



100
years

...a century of serving women

2010 YWCA ANNUAL PROGRAM IMPACT REPORT



MAY
2011

YWCA OF CALGARY

Written by the *YWCA Quality Assurance Team*

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INTRODUCTION

The YWCA of Calgary's mission is to offer programs and services for women and their families that provide them with the skills, abilities and opportunities to contribute to, and benefit from, healthy communities. Our vision is to be a cornerstone for women and their families. Together, our mission and vision have fuelled our demonstrated and unwavering commitment to serving vulnerable women in Calgary for over 100 years. These fundamental assumptions and principles have also driven our ability to be responsive to the current and emerging needs of women, to deliver impact and outcome report accountabilities, and to influence broader social change. Our work contributes to the creation of a healthier community; a community which is peaceful, just, equitable, inclusive, and sustainable.

The YWCA of Calgary believes the issues of **domestic violence, poverty and homelessness** are inextricably linked to, and stem from, systemic gender inequalities. As such, we work to break the cycles of domestic violence, poverty and homelessness by both building capacity in women and their families and advocating for necessary social change. Our continuum of services is broad and encompassing, and enables us to provide wrap-around services that are flexible and expansive enough to respond to a woman's continuum of needs and those of her family, rather than concentrating on only one aspect of her presenting situation or demonstrated need. The YWCA of Calgary delivers many critical services in our community to support women and children moving from unsafe, unhealthy, and dependent environments to safe, economically stable environments that foster independence. Overall, we represent a vital piece of Calgary's social and economic fabric, having served **11,213** vulnerable women, children, and men in 2010.

This report provides a summary of our work for the year 2010. It is divided into four sections organized around our four pillars of service: Family Violence Prevention; Poverty and Homelessness Reduction; Child and Family Services; and Life and Wellness. Each section begins with a description of the attendant social issues and the related research base, provides a brief synopsis of the various programs within the particular pillar, demonstrates the numbers of clients we have served, and highlights a selection of our client outcomes. These outcomes are used in each program's quality improvement planning to inform new program development, to assist in improving agency processes and policies, and underscore board strategic planning sessions. Outcome information is also shared at the community and sector level and, ultimately, leveraged in policy discussions. It is through the process of taking the outcome results beyond that of the organization itself and into the larger community that lasting social change can be created.

If you have any questions about this report, please contact Cynthia Wild, Associate Director, Quality Assurance by email at cwild@ywcaofcalgary.com or by telephone 403-294-3669.

YWCA FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION

The Issues

Violence against women is the world's most persistent and pervasive human rights violation, and Canada is no exception. The federal government estimates the economic costs of violence against women is \$1.1 billion per year in direct medical costs, rising to \$4 billion a year when one factors in costs of criminal justice, social services, and lost productivity (Statistics Canada 2006). Yet, the human cost is much, much greater. According to Statistics Canada (2011), while self reported incidents of domestic violence remain relatively equal between genders (6% of Canadians in the last 5 years), the experience of domestic violence is frequently not the same. Women are more likely to be injured, experience multiple victimizations, and endure more severe forms of violence such as sexual assault, choking, and being threatened with a knife or gun. Furthermore, women continue to be at greater risk of homicide by their male partner – up to four times higher; a finding that has been consistent for 30 years (Statistics Canada, 2011).

However only a small proportion of these women turn to shelters for safety and support. The majority never seek any formal type of help including that of police involvement. Despite this, large numbers of women still depend on the safety and support of shelters, shedding light on the enormity of family violence. On November 25, 2009, the first ever Global Shelter Data Count was conducted. In **ONE DAY**, 2,883 sheltering agencies from 24 countries around the world helped 90,602 women and 63,315 children. As part of this same count, 41 shelters throughout Alberta sheltered 693 women and 617 children seeking safety; tragically 16 women and 20 children were turned away (Alberta Council of Women's Shelters, 2010).

Making the decision to leave an abusive partner is not an easy one and many women return to the abusing spouse with their children, even after seeking help through a crisis shelter or counselling agency. Among the reasons cited are fear of increased violence, fear of losing children through custody or welfare agencies, embarrassment and shame, lack of emotional support, or lack of affordable housing and financial stability (Tutty, 2006). Leaving the abusive partner may be the only safe way out, but breaking the pattern without support is often difficult.

In 2009, the Calgary Police Service recorded 14,267 domestic violence related calls, 2,793 domestic offences, 5 attempted domestic homicides, and 8 completed domestic homicides (Calgary Police Service, 2010). Children are often present when police respond to domestic violence calls. These children are much more likely to develop social, behavioural, and cognitive problems, and develop psychopathologies including anxiety, depression, and posttraumatic stress symptoms (Gewritz & Edleson 2007; Holt, Buckley & Whelan, 2008; Margolin & Vickerman, 2007). On top of these challenges, children often feel helpless, angry, and responsible for the violence; which often intensifies mental health and behavioural problems (Carlson, 2000; Osofsky, 2003). In addition to exposure to domestic violence however, children are also at risk of directly experiencing emotional, physical, and sexual abuse within the context of family violence. In 2009, police reports across Canada indicated

that 15,000 children were physically or sexually abused by a member of their family, with girls most at risk (Statistics Canada, 2011).

Our Impact

The YWCA of Calgary believes in helping women, children, and men create paths of change away from chaos and abuse - regardless of their role in the family violence. We focus on promoting healing and supporting clients in making positive changes that facilitate recovery and wellness, with the priority being safety for all members of the family.

In 2010,

- **3,235** women, children & men were served through integrated and specialized family violence programs and provided approximately **35,550** hours of direct service.
- We responded to **1,705** crisis calls on our 24-hour crisis line; and **1,866** information calls regarding all YWCA family violence programs.
- **50** volunteers provided **1057** hours of volunteer service to YWCA domestic violence clients.

Family Violence Programming for Women's Shelter Clients

YWCA Sheriff King Home Shelter

YWCA Sheriff King Home is a **42-bed** emergency shelter (38 funded beds) where abused women, with or without children, may stay for up to a maximum of 21 days. Services include emergency shelter, supportive individual and group counselling, child support, community liaison follow-up support, basic needs, community referrals, and advocacy. Walk-in crisis counselling is also available to women in the community. The 24-hour crisis line provides emergency assistance to victims of family violence by trained shelter counsellors at the YWCA Sheriff King Home.

In 2010:

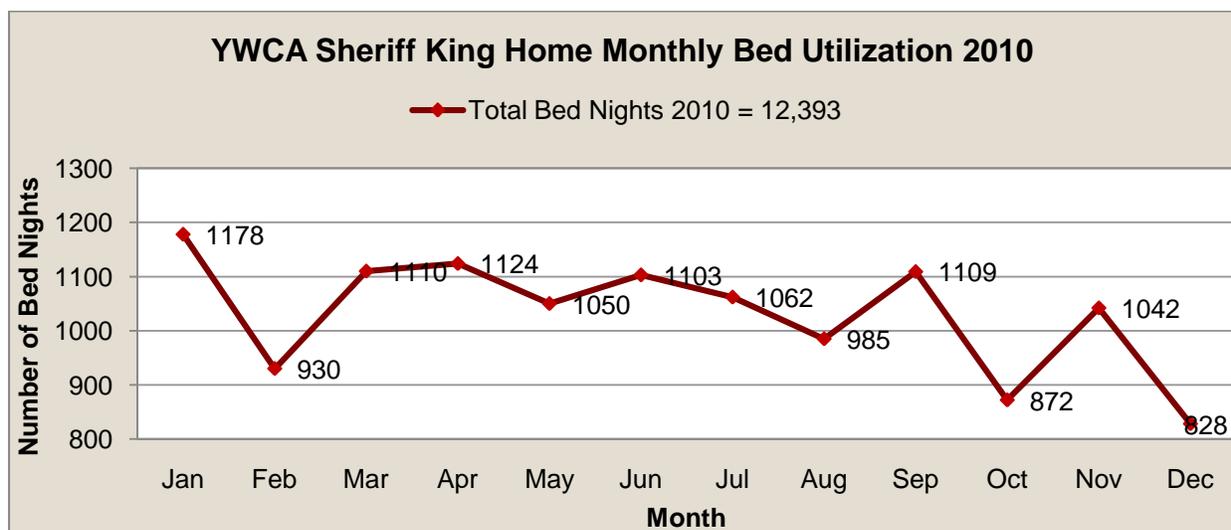
- **351** women and **405** children fleeing family violence were sheltered and provided with just over **10,470** hours of counselling support.

- 1,434 women 476 children who requested shelter were **turned away** due to lack of space at the YWCA Sheriff King Home Shelter;
- Of the 351 women who came to the YWCA Sheriff King Home Shelter in 2010, 4% returned to the shelter more than once.

As illustrated in **Figure 1** below the number of **bed nights** that were provided to women and children served at the YWCA Sheriff King Home shelter totaled **12,393**, which reflects a utilization rate of over 90% based on the number of funded beds.

The occupancy was the lowest in December which is consistent with the pattern of women finding alternate accommodation with friends and family during the holiday season. These interim housing arrangements tend to be short-lived and in January of each year, there is an increase in the number of women fleeing violence accessing emergency shelters.

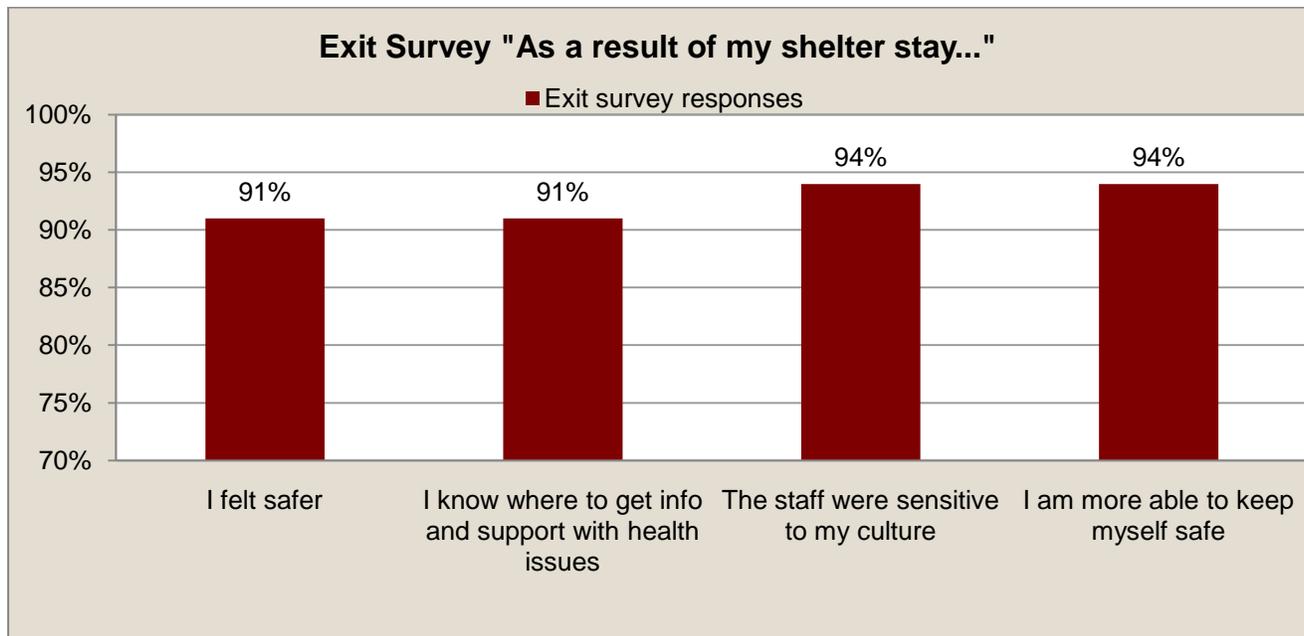
FIGURE 1 - YWCA SHERIFF KING HOME SHELTER - MONTHLY BED UTILIZATION IN 2010



In 2010, the YWCA Sheriff King Home successfully completed its involvement as the only Calgary shelter participating in the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters *Practical Frameworks for Change* (PFC) initiative which began in September of 2009 with the first World Conference of Women's Shelters hosted by ACWS. One of the main objectives of the project was to increase women's capacity to establish violence free lives through strengthening Emergency Shelter intervention using standardization of best practices in safety, health and cultural competence.

Based on data from the **Exit Survey (Figure 2)** which women were asked to complete prior to their discharge from the shelter program, 91% of women “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that as a result of their stay in the shelter they felt safer (total n=160); 91% of women also “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that as a result of their stay in the shelter they are better informed with how to access support for their health issues (total n=161); 94% of women who viewed this question as applicable to them “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that shelter staff were sensitive to their culture (total n=154); and 94% of women felt better able to keep themselves and the children in their care safe (total n=160).

FIGURE 2 - YWCA SHERIFF KING HOME SHELTER - WOMEN’S EXIT SURVEY RESULTS 2010



Comments from client cards given upon leaving the YWCA Sheriff King Home Shelter:

“Thank you for all your help during my stay at the shelter. I thought I would not be able to survive, but miraculously I have - and I think that my child will get better every day now.”

“My children and I cannot thank you enough. You helped me to feel that I was not alone - that there are others to walk this path with me - you have impacted and touched our lives in such a positive way. It is so good to know that women living in situations such as mine have a safe place such as the shelter, to go.”

Child Support

This program is designed to support families through crisis by providing support to children while residing at the YWCA Sheriff King Home Shelter. Support and referrals are also provided to their mothers. It offers children a safe and nurturing environment where they can play and begin to heal from the violence they have witnessed. Two full-time and two part-time staff provide open playroom hours as well as groups for children who have experienced family violence and some individual support. Counsellors also support the mothers of the children by providing counselling, referrals, resources and parenting strategies.

In 2010,

→ Of the 405 children that came to the YWCA Sheriff King Shelter in 2010, **323** children and their mothers were provided with Child Support services.

Therapeutic After School Child Care Program

The YWCA Sheriff King Home After School Child Support program provides direct therapeutic child support services to school-age children and youth living in the shelter, four afternoons/evenings a week for three and a half hours, and includes both group counselling and unstructured free play. The group work with school-age children is based on the YWCA's *Paths of Change* Group Counselling Program for children exposed to domestic violence.

Community Liaison Counselling (Follow-up)

The YWCA Sheriff King Home Community Liaison (Follow-up) counsellor supports women in creating and sustaining a life free from violence once they have left the shelter. The counsellor's role includes providing support and advocacy to clients as they transition from the shelter, assisting them in problem solving strategies and accessing community resources.

In 2010,

→ **69** women and their families were supported in the community after leaving the YWCA Sheriff King Home shelter with family violence follow-up, counselling, support, and advocacy.

YWCA Children Exposed to Domestic Violence Services

Programming for Children and Adolescents

This group of programs provides individual and group-based counselling for children and adolescents who have been exposed to family violence. Programs are offered at the YWCA Sheriff King Home Family Violence Prevention Centre located in Inglewood.

In 2010,

- **108** children received **674 hours** of individual prevention, assessment, intervention, and counselling services.
- **281** children participated in supported group counselling delivered on-site at the YWCA Sheriff King Family Violence Prevention Centre and in community schools.

Children's Individual Domestic Violence Counselling Program

Often children require additional support through individual counselling in order to heal from the violence they have experienced. Many of these children have completed the Paths of Change Children's group counselling program but would further benefit from one-on-one therapy. Different modalities such as play therapy, art therapy and filial therapy are utilized in the Children's Domestic Violence Counselling program. In the autumn of 2010, due to the high demand for trauma counselling services, the program hired one more full-time children's domestic violence counsellor.

Group Counselling Program for Children

This program helps children and adolescents aged 4-13 begin to process and understand the family violence they have witnessed and/or experienced directly, learn how to express feelings, thoughts and anger in healthier ways, and to begin the process of healing. Problem solving and safety planning are also integral components of this program. While children participate in this program, their parents concurrently attend a parenting group. This group supports parents in developing positive discipline strategies, improving communicating with their child, enhancing their child's self-esteem, and building a better relationship with their child. This 10-week program is offered three times per year and is held on Saturdays to accommodate families' schedules.

Group Counselling Program for Adolescents – “Art & Phototherapy Group”

This program is for adolescents 14-17 who have experienced family conflict. It is designed to assist them with developmental tasks such as individuation, self-identity, social identity, and the development of personal goals and values. Registration for this program is always in high demand due to its unique focus of art and photo therapy which has great appeal for adolescents. This eight week program takes place three - four times a year.

CHILDREN and YOUTH - UNDERSTANDING OF FAMILY VIOLENCE

Children and youth that access our family violence programming complete a Children's Questionnaire before and after their counselling experience. The **Children's Questionnaire** was developed by YWCA staff to measure children's knowledge of abuse, responsibility for the violence and safety. **Figure 3** represents the level of knowledge of abuse and safety after children and youth have been involved in our programming.

FIGURE 3 - SAMPLE ITEMS - CHILDREN'S QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS 2010

Knowledge of Abuse Questions Correct Response "Yes"	Pre-Test (n=110) % Correct	Post-Test (n=68) % Correct
If a grown-up or parent in the family slaps someone, is it abuse?	75%	88%
If a grown-up or parent in the family calls someone names, is it abuse?	65%	78%
If a grown-up or parent in the family tells someone they are going to hurt them, it is abuse?	66%	76%
Responsibility for the Abuse Questions Correct Response "False"	Pre-Test (n=109) % Correct	Post-Test (n=67) % Correct
Sometimes children are the cause of parent's abusive behaviour/fights.	41%	79%
Children are to blame if dad hits mom.	79%	88%

Art Therapy Program

Art Therapy is a counselling approach that uses the non-verbal language of art and the verbal expression of storytelling in a therapeutic setting. Using the creative process enhances our ability to find meaning in our experiences and reconcile emotional conflicts. Sessions are directive and/or non-directive and include a variety of art supplies, different creative approaches, skill building and lots of fun. The Children's Art Therapy Program offers both individual and group Art Therapy sessions for children and youth ages 6 to 18 residing at YWCA Sheriff King Home or YWCA Mary Dover House. In addition, art therapy is available to children and youth requiring further support beyond the group program.

In 2010,

- The YWCA Children and Youth Art Therapy program provided **61** children and youth with individual and group art therapy counselling.

YWCA ADOLESCENT ART THERAPY GROUP – CLIENT ARTWORK



One youth talked about how she felt disconnected and had become involved in high risk activities before hearing about the group. As she connected with the facilitators and other group members she began making healthier choices. Group fostered a new perspective of herself and her world as well as an opportunity to discover her strengths.

Choices with Horses

The Choices with Horses Group takes place once a year in the spring and operates in collaboration with Healing Hooves Equine Facilitated Counselling. This special equine therapy program is designed for girls age 12-14 that may have difficulty interacting socially with others, have experienced past trauma or violence, and/or may be exhibiting behaviours that are reflective of emotional turmoil and anxiety. Horses become an integral part of the intervention designed to improve the child's physical, social, emotional or cognitive functioning. These animals assist the therapeutic process by using the power of touch to evoke experiences of being loved and secure while reducing barriers to communication.

Children's Outreach Counsellor

This position provides ongoing support and counselling to mothers and their children who access the YWCA Family Violence programming and require ongoing support in the community. Support services provided include home visits with mothers and children, parenting support, play therapy, filial therapy, referrals to community resources and assistance in accessing the family court system for child custody issues. Due to a restructuring of YWCA Children's Domestic Violence Services this past year, this position was discontinued in September 2010, and in its place, an additional Children's Domestic Violence Counsellor position was created.

Families and Schools Stopping Abuse (FASSA) Children's Group

This program is an early intervention group counselling program for children who have witnessed family violence and to help heal from the trauma related to exposure to family violence. In 2010, the program was provided through five designated elementary schools in the Calgary area. This program was discontinued in June 2010 as part of the restructuring of the YWCA Children Exposed to Domestic Violence Services and declining enrollment. However, children from the community are still able to access the *Group Counselling Program for Children* that operates on Saturday at the YWCA Sheriff King Home site.

YWCA Children Exposed to Domestic Violence Services

Programming for Parents and Families

This group of programs focuses on the needs of parents and families affected by family violence. The menu of services includes parenting groups for both mandated and voluntary clients, interventions aimed at increasing attachment between parents and children as well as community-based parenting groups for individuals who want to learn positive parenting techniques.

In 2010,

→ **307** parents participated in family violence parenting groups delivered in various Calgary community locations and onsite at the YWCA.

Children Exposed Saturday Parenting Group Program

The YWCA Children Exposed Saturday Parenting Group Program was developed in 1994 (originally called Paths of Change) and is currently delivered within the context of the YWCA Children Exposed to Domestic Violence Services. The program is a creative integration of a number of strength-based approaches to parenting. It is designed to both enhance the protective factors and reduce the risk factors for children whose parents are affected by family violence. Groups are offered at the YWCA Sheriff King Home Family Violence Prevention Centre on Saturdays and are free of charge to all participants. These groups run concurrently with the Children Exposed Group Counselling Program for Children.

Through the Parenting Groups, parents are introduced to new alternatives and positive strategies for parenting their children. Based on Jane Nelson's Adlerian model of positive discipline, topics include empathy; understanding the world from the child's perspective; learning to play with children; positive discipline techniques; communication skills and strategies for increasing children's self-esteem; interpersonal skills for building healthy relationships in order to prevent a continuing cycle of abuse; and discussion topics on understanding anger, the effects of abuse, and child development.

Saturday Parenting and Children's Group Program Family Story:

We had a family consisting of Mom and 3 children who registered for our concurrent parent and child group program. Mom was very resistant, and skeptical of our services. She had been referred by several agencies, including one child's school. However she was adamant that she did not require counselling, and followed through only to appease these pressures. The family did not follow through with group for the winter.

The family returned for the spring 2010 session with a new perception of the program. Mom had received some support services and was soon enthusiastic about our programs, and has shared that she enjoys the Parenting Program on Saturdays. The family is happy to be attending Saturday Groups. Mom is planning to attend the group a second time with her eldest children to ensure that the benefits of the program are available to everyone in the family.

Father's Parenting Group Program

This program is a unique parenting group for fathers who have been violent toward their intimate partner and/or children and who need help to understand the impact of family violence on their children, and to build the motivation to change their behavior. Participants are either mandated to attend the program (by the court or Child & Family Services Authority), or attend voluntarily out of a desire to restore their relationships with their children. Program content is similar to the Saturday Parenting Group Program with the addition of several specific components related to accepting responsibility for their abusive behavior, safe parenting practices, the impact of their abusive behavior on their children, and restoring relationships with children.

Filial Therapy

Filial Therapy is a special kind of play therapy that serves to enhance attachment between parents and young children. In Filial therapy, the parent is present in every session and normally conducts the whole session. This allows parents to be part of the solution by changing how they relate and work with their own children, helping to ultimately break the cycle of domestic violence. After the initial assessment of the family, the therapist spends weeks training parents to better understand their child's worries and other feelings more fully. S/her also teaches parents new skills for encouraging cooperation from their children, how to enjoy play with their children while providing them with the positive attention they require.

Families and Schools Stopping Abuse (FASSA) Parenting Group

This community-based 12-week parenting group introduces parents to new alternatives and positive strategies for parenting their children, using a positive parenting framework to support parents in building better relationships with children. Participants include community members, including parents of children attending the FASSA children's groups. This program was discontinued in June 2010 as part of the restructuring of the YWCA Children Exposed to Domestic Violence Services and declining enrollment. Community parents who are struggling in their parenting as a result of family violence are still able to access the Children Exposed Saturday Parenting Group Program.

Family Counselling

A range of therapeutic approaches and techniques are used by the Family Counsellor based on the needs of the family and informed by the initial intake/assessment process. Family counselling is provided for some or all family members depending on an assessment, safety implications and the ability of each member to contribute to improved family interaction and functioning. The therapist in this area is skilled in *Family Systems Therapy*, *Cognitive-behavioural Therapy* and *Trauma Therapy*. The Family Counsellor works collaboratively with the Children's Domestic Violence Counsellor, the Children Exposed Case Manager, the Domestic Violence Case Management Team, other internal YWCA services, and other external services and systems that provide services to the family, to understand and inform the safety and treatment needs of all family members.

In 2010,

→ **55** women, men and children received **363** hours of family counselling services in their home and/or on-site at the YWCA.

Domestic Violence Outreach Counselling

Domestic Violence Outreach Counselling is a community-based prevention program that is accessible to women, men, and their families in Calgary who have experienced or are experiencing family violence. The outreach counsellors provide information, support, advocacy, safety planning, and referral services to families who are impacted by family violence but choose not to access the services of a shelter.

In 2010,

→ **208** women and their families were supported in the community with family violence outreach counselling, support and advocacy.

YWCA Outreach Counselling Client Story:

"Jane" called in January after an incident with her ex-husband. Jane had separated and divorced from her husband after several years of physical, emotional, verbal and financial abuse. While they were together, their son was born. She indicated that after her separation and divorce her main concern was bringing her child to visits with his dad outside of Calgary. Jane reported experiencing a lot of fears and also having anxiety attacks; she felt very unsafe. She also reported paying an expensive lawyer to help her with legal procedures and that she could not afford this any longer. She was also going to school but she stopped because she was having concentration issues.

In working with Jane, the Outreach counsellor helped with a referral to the Legal Aid Society in order to access an affordable lawyer; unfortunately she was denied legal aid due to a matrimonial settlement. However, the Outreach counsellor encouraged Jane to start doing basic legal procedures on her own, with support, during court sessions and eventually she succeeded -- Her claim for sole custody based on evidence of risk for her son while in his father's care was finally transferred from Edmonton to Calgary; visits were discontinued and an indefinite restraining order was issued. Jane's son was also referred to a YWCA Children's Domestic Violence Counsellor with whom he completed treatment for witnessing abuse and family violence.

The confidence Jane gained working with the Outreach Counsellor helped her to see her life from a new perspective, feeling validated and safer, and eventually she decided to enroll in art school.

YWCA Adult Domestic Violence Services

Programming for Adult Women and Men

Our family violence programs for adult women and men are recognized locally, provincially and nationally as exemplary intervention models for men and women who are impacted by intimate partner violence. Women and men who have perpetrated abuse and violence as well as those who have been perpetrated against are referred to our programs by HomeFront (Calgary's coordinated community-justice response to domestic violence), Calgary and Area Child and Family Services Authority, and other community agencies who trust in our research validated approach to treatment.

In 2010,

- **297** women and **633** men wanting to break the cycle of violence participated in group counselling.
- **85** women and **138** men received just over **1,190** hours of counselling support through individual trauma and multi-cultural family violence counselling.

Group and Individual Counselling Programs for Women

Our Paths of Change Women's program is available for any woman in the community who has experienced, witnessed and/or perpetrated family violence. The 14-week program is provided in a group format and provides women with information regarding family violence, safety planning, and the psychological and emotional impact of violence on women and children. Women are supported in healing from the effects of the abuse and taking responsibility for the abuse they have perpetrated on their partners. In addition to the group sessions, short-term crisis counselling is available for women attending group who require additional support. If language or culture represents a barrier for a woman, our multi-cultural counsellor is available to provide individual counselling and to assist with appropriate referrals.

Group and Individual Counselling Programs for Men

Our Paths of Change Men's program is aimed at examining attitudes and behaviours that contribute to men using violence, with the ultimate aim of ending all forms of abuse. In the YWCA Men's Groups, men are encouraged and supported to develop attitudes that reflect willingness to change and an acceptance of responsibility for their own behaviour. During their 14-week participation in the group program, their partners/ex-partners are contacted by program staff to provide support and assess the safety of women and children. Short-term counselling is also available for those men requiring additional support. If language or culture represents a barrier for a man, our multi-cultural counsellor is available to provide individual counselling and to assist with appropriate referrals.

YWCA Adult Services Men's Individual Client Story:

Sean came to our men's intake session in the summer of 2010 expressing suicidal ideation, having recently assaulted a male friend of his partner's, and seeking help for abusive behaviour. On that particular evening, Sean expressed suicidal ideation to the counsellor who met with him at YWCA Sheriff King Home. That counsellor spent time with Sean, contracted with him to go to the hospital that night for assessment (which he did), as well as to call the agency manager the next day. Sean began individual counselling at the agency that same week, and attended 8 sessions.

During that time, his depression lifted, he gained insights, developed goals for his future and expressed a certainty that he could change what he feared was becoming a pattern in relationships for him of abuse. Sean wrote in a card at close of counselling, "thank you for helping me to love myself again".

Men's Group Client Comment:

"This group has helped my relationship immensely. My wife and I are on a more level playing field. I have moved up and too far forward to slip back into old patterns because there was no easy way with them. I am very grateful to have taken part in the men's groups."

YWCA Visitation Services Programming

Our Visitation Services are designed to meet the urgent need of a protected setting for the safe transfer and visitation of children between custodial and visiting parents. This need arises out of the potential for escalated violence and increased safety risks to women and children (and some men) that occur during separation and divorce, particularly in families experiencing domestic violence.

In 2010,

- **116** children and **130** parents, representing **65 families**, accessed our Visitation Services Programs.
- **553** supervised visits and **66** monitored exchanges were provided to families accessing the Visitation Services Programs.

Community Safe Visitation

The YWCA Community Safe Visitation program offers supervised access visits and monitored exchanges between non-custodial parents and their children, the goal of which is to create a safe and healthy environment for continued contact in situations where family violence has been present.

In 2010,

→ **44** families with **72** children accessed our Community Safe Visitation Program.

Safe Visitation

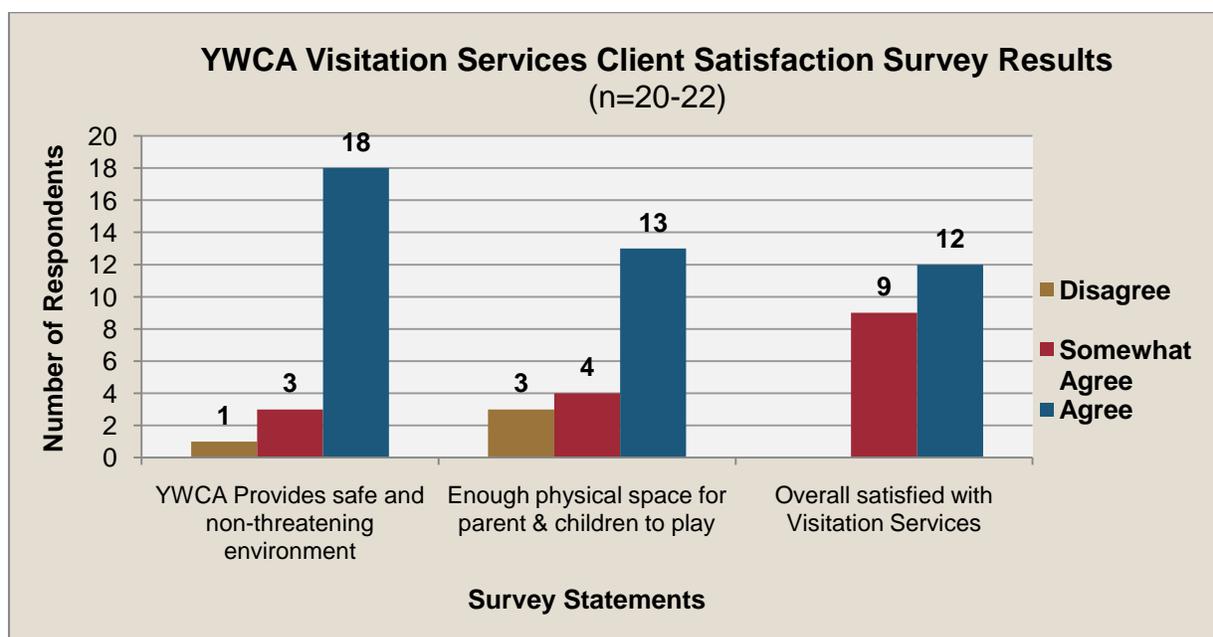
The YWCA Safe Visitation program offers supervised access visits to families referred by Calgary and Area Child and Family Services Authority. The goal is to create a safe and healthy environment for continued contact between non-custodial parents and their children in situations where there has been a history family violence.

In 2010,

→ **21** families with **44** children accessed our Safe Visitation Program.

As illustrated in the chart below, the majority of parents who completed the program Client Satisfaction Questionnaire felt that the program provides a safe and non threatening environment, that the physical space in which the program is offered is adequate and are satisfied overall with the program.

FIGURE 4 - YWCA VISITATION SERVICES – CLIENT SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRE



YWCA POVERTY AND HOMELESSNESS REDUCTION

The Issues

The interplay of cause and effect between family violence, poverty, and homelessness is complex. Two of the most significant reasons women return to an abusive spouse is because of a lack of affordable housing and a lack of financial resources (Tutty, 2006). Many women fear they will not have the financial means to support their families. These fears are well-founded. According to the Government of Alberta (2010) women's total income in Alberta in 2008 was 55% that of men's – one of the widest gaps in the country - \$34,000 versus \$61,700 respectively. In this same report, women also make up the majority of minimum wage earners in Alberta at 58% and account for 92% of the single parent households dependent upon welfare (Alberta Human Resources and Employment, 2006).

In 2008 & 2009, the majority of provinces across the country raised their welfare rates for lone parent families, including Alberta. However, these new rates still fall exceptionally short of what is needed to meet a standard of living in Canada. For example, a mother with one child now receives \$15,749 in Alberta (compared with \$13,703 prior), yet this still presents a shortfall of over \$6,500 to even meet the poverty line (National Council of Welfare, 2010).

Poverty affects a woman's ability to acquire and keep safe and affordable housing. The Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation considers housing affordable when a person does not spend more than 30% of their gross income on rent. Considering the number of women working for minimum wage or dependent upon inadequate government income supports, this places many at risk for homelessness. In April of 2009, the Alberta minimum wage increased to \$8.80/hr. According to the City of Calgary (2011) a person employed at a minimum wage job, working 40 hours a week for 52 weeks per year has a monthly affordable rent limit of only \$458 per month. Yet the average monthly rent for a *bachelor* apartment in Calgary in 2010, was \$711 per month; a discrepancy of \$253 per month. This places women into a difficult predicament. They must choose between being forced into expensive units, living beyond their means with little money for food or clothing often one step away from homelessness or, in many cases, returning to an abusive situation. Some have referred to this as a "downward spiral" where women cycle through abuse, homelessness, poor housing, poverty, then return to abuse, and ultimately are homeless again (Dale, 2007). A supply of accessible and affordable housing for women is widely acknowledged as one of the most reliable ways to prevent recurring cycles of domestic violence (Dale, 2008).

Recent immigrants to Canada are also vulnerable to poverty. According to Statistics Canada, most immigrants who enter into poverty (35%-45% of immigrants) do so during their first year in Canada and that this is followed by high rates of longer-term poverty (around 20%) (Picot, 2008). Reasons for this include language barriers, lack of recognized credentials or foreign labour market experience, competition from highly educated Canadian-born people, and the economic downturn (Fluery, 2007; Picot, 2008). Additional issues such as housing insecurity and domestic violence further complicate many of these situations for immigrant women, who remain one of the most impoverished groups in the country – beyond that of their male counterparts (Statistics Canada, 2006).

Our Impact

The YWCA Homelessness Reduction services provide safe and affordable emergency and transitional housing to women and children experiencing homelessness and who require a supportive environment, while undergoing transition and/or crisis in their lives. The YWCA Poverty Reduction services provide programming for clients in the areas of technical, language, cultural and life skills training, job search and maintenance skills, counselling; advocacy, referral, and support - all with the intent and goal of increasing our clients' employment choices and personal capacity.

YWCA Housing Programs

YWCA Mary Dover House Transitional Housing

YWCA Mary Dover House is an **80-bed** transitional housing program that offers safe, affordable, and supportive housing to women and children in times of crisis or transition. It includes on-site counselling and support for women and children, along with referrals and advocacy in an environment conducive to positive change. Case Managers work alongside women to assist them in increasing their social, emotional, and financial resources in order to support women in obtaining safe, permanent, and affordable housing in the community. Residents also have access to VON nursing support, monthly access to a Family Law lawyer and a full-scale fitness centre at YWCA Fitness on 5th. Women may stay for up to six months in the program, although the average length of stay is three to four months.

In 2010,

- **263** women and **105** children were sheltered in the YWCA Mary Dover House Transitional Housing program.
- **72** families sought shelter with the YWCA Mary Dover House Transitional Housing program.
- **1,469** individuals requesting space including 788 children were ***turned away*** primarily to lack of available bed space. A small number of requests were denied at screening on the basis that admission to the program would compromise either their own safety or the safety of other residents.
- **3.6** months is the average length of time a family stayed at the YWCA Mary Dover House Transitional Housing program.
- **435** volunteers provided over **1,794** hours of volunteer service to the YWCA Mary Dover House Programs.

YWCA Mary Dover House Emergency Housing

The YWCA Mary Dover House also provides **6 emergency beds** available for single women experiencing homelessness where the maximum stay is 14 days and there is no cost to the residents. During their stay at the YWCA, women are provided with housing, basic needs support and case management services. If women are unable to find safe, permanent, affordable housing in the community and there is space in the transitional housing program, women are given the option of transferring to the YWCA Transitional Housing Program.

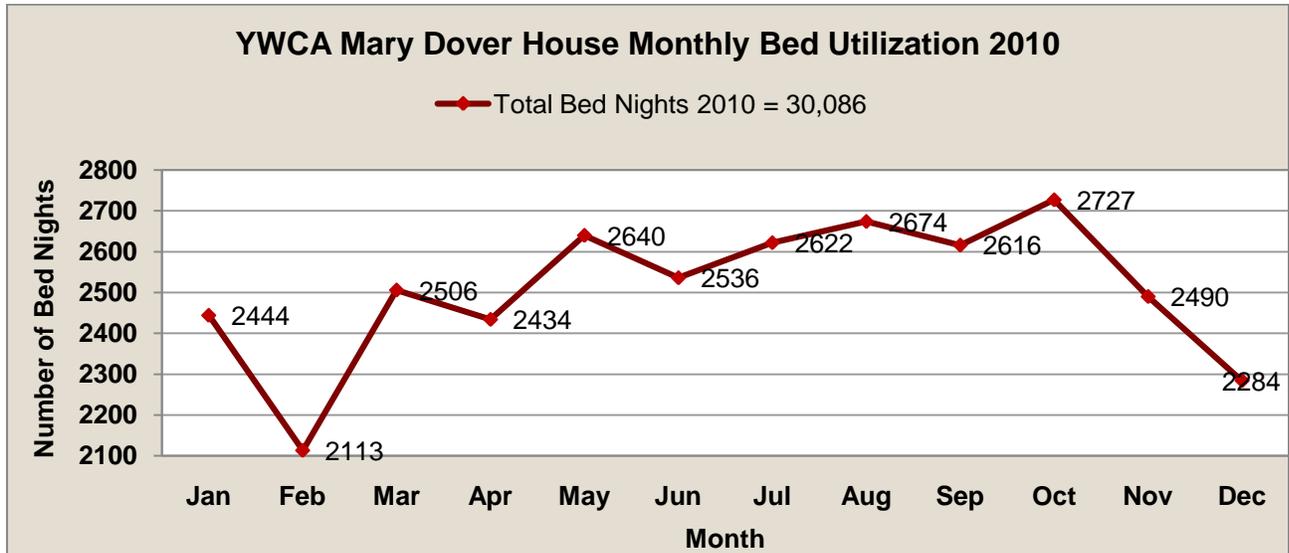
In 2010,

→ **192** women were provided with emergency shelter at YWCA Mary Dover House.

In terms of shelter bed/transitional housing bed occupancy in 2010 the total number of bed nights provided by YWCA Mary Dover House Emergency and Transitional Housing combined was 30,086. **Figure 5** provides the monthly breakdown of bed utilization. The maximum number of bed nights available for occupancy per month depends, of course, on the number of days in each month. For example, months with 31 days have a maximum occupancy of 2666 bed nights based on 86 available beds per night, while months with 30 days have a maximum possible bed night count of 2580. Having said that, you will note that last year, the bed utilization was above maximum capacity during the months of August, September and October when bed shelter was in greatest demand. Although the program maintained the operation of 86 single beds, cribs and toddler beds were added to rooms in order to accommodate the needs of families with infants and young children.

It is interesting to note that February and December were not only the months with lowest occupancy for the YWCA Mary Dover House program but were also two of the lowest months of occupancy for the YWCA Sheriff King Home program (**Figure 1**). One exception to this trend was the month of October which was the month of second lowest occupancy for Sheriff King Home but the month of highest occupancy for Mary Dover House. This is an interesting finding given that there tends to be a parallel or shared increase in service need among women's domestic violence shelters and programs that provide housing to women and lone-parent families experiencing homelessness.

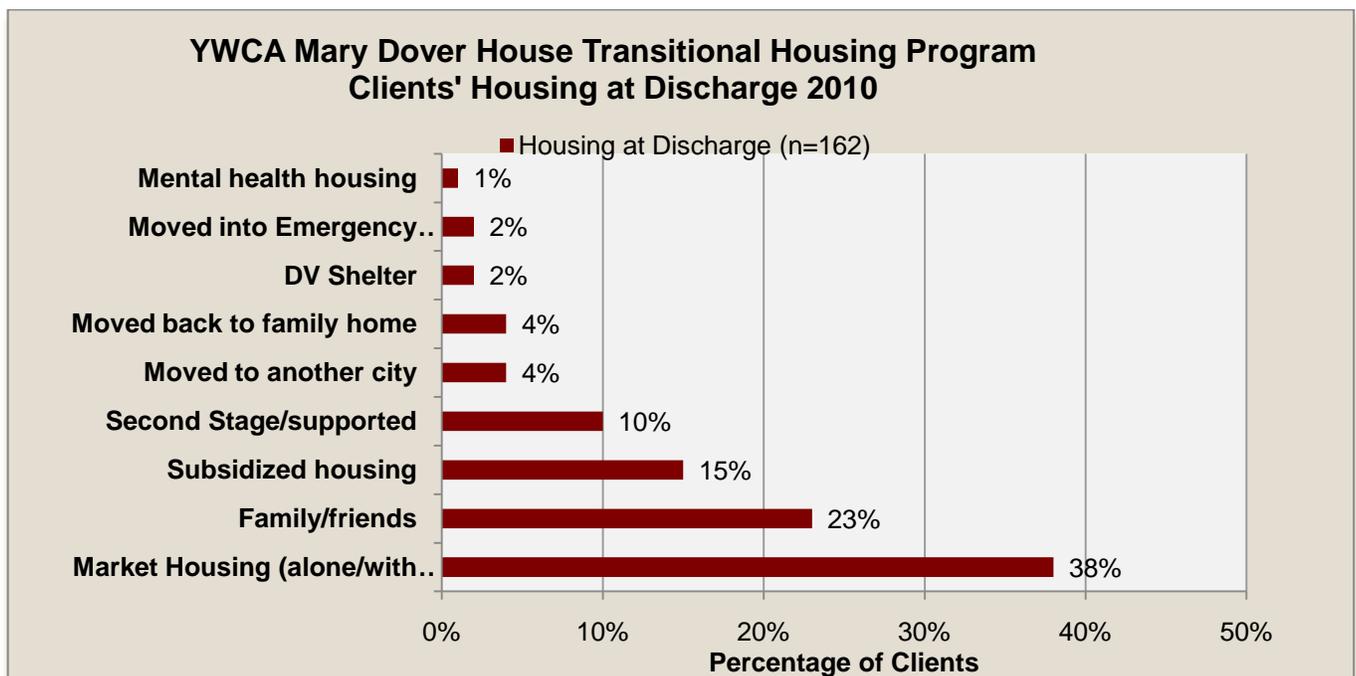
FIGURE 5 – YWCA MARY DOVER HOUSE - MONTHLY BED UTILIZATION IN 2010



CLIENT HOUSING AT DISCHARGE

Upon program discharge, women exiting Mary Dover House Transitional Housing are asked to report their housing status at discharge. As indicated in **Figure 6**, a significant percentage of women whose housing is known at discharge leave Mary Dover House to live in market housing either alone or with a friend (38%).

FIGURE 6 - YWCA MDH TRANSITIONAL HOUSING – CLIENT HOUSING AT DISCHARGE



YWCA Mary Dover House Transitional Housing Family Success Story:

“Laura” fled with her two-year-old child after living in an abusive relationship for years. She found refuge wherever she could, including a car, a couch, and an empty apartment. She ended up in Calgary and was referred to the YWCA Mary Dover House by a friend. At Mary Dover House, Laura and her child were safe, and with the help of her Case Manager, Laura developed goals around housing and was supported in moving from transitional housing to permanent housing in the community. This Christmas is the first time that Laura is decorating a Christmas tree in her own home in seven years.

YWCA Community Housing – new in 2010

YWCA works in partnership with the Calgary Homeless Foundation to provide **21 units** of safe, affordable, secure, long-term housing for women in Calgary experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, homelessness. Services provided by the YWCA Community Housing clients include tenant referrals, case management, community integration and recreational activities.

In 2010,

→ **68** women were provided with long-term housing and support in the YWCA Community Housing program.

YWCA Education and Employment Programs

YWCA English as a Second Language (ESL) Program Services

YWCA ESL Program Services has offered English classes to Calgary immigrants for approximately 100 years, providing instruction in practical English language skills and the cultural knowledge essential for living and working successfully in Canada. We serve immigrants, Canadian citizens and international visitors at a variety of times and locations.

In 2010,

- **2,562** new Canadians received ESL instruction through the YWCA ESL programs;
- YWCA ESL staff members were able to offer customer service and assistance to clients in Cantonese, Mandarin, French, Spanish, Russian and Portuguese;
- **1,326** students attended English for New Canadians (ENC);
- **1,161** students attended Language Instruction for New Canadians (LINC);
- The Canadian Employment Skills (CES) program graduated **75** students;
- **370** volunteers provided over **3,000** hours of volunteer service to the YWCA ESL Program Services.

YWCA Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC)

LINC is fully funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada and affords newcomers to Canada valuable insights into Canadian culture and the Calgary community while developing the language skills needed for daily life and successful integration. Classes are offered from the pre-beginner to upper intermediate levels at the downtown location and the Chinese Cultural Centre. Learners may enroll in either part-time or full-time classes, in the morning, afternoon or evening.

YWCA English for New Canadians (ENC)

ENC classes are learner-centered and aim to provide new Canadians with the language skills and cultural knowledge needed for daily life and work. Calgary Learns provides partial funding for this program to allow adult learners facing economic barriers to access affordable ESL classes. ENC classes are available at the downtown location as well as at the Calgary Jewish Senior Citizens Residence (in partnership with Jewish Family Services Calgary) and 13 library branches throughout Calgary (in partnership with the Calgary Public Library). Learners may

study on a part-time or full-time basis. Classes are offered throughout the day, in the evening and on Saturdays (at some libraries).

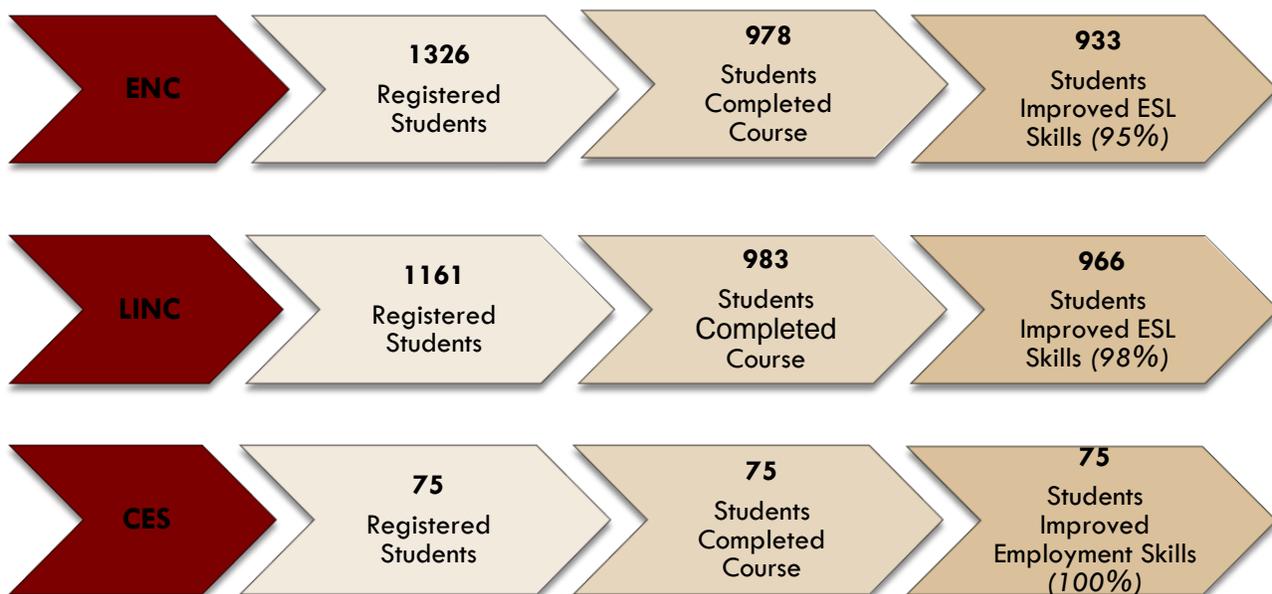
YWCA Canadian Employment Skills (CES)

CES is a bridging program that combines communication skills, computer training and job readiness preparation with work experience to prepare new Canadians for employment in their profession in Canada. To qualify for the program, participants must have occupational training and work experience from their country of origin, as well as intermediate English language skills. Many of the participants are working in survival jobs in Calgary in spite of having university degrees and diplomas from their first countries. This 19-week program is fully funded by Alberta Employment and Immigration, and has been offered at the YWCA of Calgary for 10 years. CES clients include engineers, accountants, banking professionals, office administrators, architects, geologists, IT specialists and chemists who come from China, South America, Mexico, Eastern Europe, Russia, Africa, the Middle East, India, and Southeast Asia.

YWCA ESL PROGRAMS - STUDENT ENROLMENT AND SUCCESS

Figure 7 below illustrates the total number of individuals who registered for each program in 2010, the total number that completed the program, and a program outcome statement. All three ESL programs achieved tremendous success in 2010, with improvement ratings between 95% and 100%!

FIGURE 7 - ESL STUDENT REGISTRATION, COMPLETION & IMPROVEMENT



YWCA ESL Student Success Story

We have many students with unique and varying needs however there is one story that resonates with us that shows the success of YWCA ESL programs and how the program staff touches the lives of people.

She arrived here in February 2010 from Vietnam, a woman who had no exposure to English in her own country and barriered in multiple ways. When she entered the class she had a vocabulary of a handful of common words but really did not understand English. I remember clearly how afraid she was in the class as she was shaking in fear and kept saying I don't understand. Her initial benchmarks were low across the board; however she was determined to learn and everyday came to class with a positive attitude ready to learn.

In the first few months I observed her confidence grow with every new word or phrase she learned. Today she is in a level 3 Class, speaking every day, reading and writing with great confidence. She has a job now and has no problems getting around Calgary. Her success came from the compassion she experienced with our instructors as well as the practical English skills she has acquired. She frequently comes to me and discusses her successes and is thankful for the YWCA and the services she has received. She has moved from a financial barriered individual to a contributing member of our community. This is one of hundreds of examples of the lives we touch in the ESL program at the YWCA.

Vermilion Energy/YWCA Skills Training Centre

The Vermilion Energy/YWCA Skills Training Centre is a pre-employment/pre-apprenticeship training program administered through a partnership between Vermilion Energy and the YWCA of Calgary. It seeks to help women enter into successful viable careers in the trades, thus enabling them to achieve independence and financial sustainability through career success in the construction industry. In 2010, the program received funding from Services Canada, Alberta Employment and Immigration (AEII) and through corporate and private donations. Community partners include SAIT, RONA, Habitat for Humanity, Calgary Construction Association, Prestige Railings, Cambium Woodworks, Bow Valley College and Calgary Housing.

In 2010,

- The Vermilion Energy/YWCA Skills Training Centre provided **52** trainees with approximately **20,000** hours of classroom education and hands-on work experience.
- **34** trainees successfully graduated from the Vermilion Energy/YWCA Skills Training Centre in 2010.
- **17** volunteers provided **106** hours of volunteer service to the Vermilion Energy/YWCA Skills Training Centre.

2010 Graduate Letter of Thanks:

I would like to thank the Vermilion Energy/YWCA Skills Training Centre and all its funders for giving me the opportunity to better educate myself and give me the knowledge to get working in the construction industry.

Before I came to this school I was a single mother living off welfare as the line of work I was trained in did not pay me enough to pay my rent and feed my children. I was struggling with depression as well as panic disorder and some very big trust issues. Thanks to this program I have learned to handle my depression and panic much better to the point where I have very few if any panic attacks , I have learned to trust a bit more in myself and those around me.

The biggest impact this program has had on me is the confidence it has given me to go out and support my children and myself in a growing industry. This program has been a big growing process for me physically and mentally, and with everything that I have learned and achieved, I will succeed in this life.

Sincerely, Alanna

YWCA CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

The Issues

For optimal child development, children need quality experiences in early life that focus on their emotional, social, as well as cognitive development (Mustard, 2010). Given that there has been a dramatic increase in the employment levels of Canadian women with very young children in the past quarter century (Statistics Canada, 2003), non-parental child care is now commonplace affecting how Canadian children live, learn, and grow. High-quality child care in the form of responsive and stimulating care is associated with better cognitive and language development, positive peer relations, compliance with adults, fewer behaviour problems, and better mother-child relations (Owen, 2003).

The relationship between children and their parental caregivers is central to optimal early learning and healthy development. Too often however, children experience living with family violence, abuse, poverty, and/or homelessness – situations which interfere and impede normal bio-social development and general well-being. Many children across Canada struggle with these circumstances daily. For example, according to Statistics Canada (2010a), over 600,000 children live in low income families across Canada and out of the 867,948 Canadians who accessed food banks during March 2010 alone, 38% were children (Food Banks Canada, 2010). Yet, still others are victims of abuse and neglect. The *Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect* (2008) reported that neglect (34% or 28,938 children), exposure to domestic violence (34% or 29,259 children), and physical abuse (20% or 17,212 children) were the three most common forms of substantiated child maltreatment in Canada (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2010). Conditions of poverty, homelessness, hunger and domestic violence burden children with situations of chronic stress which research has demonstrated weakens the biological structure of the developing brain, thereby effecting learning capacity, physical, and mental health (Shonkoff, 2009). These changes can affect the child's developmental outcomes over the course of their life resulting in challenges with addiction, violence, mental health, and illness (Cooper, 2009). Through the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study, Dr. Vincent Felitti (2009) demonstrated that adverse events during childhood such as abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, growing up in a household with an alcoholic or drug user or with a mother being treated violently, are related to adult health issues and health-risk behaviours such as addiction, heart disease, obesity, and suicide attempts.

Often these circumstances impact the mental health of children as well. The Mood Disorders Society of Canada (2009) reported that 1.2 million children and youth struggle with mental health; anxiety being the most common. In the 2005-06 fiscal year, 58,387 children in Alberta under the age of 18 accessed physicians for mental health services (Alberta Mental Health Board, 2008). Early intervention that provides supportive conditions for healthy childhood development, including that of increased parenting skills and family social support, is crucial for the wellbeing of children (Dodge, 2004). So too is investment in other critical services such as after school programs, mentoring programs, parenting programs, and services that centre on the social and emotional needs of children and youth. These types of services have been

found to be extremely effective in reversing some of the negative outcomes including improvements in self-esteem, communication and social skills, positive relationships and decreases in depression, anxiety and behavioural problems (Harvard Family Research Project, 2008).

Our Impact

The YWCA of Calgary believes it is every child's basic right to live a life free of violence and abuse, and in a supportive environment that will encourage positive and healthy choices. It is our vision that every child have a safe and nurturing home, every family be connected formally and informally to the community, and every youth be supported to achieve their optimal potential.

YWCA Home and School Support Programs

The YWCA Home and School Support Programs provide a platform from which to build upon and enhance family functioning and wellness. The COMPASS, Bridges and Youth Advocate programs address overall family functioning, mild-to-moderate mental health issues in children/youth, school-related issues, access to community resources, and child/youth recreational opportunities.

In 2010,

- The YWCA Home and School Support Programs provided a combined total of **30,853** hours of client service to children, youth and their parents.

YWCA Community, Parent and School Support Program (COMPASS)

COMPASS is an early intervention program that provides in-home support to families of children 0-12 years of age experiencing moderate emotional, social, and/or behavioural problems. The goals of this program are to increase behavioural, social, and emotional functioning of children 0-12 years of age; to assist parents in further developing positive parenting skills; to increase the family's awareness of, and access to, community resources, and to promote self-sufficiency and well-being in the family. The COMPASS program also offers Positive Choices groups for children and parents in community schools.

In 2010,

- **410** children and **407** parents received counselling support, parenting education, and access to community resources from the COMPASS program;
- **60** parents and children attended COMPASS Positive Choices groups;

- In 2010, the COMPASS program had **177** families on its wait list for in-home family support services.
- **165 days** was the average wait time for families to commence services with the COMPASS program.

YWCA Family School Liaison Programs

- **Bridges** – The Bridges program is a collaborative, school-based program in partnership with the Calgary Board of Education. It provides a safe, nurturing, positive environment for students in elementary and junior high schools who are struggling with school performance due to social, emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. Students aged 6 – 15, and in grades 1 to 9, are supported in their efforts to maximize their potential. Working closely with the school-based team, the Family School Liaison worker provides counselling and emotional support to families and children that addresses academic achievement, basic needs issues, parenting education and support, and information and access to community resources.
- **Short-Term Observation Program (STOP)** – The STOP Program is a short-term school-based early intervention program in partnership with the Calgary Board of Education. The Family School Liaison workers provide short-term intervention services to parents and children ages 6-12, including counselling and emotional support, parenting education and assistance, advocacy and connecting families to appropriate community resources. The maximum length of service provided to a family is approximately eight weeks.

In 2010,

- **219** students in grades 1-9 and their families received Family School Liaison counselling, support services and recreational opportunities.

YWCA Youth Advocate Program

The Youth Advocate program is an early intervention program with direct one-on-one support to youth aged 10-18 and their families. It assists with problem-solving, conflict resolution, social skill development, and building self-esteem. The program also offers youth groups in the community and the Positive Choices Adolescent Groups which are designed to provide adolescents with information and tools to manage and enhance their ability to cope with stressful circumstances, promote healthy relationship communication, and provide encouragement to make healthy choices for themselves. The Youth Advocate program also provides additional facilitation support to the YWCA “Chill Zone” after school youth drop-in program. In January 2011, with an enhanced focus on youth leadership, the program’s name will be changed to the YWCA Youth Leadership Program.

In 2010,

- **43** youth received one-on-one support and mentoring from the Youth Advocate program;
- **143** youth participated in various Youth Advocate community-based group programs.

“Chill Zone” – YWCA After-School Youth Drop-in Program

The “*Chill Zone*” is an after-school drop-in program for youth in NE Calgary that provides support to youth in the after-school hours and allows the youth to develop a sense of belonging in their community. The “*Chill Zone*” after-school youth drop-in program assists the youth to develop leadership skills and positive peer relationships, and provides the opportunity to participate in new and different activities in a safe, friendly, encouraging, inclusive environment. The program is aimed at reducing risk factors and enhancing protective factors to support youth in achieving their potential in life.

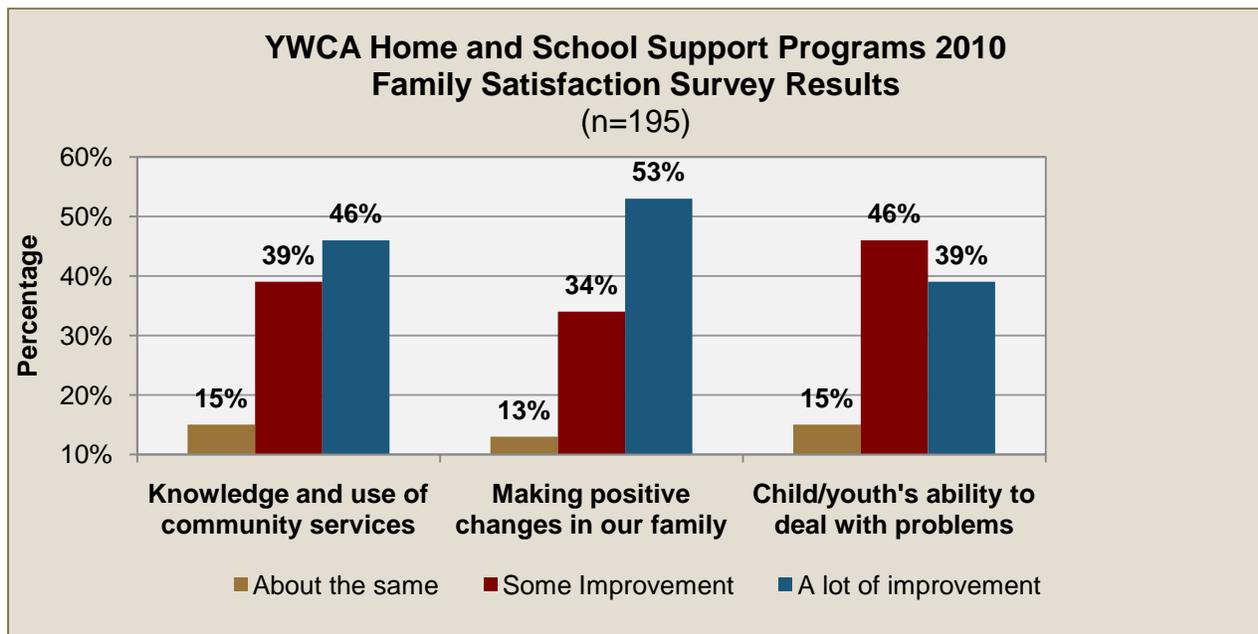
In 2010,

- **168** youth participated in the “Chill Zone” After School Youth Drop-in groups.

FAMILY SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS

As part of the outcome reporting process, the YWCA Home and School Support Programs request parents complete a **Family Satisfaction Survey** upon discharge from all three Home and School Support Programs.

The survey includes a series of questions about the level of improvement experienced in the following categories: 1) Improved knowledge and use of community resources; 2) Increased ability to make positive changes within their family; and 3) Improvement in the child/youth’s ability to deal with problems. **Figure 8** on the next page illustrates the overall level of improvement, as reported by parents, in these three categories.

FIGURE 8 - YWCA HOME & SCHOOL SUPPORT – FAMILY SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS

YWCA Summer Campership Program

Every summer, thanks to generous donors, the YWCA of Calgary is able to sponsor a number of children from economically disadvantaged families to attend overnight summer camps around the Calgary region. Being exposed to new adventures at summer camp enhances a child's self-esteem, builds new friendships, triggers different interests, challenges and restores confidence. This camp experience also provides time away from the stressors of home, a chance to be a child, and an opportunity to have fun.

In 2010,

→ **81** children were sponsored to attend week-long overnight summer camps



Early Childhood Programming

YWCA Parent Link Corridor

The YWCA Parent Link Corridor is a unique program in that it builds on existing services, creates new programs for children ages 0-6 and their parents where required, and supports populations not currently served by other programs. Parents, caregivers, and children who access YWCA Parent Link Corridor programs benefit from a number of “bonus” services, offered by virtue of the fact that the YWCA Parent Link Corridor represents a three-way partnership between the YWCA of Calgary, Calgary Urban Project Society, and Calgary Family Services.

In 2010,

- **838** children and **960** parents received **651 hours** of early childhood, parent education and family support services from the YWCA Parent Link Corridor;
- **42** volunteers provided **283** hours of volunteer service to the YWCA Parent Link Corridor.

The YWCA Parent Link Corridor philosophy recognizes that a “one size fits all” approach does not work for families who are marginalized, struggling with poverty, addictions, homelessness, family violence, and other realities that set them apart from “typical” families. Many families who access the program lack basic needs such as food, clothing, medical emergency support, and travel support. As well, many children are not supported by community programs often because their parents are new to Canada and are challenged in navigating Canadian systems and social services. The YWCA Parent Link Corridor provides direct parenting support for these multi-barriered families with counselling, referral and on-site supports.

YWCA Parent Link Corridor – Quilt made by PLC Clients and Staff for YWCA Centennial



YWCA Parent Link Centre Parent Advisory Dinner - Parent Comments

“I felt really lonely in Canada and Parent Link gave me a place to feel connected and meet people.”

“I came from a country that had lots of people and I had lots of friends and family around all the time. When I moved to Canada I lost all this but Parent Link provided a way to connect. “

“We are moving home to China; my son’s teachers tell me he will do well because of his language skills and all the songs he can sing. That is because of Mother Goose. Thank you for everything, we really loved coming here.”

YWCA Child Care Centre (Downtown)

The YWCA of Calgary Child Care Centre has been in operation as a fully-licensed facility since 1998. Prior to this, the centre operated as a drop-in and pre-school room beginning in the early 1980s. The YWCA Child Care Centre currently provides services to children ages 13 months to 5 years. With its location in the downtown YWCA of Calgary building, children have the added benefit of two outdoor playgrounds and recreational opportunities in the Fitness on 5th gymnasium. Full-time pre-school children have the opportunity for a weekly gym program.

In 2010,

- **50** infants and young children attended the YWCA of Calgary Child Care Centre, located at our downtown site.
- In March 2010 the YWCA Child Care Centre was re-accredited for **3 years** by the Alberta Association for the Accreditation of Early Learning and Care Services.

YWCA Child Care Centre – Downtown Child Care Playground



ENMAX/YWCA Bright Lights Child Care Centre

The ENMAX/YWCA Bright Lights Child Care Centre opened in August 2007 as a fully-licensed facility capable of providing high-quality child care to children aged 3 months to 5 years. This beautiful and thoughtfully-designed facility, offering exemplary service to families and children, is the result of a creative and collaborative partnership between ENMAX and the YWCA of Calgary. The Centre's staff is made up of credentialed child care professionals and the Bright Lights Child Care Centre's environment provides a wide variety of opportunities for exploration, discovery and positive growth at all developmental learning stages.

In 2010,

→ **98** infants and young children attended the ENMAX/YWCA Bright Lights Child Care Centre.

Enmax/YWCA Bright Lights Child Care Centre – Children's Open-Ended Artwork



Bright Lights Child Care Parent Letter

Dear Celia,

I am writing you this letter to convey how happy I am with the care my daughter and son have been receiving at the Bright Lights Child Care Centre. We have seen such positive growth in our daughter through the care and guidance she receives from the program, and I anticipate the same impact for my son as he develops and grows within the environment.

Both my children love their teachers as well as the activities available. They thoroughly enjoy the music man, arts and crafts as well as the friends they have developed. They also receive the steady and consistent rules and guidelines they have to follow at home, which gives them the coping skills they will require as they continue to grow.

Again, I truly value the experience my children receive as part of their day at Bright Lights. Keep up the good work!

Sincerely yours,
Shawn

YWCA Child Care Centre at Bow Valley College (BVC)

The YWCA Child Care Centre at BVC opened in August 2009 as a fully-licensed facility, providing services to 48 children aged 19 months to five years. This beautiful and creatively-designed facility, offering exceptional service to children and their families, is the result of a creative and collaborative partnership between Bow Valley College and the YWCA of Calgary, to primarily address the child care needs of Bow Valley College students and employees.

The centre provides high quality child care based on child-centered, emergent curriculum within a collaborative framework that includes the child, the family, the Early Learning and Child Care program at BVC, and the YWCA of Calgary. As part of the centre's commitment to quality programming and parent feedback, the centre conducts an annual family survey. Some results for 2010 are highlighted in Figure 8 on the next page.

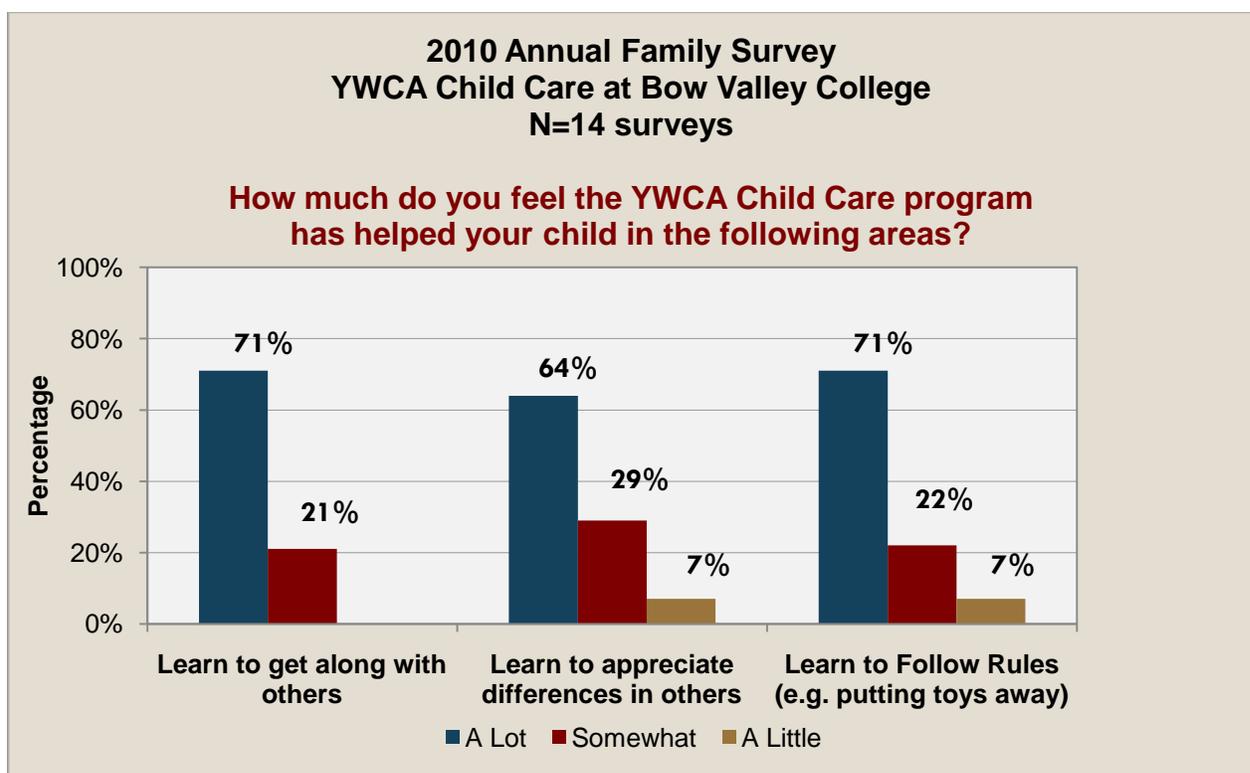
In 2010,

- **77** infants and young children attended the YWCA Child Care Centre at BVC,
- In October 2010, the YWCA Child Care Centre at Bow Valley College received

3 year full accreditation status from the Alberta Association for the Accreditation of Early Learning and Care Services.

- ➔ In partnership with Bow Valley College, the YWCA Child Care Centre at Bow Valley College celebrated its grand opening on November 19, 2010.
- ➔ The centre was presented with a plaque from Minister Yvonne Fritz on behalf of Premier Ed Stelmach: *"In appreciation of your partnership dedicated to providing state of the art child care. Your high standards in Early Childhood Learning and Child Care will enrich the lives of children."*

FIGURE 9 – YWCA CHILD CARE AT BOW VALLEY COLLEGE – 2010 ANNUAL FAMILY SURVEY



YWCA LIFE AND WELLNESS

The Issues

The YWCA of Calgary believes the health and wellness of all individuals contributes to a vibrant and healthy community. Many factors can influence overall health such as genetics, personal coping skills, our social, mental, and physical environments, and the economic context of our lives. While Canadians are often touted as some of the healthiest people in the world, obesity and sedentary lifestyles are on the rise. In the most comprehensive national study ever conducted in Canada, 37% of adults were found to be overweight and 24% obese; a total of 63% of the adult population (Statistics Canada, 2010b). Fitness levels of adults, children, and youth were all found to have significantly declined since 1981 in this same study, raising concerns at the federal level about disease development, increased health care costs, and future productivity.

The physical health implications of inactivity and obesity are well known; cardiovascular disease, diabetes, musculoskeletal disorders, and some cancers, (colon, breast and endometrial) as well as premature death and disability in children (World Health Organization, 2011). Research examining the health benefits and risks specific to girls and women expand this list to include osteoporosis, poor body image, eating disorders, estrogen-related cancers, menopausal symptoms, fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome, and psychosocial health problems such as depression, anxiety, and low-self esteem (Reid, Dyck, McKay & Frisby, 2000).

Advocates for women's health suggest that women face specific barriers to participating in physical activity and recreation. In general, these barriers revolve around the juggling of family, home, and work responsibilities which many women are primarily responsible for (Segar, Jayaratne, Hanlon & Richardson, 2002). Demands of child-rearing, domestic responsibilities and full-time work severely limit the amount of time and energy women have available for recreation and personal time. Further, women often express that they prioritize the needs of all others over their own. According to Hoebeke (2008), additional obstacles are present for women with low socio-economic status -- the population demonstrating the highest rates of physical inactivity and the highest risk for health-related issues. Lack of transportation, child care, money and social supports, compounded by the low self-esteem and fatigue that often result from the stress of impoverished situations, account for their high levels of physical inactivity.

Through physical activity girls and women can reduce their risk for a myriad of physical health problems (Reid, Dyck, McKay & Frisby, 2000), decrease depression, anxiety and psychological distress (Azar, Ball, Salmon & Cleland, 2008), increase feelings of personal empowerment, body awareness and self esteem, (Concepcion & Ebbeck, 2005) and reduce social isolation (Reid, Panic & Frisby, 2002). Initiatives aimed at increasing the participation of young girls and women in physical activity worldwide argue that the outcomes from involvement in recreation can extend even further through building life skills, creating social networks, challenging gender norms and uniting communities (Fassihi, 2009).

Our Impact

The YWCA of Calgary believes in a holistic approach to life, health and wellness - empowering women to make positive lifestyle choices and to rise above crisis and barriers. The YWCA Fitness on 5th fitness facility offers a multitude of programs and services for community members, volunteers, staff and YWCA clients.

In 2010,

- The YWCA Fitness on 5th facility provided **875** subsidized fitness passes to YWCA clients, valued at \$52,500.
- YWCA Fitness on 5th personnel provided **208 hours** of fitness assessment, instruction and nutritional counselling to Vermilion/YWCA Skills Training Centre trainees – integral to the physical preparation required for the demands of a career in the construction trade!
- In 2010, the YWCA Fitness on 5th served **724** members (*386 women and 338 men*), 202 of which were new members.
- The YWCA Fitness on 5th membership retention rate in 2010 was **72%**, compared to the industry average of 45%.
- **22** volunteers provided **550** hours of fitness programming to Fitness on 5th members.
- The YWCA Fitness on 5th hosted **32 fitness delegates** from around the province at the 21st Annual AAYWCA Fitness Leader Retreat in May 2010.

YWCA Fitness on 5th Programs and Services

- 45,000-square foot fitness facility with cardio, weight, balance and functional training equipment
- Adult group fitness classes
- Two squash courts
- Full-size gymnasium
- Four aerobics studios with wood-sprung or aerobic flooring (available for hourly rentals)

- Yoga, cycle, core conditioning, definition and strength, cardio and TRX fitness classes
- AFLCA and CanFitPro certified fitness class instructors
- Personal training, fitness assessments, body composition and fitness centre orientation
- First Aid & CPR Training (offered to the community, clients of Vermilion Energy/YWCA Skills Training Centre, and staff)

YWCA Fitness on 5th Health and Wellness Services

- Hands on Massage Therapy - quality massage therapy since 1989
- Myo Sport Physiotherapy - professional and personalized physiotherapy services

The YWCA Fitness on 5th facility is committed to offering physical fitness and recreation opportunities to all YWCA clients through the provision of subsidized fitness passes. **Figure 10** summarizes the number of subsidized fitness passes provided to YWCA clients by program area in 2010.

FIGURE 10 - YWCA SUBSIDIZED CLIENT FITNESS PASSES by PROGRAM AREA in 2010

YWCA OF CALGARY PROGRAM AREA	Number of Subsidized Client Fitness Passes Issued in 2010
YWCA ESL Program Services	431
YWCA Mary Dover House Programs	234
YWCA Sheriff King Home Programs	38
Vermilion Energy/YWCA Skills Training Centre	172
TOTAL CLIENTS	875

YWCA PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

YWCA of Calgary – Downtown 5th Avenue SE – 403-263-1550

YWCA of Calgary Sheriff King Home – 403-266-4111

ENMAX/YWCA Bright Lights Child Care Centre – 403-301-2777

YWCA Child Care Centre at Bow Valley College – 403-705-5786

Vermilion Energy/YWCA Skills Training Centre – 403-705-7526

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### **YWCA of Calgary Chief Executive Officer**

Sue Tomney, Chief Executive Officer ~ 403-262-0481

### **YWCA Child Care Centres**

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- ➔ Andrea Gallant, Supervisor, YWCA Child Care Centre ~ 403-232-1594
- ➔ Celia Cancela, Supervisor, ENMAX/YWCA Child Care Centre ~ 403-301-2777
- ➔ Sarah Eichhorn, Supervisor, YWCA Child Care at BVC ~ 403-705-5786

### **YWCA Community and Visitation Services Programs**

Jean Dunbar, Associate Director, Intervention Services ~ 403-294-3662

- ➔ Hazel Lawley, Manager, Community and Visitation Services ~ 403-262-0496
- ➔ Ayka Reitsma, Supervisor, Home and School Support Programs ~ 403-206-3460
- ➔ Marlene Thauvette, Supervisor, Home and School Support Programs ~ 403-294-3664
- ➔ Sue Salmon, Supervisor, YWCA Parent Link Corridor ~ 403-232-1582

### **YWCA Education and Employment Programs**

Lee Fletcher, Associate Director, Learn English and Wellness Services ~ 403-262-0488

- ➔ Jane Cooper, Manager, Vermilion Energy/YWCA Skills Training Centre ~ 403-705-5773
- ➔ Carol Rix, Supervisor, YWCA CES Program ~ 403-538-2537
- ➔ Peter Jarmics, Supervisor, YWCA ESL Programs ~ 403-750-2521

## **YWCA Family Violence Prevention Programs**

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- Hazel Lawley, Manager, Community and Visitation Services ~ 403-262-0496
- Suzanne Ranta, Manager, Sheriff King Home Shelter and Outreach ~ 403-294-3672
- Gary Gibbens, Manager, Domestic Violence Special Projects ~ 403-294-3679
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- Allan Desjardins, Supervisor, Children Exposed to Domestic Violence Services ~ 403-294-3660

## **YWCA Fitness on 5th**

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- Ferry James, Manager of Wellness ~ 403-262-0499
- Doug Smith, Wellness Supervisor ~ 403-294-7333
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Karen Orser, Associate Director, Housing ~ 403-262-0476

- Val Tkacik, Manager, Housing ~ 403-262-0479
- Ermine Cummings, Supervisor, Mary Dover Transitional Housing~ 403-294-7340
- Gail McNeil-Oliver, Team Leader, Community Housing ~ 403-705-5778

## **YWCA Quality Assurance Department**

Cynthia Wild, Associate Director, Quality Assurance ~ 403-294-3669

- Christine Hall, Manager, Outcomes and Quality Assurance ~ 403-232-1593
- Sarah Fotheringham, Manager, Research and Quality Assurance ~ 403-705-5770
- Anna Burrowes, Outcomes and Research Analyst ~ 403-750-2519

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