



COMMUNITY LINKS OVERVIEW



CommunityLinks

*Strong Individuals
Strong Families
Strong Communities*

2017/2018

Community Links
211, 125 Main St
Airdrie, AB T4B 0P7
Tel: 403.945.3900
Fax: 403.945.3901
www.nrvcl.ab.ca

Strong Individuals
Strong Families
Strong Communities

Our Mission....

Community Links strengthens individuals, families, and communities of North Rocky View by providing them with and connecting them to services, supports and resources.





CommunityLinks

*Strong Individuals
Strong Families
Strong Communities*

Partnerships & Collaborations

- Airdrie and District Victims Assistance Society
- Airdrie and District Youth Justice Committee
- Airdrie Chamber of Commerce
- Airdrie Christmas Hamper Program
- Airdrie Food Bank
- Airdrie Fest Community Planning Committee
- Airdrie Housing Ltd.
- Airdrie Lioness Club
- Airdrie Over 50 Club
- Airdrie Public Library
- Alberta Health Services
- Beiseker Community School
- Beiseker Fire Department
- Beiseker Golden Years Town and Country Club
- Beiseker Preschool
- Bert Church High School
- Bethany Care Centre
- Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Bow Valley College
- Boys and Girls Club of Airdrie
- Calgary Catholic Immigration Society – Diversity Services
- Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse (CCASA)
- Calgary Housing Ltd.
- Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter
- Canada Revenue Agency
- Canadian Tire Jumpstart
- City of Airdrie
- Correctional Services
- Crossfield Lions Club
- Crossfield Lodge
- Crossfield United Church
- Diamond Jubilee Manor
- Distress Centre
- Dr. Whillan's Manor
- Eastside Family Counselling Center
- Fletcher Village
- Golden Key Club
- Good Shepherd Elementary & Junior High School

- Grace Baptist Church
- Healthy Families (Children's Cottage Society)
- HomeFront
- Kathryn Community School
- Kids Up Front
- KIK Seniors
- Luxstone Manor
- Masterpiece Cedarwood Station
- Our Lady Queen of Peace Ranch
- RCMP – Airdrie and Beiseker
- Rocky View Schools
- Rocky View Schools Community Learning
- Rotary Club of Airdrie
- Rural Addiction and Mental Health Services
- St. Francis of Assisi Anglican Church
- Stepping Stones to Mental Health
- Supplies for Success
- Town of Crossfield
- Town of Irricana
- University of Calgary
- United Way – Ambassador of the Way
- Village of Beiseker
- Volunteer Airdrie
- Volunteer Alberta
- Volunteer Manager's Group
- Welcome Wagon
- Welcoming Airdrie Committee
- WG Murdoch School
- 55+ Interagency Group

Community Links staff, volunteers and clients are valued, respected, supported and safe.

Community Links participated in an extensive agency assessment using a capacity building assessment tool from the City of Airdrie and several highlights and needs were identified. Thanks to staff and volunteers we are showing good results with community engagement, assessing needs, referrals to community, quality of services, program planning, alignment to mission, vision and strong relationships outside agency. Marketing and professional development opportunities were identified as ways to strengthen staff and the agency.

We are so thankful for our amazing volunteers and their support is so appreciated by everyone.

We are also blessed by the dedication and continued commitment of our staff who work extremely hard each and every day to provide amazing support to the community.



Board of Directors



Ashley Jellema, Chair

I joined the Community Links Board in order to take the opportunity to use my experience to give back to our community. I come from an extensive background in the not for profit sector starting out as an in home family therapist and then moving into leadership. My international background includes the delivery, development and implementation of evidence based models of therapy for positive outcomes working with children, youth, families and women.



Brett Mark, Director

I have chosen to join the Community Links Board as it allows me to donate my time, knowledge and experience to an important organization that supports the communities of North Rocky View. My business acumen coupled with my experience with corporate relationship building will allow me to provide meaningful contributions to the organization. Community Links provides a wealth of relevant programs and services and I look forward to being a part of the growth and success of the organization.



Chris Harper, Treasurer

I returned to the Community Links Board to continue to give back to the community. I have enjoyed the hard work and dedication shown by the staff and have seen the organization grow over the years as the needs of stakeholders have evolved. In good times and challenging times, organizations like Community Links are vital to ensure communities remain strong and vibrant.



Diane Hill, Director

I want to support the work that is being done within Community Links for residents of all ages, which is why I became a Board member in 2012. I bring an ability to balance and understand the needs of staff, children and families with the realities of budgets and program expectations.



Dirk Bannister, Director

I joined the Community Links Board to support the programs and services provided by Community Links. My strong background in Service Clubs and FCSS programming will help me to help Community Links make Airdrie a great place to live.



Glenn Smaha, Director

I joined the Community Links Board as I have come to appreciate Community Links good work in the Airdrie area. In looking at common or shared values I believe my personal beliefs align very closely with the vision of Community Links. Giving back is a mutual responsibility all of us as a society share. I enjoy the sense of satisfaction that comes with knowing that I can contribute to the wellbeing of others by being part of organizations like Community Links.



Greg Wagland, Director

I joined the Board in 2016, as I have been inspired by the work of Community Links and the important function it serves in this community. I am pleased to be part of the Board of Directors and look forward to working with the staff and volunteers to help build a strong support for this great organization in the years to come.



Lisa Elmore, Director

In the short time I've lived here, I've come to understand the vital role that Community Links plays in the region. Airdrie is growing and so are the needs of its citizens, and I want to be a part of an organization that enriches lives in so many ways. I will draw on my legal background, together with the knowledge I've gained volunteering with non-profits, to support the dedicated people who make Community Links so effective.



Maria Eligon, Director

I joined the Board of Community Links in 2012 to give back to the Community. In all areas of my career experience, I have developed a versatile, transferrable professional skill set with carefully nurtured business values.



Thelma Cameron, Director

I joined the Community Links Board to support the work done by the Board in Airdrie and the surrounding community. I look forward to gaining an understanding of the rising demand for Services and Programs and helping to meet the needs of the residents of Airdrie. My extensive background in the energy industry has provided me with an ability to communicate with and grow positive relationships with staff, clients and colleagues at all levels of the organization.



Ashley Jellema, Chair

In 2018, Community Links has continued to strive to meet the vision of

“Strong Individuals Strong Families Strong Communities” across the North Rocky View Region including Airdrie, Beiseker, Irricana, Crossfield, Kathryn and Balzac. In providing supports and services to 11,000 children, youth, adults and seniors, Community Links continues to be the leading social service agency and community hub for people in Airdrie and the surrounding area.

With the Journey to One largely complete, the focus of the past year has been on settling into our newly renovated location and supporting the transition for the entire organization.

Challenges have included; seeking sustainable funding grants and contracts, creating a comprehensive fund development plan that aligns with the agency strategic plan and increasing networks amongst the community including donor relations. With several long term Board members completing terms this year, Board recruitment will be a focus moving forward.

As the Board Chair, I have had the pleasure of attending many community based events including Roll to the Hole, The Beiseker Show and Shine Parade, Linking the Community and volunteering to sell ice cream for fundraising. Internally, I have attended strategic planning, joined the Christmas dinner for Child Care Providers, participated in a visit with the Minister of Community and Social Services and met with agency leadership and staff for networking and development related opportunities. These, along with my regular contact with the Executive Director, have provided me with a great understanding and appreciation of the impact that Community Links has within Airdrie and the surrounding community.

Looking ahead, goals of the Board will include ongoing recruitment efforts and activities that support cohesion amongst members, continued support of the Executive Director for fund development and staff capacity building, finalization of strategic planning for community and donor relations, as well as other initiatives that may arise. Our priority is to continue to build on the foundations of this thriving organization to support excellence in service delivery and a workplace of choice for the people involved.

My heartfelt thanks to the staff, volunteers, leadership, Board, donors and partners who continue to make this possible.

Sincerely,

Ashley Jellema
Board Chair, Community Links

Brenda Hume, Executive Director

Community Links celebrated a huge milestone with its 35th Anniversary in 2017-2018! There have been numerous highlights from the two previous agencies, Airdrie Family Services Society and the North Rocky View Community Resource Centre Society. In 1982, Airdrie Family Services began with the opening of Airdrie Family Day Homes, offering quality child care funded by Town of Airdrie FCSS, to the first Prenatal Program offered in Airdrie in 1987 by Airdrie Family Life Education Council which later became the Family Resource Program offering Parent Education, Parent Resource Library and Anti-Bullying Programs; 1988 was when the first Counsellor was hired, the Jacket Racket Program began in 1992 and Parent Consultation in 1997. In 2001 the North Rocky View Community Resource Centre opened its doors with 2003 having its first Supplies for Success Program; the Airdrie and Area Parent Link Centre was established in 2005, followed by the amalgamation of the two agencies to become what is known today as Community Links. In 2010 the agency expanded its support by officially opening a rural office in Beiseker and in 2017, after many years, Community Links operated from one location in Airdrie.

In January, 2018, Community Links adopted its 2018 – 2020 Strategic Plan realigning its outcomes as well as outlining goals and strategies that will continue to strengthen the agency and its service delivery.

Our passion for the community in providing various programs and services continues today and our 2017 - 2018 Annual Report highlights statistics, testimonials and stories which are a testament of our continuing work towards our Vision of Strong Individuals Strong Families Strong Communities.

We are forever grateful for the continued support from our dedicated Board, staff and volunteers. Their commitment, time, expertise and sense of caring in supporting the communities of Airdrie, Beiseker, Irricana, Crossfield and surrounding North Rocky View County is commendable.

Some of the facts that we are proud to report for April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018 are:

- Supported 10,931 individuals (18% children 0 – 6, 17% children/youth 7 - 18, 55% adults and 10% seniors) through various programs and services. (Over a nine year period we have worked with an average of 11,000 individuals annually);
- Worked with 7111 families;
- Connected residents over 13,625 times with various additional supports;
- Provided 30,334 referrals to individuals for additional support which is an increase of 10.5% over last year of 27,431 referrals;

- Community Links is a resource and support for 14% of Airdrie's growing population. This statistic aligns with previous year's average of the agency serving between 17 – 22% of Airdrie's population;
- 287 volunteers provided 4,820 hours of support to the agency;
- According to our surveys, our programming has contributed positively to assist residents by increasing their awareness of resources available in the community, accessing resources, increasing self-esteem and confidence, coping and problem-solving skills, parent-child relationships and knowledge of child development.
- 48% of staff have been with the agency over 5 years which speaks to the dedication that staff have towards the agency.

The continued challenges impacting the agency include:

- Raising awareness with current and potential funders and investors of the necessity of secure alternate funding to meet current and emergent needs of programming, increased operating costs and the need to meet competitive wage scales for staff retention.
- Increased fundraising efforts prove to be challenging when balancing already heavy workloads among staff and Board.
- Our agency would benefit from multi-year funding to increase and strengthen staff retention through COLA increases to create long term stability, reduce staff turnover and sustainability and longevity of well qualified staff.
- An increase in complex situations being presented by individuals accessing services. With the growing population of Airdrie, clients often need additional resources and frequent support. This includes, but is not limited to: unemployment, mental health and financial challenges (i.e. rent/utility concerns, unstable housing and homelessness). Although the need has grown, the access to supports and resources have stayed the same. Most of these families have already exhausted these resources. This can sometimes be challenging for a resident to get all the help they need in order to help their situation. In these situations, we continue to meet with the clients to provide empathetic listening, problem solving support and advocacy as well as continue to make referrals to appropriate resources.
- Ongoing and improved marketing to increase our reach to the community. We often hear "we didn't know that Community Links existed" and "wish we had known before there was help available".
- Increased professional development opportunities for staff to increase their skill set to engage in more leadership possibilities.

Although there are a number of challenges, we continue to be proud to serve North Rocky View communities and we are pleased to help make a positive difference for residents of all ages.

The success of Community Links is attributed to the amazing support we have received from our funders, donors, partners and community members.

Thank you!

Brenda Hume

Executive Director



Community Links will have effective branding and marketing to ensure there is financial stability and sustainability through diverse sources (including corporations, government, individuals, foundations, partnerships and fund raising activities).

Community Links financial sustainability is largely due to the generous support from funders, supporters, donors and in-kind donations from the community. Fundraising continues to be an integral part of our daily life due to rising operating costs. The following provides an overview of the efforts and supports we have been part of over the last year. **Thanks to these amazing events, we were able to receive \$99,235.95 to support the programs and services provided by Community Links.**

Agency Events

Community Links hosted its two signature events again in 2017 and introduced an extremely successful new event which we hope will continue to grow in future years.

- **Legacy Run to end Family Violence – April 2017**
Sponsored by: Astoria Asset Management Ltd.; Joe & Des Dotto; Engel & Volkers – Patti Reid
Partners: Airdrie and District Victims Assistance Society (ADVAS) and Legacy Endurance
- **Roll to the Hole – August 2017**
Sponsored by: McKee Homes and The Cooperators (Rockyview Insurance Services)
- **Wine Down – November 2017**
Sponsored by: Fortis Alberta

Testimonial

No name attached

Lots of information I received today and was very interesting. Thank you for all the good information.

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Third Party Events

We are very fortunate to benefit from a number of events hosted by local businesses or groups that select Community Links to receive the proceeds from these events.

- Beiseker Show 'n Shine – June 2017
- ATB Silent Auction – June 2017
- Safeway Canada Screams for Ice Cream – June 2017
- McKee Homes Golf Tournament – July 2017
- Airdrie Oilmen's Association Bikes 'n Bulls – August 2017
- Rona Popcorn Sales – August 2017
- Birdies for Kids presented by Altalink – September 2017
- Shopper's Drug Mart "Growing Women's Health" Campaign – Fall 2017
- Festival of Lights – December 2017
- RCMP Red Coats for Kids – January 2018
- Behind the Masque – February 2018
- St. Martin de Porres Human Foosball Tournament – March 2018

Saying Thank You

In September 2017 Community Links hosted an Open House to celebrate our 35th Anniversary. This event allowed us to showcase our new space, as well as to recognize the amazing donors and volunteers who make support our agency throughout the year.



Community Links develops and provides programs and services that are of consistently high quality and that reflects the needs of the communities we serve.

Community Development

Highlights

Supplies 4 Success

In August 2017, Community Links gave out 334 backpacks to families who were struggling financially through the Supplies 4 Success Program. This program, and the need within our community, continues to grow year after year. We are very fortunate to have some amazing community partners, Davis Chev and Airdrie Staples, who collaborate with us to make the program a success and allow us to continue to support our growing community. We are also thankful for the support we receive from other local businesses whose staff members collected supplies to contribute to this valuable program.

School-Based Programs

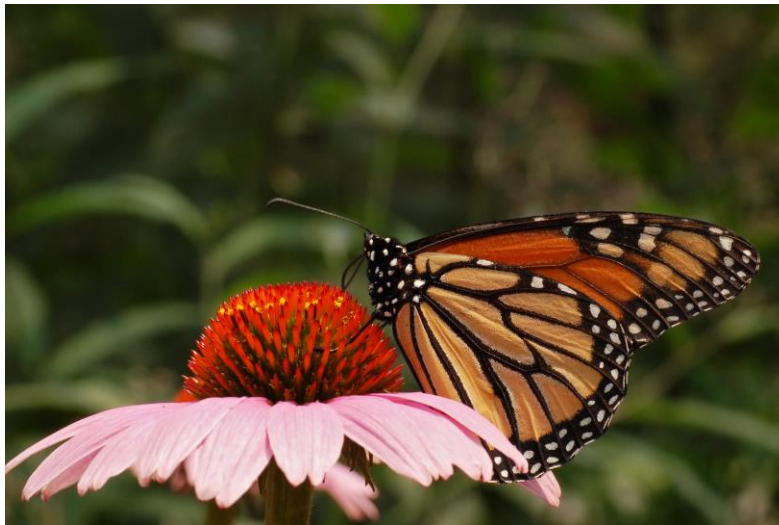
There were a total of 13 groups facilitated by Community Links staff in 6 different schools throughout Airdrie and North Rocky View during the 2017-18 school year. These groups provided supports to 116 elementary, middle, and high school students in grades 4 through 10 in the group setting, as well as offering 1-to-1 supports to these students outside of the group forum. Examples of the topics addressed include: healthy relationships, self-concept and self-esteem, stress and stress management, communication, diversity, bullying, body image, and feelings. These groups also provided a forum to present information about resources available to these students in Airdrie and the greater community. This year there was a high number of requests for elementary (grade 4) groups.

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Highlights Continued...

Seniors Supports

In November 2017, the Senior Services team grew with the addition of a new staff member. This new staff member assisted with service delivery to the senior demographic and allowing the team to better meet the needs of the growing senior population in Airdrie and North Rocky View. In the spring, this new staff member coordinated a meeting with local Service Providers who work with seniors in Airdrie and North Rocky View and we look forward to continued opportunities to connect and collaborate with these partner agencies.



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Going Forward

Partnership with Airdrie Pride Society

Starting in April 2018, Community Links will partner with Airdrie Pride Society to create community supports for Airdrie and North Rocky View County's LGBTQ+ population. Two groups will be offered through this partnership with a goal of creating inclusivity in Airdrie. The first group is a Community Gay straight alliance for local youth. This group will meet monthly and include information and referrals as well as informal peer support in an accepting environment. The second group is a peer led support group for parents who have children who identify as LGBTQ+. Our hope is that with connection and acceptance in their own community, Airdrie and North Rocky View County's LGBTQ+ population will engage in the community and feel supported to be themselves.

Senior Respite

Thanks to additional funding received through the United Way, we now have additional funding to support the Senior Respite Program. This increase in funding provides an opportunity to expand our Respite Services throughout North Rocky View.



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Committee Highlights

Crossfield Interagency

In March 2018, the Town of Crossfield staff reached out to community partners to initiate a quarterly meeting to share what each organization offers to the residents of Crossfield and North Rocky View. The first meeting was attended by over 30 people. Everyone had a chance to share about their programs and connect with staff providing service in the area. There was great enthusiasm during the meeting to further build services in the area. Follow up meetings are scheduled for June and October and Community Links looks forward to ongoing participation in these meetings.

Senior's Week Planning Committee

The Seniors Week Planning Committee is a community partnership with representatives from non-profit organizations, local businesses and community volunteers, all with a passion for support seniors in our community. The planning committee consists of representatives from the following: Bethany Airdrie, Community Links, The Hamlets at Cedarwood Station, Luxstone Manor, Airdrie Over Fifty Club, A Friend Indeed, *Loving Hands* Partners in Care and community volunteers. This committee hosts the annual Seniors Week celebration that is hosted during Senior's Week each year in June. We are fortunate to have generous community support for this event again each year and look forward to working with over 50 volunteers to host over 300 local seniors for this popular annual event.

Testimonial

No name attached

I really appreciate feeling valued, respected and supported from the people and services offered at Community Links. They are a valuable asset in this city and surrounding area.

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Stories

Story #1

We initially met Mary* when she accessed Intake Services requesting help to fill out an application for AISH (Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped). At this time Mary was employed full-time at an establishment which she had been working for the past 20 years, but due to increasing complications of multiple health issues she was arriving late to work, missing shifts, and was not able to complete a majority of her shifts. Not only were these prevailing health issues creating stress for her, but it also placed a financial strain on her family as she was no longer bringing in the same amount of monthly income as she had previously. Her place of employment was also placed in the unfortunate position of needing to discuss her future employability with their company, which created even more concern for this family. Intake Services staff were able to facilitate the AISH application process in which many medical reports and financial documents needed to be requested from multiple sources and submitted. Staff provided support with continued communications between AISH and Mary, and assisted her with payment for medical reports from her doctor through the Client Emergency Fund. There were also other local, provincial, and federal supports the Intake Services staff explored with Mary to determine her eligibility. Further, Mary was internally referred to Wrap-around Services for continued supports with her situation.

Testimonial

No name attached

Super people and great feedback. They have helped me to get my feet back on the ground, awesome.

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Stories Continued...

Story #2

Shelley* was first connected to Community Links through Intake, where the Intake Worker helped her connect to Alberta Seniors Benefits and Service Canada and helped her access a form on-line. On her second visit she was assisted by Intake to access tax forms and to inquire about hearing aids. On a subsequent visit she accessed the Community Volunteer Income Tax Program. She was then referred to Senior Services where the Outreach Worker helped her mail out change of address letters to Service Canada and to Alberta Supports. She was also provided with resources on housing, as she indicated that she was not happy with her current housing arrangement (living with family). Shelley mentioned that her family member was not home a lot and she felt isolated. The Senior Services staff connected her with the Airdrie Over Fifty Club and the Crossfield Golden Key Club. Staff also approached Shelley with the idea of becoming a volunteer. Seniors Services staff continued to support Shelley as she pursued alternate housing and address concerns with her family. Shelley connected with some of the community resources and started to feel less isolated.



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Community Development – Volunteer Program

Highlights

Community Volunteer Income Tax Program (CVITP)

This program continued to take on a new direction with the amalgamation of the north and south offices in June 2017. Having the Intake staff and the Volunteer Coordinator under one roof and in close physical proximity to each other allows the program to flow with relative ease, creating a smooth transition for staff, clients and volunteers.

Toy and Resource Library

Volunteer coverage for Thursday mornings in the Library has been very successful. One particular volunteer has taken on this Thursday morning role. He is reliable, dependable and skilled and takes this volunteer role very seriously. He will also be transitioning to a practicum student with the Counselling Team in the near future.



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Going Forward

We will continue to look for opportunities to say "Thank You" to our volunteers. We will host our annual Volunteer Appreciation event in October, and are also hoping to connect with specific groups who have supported our agency over the years by providing hand-crafted quilts and blankets. These volunteers dedicate a large amount of volunteer hours and work tirelessly on their craft, which we are fortunate to receive and be able to share with those individuals and families who access our services.

We are also continually looking for ideas for valuable training opportunities to offer our volunteers. We recognize that increasing personal skills and therefore gaining confidence is an important benefit of volunteering. We want to ensure that the volunteers who support our agency feel that they have the tools to successfully fulfil their roles.



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Friendly Visiting Program

The Friendly Visiting Program is, undoubtedly, our most popular volunteer opportunity. Volunteers enjoy the one-on-one experience, feeling that they are truly making a difference in the life of an isolated senior. The current matches that we have in place are very successful and often last for years.

Over the past year, we have experienced some difficulty in facilitating the matching of clients to volunteers. It is often a scheduling challenge to find a time that works for all three involved parties - client, volunteer and staff – especially when the staff and volunteer have quite busy schedules. We will continue to work to find solutions to mitigate this challenge and look forward to creating many successful matches in the future.

Senior Transportation Program

The safety of our program users, as well as our volunteers is of utmost importance in Community Links. We are currently reviewing our Intake processes and emergency procedures for the Senior Transportation Program, to minimize risk and to ensure that the program continues to be successful. We will be shifting the Intake for this program to our Intake and Seniors Services teams to streamline this process with other agency processes and to ensure that the Program users receive a thorough assessment and appropriate referrals to meet their needs.



Thank You!

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Family Resource Services

Highlights

We have been successful in our efforts to achieve our goals in last year's report by:

- Expanding programs in schools, preschools and daycares including; W.G. Murdoch High School in Crossfield, Beiseker Community School, five schools in Airdrie as well as two preschools and one daycare;
- The Thursday evening P.L.A.Y. Program (for families with children 0 – 5 years) was enhanced to meet the needs of participant families to include children up to grade 3;
- The rural Drop-in Program saw record attendance at their new location at the Arcadia Café in Beiseker;
- The new Baby Babble program, formally known as Alberta Health Services (AHS) - Baby Café, offers support for new parents with children 0 – 3 months. A nurse from AHS attends twice during each program session;
- Our first annual Ages & Stages Birthday Parties were held in Airdrie, Irricana and Beiseker. They were a huge success with 44 screens being completed;
- The Parent Coach Consultation Program expanded to serve 136 participants (Jan. – Sept.) in 2018 from 100 participants in 2017;
- The Family Child Care Program successfully received their Year 3 seal in the Annual Accreditation Review and are now working on what we expect to be a very successful application for Accreditation this fall;
- This year for our annual audit, we have successfully reviewed and revised the data collection and reporting process by creating a new Theory of Change, revising the PLM and streamlining the participant survey.

Testimonial

No name attached

Community Links is amazing.

Community Links develops and provides programs and services that are of consistently high quality and that reflects the needs of the communities we serve.

Going Forward

- Family Resource Services will continue to develop programs, collaborating with other agency experts, to meet needs that have been identified by the community, such as expanding on trauma informed programming.
- We will continue with annual audits of programs to ensure they meet our outcomes and funder's requirements.

Testimonials

- A group participant commented that the "strategies given have been very helpful. I have seen a real difference in both my child's behaviour and my own behaviour in situations when my child was misbehaving. I used to use spanking to discipline and do not use spanking anymore."
- Another participant commented that "this program was very helpful. It gave me the tools to deal with tantrums and make a plan for getting my child to sleep better. My confidence dealing with difficult situations has increased dramatically."



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Counselling

Highlights

Counselling Services follows the agency vision and mission by providing various options of Counselling support in a safe, caring, confidential and welcoming environment to aid individuals and families in becoming stronger by identifying aspects of their lives that work towards positive and desired changes. Counselling Services contributes to individuals accessing opportunities to enhance their sense of well-being and actively connecting with additional resources and their communities to lead a healthy, well balanced life style. Individuals can connect with the various support options as a continuum of care to increase their self-esteem and build on their growth and development. Helping individuals and families become more aware of their situation while increasing their sense of independence to assume responsibility for decisions and actions to help them improve their lives.

Counselling Supports may include: Individual counselling sessions; Drop-In Counselling every Thursday afternoon and evening, and Friday afternoons; and Group Counselling Programs such as: Wisdom Circle Workshop, Women's Empowerment Group, Men in the Mirror Group, Family Violence Journey Groups and Anger Management Groups, and a Monthly Wrap Around Group.

Being part of the Community:

Domestic Violence Stakeholders Group and Mental Health Taskforce

As a result of the 2016-2017 study by the City of Airdrie, Community Links is a participant in the Airdrie Domestic Violence Community Stakeholders Group and Mental Health TaskForce ongoing meetings to determine the best strategies to use in addressing family and domestic violence and mental health.

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Going Forward

Going forward Counselling Services will offer educational and skill building groups and workshops offered as single sessions or as part of a series. These will be available with varying options of length, time and day of the week offered, with some being offered in collaboration with schools and community partners. Topics for workshops are identified through analysis of presenting issues identified through agency and community data and participant feedback. The evidence-based strategies used in groups and workshops help to alleviate feelings of isolation as well as providing new learnings and understandings in a supportive manner. Participants are screened for appropriateness based on the presenting concern, group and workshop content and structure. Groups and workshops provide the opportunity for participants to connect with other participants in a safe and supportive environment.



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Stories

Sara *not real name - is a teenager whom was referred to Counselling by her school Counsellor. She was incredibly reluctant to attend counselling and stated that she did not need any help from anyone. She refused to talk at first and would sit with her arms crossed. She was deeply depressed, highly anxious and had made several attempts to take her own life. Sara has a long history of trauma and abuse and had very little positive supports in her life. Nevertheless, she made some significant and positive changes in her life, began to process some of her traumatic experiences and was able to find the strength to heal and move forward. She has been able to identify a few key supportive people in her life and has worked to strengthen those relationships and to develop the skills to be able to ask for help and support when she needs it. She was also able to identify how her negative thinking was impacting the other areas in her life and she was able to make some positive shifts. She is feeling much more hopeful about her future, has improved her self-esteem, mood, and ability to focus on goals, communication skills and positive healthy relationship skills.



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Stories Continued...

In January, Marie*, who had recently moved from another province to Airdrie came to Drop-In Counselling and was referred to Wraparound Services. Marie also participated in the three session Wraparound Services Workshop which highlighted the opportunity to create a vision board to begin setting her goals by creating the big picture. One of the participant's personal story was very similar to Marie's and expressed support for Marie. Marie stated she "found the connection to the participant very helpful and inspiring".

Through continued support from members of the workshop, Marie began to feel better about herself. By the second session she had done her make-up, dressed up, was smiling, and expressed how she felt "more positive about her life generally".

The Facilitator of the Wraparound Services stated "The workshop offered a place for connections, and a place where no matter who you are, or what you have experienced, you belong to the safe community we create together where you are accepted as you are. They may seem like tiny actions, yet for Wraparound clients, they require a great deal of personal risk, trust and courage".

By the third and last workshop, the participants requested a monthly "connection group", a designated time that was set aside for them so they could help each other along their journey and discuss common concerns they were all struggling with. Some of the discussion items include: developing healthy friendships and boundaries, and community resourcing.

**Name was changed*

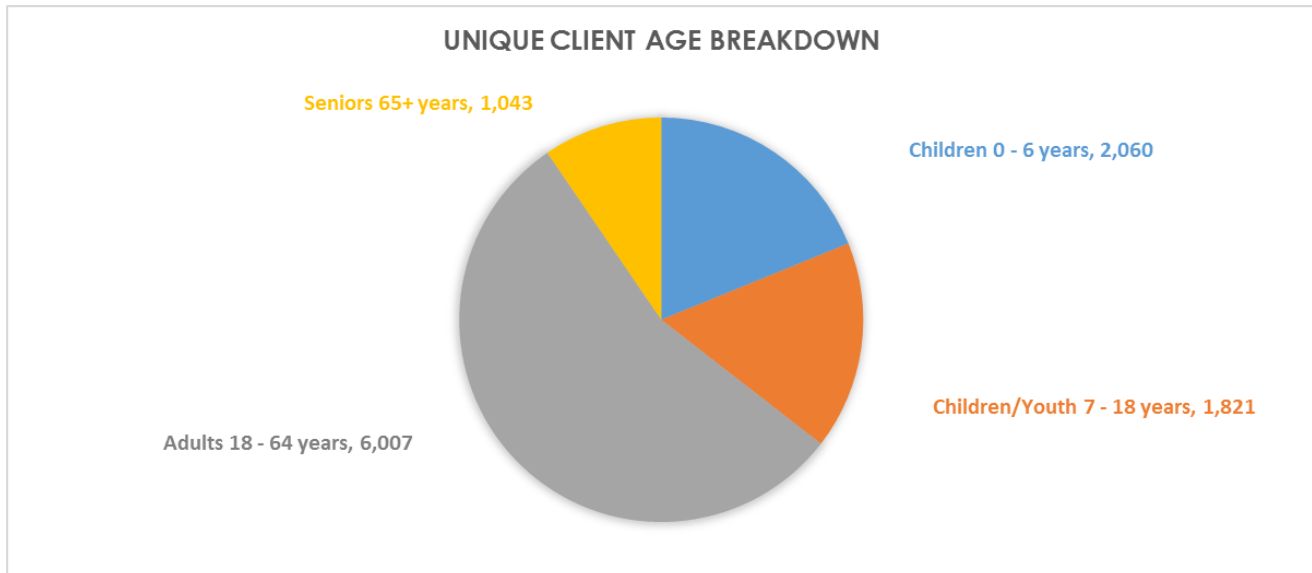
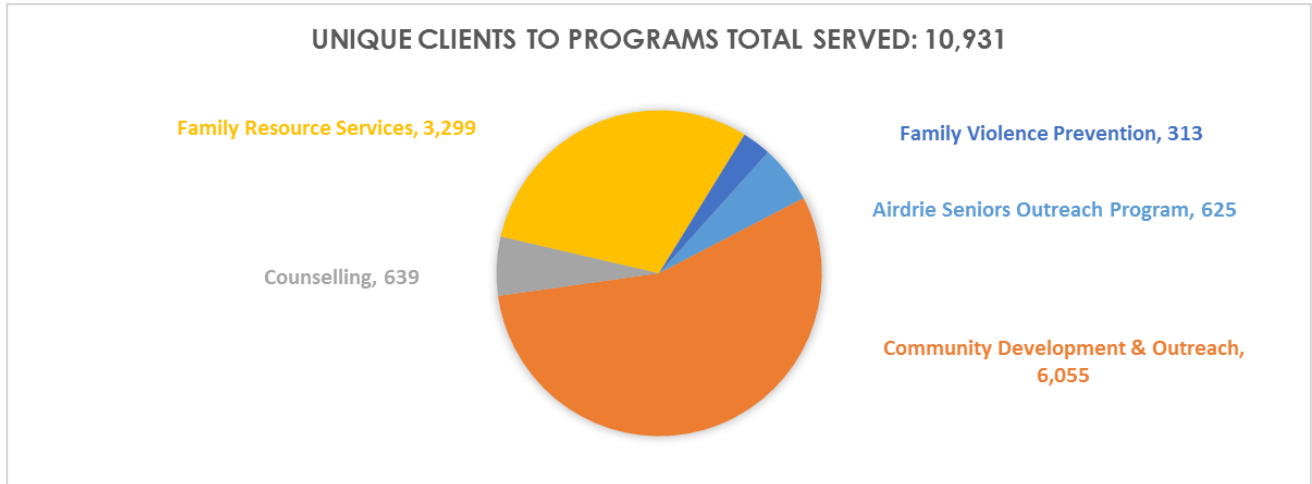
Testimonial

No name attached

Program has helped improve my state of mind. Much appreciated!

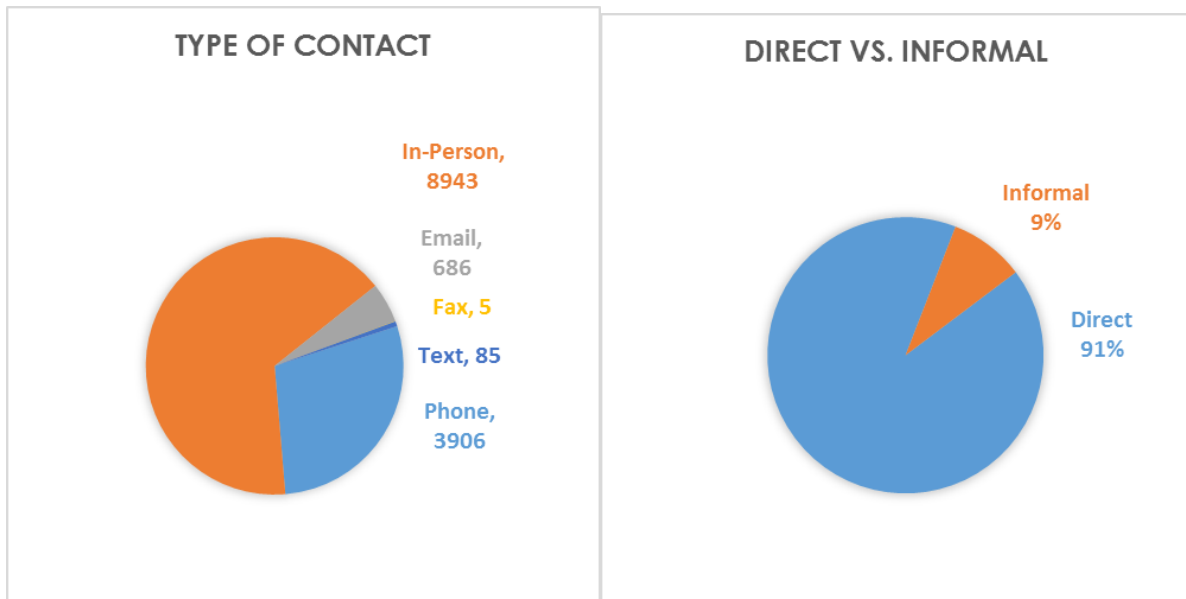
Community Links Overview

April 1, 2017 – March 31, 2018 – Community Links Statistics



Community Links Overview

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Direct – Individuals or families who are identifiable and engage with Community Links staff, receiving service from one of our core areas.

Informal – Individuals who are not identifiable (anonymous) and receive basic information from Community Links.

Testimonials

No name attached

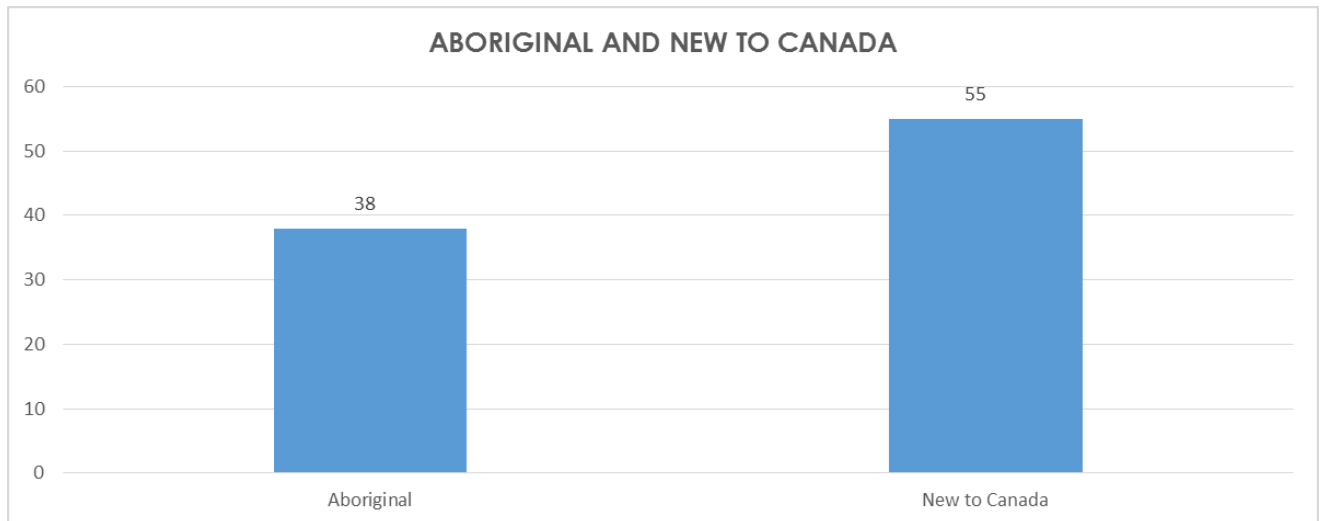
Community Links has great resources and programs to use. The staff are very accommodating and kind. I've been lucky to come across Community Links and appreciate all the people and programs they have.

No name attached

Thanks to Community Links for helping me through a difficult time! The support has meant the world to me.

Community Links Overview

April 1, 2017 – March 31, 2018 – Community Links Statistics



Testimonials

Kilye H

Being an only parent is difficult to say the least. With programs through Community Links such as Kidsport, Jumpstart and Genesis programs, my 2 boys are able to participate in sports, exercise daily and be around other kids.

No name attached

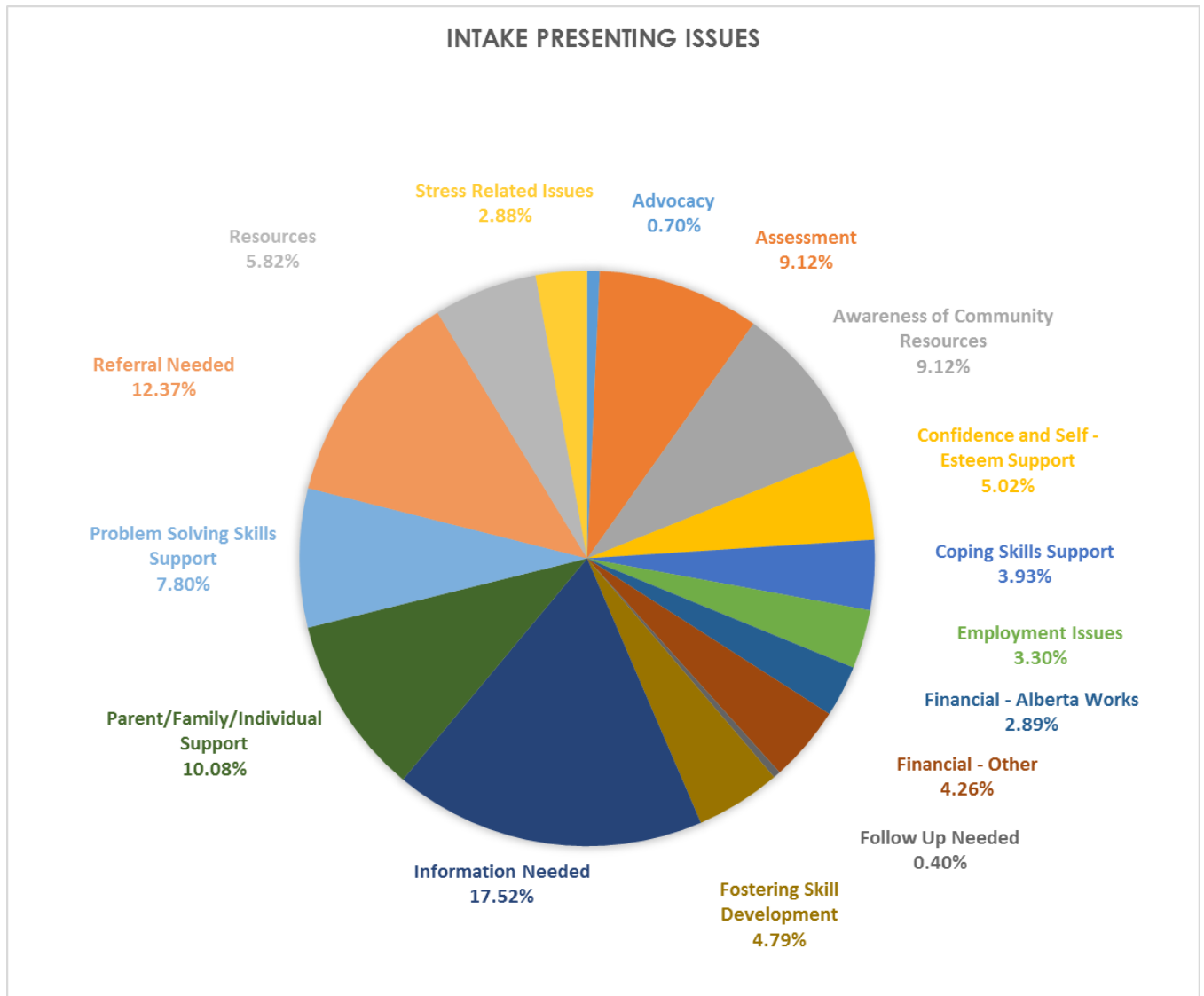
Community Links is a great place to get any information that you need about housing, food, work etc. they are very helpful with everything.

Nicole K

I love the staff here, I have always left feeling like my family will be ok.

Community Links Overview

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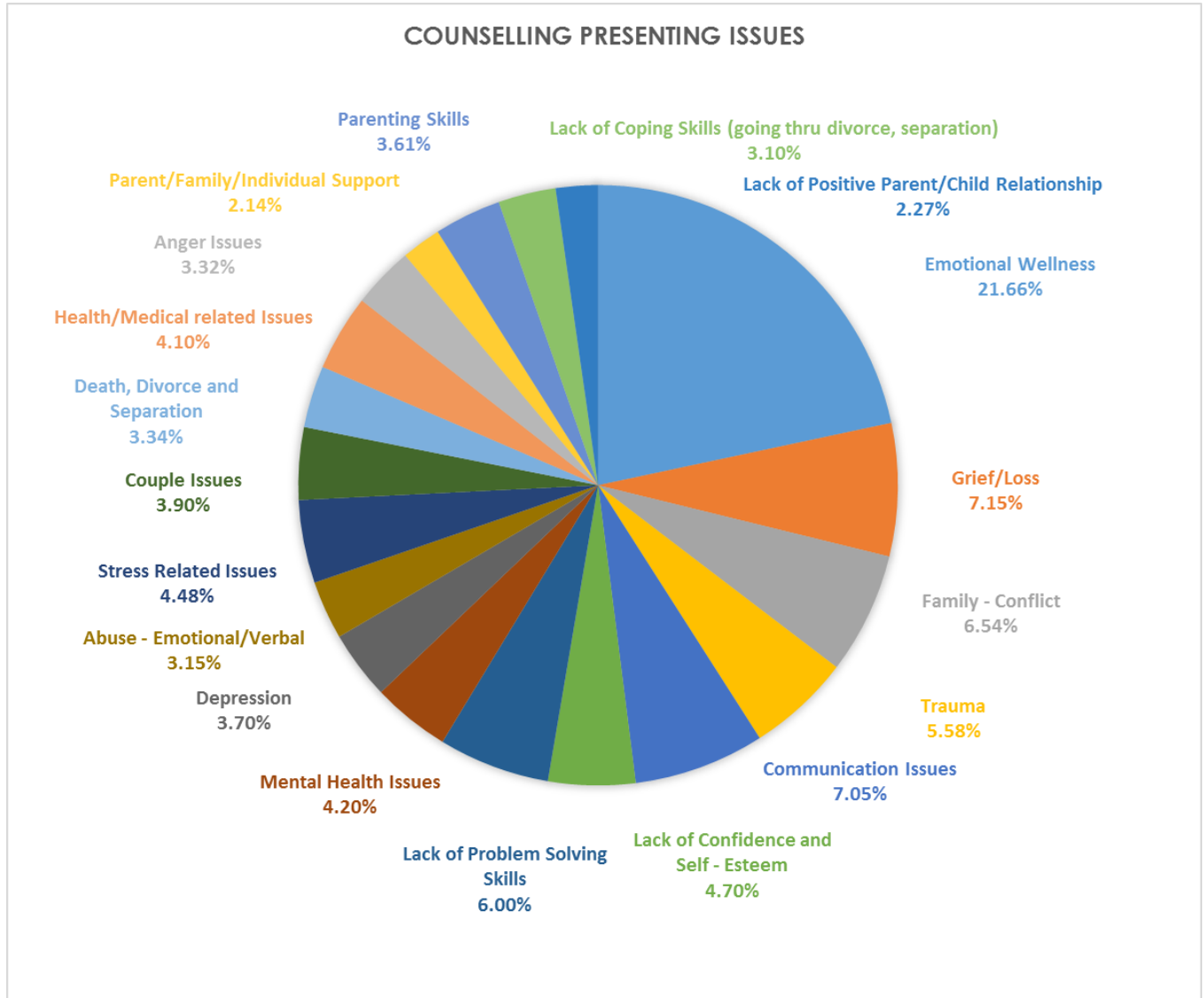
Testimonial

No name attached

I've noticed a big difference in my daughter after seeing the counsellor at Community Links. They are very good at making her feel comfortable.

Community Links Overview

April 1, 2017 – March 31, 2018 – Community Links Statistics



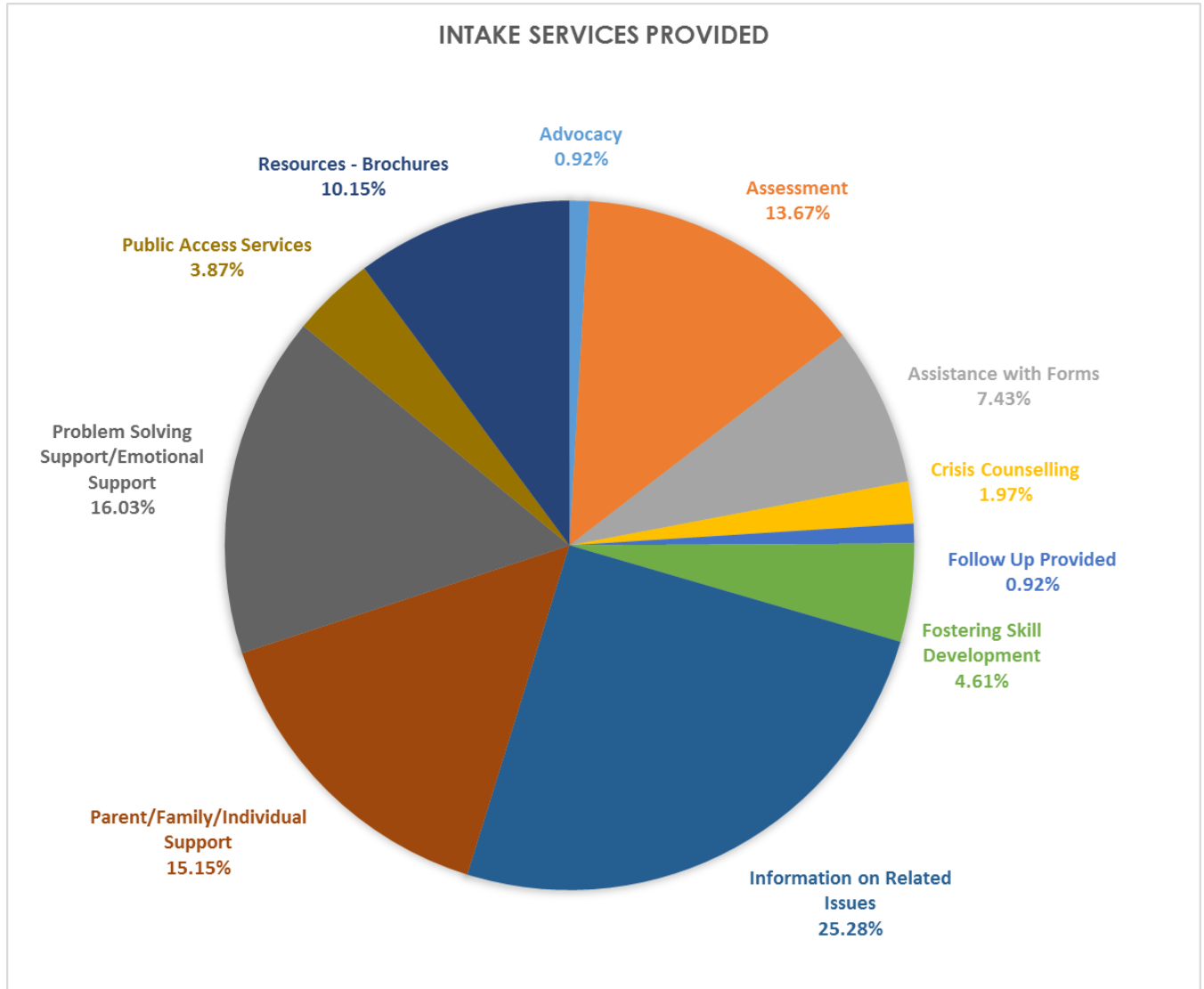
Testimonial

No name attached

Every time I've needed help or not sure what to access, Community Links always helps.

Community Links Overview

April 1, 2017 – March 31, 2018 – Community Links Statistics



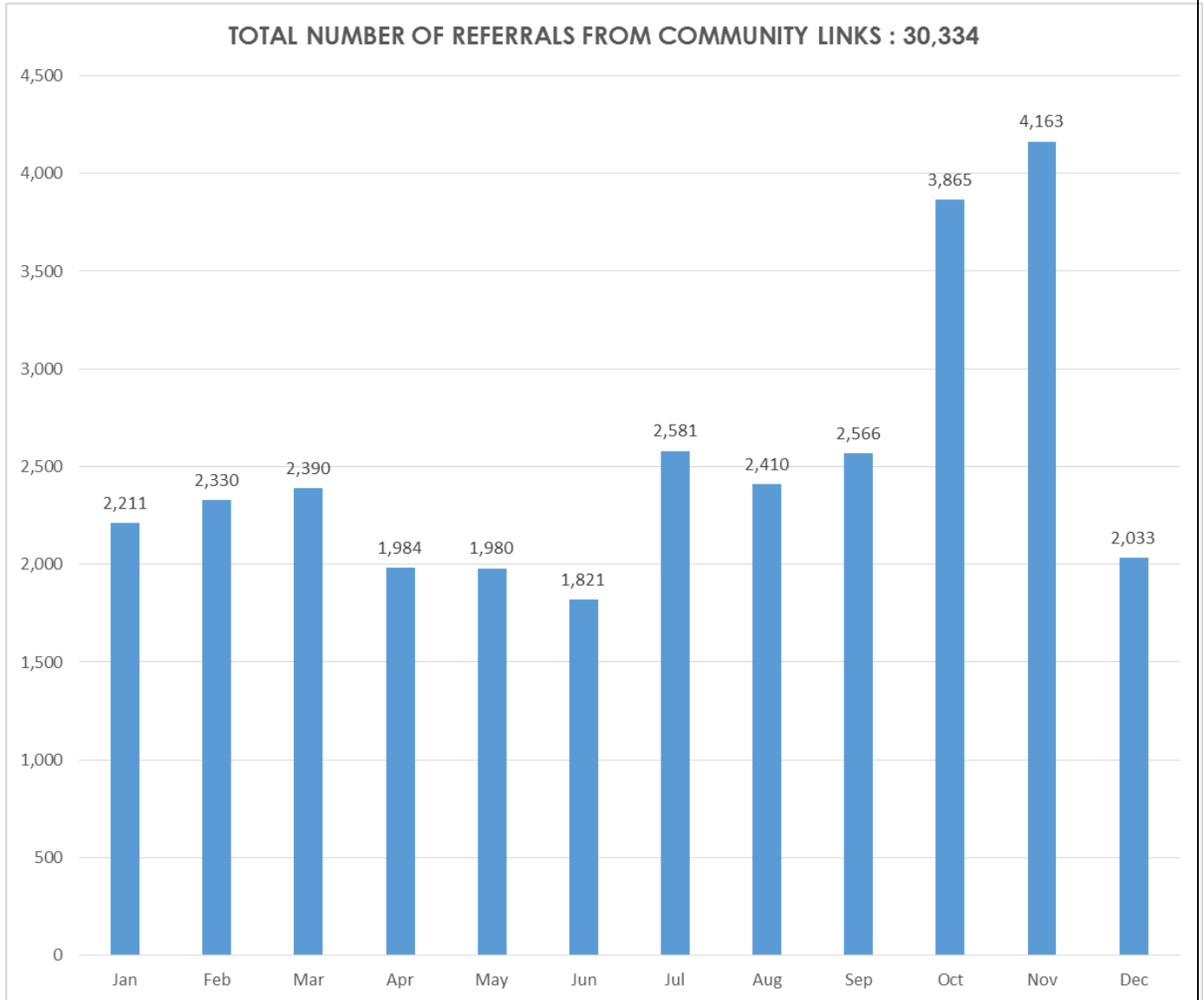
Testimonial

No name attached

I am thankful there is a variety of resources for low income families just like in the big City of Calgary.

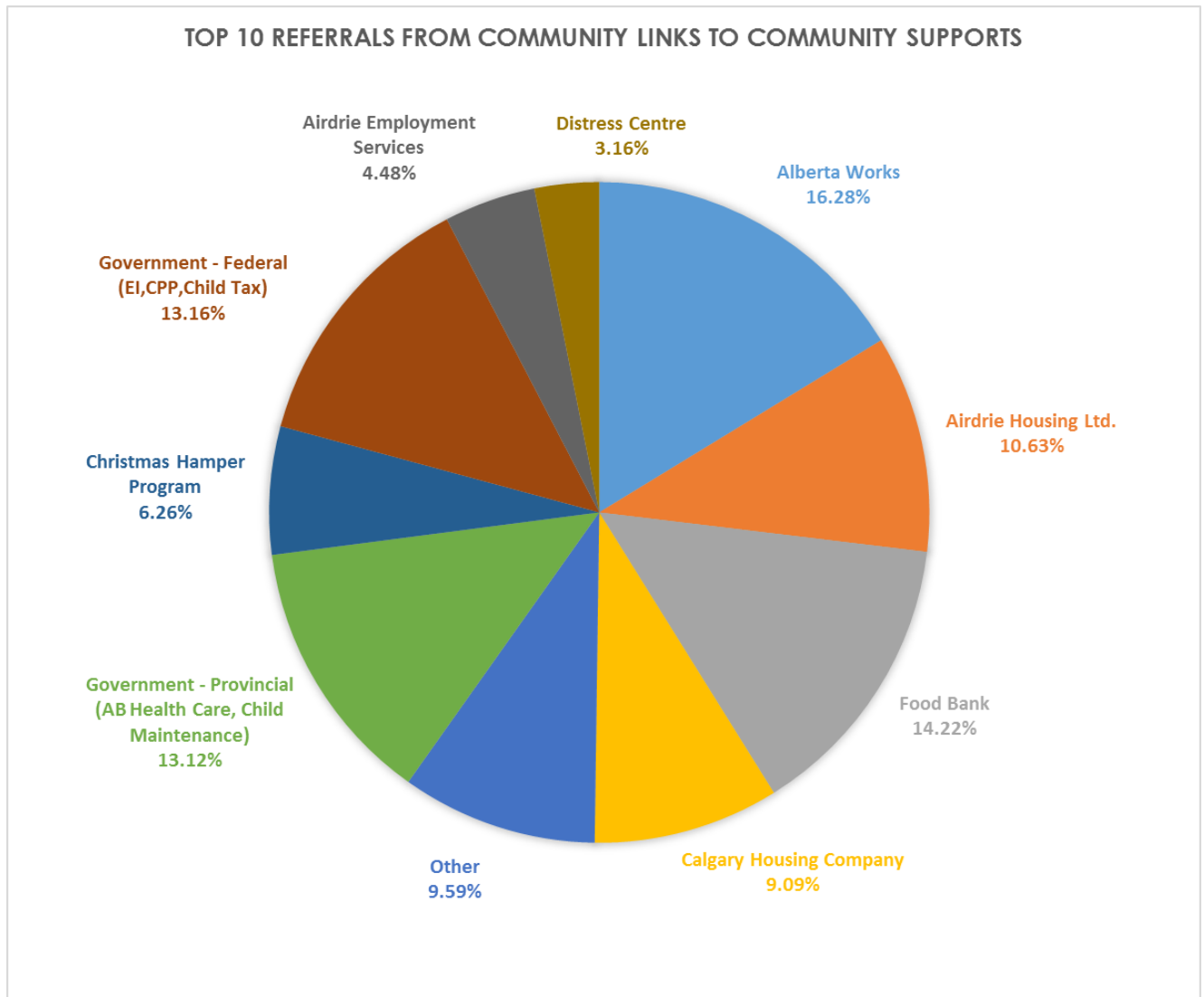
Community Links Overview

April 1, 2017 – March 31, 2018 – Community Links Statistics



Community Links Overview

April 1, 2017 – March 31, 2018 – Community Links Statistics



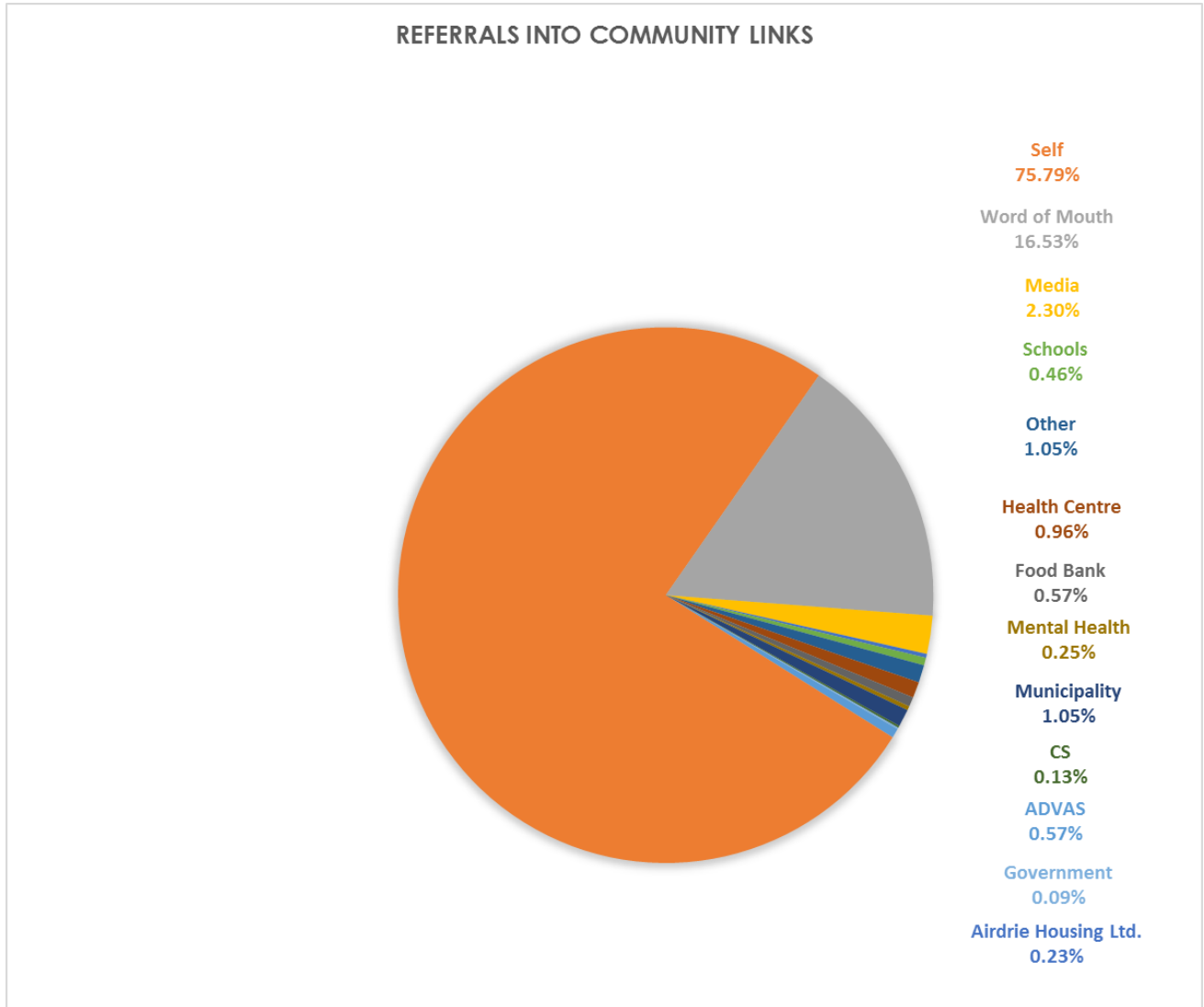
Testimonial

No name attached

Very helpful, kind and patient.

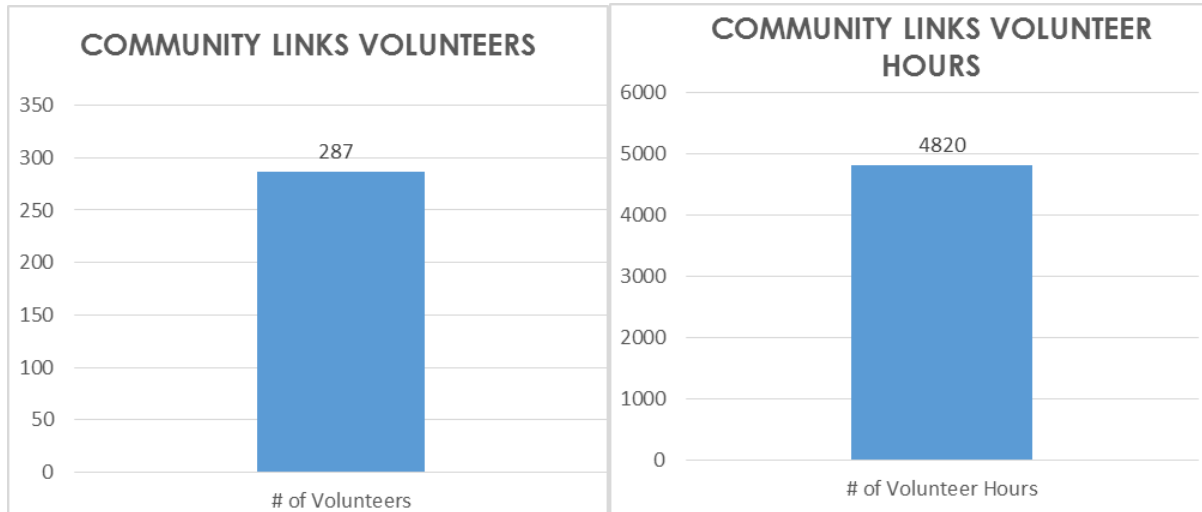
Community Links Overview

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Community Links Overview

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Testimonial

No name attached

Empowered me to help myself! Gave me and my kids access to opportunities in town.

No name attached

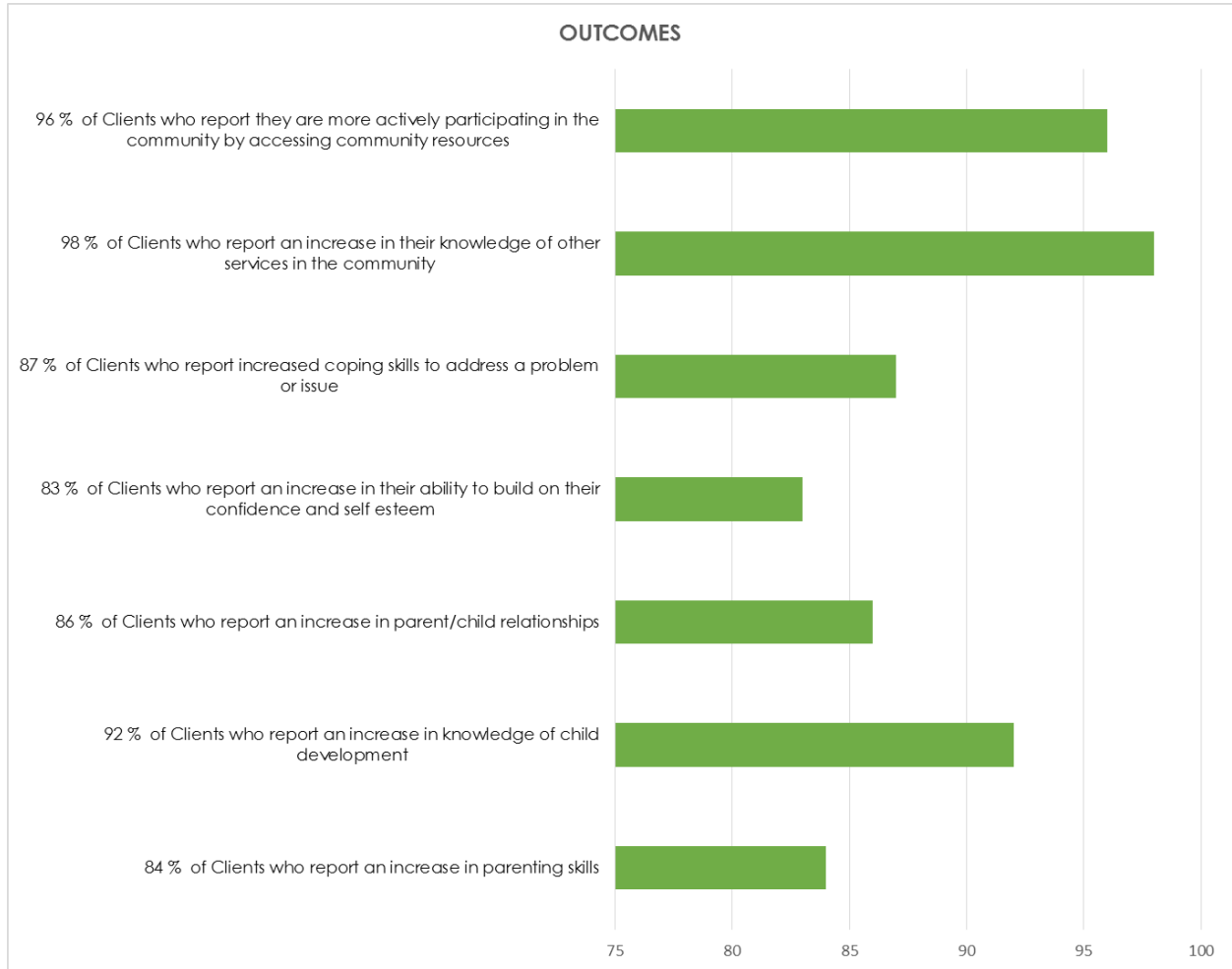
Many resources have been made available to me that I did not know existed. I feel that there are many avenues of help open to get me through a very difficult time.

No name attached

Community Links has helped my mom with resources for seniors. Very nice and helpful people.

Community Links Overview

April 1, 2017 – March 31, 2018 – Community Links Statistics



Testimonial

Crystal T

As a parent and part of the community, if you feel hopeless about anything, Community Links is where you need to go or call. You will leave feeling better, feeling supported and you will leave with direction to what your next step is.

Funders

- Alberta Children and Youth Services
- Alberta Health Services Safe Communities Innovation Fund
- Calgary and Area Children's Services
- City of Airdrie Family and Community Support Services
- Corporate and Community Donations
- Crossfield Family and Community Support Services
- Rocky View County Family and Community Support Services
- United Way of Calgary and Area and Donor Option
- Beiseker and District Family and Community Support Services
- Irricana Family and Community Support Services
- Alberta Culture & Tourism

