



2024 ANNUAL REPORT



CALGARY
YOUTH
JUSTICE
SOCIETY

**I feel much more confident in myself,
and my abilities. I believe that I can be
a good leader if I put my mind to it.**

- Past Program Participant



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About Us

Calgary Youth Justice Society builds positive connections between young people and their communities through strength-based programs that focus on what's strong, not what's wrong. We believe that every young person matters. Our impact is young people who feel valued, supported, and meaningfully connected to their community.

Our Programs



In the Lead

In the Lead (ITL) is a strength-based leadership program where young people recognize their potential and build confidence in who they are. ITL empowers participants to see, use, and believe in their strengths. Through reflection, real-world leadership opportunities, and support from caring volunteers, young people in the program develop key skills that increase resilience. Participants leave the program with a renewed belief in themselves, their abilities, and a sense of belonging.

In the Lead 180

In the Lead 180 is a character and leadership development program designed for youth involved in the justice system. The objective is to build and enhance key protective factors that are known to reduce risk taking behavior and re-offending.



In the Lead Next Gen

In the Lead Next Gen was launched in 2024 and is a strength-based advanced leadership program for young adults who have completed ITL and want to continue their leadership journey. This program helps young adults maximize their unique strengths, take their leadership skills to the next level, and deepen their self-awareness.

Calgary Youth Justice Committees

A community-based alternative to court that gives young people a second chance on a bad decision. CYJC volunteers help young people move through and past a minor offence by holding them accountable without holding them back. With support, young people from all walks of life turn their mistakes into opportunities to grow and give back to their communities.



Our Mission

Through the power of restorative and strength-based practices Calgary Youth Justice Society inspires young people to realize their potential, build meaningful relationships and positively engage with their communities.

Our Vision

All young people contribute to and flourish in safe, caring communities



YOU ARE HERE

“You Are Here” is that mark on a map that we all look for as the starting point to get from where we are, to where we want to be.

*Our young people are standing on that mark,
ready to take a step in the right direction.*

Because of you, they see what’s possible.

Because of you, they are more connected.

Because of you, they know their strengths.

Because of you, they have hope for their future.

Thank You!

Community connection is at the heart of everything we do at CYJS.

We strive to build positive and lasting relationships between young people and their communities. This wouldn't be possible without the support of our community partners, donors, volunteers, stakeholders, and champions. Your support shows young people that they are truly cared for. Together, we are creating a more positive and welcoming environment where young people can thrive. Thank you for your continued support and for believing in their potential.

DONORS:

CORPORATE AND FOUNDATIONS

Cenovus Energy
Alberta Law Foundation
RBC Foundation
Cadillac Fairview
Rogers Charity Classic
Foyston, Gordon & Payne Foundation
Canadian Red Cross
A.M. (Don) Robertson Fund
Dick and Nancy Wilson Fund
Byler Foundation
Lily Street Foundation
Ember Resources Inc.
Parsons Dialogue Ltd.
Southern Roofing & Waterproofing Inc.
Field Law
Prospect Land and Environmental Services
Gentle Lion Communications
Canada Helps

INDIVIDUALS

Aasen, Michael
Baxter, Meaghan
Berthier-Stephenson, Michelle

Cartier, Elise
Cordell, Gilbert and Ameeta
Dang, Patrick
Domantay, Jano
Floreani, Elvis
Fujino, Gwen
Gallego Moreno, Ana
Gilead, Renee
Gladstone, Brenda
Gobin, Charles
Grover, Karen
Harris, Chelsea
Laylor, Philecia
Lowry, Kathryn
Lynch Proctor, Kim
Martin, Darren
McVeigh, Cathryn
Moroz, Krista
Ng, Courtney
Proctor, Cameron
Proudfoot, Mike
Rasheed, Kola

Rogers, Kendra
Slen, Justin
Stewart, Wayne
Tainsh, Darryl
Tamura, Sharlene
Trafford, Susan
Tsang, Brian
Waslen, Lori
White, Linda
Wolters, Adrien
Yanko, Mike
Zimmerman, Carrie

IN MEMORIAM

Munroe, Tanya - in memory of Billy O'Neill
Lawrence, Ted - in memory of cousin Chris
Lawrence, Trevor - in memory of cousin Chris

IN HONOUR

Randall, Bruce - in honour of grandchildren:
Patrick & Eleanor
Anonymous Donors - in honour of Deb Watson
Bonterra - in honour of Megan Dodds

cenovus
ENERGY

Alberta **LAW**
FOUNDATION

Alberta

fcss
family & community
support services

Calgary

RBC
Foundation

ROGERS
Birdies
for Kids
Presented by ALTALINK

CF Cadillac
Fairview

CALGARY
FOUNDATION
FOR COMMUNITY, FOREVER

AGLC
Choices Albertans can trust.

Canada



Message from The President and Executive Director

"Great things are not done by impulse, but by a series of small things brought together."
- Vincent van Gogh

"In 2024, we proudly completed our 5-year strategic plan at the Calgary Youth Justice Society, marking a significant milestone for the organization. The focus of the 2020-2024 plan was to build a solid foundation for future growth, while also significantly expanding our reach.

We are pleased to share that we met and exceeded every one of our ambitious goals including our aim to double the number of youths served and to double the organizational budget. We closed out the year having served 817 young people, surpassing our yearly goal of 800 that we set back in 2019. Virtually every area of the organization has grown, including our team which has also doubled from 9 to 18 staff members. A highlight during this period was our geographic expansion to support young people through our In the Lead 180 program and Youth Justice Committees across Alberta.

We are immensely proud of the entire CYJS team, including our dedicated staff and volunteers. Their unwavering focus and commitment to our mission and vision are the driving forces behind CYJS's success. Not even a global pandemic could stand in the way of the team consistently exceeding every goal that was set. And as a team we are grateful for each and every stakeholder, community partner, and generous supporter that empowered us to exceed our goals. The support of our community is fueling our team as we move forward. We are confident that the last 5 years of work have prepared the organization to embark on the next level of transformation.

In 2024, we undertook the development of a new 5-year strategic plan. The process was led by Parsons Dialogue and supported by Alberta Law Foundation. Thank you to our Board members, staff, stakeholders, funders, partners, and youth who informed our path ahead through surveys, interviews, focus groups, and meetings. We envisioned a future for CYJS, supported by three strategic directions: Flourishing Youth, Thriving Organization, and Growing our Reach. We are eagerly looking ahead to the next five years as we continue to build opportunities for all young people to realize their potential.

Thank you for the continued financial support for In the Lead from founding partner Cenovus Energy, as well as FCSS, RBC, Rogers Charity Classic, City of Calgary Crime Prevention Investment Plan, Calgary Foundation, and The Ministry of Public Safety and Emergency Services. Thank you to Alberta Justice, Ministry of Public Safety and Emergency Services, and Alberta Law Foundation for supporting the Youth Justice Committee program. We also recognize the many individual donors who give generously to help us reach deserving young people. Your support is making a difference.

Carrie Zimmerman, President - Board of Directors
Denise Blair, Executive Director

"A vision is not just a picture of what could be; it is an appeal to our better selves, a call to become something more."
- Rosabeth Moss Kanter



2020 - 2024 Strategic Plan: Goals & Successes

GOAL 1

Grow our impact amongst vulnerable youth in Calgary

We achieved the goal of doubling the number of youth served from 409 to **820**:

- From pilot to regular In the Lead (ITL) 180 programming
- ITL program delivery expansion and diversification to include grade 9, indigenous, 2SLGBTQIA+, youth in custody, and 18-24 year olds
- Increased referrals to Youth Justice Committees (YJC) through a strong partnership with Calgary Police Service and justice stakeholders
- YJC community development to increase youth access to services and supports

GOAL 2

Grow revenue, profile and community of support

- Double our budget by 2024. We exceeded that goal with an **increase of 125%**!
- Dedicated resources and capacity to increase public presence through community events, communication channels, and conference participation
- Diversification of revenue through a fund development strategy to increase in corporate, government and individual supporters

GOAL 3

Strengthen organizational infrastructure to support growth

We exceeded our goal from exploring to delivering Provincial programming:

- ITL 180 is offered to young people across Alberta
- Expanded our support to YJCs and law enforcement across Alberta

Our staff team grew from 9 people to 18, including 7 new positions

Strengthened resources to support program operations:

- File and volunteer management databases
- Evaluation resources and tools

Strengthened Board capacity by:

- Development of Board Committees
- Diversifying skills and experience of board members

Looking Ahead: 2025 - 2029 Strategic Plan

In June of 2024, CYJS embarked on the journey of creating a new 5-year Strategic Plan. We engaged our community of young people, partners, volunteers, and investors, receiving their input on various aspects of our organization. We also invited our board and staff members to participate in strategy planning workshops. As a result of these conversations, we observed the importance of remaining true to our core values and plan on growing our reach to include a more diverse range of communities and clients. We are so excited to highlight some of our goals that resulted from these conversations and workshops:



Flourishing Youth - providing impactful and innovative programming

- Proactively evolve and build programming to meet emerging youth needs
- Amplify our volunteer engagement
- Build and sustain collaborative program partnerships



Thriving Organization - ensuring organizational sustainability and excellence

- Enhance our team, culture, and capacity
- Advance a high-performance Board of Directors to steward a growing organization



Growing our Reach - engaging agency champions, promoting best practices, and expanding our geographical presence

- Broaden and retain our base of funders, donors, and supporters
- Share our strength-based and restorative approaches working with youth
- Continue our geographical expansion in Alberta

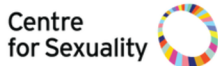
Recognition

Strong Not Wrong Community Partner Award

This year, we are recognizing two recipients for our Strong not Wrong Community Partner Award. This award recognizes individuals or organizations who have contributed to the work of CYJS in a way that helps us do more by working together.



Kyle Bell & Bill Bourrier
WiseGuyz Facilitators



WiseGuyz Program at Centre for Sexuality

We have had great success referring young people to the WiseGuyz program at the Centre for Sexuality. When referrals to Youth Justice Committees grew in number and complexity, Bill and Kyle adapted the WiseGuyz program delivery model to suit the needs of young people by connecting with them one-to-one. Bill and Kyle truly have a knack for getting participants engaged and interested - we have received amazing feedback from young people about how appreciative they are for the WiseGuyz program. We are so incredibly grateful for the Centre for Sexuality, Bill and Kyle, and WiseGuyz.



Cst. Jeff Bond
Red Deer RCMP



Cst. Jeff Bond Red Deer RCMP

Constable Jeff Bond has made an instrumental difference to our work at CYJS and being able to expand our reach to youth across Alberta. His encouragement and investment has immensely helped us gain momentum with our In the Lead 180 program. He has truly helped us develop a dream into reality, and has gone above and beyond to make this program work in his community and for his young people. Constable Bond is an incredible advocate for young people, a great communicator, and a beacon of optimism and positivity. We are so appreciative of his hard work and know that the difference he has made will be realized well into the future.

Cenovus Energy Difference-Maker Award

This award recognizes an individual or organization who has helped CYJS to make a difference in our community that otherwise would not have been possible.

Bonnie Lewin

Alberta Youth Diversion Program Developer
Calgary Youth Justice Society

Throughout this past year, Bonnie helped turn an idea into reality. Because of her, we were able to bring Youth Justice Committees across Alberta and provide increased access to an alternative to court for young people. Bonnie's passion, unwavering support, and incredible positive energy has truly helped to ensure that young people across Alberta will have a better life. The impact she has made will last for years to come.



Denise Blair Leadership Award

This award recognizes a CYJS youth program participant who demonstrates leadership qualities that reflect the values Denise has instilled as pillars of the CYJS foundation. These include compassion, integrity, curiosity, collaboration, and commitment to community.

Sajid

Past Program Participant

Sajid is one of our outstanding program participants. He has overcome many obstacles with determination, focus and perseverance. Sajid always takes accountability and seeks to continuously grow and move forward. He has an immense passion for helping others by sharing his story. He is actively making a change in our community and strives to inspire young people to make positive choices. Sajid has directly applied the principles of our In the Lead program to his life and has become such a strong leader. We are SO proud of him for how far he has come.



*** This Award is generously supported by local Calgary family Foundations and long time friends of CYJS.*

820

Young People
Served in 2024



342

Total Volunteers
in 2024

14364

Volunteer Hours
in 2024





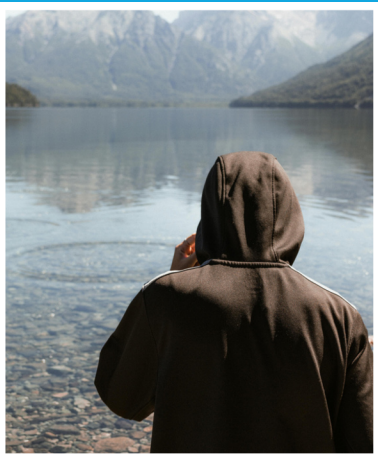
Tannis Smith

Youth Justice Committee
Volunteer

I volunteer with the CYJC because I believe in youth. As a community member, I enjoy being able to work with youth and be given the opportunity to see them for who they are as opposed to a poor decision they made at a moment in time.

One of the best parts about volunteering is witnessing the growth and success of the youth throughout the program. I am grateful to witness them complete their sanctions or growth plan in a thoughtful, engaged, and personal way. To hear their experience of the program and how it was not as scary as they thought!

Youth have shared they feel heard and respected. They are empowered to have a voice, to build upon their strengths and given opportunities to learn new skills or be connected to community resources to assist them in making better choices moving forward.



Sajid

Past Program Participant

My situation while growing up was challenging. I grew up in an immigrant household, faced poverty, and did what I could to 'fit in' with others. This resulted in me hanging out with the wrong crowd and finding myself in trouble. I felt cornered and stuck, but knew that I wanted to do well in life.

Since beginning the programs at CYJS, I am no longer involved with the wrong crowd. I am starting fresh as a university student, a public speaker for Gloves Not Guns (a youth boxing program that empowers young people to overcome life's obstacles), and am helping others through speaking, consulting, and training. I was able to beat the cycle of poverty and pain, and am the first child in my family to attend post-secondary.

For a lot of my life, I felt like a bird in a cage. Because of different non-profit organizations, one of which being CYJS, I was able to find my wings again and fly, and now I am doing more than I ever thought I could.

Our Impact in 2024

Our programming is grounded in three core principles that guide everything we do: a relentless pursuit of strengths, meaningful relationships, and a positive connection to community. These principles form the foundation of our work, shape our approach, and result in **three key pillars of impact**:

- 1 **Connection to a strengths-based worldview**
- 2 **Connection between young people and positive supports**
- 3 **Connection with community**

Connection to a strengths-based worldview

We aim to inspire young people and their supporters to focus on strengths and possibility, helping them recognize and use their own strengths - and those of others - to thrive.

➔ **85% of ITL 180 Participants** said that because of the program, they know more about their strengths.

"[I learned] how to identify my strengths and use them to better myself as a leader."
- ITL 180 Participant

➔ **91% of ITL Young Leaders** further developed a growth mindset; believing in their ability to improve on their strengths and abilities through hard work.

"In the Lead has made me more eager to work to be the best person I can. So that I can be a good leader to whoever I take care of, so that I can lead by example."
- ITL Young Leader

➔ **94% of ITL Volunteer Coaches** agreed that through their experience with ITL, they more consciously seek to see the strengths in themselves and others.

"My takeaway is seeing strengths in any situation and increasing the toolbox of methods to face challenges in any form they may come."
- ITL Volunteer Coach

➔ **91% of youth participating in the YJC Program** successfully developed strengths and skills setting them on a positive path forward.

Connection between young people and positive supports

We create intentional opportunities for young people to develop meaningful relationships with agency volunteers and other supports, creating opportunities for learning, inspiration, and development.

98% of ITL Young Leaders strengthened intrapersonal strengths, supporting their ability to have positive interactions with others and successfully manage relationships.

"I feel more confident with myself and I feel like I can build on my relationships in more positive ways now"

- ITL Young Leader

92% of ITL Volunteer Coaches agreed participating in the program helped them develop new ways to connect and communicate with others.

"One is never too old to learn! I have learned & grown so much, developing communicative & leadership skills through this program..."

- ITL Volunteer Coach

YJC Volunteers believe the program provides a unique opportunity for youth to feel heard, seen and valued by a group of supportive adults.

"The young people are supported and validated in a community of safe adults; which can be so meaningful in today's society."

- YJC Volunteer

Connection with community

Our programming creates its own exclusive community for young people while also creating opportunities for young people to positive engage with and contribute to their own communities.

95% of ITL 180 Participants said that because of the program, they believe they can be a positive influence in the world.

"Even the smallest things you do can be a good influence on others' lives"

- ITL 180 Participant

YJC Volunteers strongly believe the program has a positive impact on the young people and their communities.

"The community as a whole I feel benefited from this program. Learning to understand a young person's behaviour and giving them a second chance has made the community that much stronger. Not judging the young person and their behaviour helps build trust in the community"

- YJC Volunteer



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The Calgary Youth Justice Society is a registered charity. Donations are gratefully accepted. Thank you for your consideration.

Charity Number: 870837044RR0001

For more information:

 calgaryyouthjustice.ca

 @InTheLeadYYC

 @CalgaryYouthJusticeCommittees

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