Policy Framework – Vision

More than 31,000 people helped create Alberta’s Social Policy Framework, through conversations in communities. The framework is a roadmap for transformational change that communities, non-profit organizations, government and businesses will use as a guide to ensure their supports are achieving the results Albertans want.

The framework’s vision, goals and principles will inform decision-making for priority actions including poverty reduction and early childhood development and addressing challenges such as addictions and family violence.

“This community-owned framework will help communities and government do things differently. It will allow Albertans to have the opportunity to maximize their abilities, live in dignity, and participate in and give back to their communities,” said Minister of Human Services, Dave Hancock.

Albertans contributed their input through 400 discussions in communities, electronic surveys, blog postings, and collaborative work on the wiki at socialpolicy.alberta.ca, from June to December 2012. The province-wide conversation brought together Aboriginal Elders, business leaders, communities, non-profit organizations, community groups, service delivery agencies, municipalities, and elected officials.



DEREK COOK – Executive Director:
Calgary Poverty Reduction Initiative

“We commend the Government of Alberta for undertaking this important work. This new framework reflects our key values of collaboration, integrity, social equity, participation, inclusion and diversity; all which are critical elements to finding solutions for the social challenges we face in our city.”

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

As of January 2013, the Aboriginal Engagement and Strategy Division has engaged with more than 1,200 people, representing 117 communities in nine locations across the province to address the over-representation of Aboriginal children and youth in care. At each community event, participants from government, agencies, police, schools and health care, as well as other interested individuals had the opportunity to speak and listen from the heart, allowing everyone to enhance their understanding of and focus on the complexities facing Aboriginal children, youth, families and communities.

We heard from these conversations that there is a need for increased recognition, awareness and education. We also learned that we need to work with communities to make sure children and families can live in a healthy and supported environment. In addition, child intervention services need to be family focused, rather than focused solely on the child. We also heard we need to increase collaboration within government and among governments, together with Aboriginal leaders and communities. We must respect and incorporate Aboriginal culture and traditional practices into collaborative decision making processes, prevention and intervention strategies, policies, regulations and child intervention practices.

Human Services is also undertaking a comprehensive literature review. The data being gathered across the province through community conversations, research and promising practices will inform solutions and strategies to address the over-representation of Aboriginal children in care.





NATIONAL ABORIGINAL AWARENESS MONTH

In recognition of National Aboriginal Awareness Month, events were held around the province in June to celebrate Canada's unique heritage, cultures and the outstanding achievements of Alberta's Aboriginal people.

Children, families and community members gathered at the Jubilee Park on June 21, 2012 for the Aboriginal Day Celebration. More than 30 community groups and organizations, including Central Alberta Child and Family Services Authority (CFSA) staff, came together to plan the event, and more than 1,200 people attended throughout the day.

Human Services held its first annual Aboriginal Awareness Open House Event for Human Services staff in Edmonton on June 27, 2012. Activities included storytelling by Métis Elder Alvena Strasbourg; traditional Aboriginal dancing; Métis jigging and a performance by the Auger Human Resources Band. Complimentary bannock burgers and cake were served to celebrate Elder Strasbourg's 91st birthday. The event was so popular that many staff volunteered then and there to help with what has become an annual event.

REACHING OUR FULL POTENTIAL

Peter Watson, Deputy Minister of Executive Council has championed a movement that has swept across the entire Alberta Public Service. Every ministry has been challenged to develop as engaged and collaborative representatives of the Government of Alberta. All of us are encouraged to get involved, as “there are no spectators.” Human Services, who unsurprisingly numbered the highest in initial volunteers when the call went out, has raised the Reaching Our Full Potential (ROFP) banner high in a variety of ways. Our ministry attracts people who want to make a difference in the lives of Albertans. It is only natural that we should extend that same hand of friendship and care to our colleagues.

Transformation is the watchword around Human Services. Bringing together so many dedicated professionals to devote their aims at wrap-around services for vulnerable Albertans is essential to make the vision of Alberta Supports truly happen. Well, change comes at a cost. It can be unnerving, stressful and downright scary to some folks. Even people who embrace change require flexibility skills. In September 2012, the Organizational Renewal Division was created to provide continuity, increased nimbleness and intentional energy to the renewal process.

Reaching our full potential is better for all Albertans, not just the Alberta Public Service. Making Human Services a great place to work helps us provide better service to our clients all across the province. We are consciously working, through our ROFP Human Services Culture Network, our internal communications of emails and intranet, our Better Together sessions, and our everyday interactions to develop a workplace of trust and respect. In this way, we can build a culture that reflects the dedication we bring to our work for and with Albertans.



CITIZEN-CENTRED APPROACH



The Alberta Supports Contact Centre received calls from Albertans on information related to employment and training, services and supports for seniors, persons with disabilities, low income, children and youth, abuse and bullying, homelessness and making life decisions. The objective is to provide Albertans with a single point of contact, which includes the Alberta Supports website, the provision of service application forms and referrals to provincial services and benefits as required. Through the Alberta Supports web portal, the public can use the “Am I Eligible” tool which helps individuals determine if they are potentially eligible for social-based assistance services.



JAYME COX – Common Service Access

“The caller could be our grandmother, our neighbour, someone’s aunt. It’s Alberta, and we’re all connected... We’re Albertans serving Albertans.”

DID YOU KNOW?

The Alberta Supports Contact Centre received approximately 233,000 calls from Albertans between April 1, 2012 and March 31, 2013.

SUPPORTING
VULNERABLE ALBERTANS IN TIMES OF NEED



PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

In 2012-13, Human Services implemented the Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) Change Initiatives aimed at making it easier for individuals and families to access contact and program information, and related resources. The PDD program website has been revised to make it easier for individuals and families to access contact information, program information, and related resources.

Working with individuals who have Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) requires extensive collaboration across government and non-government sectors. The FASD 10-Year Strategic Plan supports development of services for individuals with FASD and their caregivers through the FASD Service Networks which provide a single point of entry for services and resources and also raise awareness to ensure Albertans are better informed about the complex nature of FASD and its causes.

DID YOU KNOW?

Preventing FASD in 10 newborns per year pays for all of the community-based services offered by 12 FASD Service Networks to support prevention, diagnosis and assistance for individuals living with FASD and their caregivers.

The Family Support for Children with Disabilities (FSCD) program helps parents who have a child with a disability to strengthen their ability to address their child's unique needs and promote their child's development. Staff are provided who can go in to support the family, or take the child for a weekend to allow the family some respite time and protect them from possible "burn-out" related to their caregiving duties.

DID YOU KNOW?

The maximum Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) financial benefit increased by \$400 per month and the thresholds for the employment income exceptions increased.

A JOURNEY TO INDEPENDENCE

Sarah has a developmental disability. During her school years, she received funding and specialized supports through an aide. When she turned 18, she began receiving staff supports from the Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) program through a Family Managed Services agreement.

Under this type of agreement, PDD provides funding and the family of the person with the disability takes responsibility for hiring and managing the support services staff. Many families find this option provides them with more flexibility in managing the services their family member receives. At the beginning of her relationship with PDD, Sarah was receiving up to 35 hours per week of support with independent living, employment, community access, in-home respite, transportation and behavioural supports.

However, over the years, Sarah did so well that she became more and more independent. She got a job with a local day care and moved out on her own. Now, the only support Sarah needs is help to manage her finances. To do this, she meets periodically with a financial advisor at a bank, who helps her plan her budget and pay her bills.

Sarah went from needing full-time staff supports to needing just a few hours of financial counseling from her local bank. This outcome is exactly what the PDD program strives for: to help people with developmental disabilities live as independently as possible, and be a part of their community. Thanks to Sarah's supportive family, the excellent staff they hired, and Sarah's hard work, she now has an excellent quality of life and lives with full independence.

DID YOU KNOW?

PDD is changing the way it works so that we can help more people achieve what Sarah has achieved. To find out more, visit humanservices.alberta.ca

OUTCOMES-BASED SERVICE DELIVERY

Outcomes-Based Service Delivery (OBSD) began in 2009 as a way to shift the focus of serving at-risk children and families from what services are provided to what the result of the services should be. It is helping children and families involved with the child intervention system make positive changes by providing more flexible, creative, collaborative, and community-based services to address their needs. Both agency and Child and Family Services Authority staff collaborate with parents to set goals and identify friends, relatives and community members who can support the family in achieving these goals.

FAMILY COACHING

Debbie, a 22-year-old single mother of two, has a diagnosis of FASD with Borderline Personality Disorder, ADHD, Severe Anxiety Disorder and Depression. When the McMan Family Coach started working with Debbie she was no longer taking any of her medications and her anxiety was so bad she was having difficulties functioning as a parent. The coach was able to meet with Debbie and her psychiatrist and assist with monitoring medication usage. After one month on new medications, taken regularly, Debbie has been able to begin the application process for AISH, complete the application and start receiving Income Supports, apply for Kid Sport and register her children for soccer, and has stated that she feels less anxiety most of the time.

A 31-year-old mother of four was referred to the OBSD family development program due to health issues (chronic pain, back and hip injury), mental health (depression, ADHD and PTSD), neglect, as well as lack of parenting skills. McMan staff was able to assist her in attending medical appointments regularly, getting medications for her depression and ADHD, seeing a mental health counselor, introducing morning and evening routines, start using chore charts and home work charts and parenting more appropriately. She attended the appointments and successfully introduced the changes in her home and now requires minimal support from McMan staff.

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2012-13, Human Services expanded the Outcomes-Based Service Delivery (OBSD) Initiative to 15 sites across the Child and Family Services Authorities. The first Aboriginal Outcomes-Based Service Delivery pilot site was launched in Edmonton, a partnership between the Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society, the Boyle Street Co-Op and the Edmonton and Area Child and Family Services Authority.

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2012-13, 89 per cent of families who received child intervention services did not require subsequent child protection supports within one year of their file being closed. This result exceeds the target of 87 per cent.



ALBERTA'S APPROACH TO EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Every child in Alberta deserves to have the best possible start in life, with every opportunity to reach their full potential. We know that when children flourish, they are likely to become adults who thrive. This contributes to the collective well-being of the province now and into the future. The foundation for strong and healthy children starts even before they are born. All children need a healthy start, nurturing relationships and safe, supportive environments to grow, learn and thrive. We know that child poverty, homelessness, family violence and abuse cause some children to be more vulnerable than others. Supports need to be targeted to fit the unique challenges and diversity of Alberta families so all children can succeed. This means a connected early childhood system of evidence-based prevention, early intervention and protection services in communities that support the healthy development of all children.

In 2012-13, Human Services played a lead role, working with Education and Health, to focus special attention on the government's priority of early childhood development. Key action areas include improving maternal, infant and child health to support healthy pregnancies, optimizing maternal mental health and providing early screening and followup to support children's development. This work will enhance the programs and services that are available to families now and help parents provide nurturing and stable environments for their children. The Alberta government will continue to work with families and community partners to help parents give their children every opportunity to realize their full potential.

CHANGING A FAMILY'S LIFE WITH HELP FROM TRIPLE P

When a toddler screams in the aisles of the supermarket, or a little boy wails and pounds his fists on the ground, demanding candy, no one is comfortable – least of all the child's parents.

Judgement and guilt were frequently felt by Fort MacLeod parents Trish and Chris Hoskin from the moment their second daughter was born. Trish says, “Anna was a very challenging baby and consequently we didn't bond until she was over two years old. Because of this, I felt a lot of guilt and anguish about my parenting, or what I thought was a lack of parenting.”

Fortunately, Trish found the Triple P – Positive Parenting Program, considered one of the world's most effective parenting programs and used in 23 countries around the globe. Triple P gives parents simple ideas and tips they can use to tackle a wide range of family problems, from everyday issues such as tantrums and disobedience to more serious concerns such as fighting and aggression. Trish completed Primary Care Triple P, a series of four 30-minute sessions with a Triple P practitioner.

Thanks to that support, Trish no longer dreads going out in public with her daughter because she has strategies that are practical and concrete to deal with challenges that arise or that help to prevent problems from occurring in the first place.



Triple P is offered free to parents through Alberta's network of 46 Parent Link Centres. Additionally, Stepping Stones is available to assist parents with strategies and supports when their child has a disability, and is available to families through Family Support for Children with Disabilities.

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2012-13, the ministry expanded the capacity of Parent Link Centres to deliver Triple P and also offered new training to Child and Family Services Authorities' contracted agencies and Outcomes-Based Service Delivery lead agencies for the more intensive levels of Triple P. Approximately 160 more practitioners were trained in the province to deliver the program.



STRENGTHENING HOPE BURSARY

On October 16, 2012, Minister Hancock and Jeff Johnson – Minister of Alberta Education joined representatives from the Terra Centre for Teen Parents in Edmonton, Braemar School and an auditorium full of excited students and their young children to celebrate the launch of the Strengthening Hope Bursary Program. This new bursary was designed to make it easier for pregnant and parenting teens attending this school and the Louise Dean Centre in Calgary to access financial support to help improve their chances of completing high school.

“Funding is easier to access now and we don’t have to wait as long to receive the benefits,” said Marisa, student and teen parent attending the Braemar School. “I feel more on track, because the people here really know me and my situation. It’s really helped me to be successful because I know what I need to do to get the funding, exactly how much it will be and when I will get it. That’s helped me to be more stable because I can budget and be sure that my daughter and I will have what we need. I feel less stress now, which helps me focus on school. It is a big part of why I’ll be graduating and going to university.”

More than 200 students accessed this bursary administered by Terra and Catholic Family Service of Calgary in 2012-13. This addresses each student’s needs through a simplified process, providing access to funding to help with the cost of their day-to-day living and child care.

HOMELESS SUPPORTS

In January 2013, the Alberta Interagency Council on Homelessness was established. Since 2009, more than 6,600 homeless Albertans have been provided with housing and supports, and more than 1,600 people have graduated from the Housing First Programs and are living independently. Of the Albertans who received support to help break the cycle of poverty and homelessness, approximately 80 per cent remain housed.

Two years ago, Tony was homeless and alone. He arrived in Edmonton to escape a toxic relationship and family situation up north. When his mom died, he turned to alcohol to cope with his situation. Eventually, Tony sought help from the George Spady Centre, a not-for-profit organization that helps alcoholics get back on their feet. The Centre referred him to Homeward Trust, an organization which provides and disperses funding for Housing First programs.

Housing First, a provincially funded program, helps those who are homeless or who are at risk of becoming homeless obtain housing with support services. These services include medical and psychiatric case management, life skills training and addictions counseling. The goal is to address underlying causes of homelessness so people can maintain their housing over the long term.

Thanks to the program, Tony is successfully overcoming his alcohol addiction. He regularly attends support meetings, ensures his rent is paid and is even volunteering to share his story with others so they can be inspired to lead better lives.

“The program has given me stability. It’s given me a start to get my feet off the ground. These people have been so supportive,” says Tony.

In December 2012, the provincial government announced \$60 million in funding - an additional \$12.3 million compared to last year, for the Outreach Support Services Initiative (OSSI). OSSI will help people like Tony across the province by supporting permanent supportive housing programs, including Housing First, and other services.

DID YOU KNOW?

The 33 member Alberta Interagency Council is a government-community partnership that includes leaders from the three levels of government, the community, homeless serving agencies, and housing and service providers. Together the Council members have the skills and experience needed to provide advice and guidance required for the successful implementation of *A Plan for Alberta: Ending Homelessness in 10 Years*.

INSPIRATION AWARDS

Leadership in Family Violence Prevention



First-ever ... recognizing leaders in family violence prevention.

DID YOU KNOW?

Between April 1, 2012 and September 30, 2012, more than 5,000 women and children accessed in-shelter residential services in provincially funded shelters. In addition to providing in-shelter residential services, shelters supported women and children with more than 8,500 community referrals between July 2012 and December 2012.

The Government of Alberta, in collaboration with provincial sexual assault centres, is currently working toward standardizing program outcomes for men and women accessing counselling services across the province to ensure consistent measures and outcomes. This includes \$3 million in funding over three years from Alberta Health to the Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services through the Creating Connections: Alberta's Addictions and Mental Health Strategy, to support increased counseling services and training for staff.

Seventeen exceptional individuals, organizations, businesses and youth were recognized for their commitment to end family violence in their communities. The first-ever Alberta Inspiration Awards were held during Family Violence Prevention Month in November 2012. "Family violence can have devastating and long-term effects," said Dave Hancock, Minister of Alberta Human Services. "The Inspiration Award recipients have demonstrated their dedication, compassion and leadership and have had a tremendous impact in the prevention of family violence in their communities.

Funding is provided annually to nine sexual assault centres and their provincial association to support victims of sexual violence in the context of family violence.

Funding supports seven core services: co-ordination and collaboration; crisis response; counselling; police and court support; education; outreach services; and support to volunteers.

CONTRIBUTING

**TO ECONOMIC PROSPERITY THROUGH A SKILLED
LABOUR FORCE AND FAIR, SAFE, HEALTHY AND
INCLUSIVE WORKPLACES**

ALBERTA WORKS SUCCESS STORIES



The goals of Alberta Works are to help unemployed people find and keep jobs, help employers meet their need for skilled workers, and help Albertans with low incomes cover their basic costs of living. Alberta Works achieves these goals through its four program areas: Employment and Training Services, Income Support, Health Benefits and Child Support Services.

In 2012-13, Alberta Works Centres hosted more than 2 million job seeker visits from Albertans. The program provides career information and resources to all Albertans, including support for youth through the *Youth-In-Transition* program, and the entrepreneurship and self-employment for Aboriginal people through training and supports.

OFFERING A HELPING HAND

Through the Alberta Works office in Brooks, Human Services coordinated the supports for employees of XL Foods Inc., Lakeside Packers, following mass layoffs affecting approximately 2,000 staff. Approximately 1,000 Lakeside Packers' employees, including temporary foreign workers, visited the Alberta Works office to obtain information related to financial assistance, and career and employment resources. Additional staff resources were deployed from other Human Services programs to respond to the crisis, as well as staff from Calgary's Temporary Foreign Worker Advisory Office to assist temporary foreign workers.

KAREN

Thanks to the advice of a good friend, Karen found her way to Alberta Job Corps in April 2012. She took an onsite personal development course, got her WHMIS, Food Safety, First Aid, Forklift certification and was overjoyed when she attained her Class 7 driver's licence.

AMBER

When Amber came to Alberta Job Corps (AJC), the single mom of four was out of work and on income support. With Amber's strong spirit and support from Alberta Job Corps, she was eventually able to connect with Bio-Fuels Incorporated in Edmonton. The wood recycling plant located west of Edmonton was a good fit for her. Within the first two weeks at her new job, Amber was sorting wood products and began running the equipment. She eventually became the lead hand and a solid mentor to staff. Amber advises anyone seeking employment to stay focused and most of all, "You've got to like your job and believe in what you do."

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2012-13, the Career Information Hotline (1-800-661-3753) provided assistance to nearly 12,000 Albertans to help them make informed career, education and employment decisions.



SAFE, FAIR AND HEALTHY WORKPLACES

The Alberta government has increased its efforts to improve fairness in the workplace through a combination of more education tools and enforcement regarding employment standards.

These efforts include the launch of a web page listing employers who have not paid employees properly, plus a series of short videos outlining employment standards basics. Albertans can now also sign up online for free local workshops that provide detailed information on applying the Employment Standards Code and Regulation to everyday situations.

Most employment standards claims involve unpaid earnings. Employment Standards officers investigate these claims and order employers who are found to be owing, to pay up. Government eventually collects about 80 per cent of these claims, but some end up as unsatisfied provincial court judgments. The new webpage listing these employers with unpaid judgements received tremendous response from Albertans, with 4,413 visits and 4,028 company searches.

Alberta workers and employers who violate Alberta's safety rules face stronger penalties and significantly greater fines with the amendment of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* through Bill 6.

Amendments to the Employment Standards Regulation were passed this year to address firefighters' work schedules. The new regulations align the Regulation with existing municipal and Métis Settlements firefighter work schedules as they relate to hours of work, overtime, and rest periods. Government also committed to studying the effects, if any, of the long shifts that are typical for firefighters and other industries.

More information about these tools are available at humanservices.alberta.ca



To access a copy of the Alberta Human Services Annual Report, or to learn more about the programs and services offered through Human Services, visit us at:

humanservices.alberta.ca

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