

# e4cenvoy

Winter 2020/2021



Alice\*, a mother of 2 twin toddlers relies on Financial Management Hub for more than helping her to learn how to budget, she relies on the dependability of knowing that she can receive gift cards for groceries rather than cash. For a mother in addiction recovery, this helps reduce her fears around returning to addiction.

*"We help as much as we can, by mailing gift cards to her, or dropping them off if they're urgently needed. We try and limit contact to reduce risks. She can't go out to the bank like you or I could – the risks are just too high. COVID has severely impacted her independence. We see that a lot."*

*Prior to COVID, Alice would often drop into Hub with her two girls for a quick visit, or to pick up her weekly funds. These touchpoints with her support networks are essential.*



Seeing people not poverty.

# Financial Management Hub



***"It's their money, and their decision. We're just here to provide education, and ultimately support their decisions."***

— **Talita Cordeiro**, Senior Financial Administrator, Financial Management Hub

It's no secret that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a tremendous impact on Albertans. For folkx living on a limited income, the impact is often tenfold.

e4c's Financial Management Hub works with clients who are seeking support with managing their money, and establishing a budget. It's important to note the difference between Financial Administrators and someone like a Public Trustee. Clients of the Hub have complete control of every aspect of their finances and financial decisions, making choices about what a realistic budget might look like for them, and ensuring the importance of honesty around their spending habits. 'If clients enjoy a coffee, a cigarette, or other personal choices, it's important to note that in their budget. If it's not accounted for, their budget won't be successful.

## Currently HUB supports



**338**  
Clients



**14**  
Clients through  
Consulting  
services



Working in partnership  
with Homeward Trust  
Edmonton and  
AHS and AHS  
Continuing Care

***"Once you figure out your money and establish financial security, you see the impact on every area of your life. You have better health - your stress is lowered. You have better mental health, because your anxiety around your money is decreased. It truly is profound." - Tanya Tellier-McCandless, Manager***

Financial Administrators work with clients to help them manage their money effectively, prioritizing paying for essentials like rent and utilities, and supporting them to advocate with creditors and debtors.

The pandemic has presented a unique set of stressors for our clients, who rely on the Hub not only for their weekly spending money, but also for their relational supports.

"Isolation is definitely having a huge impact on our clients," Talita shares. "Financially, things haven't changed much for them. But for those that are used to coming to Hub to talk to us about what they're going through, or who rely on going to the grocery store for social interactions, those opportunities just aren't there."

Supporting clients in our community highlights the technological divide between Edmonton's vulnerable population and those living above the poverty line. Luxuries like a consistent cell phone or internet aren't often things that they can afford.

***"We definitely have a lot of clients who use public phones, borrow a phone from a friend, or use a phone at a business or other support agency. This creates difficulty for both the client and us. We have no guarantee that clients receive the message, or that we can connect with them if needed. With reduced office hours at the Hub, this can lead to miscommunication and misunderstandings."***

With limited appointment hours due to COVID-19, relationships that were previously relational, with the luxury of personalized touchpoints, aren't often possible. Engagements and office hours become more transactional in nature due to necessity; with reduced hours come an increased demand for services when the Hub is open.

"That is something that is difficult for all of us to cope with, both clients and staff. We are used to being able to connect for much longer. We love the intentionality in our relationships. But, with limited hours, our lines are long and we have to ensure that we see everyone. It's been a tough adjustment; we're so used to being able to enjoy a coffee together and catch up. But we'll get back there when it's safe to do so. And we can't wait for that."

***You may have noticed our shift to using "womxn" and "folkx" in our messaging and writing. The X is intentional! In the spirit of inclusivity, e4c has shifted our language to reflect terminology that includes and references transgender, non-binary, and LGBTQ2S+ people.***

# Remembering the Tax Man

---



Archdiocese of Edmonton

e4c Our community was saddened to hear of the passing of “The Tax Man,” Clarence Mohr, who passed on November 1, 2020. Clarence and his wife Carol were members of the inner city tax filing community for many years. Clarence was known to solve seemingly unsolvable tax problems for many folkx and improving their access to benefits. Clarence was a gentle man who was a blessing to so many. He will be greatly missed.

***“Our deepest sympathies to all who knew and cherished Clarence. He helped hundreds of our clients to complete their taxes over the years. A true community hero; he will be missed”***

—  
Elizabeth Fry Society, Edmonton.



e4c mobilized Make Tax Time Pay clinics in July to continue to file taxes for our community on a virtual basis during the COVID-19 pandemic.

***We filed 2,388 tax returns for 1,990 individuals, resulting in an average return of \$1,812.***



# Welcoming Annie Brandt

WEAC Manager

**"It's a beautiful place."**

When you first meet Annie, you are greeted with a soft voice and a smile. Originally from Freemont, Nebraska, Annie ventured to Edmonton at just 21 years old. Before WEAC, Annie was employed for over fifteen years with Unlimited Potential Community services, as front line Group Care, working her way to Manager of Group Care for the Edmonton region.

"I'm always open to opportunities," Annie shares after being asked why she came to WEAC in the middle of a global pandemic. "Honestly, what did it for me, was being able to spend time on a Saturday with some of the womxn who access the shelter. It was extremely humbling. Everyone welcomed me with open arms, and were very warm. There's a sense of family here."

Annie shares that she was also drawn to the Gibson Block, which has housed the Women's Emergency Accommodation Centre since 1994. "It has its own soul, this building. It's a big piece of what happens here."

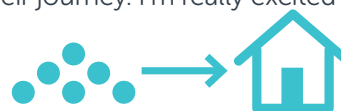
There is strength and resiliency within those walls, evidenced as WEAC moves forward in its transformation journey, which began in 2018 with a community consultation panel to envision the future of WEAC.

***"What e4c wants to accomplish is to create something that doesn't exist for womxn in this community. There is so much potential with this transformation project."***

The transformation has taken a backseat in recent months, as the staff and womxn accessing the shelter have battled chaos of COVID-19, from seemingly ever-changing protocols, procedures, and medical orders. Part of the challenge is reduced capacity within the shelter itself. With social distancing, bed space has become limited. "COVID complicates things, and exacerbates existing challenges for a lot of these womxn". Mental health that was previously in a manageable balance has been challenged with 14-day public health quarantines upon entry to WEAC. "Those with active addictions in isolation – it's challenging. We do our best to provide them with activities, iPads, and chocolate and candy to

help with withdrawals, but like you and I, they're scared. They're lonely, and there is a lot of fear around COVID."

Despite these challenges, the WEAC Housing Team has been actively working alongside the womxn in the shelter. "A shelter is just that – a shelter. It's not a home. Those days that you feel overwhelmed, that's what keeps you going. Knowing that the womxn are taking the next steps on their journey. I'm really excited for what's next."



**Since August, 25 womxn**  
have moved into a home of their own.

## Fun Facts about Annie:

- She was born and raised in Freemont, Nebraska and attended college in Kansas at Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas
- She has a degree in Criminal Justice
- She's a mom to 2 beautiful and busy daughters
- She used to manage a Starbucks in Millwoods and absolutely loved it.
- She lives with her 2 daughters, partner, and husky pup

## Thank You: Telus Edmonton Community Board

Thanks to the generosity of the TELUS Friendly Futures Foundation, \$18,500 was donated in support of promoting positive engagement opportunities for womxn in isolation through the purchase of iPads, activity kits, and PPE including reusable masks.

Their generosity will help reduce the impacts of isolation, and help retain connections to the womxn's natural supports, like family and friends.



# "It's not what I had pictured for myself"

Before WEAC, Alma was living in the bush, and has gone from there to 'being on the right path,' in life, managing her addictions and coping skills. In six months, Alma says her life has been transformed, going from injecting vodka, snorting pills and carving her own skin as a way of handling the pain in her life, to looking forward to moving out into her own apartment.

At WEAC, she has learned stress management, how to manage her money, and how to control her emotions.

Alma grew up in foster care, from the time she was 11 months old, to transitioning out of the system at 19 years old. In foster care, she says, she was badly abused by 2 different foster dads until the age of seven, trauma that has impacted her life every day since. Her life changed when she was eight, moving into a foster home that was very spiritual and supportive. "I was blessed to find them. They prayed for me, paid for private school, therapy. We went on vacations...I still remember those vacations."

Running away at fifteen, she experimented with drugs and alcohol, often staying the night at youth shelters, and trying to outrun the trauma from her youth, developing drug-induced psychosis at sixteen. "It was hard," she admits. "It's not what I had pictured for myself." Having a perspective of continuous self-improvement helped get her through periods of living rough, often sleeping out in the open, or on friend's couches.



**When people stared at her panhandling, or sleeping outdoors, she viewed them with compassion and understanding; it's all about perspective. "Maybe they've never slept outside, or gone three days without eating. They have no empathy because they lack understanding. Complaining and being bitter about the way you are seen is not productive. I want to be the force of change."**

There are small things that people take for granted when considering looking for an apartment, or finding a job. Alma feels like she is able to take the next steps in finding her own place, now that she has access to a computer and a phone.

Each day is a step forward to her ultimate goal of completing her post-secondary education in Film Studies, and getting married. Alma has encountered a lot of personal growth since becoming sober. "I'm focusing less on what I dislike about my situation and more about what I like about myself. I love myself more now. I'm worth more. I love who I'm becoming, I love my journey, and want to work harder to get that." Thanks to WEAC, she wakes up excited, with a positive attitude, and feels as though she can conquer the world. Housing is that first step, and she's already on her way.



Thank you to  
Anne/Marc:

**\$75K**



**The holidays are a challenging time to live in a shelter-based environment. Between the cold, and the separation from friends and family, we have seen the resiliency and community in the womxn that reside within the walls of WEAC.**

Here's how you can help make the holidays a little brighter for the womxn of WEAC:

- In-Kind donations of NEW activity kits (coloring books, word searches, pencil crayons, no-sew craft kits.)
- In-Kind donations of cold weather gear (new or gently used & freshly laundered): gloves, mittens, hats, sweaters, jeans, socks & pyjamas.
- Monetary donations by donating online

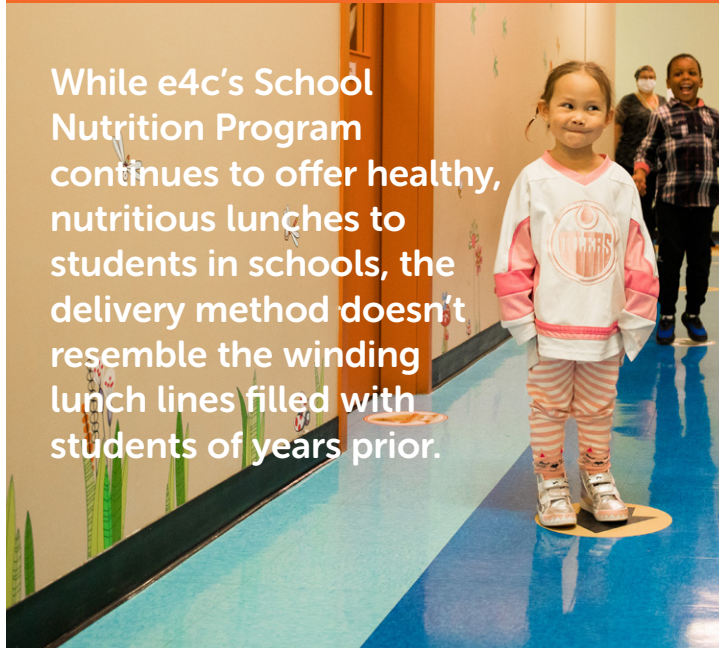


**Scan to  
donate today.**

# Taking Care of One Another

## An Update on SNP

While e4c's School Nutrition Program continues to offer healthy, nutritious lunches to students in schools, the delivery method doesn't resemble the winding lunch lines filled with students of years prior.



Nutritional Support Workers work tirelessly to protect the students in the school communities – by completing at-home health screenings prior to shift start, and another upon entry to each school. Each worker dons PPE including a mask and gloves, and fully disinfects the kitchens prior to beginning food preparation. These enhanced measures help limit the spread of COVID-19.

The halls are eerily quiet as our Nutrition Support Workers wheel their carts down each hallway, dropping bins off at each classroom. Now, instead of Nutrition Support Workers handing out food to students each day, the individually packaged food is passed out by the

classroom teacher. The program remains universal, and students choose what they want to eat that day.

Morning meals often see a circulation of different fruits, like grapes and watermelon when available. If we've learned anything from previous school years, it's that the students accessing the program are adventurous eaters, and always eager to try new things!

Since September, we have seen an increasing demand for nutritional supports in each school. Parents are becoming increasingly reliant on the program to ensure their children have access to consistent, nutritious food. We know the impact that nutrition has on their learning – a full tummy allows students to focus in school, which in turn helps set them up for better learning outcomes. While COVID has changed the way food is delivered to classrooms, the outcomes remain the same: healthy bodies, healthy minds, and happy students.

*Each meal costs  
just \$2.50 per day,  
per student.*

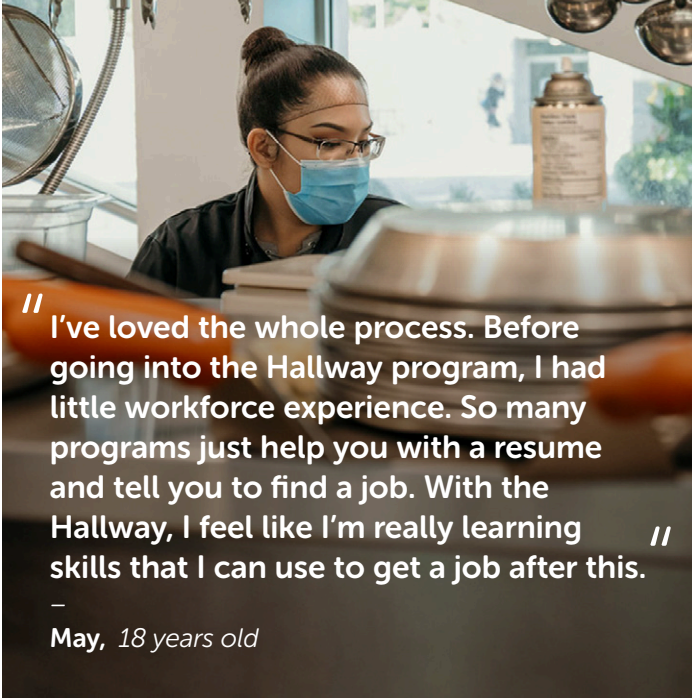
*This year, e4c is providing nutritional supports to students across 38 Edmonton area schools. A fan favorite lunch item continues to be the Taco Wrap, followed closely by the Pizza Sub!*

"The number of students accessing the School Nutrition Program in some schools has doubled, or even tripled, for morning meal!"

—  
Leanna,  
e4c School Nutrition Coordinator



# Hallway Update



// I've loved the whole process. Before going into the Hallway program, I had little workforce experience. So many programs just help you with a resume and tell you to find a job. With the Hallway, I feel like I'm really learning skills that I can use to get a job after this. //

— May, 18 years old

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, the Hallway proactively closed in March 2020. In August 2020, the Hallway Café reopened to support 17 youth, with an additional 9 starting programming before the end of December. The Hallway is pleased to announce that they are on track to support 48 youth on an annual basis, empowering them to use a self-directed approach to continue their education, while gaining valuable transferable skills in a teaching cafe.

Currently, youth are focusing on keeping hands and hearts warm through a variety of holiday-themed sweets, treats, and drinks!

***The most recent favorite is the peppermint mocha – a midday minty chocolate pick me up!***

The Youth in the Hallway Café Program go on to transfer their skills in a variety of ways - pursuing their education, careers in hospitality, or following their dreams in retail.

Often, youth come with little job experience. At the Hallway, they engage in training opportunities beyond the kitchen, from resume-building workshops, to preparing for interviews.

Cecilia, an upcoming graduate of the program shares, ***"My work experience has been limited. I've worked at Orange Julius, so I'm familiar with front of house skills like customer service, and working the till. I'm not sure what I'd like to do in the future, but I'm soaking up all of these opportunities while I can."***

What sets the Hallway Café program apart from others? Cecilia shares that, while she's engaged in other work experience supports in the past, the Hallway has offered a combination of hands-on experience, skill building, and skills like conversation and customer service

"I've learned a lot about working in a kitchen, cooperation, and a lot about responsibility. I know that this will help me get a job once I graduate. Honestly, I'm not sure what I'd like to do, but I feel more prepared now, thanks to the Hallway."



 **Staying Home**   
**this Winter?**

**We are on Uber Eats & Skip the Dishes, offering city-wide delivery!**







Together, we can continue to build a stronger community – one where we can be here to provide education and support to a mom so that she can make the best financial decisions for her and her family, give a womxn a chance to rest and regroup at WEAC, and to provide nutritional supports to students in 38 Edmonton area schools. This is just a small slice of the impact that you are creating in our communities.

#### Your gift of:

- \$25** – purchases hygiene products, or a set of pajamas for a womxn at WEAC
- \$50** – purchases grocery gift cards
- \$100** – purchases a nutritional snack for a classroom for a month

#### OR

**Become a monthly donor** - your gift of \$25 per month becomes \$300 in a year! That could purchase 120 days of meals for a student!

Make your donation before December 31<sup>st</sup> to be eligible to receive a tax receipt for the 2020 tax year.

For example, making a donation of \$250.00 could have an impact worth \$250.00 while only spending \$175.00 (after receiving a \$75.00 tax credit).

We understand that this year is challenging for all of us, and sometimes a financial gift is not possible. Please consider sharing this Envoy with a family or friend, to learn more about the work being done in their community.

While donors, stakeholders, and community supporters have many options available to them in terms of agencies and organizations to support, we are thankful for those that continue to choose to walk alongside us on this journey. Thank you! Together, we are building a stronger community.

**Wishing you and your family a safe, happy & healthy holiday season! Best wishes for 2021.**



For over 50 years, e4c has been helping Edmontonians get what they need to tackle life's challenges. e4c believes that people deserve to be listened to and respected, no matter what their circumstances or challenges. We see people and welcome them without judgment or bias.

**e4c's vision is to limit, alleviate and ultimately eliminate poverty.**

**e4calberta.org**

**f** **Follow Us**

**780.424.7543**

9321 Jasper Avenue  
Edmonton, AB T5H 3T7



**Seeing people not poverty.**