

Courage
Compassion
Connection
Commitment



Seeing people not poverty.

2020 Annual Report

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Treaty Acknowledgement

e4c acknowledges that we are on Treaty 6 territory, the ancestral and traditional lands of the Nehiyawak (Cree), Dene, Niitsitapi (Blackfoot), Anishinaabe (Salteaux), Nakoda Isga (Stoney Nakoda) and Métis peoples. We acknowledge and celebrate the many First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people whose footsteps have marked these lands for generations, and whose histories, languages and cultures continue to influence our work and our communities.

Photos

Photos in the enclosed report were taken prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, or with the appropriate social distancing and PPE in place.

Mission & Vision

At e4c, our core values, mission, and vision guide our daily practice and support our work.

Our vision is the elimination of poverty. It will be a remarkable achievement, and one that can only be accomplished collaboratively. We are committed to working towards the vision together, alongside interest groups, faith communities, service organizations, funders, businesses and the community at large.

We take steps towards that vision by fulfilling our mission of changing lives and growing communities.

- To be a supportive and empowering presence in times of individual, family and community need.
- To create opportunities for people to become self-supporting, and to lead in the growth of inclusive and caring communities;
- To be dedicated to program and service excellence, placing high priority on collaborative partnerships, inclusive transparent operations, promoting public awareness and building broad community support, and;
- To be responsive to emergent needs, continuously seeking new and creative opportunities to improve and develop services in our areas of expertise.

**"When I grow up,
I want to be a dad
because my dad
is the best!"**

**— Early Learning
student**



2020 in Review



14,500
Edmontonians
served.



327 homeless
women sheltered.

Housed **198** children
and families experiencing
homelessness.

53 people transitioned from
bridge housing to stable housing.



6700+ food packages
delivered to food-insecure
families during the early days
of the pandemic. Packages
made 10-12 meals.



\$39,300 in
emergency grant
funding distributed
to 56 people in
urgent need.

85% increase
in donations
via online
giving.

\$4.8 million in credits
& benefits returned to
community after filing
taxes through MTTP.



89% of pre-school
children improved their
developmental skills.

28 youth received
their high school
diploma.



135 wellness activities, sessions
and courses attended by
community members.

Message from the Board Chair and CEO

2020 was nothing short of extraordinary. With the COVID-19 pandemic entering our worlds in March 2020, our realities shifted to adapt to the *new normal*, which meant that PPE replaced smiles, hand sanitizer became a prized possession, and Dr. Hinshaw's updates quickly became part of our regular routine.

As an agency, we also entered our fiftieth year of operations. In 2020, e4c continued to serve Edmonton with the tenacious belief that we can make a difference. Like the early days of our organization, our staff and funders went through 2020 with a *whatever it takes* mentality to support our community. Our staff are tireless and committed, and we are honored to have them on our team.

Throughout 2020, e4c continued to hold strong in the face of challenges, putting the safety and needs of the people and communities that we support at the forefront of our decision-making. While swift changes were often required, our team responded with tenacity and grit. Perhaps the biggest example of this is our response to the school shutdown in March 2020, and what our School Nutrition Programs (SNP) might look like. We immediately knew that our program would not be able to continue to operate in the same fashion as it had pre-pandemic in light of the transition to at-home learning. Yet we also understood that food insecurity would be heightened for not just the children accessing our SNP programming, but their families as well.

In collaborative partnership with the Hallway Café, our School Division partners, and the City of Edmonton's *Edmonton Convention Centre*, we evolved School Nutrition operations to put together over 6,700 nutrition packages for the most food-insecure families identified by over 60 schools. These packages extended beyond the end of school in June, and continued to support families during the first COVID summer. Packages included items like bread, fruit, dried beans, and rice, as well as a cookbook that families could utilize for suggested meals made from the ingredients. Hallway Café staff were able to redeploy to new roles and remain employed during the first shutdown of the pandemic.

We know that looking forward into 2021 and beyond, the pandemic and post-pandemic environment will continue to impact our daily lives, particularly those experiencing chronic homelessness and cycles of poverty. With projections suggesting that more Edmontonians will transition into poverty, we know that the need for e4c programs and services will be greater than ever.

We remain committed to meeting the needs of our community, and we continue to draw strength through their resiliency in the face of all challenges. We hope that you continue to walk with us on this journey in 2021.

Marian Gayed
Board Chair

Barb Spencer
e4c CEO

The Power of Connection

While most of the world stayed home, our staff at WEAC donned PPE and headed into work. The early days of the pandemic meant consistently changing practices for our shelter-based environment, as we balanced protecting the livelihoods of vulnerable Edmontonians, with safety measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.



Within days of the pandemic announcement, we saw impacts on our shelter capacity as we incorporated a “new normal” of increased sanitization and physical distancing. However, this reduced our capacity from our regular 64 beds, to just 32.

Under public health direction, we introduced isolation rooms, requiring all new womxn to self-isolate upon arrival for 14 days, which created its own set of challenges for those experiencing mental health issues, or substance use, as well as disconnection from natural supports. We are grateful to our community partners, Alberta Health Services, and the City of Edmonton for recognizing the high vulnerability of our population heading into the winter months, with the launch of Tipinawâw in November 2020.

“ When I arrived at WEAC, I didn’t think it was going to change my life as much as it did. I found myself here. I made friends with others that could understand what I was going through. That was a first for me. Thanks to support from the housing staff and my worker with ICMT, I’m in a good space now. I’ve got a great apartment and I’m managing. My friend from WEAC moved into the same complex as me, which helped a lot during the pandemic.”

– Arlene*, former WEAC resident

With the implementation of quarantine requirements, we knew that the womxn at WEAC needed to remain connected to their natural supports – friends, family, and others in their lives. We also knew that isolation impacts overall physical and mental wellness. Thanks to support from our community donors, we provided activity packs to new arrivals containing items like chocolate and sweets to curb substance cravings, word searches and puzzle books to pass the time, and things like puzzles, sketch books and journals to create a healthy outlet for their feelings. In the community, substance use and addictions rose during COVID-19 as a response to pandemic-related stressors, as did overdoses. These meaningful activity packs helped act as a distraction and support to womxn as they navigated their own wellness journeys.


“ I was at WEAC last November. While at times it was challenging with all of the restrictions, I felt that it helped me to stabilize. I got into colouring to alleviate my boredom. It’s technical, creative, and distracting. A great outlet to lose track of time in.”

– Victoria, former WEAC resident

We are also grateful to the TELUS Community Board, who provided \$18,500 in funding for the purchase of Isolation Activity Kits, including iPads, colouring books, sugar to stave off withdrawal symptoms, and other boredom-busting essentials. This funding allowed us to purchase 20 iPads, enabling womxn to access the Internet, email, social media, and entertainment sites like YouTube to help reduce feelings of isolation and boredom, as well as remain connected to their natural support systems of friends and family.

As womxn were discouraged from leaving WEAC unnecessarily to prevent the spread of COVID-19, we saw friendships and connections blossom within the walls of WEAC. While strong bonds have always formed here, we noticed that womxn sought solace in one another for comfort during these unprecedented times.

We received the second phase of recommendations from our WEAC Advisory Committee in February 2020, just a month prior to the pandemic declaration. These recommendations have informed the next phase of our transformation plan.



We are grateful to the TELUS Community Board, who provided \$18,500 in funding for the purchase of Isolation Activity Kits.

The goal of the WEAC transformation, launched in 2018, is the shift from an emergency shelter to a housing-focused shelter. Edmonton continues to witness cycles of chronic homelessness, often resulting in womxn cycling in and out of the shelter multiple times. This is partly due to a lack of supports and stability in the community, or simply loneliness. WEAC offers stability for many – dependable meals, friendships, and supports from both the womxn within the shelter, and the staff themselves.

We know that a shelter is not a home.

e4c WEAC hired two new Housing Outreach Workers, renewing our focus on transitioning womxn to a home of their own.

WEAC began intentional work with e4c's Intensive Case Management Team (ICMT), a Housing First program that offers 6-12 month intensive follow up supports to housed individuals. Some of these supports include skill-building like budget planning, grocery shopping and cooking, as well as connecting to external supports like medical doctors and cultural supports, including traditional healing.

In 2021, WEAC will introduce a case management team approach to continue to enhance the housing focus at WEAC. This multidisciplinary team will intentionally support each womxn to develop an individualized exit strategy, with stabilized health and the supports required to sustain long-term housing in the community. Being connected to accessible supports (like living in a community close to your medical team, supportive family, or close to transit) helps to promote housing sustainability. This is in alignment with Housing First, a sustainable, recovery-oriented approach to ending homelessness. Ultimately, the team will create a flow through effect for womxn into their own permanent housing, maintaining WEAC's capacity to provide a safety net for womxn that are in need of immediate, emergency accommodation supports.



Thanks to the efforts of this team, WEAC transitioned 75 womxn to a home of their own.



**"I just wait.
For the moment in
which
God stops dreaming
And closes His eyes."**

—
Original poem by
Victoria, former
WEAC resident



“Creating online programming was a challenge. Many families don’t have access, or know how to use technology like Zoom, or FaceTime. Some families don’t have art supplies – the basics like crayons or markers. We were able to pivot, and provide interactive art packages containing things like glue, construction paper, and crayons. A lot of our families are facing multiple challenges, and so reducing stressors on things like art supplies or providing books helps them focus on their most urgent needs.”

– Jennie, Professional Practice Lead,
Home Support



Courage:

Early Learning Programming in 2020

Like every school in Alberta in early March, our Head Start and Early Learning Programming and supports transitioned to digital learning to support 304 children and families to meet their goals in preparation for kindergarten. For many families, moving to online learning was not just challenging as they juggled competing demands for childcare and working from home themselves, but also the ability to access online programming for their child.

As the pandemic stretched into the fall, our Early Learning teams worked diligently with children and families to welcome them back to a school-based environment, despite the new normal with masks, sanitizer, and physical distancing markers that marked the hallways. We created the 2020-2021 Early Learning Relaunch Strategy for parents, which influenced and guided our practices throughout this unique and challenging year. The strategy was created based on the three scenarios proposed by Alberta Education in Summer 2020, and implemented measures such as cohorting, regular temperature screenings, and visitor restrictions in order to keep both our staff, children, and families safe.

Early Learning continued to offer virtual programming and family support options, like our English Conversation Circles into September and throughout the year.

“ One of our teachers was maskless on Zoom when we transitioned back to at-home learning. The students didn’t recognize her without a mask – they had never seen her without one. That tells you how embedded these practices are with both our children, staff, and families.”

– Zoë Beaulieu, Manager, Early Learning and Head Start Programming

Despite this, children in the program continued to hit milestones, with 98% of students demonstrating improved developmental skills.

“ The thing I like best about the school is the books and playing with my friends. It’s a fun place and you can also sit quietly if you want.”

– Oriana, Early Learning student, age 4.



**The 2019-2020
School Year saw**

**172
Early
Learning
students
graduate to
kindergarten.**

A photograph of a school cafeteria where children are receiving food. In the foreground, a young girl with brown hair in a ponytail, wearing a pink sweatshirt with 'WINK AND' printed on it, is looking down at a blue divided tray. Behind her, a boy in a grey hoodie is also looking at the tray. To the left, another boy is partially visible. In the background, many other children are standing and talking, some wearing costumes like a Superman shirt. A person in an orange safety vest is also visible. The floor is wooden with a red and yellow striped pattern.

A Renewed Focus on Food Security

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the increasing food insecurity amongst Edmonton individuals and families.

In May 2020, Edmonton Social Planning Council projected that one in five households would experience food insecurity.

“They are always excited about snack. There are a few children in my class that do not get breakfast at home. I can tell that they’re hungry, and it’s nice to see them eating nutritious foods in the morning.”

— Teacher, St. Bernadette School

Our supplementary food package pandemic response initiative, in collaboration with Edmonton Public School Division and Edmonton Catholic School Division ran from April to August, reaching over 1,800 of the most food-insecure families that were identified by the schools connected to our School Nutrition Program.

Thanks to existing relationships with food service providers, and connections through the Hallway Café, these packages included staples like rice, tomatoes, canned goods, fruits and vegetables, and cost just \$100 each wholesale in comparison to a grocery store, where items would cost almost \$185. These cost savings allowed us to support more families and provide more food options within the packages. Packages were distributed from the Edmonton Convention Centre to schools by Edmonton Public School Division and Edmonton Catholic School Division drivers; an invaluable asset to ensure that these large packages, often ranging from 2-3 boxes of food per family, were delivered quickly to those who needed it most.

As we transitioned from summer to fall, we knew that offering nutritional supports in a pandemic environment would look vastly different from the previous school year. COVID changed our preparation, delivery, and distribution procedures in order to prevent community spread. Items were individually wrapped, bagged and placed in food-safe delivery bins.

Lunch lines disappeared, along with the smiling faces of the students our Nutrition Support Workers know by name; replaced with staff in full PPE delivering bins to each classroom, where students ate with their cohorts. Despite these challenges, our staff reported innovative ways of continuing to interact with the students and teachers to receive ongoing feedback, including things like using whiteboards outside of the classrooms to share the number of servings of food items required each day, to prevent food waste.

A part-time Nutrition Support Worker shared that *"the program went really well this year. The kids adapted better than the adults!"*

" This has been a great opportunity for our drivers to feel connected to the children and families, as well as part of a meaningful solution during such uncertain times in the community. The packages are enormous! I've seen photos of the packages from schools and principals, and have been receiving emails and testimonials from families. It's been quite emotional. Everyone is so enthusiastic to participate."

– Nancy Petersen, EPSB



**Over 7,300 students
accessed nutritional
supports each
school day across
38 Edmonton area
schools.**

We continued to see the demonstrated impact that nutritional supports had on Edmonton students in the classroom and beyond, from increased focus to fostering friendships.

There is no doubt that COVID-19 presented unprecedented challenges in 2020. Between school shutdowns, and the introduction of mandatory masking, and work from home orders, every Albertan was impacted by the pandemic. One of the most profound impacts of the pandemic was on our social enterprise, The Hallway Café.



The year began with an intimate menu launch within the café, hosting supporters like City Councillor Scott McKeen, and tasting innovative dishes such as a pickle-bacon pizza, a soul-filling risotto, and a green onion cake bannock, to name a few. The youth were buzzing from the experience, and we looked forward to planning catering and other intimate events moving forward.

As a teaching kitchen and fully operational café, the pandemic closed our doors in April 2020, reopening in August 2020, before closing again in October 2020 due to rising case numbers. However, these restrictions allowed us to rise to the challenges presented, and the Hallway partnered with SkiptheDishes in July to offer a delivery alternative to curbside pickup.

Our café demonstrated its resiliency throughout this unique year, pivoting to provide staffing support to the Supplementary Package Program operating out of the Edmonton Convention Centre, and leveraging industry contacts and supply chains to ensure that the program was a success. When the café reopened, youth worked tirelessly in masks and face shields, behind plexi-glass barriers, and the Café opened a patio to further support the health and safety measures put in place to protect our community.

Despite all of the challenges presented this year, 74% of Hallway Café graduates became employed or returned to school, with 28 youth attaining their high school diplomas.



" I worked at Orange Julius before. I didn't really have a lot of goals or ideas of where I wanted to go. I really like it so far. The Hallway Café, I mean. I really like it. We have a lot of fun. It's a place for me to look at what I can do in the future. Maybe go back to school. Maybe look at things that I didn't think were possibilities."

– Hallway Café Youth

Make Tax Time Pay Goes Virtual

80
volunteers
worked with MTPP
as it launched
virtually
mid-pandemic.



The Government of Canada postponed the April 30 tax deadline to June 30 to accommodate the pandemic. With increasing numbers of Canadians accessing COVID-related financial supports like the Community Emergency Response Benefit (CERB), we knew that as the pandemic continued, Financial Empowerment and Make Tax Time Pay programs would become more essential than ever.

Make Tax Time Pay pivoted their operations to a virtual environment, working closely with Prosper Canada and the Canada Revenue Agency to ensure that safety and confidentiality measures were followed. We knew that the greatest barrier to many of the folks that rely on Make Tax Time Pay would be technology; and instead of conducting virtual appointments over Zoom, our volunteer tax preparers filed taxes over the phone with each client. The transition to phone-based virtual services enhanced program accessibility for participants who might otherwise have faced barriers with transportation or mobility.

**Over 2,295 people received \$4.8 million
in tax credits and benefits after filing their taxes.**

We continued to see the community need for financial literacy and empowerment work, and co-developed a Financial Empowerment framework with the Bissell Centre. The framework includes common definitions, evidence, and principles to guide future financial empowerment services and collaboration.

We know that the need for Financial Empowerment work increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, as the pandemic further magnified pre-existing income inequalities. Empower U programming also launched virtually in 2020, supporting over 22 womxn in the Edmonton area to work through modules that include income and taxes, budgeting, credit basics, debt, and savings. In 2020, participants saved \$3,595 through the Empower U program.

Talking about money issues, or money management can be challenging. e4c and our community partners focused on furthering our Financial Literacy courses to build the financial empowerment knowledge and capacity of staff with existing trust-based relationships with low-income Edmontonians. Training includes a reflection on cultural and familial attitudes with money, so that staff are able to better understand the root causes of financial habits and spending patterns. Training ensures staff have the awareness, desire, knowledge and confidence to incorporate Financial Empowerment into their work, furthering the reaches of financial literacy into the communities in which we work.

“ I am a strong believer in Financial Empowerment work. Financial illiteracy is one of the main barriers that holds womxn in poverty. e4c’s programs have transformative impact on the cycles of poverty.”

– Kelly Bickford,
Community Services
Manager

“ The program has been an incredible blessing for my family. I am so proud to say that I have saved over \$500 towards a Registered Education Savings Plan for my son since enrolling in the Empower U program!”

– Eliza, Empower U
participant

Financials

e4c STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Year Ended December 31, 2020

	2020	2019
Assets		
Current	14,648,847	6,361,700
Long Term Investment	1,216,200	1,217,279
Inner City Youth Housing Project	139,289	136,445
Capital Assets	9,201,487	9,992,840
	25,205,823	17,708,264
Liabilities		
Current	5,772,957	4,268,974
Long Term Debts	1,602,011	1,784,496
Deferred Conditional Grants	–	8,000
	7,374,968	6,061,470
Net Assets	17,830,855	11,646,794
Total	25,205,823	17,708,264

e4c STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

Year Ended December 31, 2020

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Invested in Capital Assets	Total 2020	Total 2019
Revenues	5,139,606	23,375,766	212,054	28,727,426	25,136,075
Expenditures	(365,808)	22,108,860	549,689	22,292,741	22,875,341
Excess (deficiency) of Revenues over Expenditures before other items	5,505,414	1,266,906	(337,635)	6,434,685	2,260,734
Other items:					
(Loss) Gain on disposal of capital assets	–	–	(240,377)	(240,377)	85,791
Inner City Youth Housing Project	–	2,844	–	2,844	2,848
	–	2,844	(240,377)	(237,533)	88,639
Excess (deficiency) of Revenues over Expenditures	5,505,414	1,269,750	(578,012)	6,197,152	2,349,373

Thank You

We would like to extend a huge thank you to our team members, donors, funders, and board members who have continued to work tirelessly throughout the pandemic.

From our frontline workers who bravely donned PPE and continued to support our community while everyone stayed home, to our donors who continued to support our work despite challenging economic times, to our board who continued to provide guidance and strategic oversight to our work.

It is because of all of you that we are in a position of strength as we look forward to a future beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you for walking with us on our journey towards the elimination of poverty within Edmonton.



220
new donors



\$145,000
received in online
donations

85%

increase in digital
giving since 2019



Supported
327
women with isolation
kits and welcome
packages.



\$12,800
raised during
Giving Tuesday



422
winter items donated,
including toques, mittens,
and jackets warming our
clients this winter

" This year is different. Difficult. Unlike any other. But I love my job,
and I love the kids we support. We are making a difference."

– Nutrition Support Worker, e4c

e4c Board of Directors 2020:

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Seeing people not poverty.

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