



ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

Kids Kottage Foundation would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the traditional territories of the Indigenous peoples of the Treaty 6 region and the Métis Settlements and Métis Nation of Alberta, Regions 2, 3 and 4. We respect the histories, languages, and cultures of First Nations, Metis, Inuit, and all First Peoples of Canada, whose presence continues to enrich our community.

OUR VISION AND MISSION

Kids Kottage Foundation is Edmonton and area's only crisis prevention and intervention shelter for infants and children.

When a family is under toxic levels of stress, whether it be from homelessness, the effects of poverty, mental or physical health barriers, abuse, or whatever the case – so are the children – they are the hidden victims.

Our mission is to ensure every infant and child is kept safe, and their families are provided with the resources they need to build a strong and resilient future. We operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year ensuring children's basic needs are met, and connecting their caregivers with the resources they need.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Ramakrishnan**

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**Michelle
Plouffe**

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Troy Chalifoux

Manager, Indigenous Services Canada

Maryna Korchagina

*Assistant Deputy Minister, Preventative Community Services,
Ministry of Community and Social Services, Government of Alberta*

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A LETTER FROM: THE BOARD CHAIRPERSON

It is an honour to acknowledge the exceptional efforts of Kids Kottage Foundation in this past year.

As a volunteer Board Chairperson with Kids Kottage Foundation, I know firsthand our organization's ability to adapt its services to remain relevant and meet changing humanitarian needs. The current pandemic has not been an exception— if anything, it has been an accelerant to innovation and adaptability, unlike anything we have seen before.

My first term serving as Chairperson of the Board for Kids Kottage Foundation began as COVID-19 held this community, country, and the rest of the world in its grip. As the pandemic devastated lives and livelihoods, it was remarkable to see how Kids Kottage Foundation quickly used its depth of expertise to help meet the emerging needs of the most vulnerable and offer life-sustaining and life-saving services.

As Kids Kottage Foundation operations adapted to the ever-changing elements related to COVID-19, so too did the Board of Directors. It is a privilege to be the Chairperson of such an exceptional group of people dedicated to the governance of Kids Kottage Foundation.

Over the past year, the Board continued to work virtually to keep our commitments to demonstrate accountability, transparency, efficiency, continuous improvement, and excellence in governance. We worked with our Executive Director to examine the long-term impact of the pandemic on the Foundation.

I would like to thank Kids Kottage Foundation staff, volunteers, donors and our many partners whose dedication and generosity have helped us to help others during these challenging times.

As I reflect on the past year, I also pause and try to look ahead. While the future is unknown, especially during a pandemic, I do know that Kids Kottage Foundation will be there to keep infants and children safe, and strengthen families. **During uncertain times, that is a comfort all in itself.**



Rajesh Ramakrishnan
Board Chairperson
Kids Kottage Foundation



**Evolving through uncertainty
and building resilience.**

A LETTER FROM: THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends of Kids Kottage Foundation,

This has been an incredible year at Kids Kottage Foundation. I witnessed families and caregivers face extraordinary challenges—an insidious global pandemic, ballooning inflation, paralyzing uncertainty, and now a war in Ukraine resulting in global instability.

However, the courage and tenacity of each individual that called our Helpline or walked through our doors—whether it was a child, caregiver, staff, stakeholder or donor – showed unflinching resolve and hope. My message today echoes Desmond Tutu’s quote:

There comes the point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they’re falling in. ~ Desmond Tutu

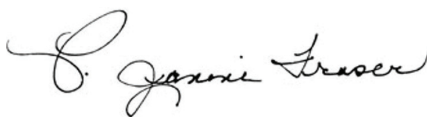
This report highlights how Kids Kottage goes upstream to prevent infants, children, families and caregivers from falling into further crisis and trauma. We go upstream with the families and caregivers to build a proactive action plan to get out of crisis and stay out of crisis. We go upstream and build a community of support when a family does not have support.

By going upstream, we mitigate potential life-long impacts when infants and children become exposed to trauma, crisis, homelessness, and poverty. The cycle of trauma did not begin with these children, but it has the potential to end with them.

I would like to give a special thank you to Honourable Minister Schulz for her continued support for Kids Kottage Foundation and for recognizing that Kids Kottage is part of the solution to keeping infants and children safe and families strong. I would like to thank Honourable Lieutenant Governor Salma Lakhani for her continued commitment to Kids Kottage Foundation. Lastly, I would like to thank His Worship, Mayor Sohi, for recognizing and providing Kids Kottage Foundation with a City Proclamation on National Child Day.

To our ecosystem of supporters, staff, volunteers, Board of Directors, and donors—we wouldn’t exist without your enduring support, both in material and in spirit. Together, you form the village that raises the most vulnerable children around us with love, compassion, and hope. As we continue to mature as an organization, I am grateful every day for the voices, visions, and commitment to community well-being that keeps us heading towards a glowing tomorrow.

Thanks to you all, the future of our community is bright.




Janine Fraser

Executive Director

Kids Kottage Foundation

FUND DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS

Kids Kottage Foundation exists today because of you—our donors! As we celebrated our 25th-anniversary last year, we honoured the inception of the Kottage whereby a group of concerned volunteers and donors saw the need in our community and created a solution in 1995 that is still going strong today.

It is through the continued outpouring of support of monthly donor contributions, special appeals, corporate gifts, grant funding, third-party fundraising initiatives, and individual support that we humbly serve the most vulnerable infants, children, and families in our community.

Thank you for sticking by us in 2021—our second pandemic year. Due to ever-changing public restrictions, we did not host any fundraising events last year besides our annual Radiothon. However, we are thrilled to announce the return of our Kids Kottage Foundation Breakfast event for Fall of 2022.

Thank you for continuing to ask how you can make a difference for families and children in crisis. Your interest in volunteering, liking and sharing our social media posts, and making donations leaves a huge impact— so, THANK YOU! **You are helping to break the cycle of intergenerational trauma and initiate real change in our community.**

Here are a few of the major highlights from the past year:

Community fundraisers benefiting the children!

The Kottage is grateful to the many organizations and individuals who reach out on a regular basis asking if they could support the children through their own fundraising activities!

Last year we were thrilled to have the support of groups such as Freedom Air's toy drive, LEDCOR Cares employee giving challenge, Can Man Dan's donation drive resulting in \$7,000 worth of gifts, and the 12 days of Christmas Donation Drive from Glenora Elementary collecting more than \$10,000 worth of gifts to name a few!

Stay tuned to our social media, web posts, and newsletters this year to learn more about how you can partake in or lead your own fundraiser. **Every Child Deserves to be Safe.**

27th annual Radiothon success!

The Radiothon was the Foundation's first-ever fundraiser and continues to be our signature fundraising event. This year's day-long Radiothon was hosted by ShineFM on December 9th, 2021. Numerous donors showed up to answer the phones, issue matching gift challenges, and co-host live activities. Thanks to all of you, more than \$200,000 was raised for infants, children, and families in crisis!

COVID-19

There were moments in time throughout the past year when all we could do was courageously keep answering the helpline, admit infants and children, and help families walk bravely into the unknown of this unpredictable global pandemic.

Unfortunately, it is the most vulnerable who are the hidden victims. It is a convergence not widely understood—social challenges always show up when infants and children are consistently exposed to trauma and crisis. This pandemic has shone a bright light on why the most vulnerable need a safe place, and why human connection is not just a “thing” but rather a necessity for development, growth, and mental health.

It's noteworthy to point out that our front-line services remained open, serving the most vulnerable. We are exceptionally proud of the way our team came up with creative and effective solutions around so many unexpected challenges during the pandemic.

Now we are looking towards the future with in-person events. **While our approaches evolve, the health and safety of everyone who walks through our doors will always be our top priority.**



Staff Retreat



Sanitizing Toys



Crisis Nursery Courtyard

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Kids Kottage provides temporary emergency care for infants and children from newborn to 10 years without any fee charged to families for our services. When parents, caregivers or guardians are in crisis, we are committed to providing a safe haven to their little ones. Additionally, we strengthen families by connecting them with the resources they need to get out of crisis, navigate future challenges, and ultimately achieve self-sufficiency.

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CHILDREN WERE KEPT SAFE

As a trusted resource for vulnerable families, we remained strong and resilient throughout the year. We are committed to protecting vulnerable families and continue to safely provide shelter to infants and children and support their caregivers during their crises. Extensive safety protocols and staff training were put in place, with all caregivers, children, staff and visitors being required to complete a health screening upon arrival at Kids Kottage. In addition to utilizing rapid tests, frontline workers wore full PPE while taking care of the vulnerable infants and children. Their dedication, commitment, humility, and courage deserve our deepest gratitude and admiration. **During the past year, 1147 children, from newborn to 10 years of age, were served through our crisis line. Meanwhile, 461 of them were admitted to our crisis nursery.**

ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACEs)

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are recognized as a series of compounding traumatic events during childhood. Toxic stressors such as homelessness, verbal and physical abuse, poverty, and neglect can harm a child's healthy brain development and may lead to negative outcomes as they grow up.

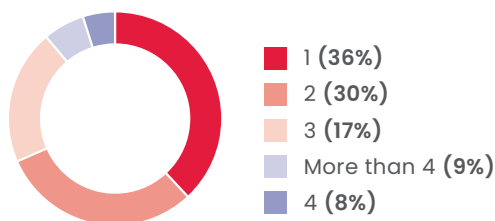
Literature suggests that when Adverse Childhood Experiences remain unaddressed among infants and young children, they may become vulnerable and susceptible to adverse outcomes later in adult life. This, in turn, may lead to a cycle of intergenerational trauma in their familial system.

An alarming result from Kids Kottage Foundation client surveys shows that over 80% of caregivers experiencing homelessness and poverty have high ACEs scores themselves. As the number of ACEs increases, the amount of adverse outcomes tends to go up which results in higher vulnerability of a familial system. Although we have all encountered some negative experiences as we grow up, a positive support system changes the narrative for the very young among us and prevents negative outcomes from occurring later on.

At Kids Kottage Foundation, we provide a healthy support system for both the caregivers and the most vulnerable among us—infants and children. We admire the caregivers who are seeking help, as it takes an unthinkable amount of courage and strength to do so. **Together, we can give the best support possible to help the children break free from the cycle of intergenerational trauma.**

Snapshot of Our Clients

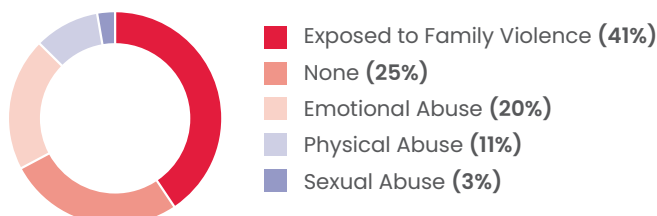
NUMBER OF CHILDREN PER HOUSEHOLD:



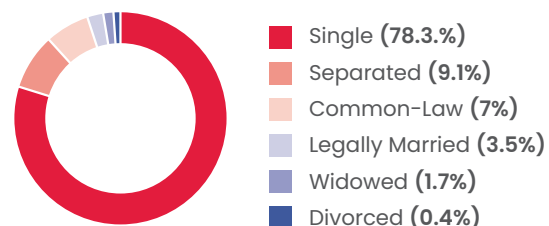
CAREGIVERS SELF-IDENTIFIED AS:



HISTORY OF A CHILD INCLUDES:



MARITAL STATUS OF CAREGIVERS:



COMMUNITY LEADER SUPPORT

Throughout the year, Kids Kottage received support from a number of recognizable leaders within our community, and our province. We are grateful to live in a community where the leaders are so in tune and passionate about creating a stronger and more resilient future for our children.

CITY PROCLAMATION: NATIONAL CHILD DAY

We were honoured to have His Worship Mayor Amarjeet Sohi, Mayor of Edmonton, recognize the importance of National Child Day and show his support of Kids Kottage Foundation through the City's Proclamation in commemoration of the day.

We would also like to extend a thank you to the community leaders who joined us in highlighting the importance of National Child Day and what it means to us.



Photo credit: Alexis Zacharko

VOLUNTEERS IN 2021

While we have not been able to welcome volunteers back in the crisis nursery yet, we have had some amazing groups volunteer their time to help around outside of the Kottage!

The amount of support we have received from Edmontonians and those in surrounding areas has helped us immensely throughout these times and has enabled us to serve even more infants, children, and their families. From sorting files, donations and PPE, decorating the crisis nursery for every holiday, to answering phones during Radiothon, and everything in between, we really couldn't operate without the generous support of our sponsors, donors, and Board of Directors.

During this challenging pandemic, the Board of Directors tirelessly gave themselves and their time. Their chief concern was the safety of infants, children, caregivers, and the Kids Kottage Team, and it showed throughout the year in their efforts and dedication to Kids Kottage.





I like the teachers a lot they are nice.

There are lots of Paw Patrol toys, trains, lego. I want to come here again.

I would come to Kids Kottage again "after I got used to it because not at home."

I like it here. It's the only place I feel safe. It's the only place adults listen to me.

My bed "was kinda hard."

I had a good stay at Kids Kottage "except for baby who pushed me."

I like playing in Zen den.

What we heard from the children who stayed with us.

We played good games "just dance."

I had my birthday party here. It was awesome. The teachers are so nice.

I liked the food "pizza."

The playground is awesome, I want to go outside all the time.

I like coming and playing with Cara. She is so funny.

I liked Xbox.

I like making stuff.

Ana Maria makes the best Macaroni and Cheese in the whole world – it's better than KD!



TESTIMONIALS

FROM CAREGIVERS:

- “ This has helped so much, you don't even know.
- “ I was able to get so much done. You guys were the only people I could turn to.
- “ I was new to Edmonton. I have been a victim of domestic violence. I didn't have a safe place to leave my son when I had nowhere! I will never forget what you did to support me during my crisis.
- “ Thank you for this. My children didn't need to be around the tension in the home.
- “ I have been through a lot. Calling there was the best thing I could have done. The lady on the phone was so kind. My children had a great time. And thank you for free masks and hand sanitizers and food hampers. I am so grateful for all you have done for me.
- “ I'm glad I have a safe place for my child to go while I figure things out.

FROM TEAM MEMBERS:

Intake

- “ **I appreciate working for a foundation that works towards creating a difference** and change in our community. I look forward, each day, to creating relationships with clients and helping them work towards their goals. It is an honour to be part of an organization that is so client-centred and focuses on keeping families safe and strong.
- “ **I am honored to be given the opportunity to work with children and their caregivers.** I am able to work with and alongside caregivers as they work towards their goals while we provide care and keep children safe at Kids Kottage. I am thankful for the trust that caregivers give when they open up or every time they tell their stories. I am glad that they feel safe and know that they are in a safe environment. It is a very rewarding feeling when caregivers come back and feel a lot better as compared to when they previously came in, from being at a 1 or 2 in the Coping Scale and not coping well and then moving to a 10 and coping very well during discharge.

Childcare

- “ **I just want to say I have had a wonderful experience working at Kids Kottage,** this organization makes me feel valued as an employee. Team Leads are amazing, considerate, helpful and so easy to talk to. The fact that this organization had a staff retreat, provided a gift card and a wage increase has really increased my morale, and out of the conversations I have had with others they seem to agree. Thank you!



I am happy and at peace with our workplace culture. Everyone is nice, kind, and supportive of one another. We all work as a team and help one another towards reaching our goals. Our supervisors are nurturing and very supportive, they let us grow and develop our knowledge and skill set. The training opportunities are very helpful in improving our knowledge and skills.

Team Leaders



Working at Kids Kottage is the most rewarding, and challenging, job I have ever had. Hearing the stories behind the intakes can hurt your heart, but they also show the strength and resilience of the parents who contact us. These parents are often at the breaking point when they reach out to us, trusting us to care for their children while they work to improve things for themselves and their family. The strength these families show when they reach out for help is inspirational and is what makes the hard work worth it. Plus, children's hugs and baby snuggles are an amazing work perk!



I have been at Kids Kottage for 12 years, 13 years in October. What drew me to the Kottage in the first place was my love of children, and a desire to do something meaningful with my life. What has kept me at the Kottage is how much of a difference we make, and all the little moments of connection I have made over the years with caregivers, children, co-workers and colleagues. Part of my core beliefs is that the family is the cornerstone of society, and to see those exact words as part of the mission statement of the Kottage told me that I was in the right place. And daily caring for children, being there when they're having a hard time, reassuring caregivers, giving support and encouragement, and searching for solutions, or the beginning of solutions has fulfilled me in a way I never expected. The Kottage is where I found my passion and my purpose in my career in social services. I am proud of the work we do to help strengthen and keep families together, to help (in little ways) children and caregivers to deal with and start healing from the trauma in their lives, and to make our community just a little bit better.



These stories; these infants, children and families, are the reason we exist.

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

Kids Kottage Foundation has always strived to achieve the goal of safe children and strong families in our community, and 2021-2022 was no different. However, due to the pandemic, this became increasingly challenging. Enduring difficulties coinciding with each and every wave of the pandemic, the staff members at Kids Kottage were pushed to their limits. Using PPE supplied by the Government of Alberta and adhering to safety protocols outlined by the Board of Directors, we are happy to say that there were zero cases of COVID-19 contracted by our clients while staying at the Crisis Nursery. It is truly astounding how everyone here at the Foundation came together in the face of adversity to provide a safe harbour for the most vulnerable in our community.

Kids Kottage Foundation would also like to convey our deepest gratitude to all of our supporters in the Edmonton region. With financial assistance from the generous individuals, businesses, and charitable foundations in the capital city region,

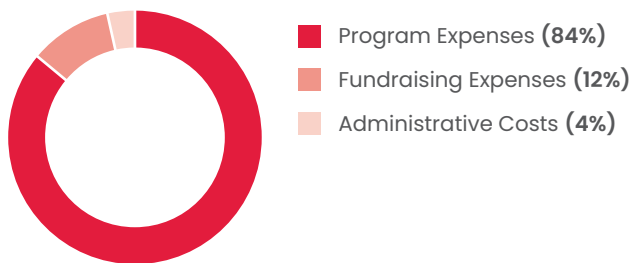
along with wage subsidies provided by the Federal Government, the Foundation was able to provide all the required services to our clients without going into a deficit. Additionally, we are happy to announce that we received a 20% increase in funding from the Government of Alberta which we have flowed directly to the wages of our Crisis Nursery staff. With this increase, we will be able to maintain the impactful level of care that enables our clients to thrive.

In closing, Kids Kottage Foundation maintains its current operations and provides the same program effectiveness level to assist vulnerable infants and children in our society. **We continue to face the adversity that the future holds while ensuring our services provide the much-needed respite that families in our care require.**

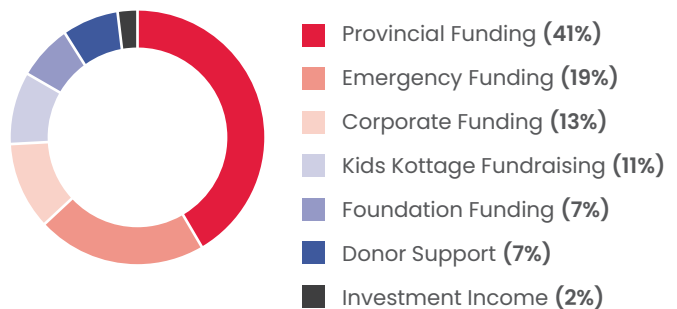
Thank you.

Financials

EXPENDITURES:



REVENUE:



STRONG CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

INTER PIPELINE is proud to support Kids Kottage Foundation's incredible work in the community with vulnerable children. Inter Pipeliners believe our most precious resource, our community's children, holds the hope and opportunity for our future. We want to thank families, caregivers and staff for their passion and dedication and for allowing us to be a part of this invaluable service to the community.

LEDGOR employees care. We care about each other, our families, and the communities where we live and work – that's the Ledcor Cares spirit. Kids Kottage has a place in our hearts as it not only helps families with their immediate needs while in crisis, but goes beyond and helps them get the long-term care they need. Kids Kottage helps build strong families which in turn builds strong communities. Ledcor has been living and working in Edmonton for 75 years and keeping our community strong is our goal.

Strong families build strong communities, and strong communities build strong businesses. Through the pillars of "Take Care" and "Love the Work", we have a strong team that makes **MAMMOET** into who we are and what we do. Thank you, Kids Kottage Foundation, for being committed to helping families in distress by providing a safety net for the infants and children and supporting their caregivers in building stronger, more resilient futures. We are proud to be your long-term partner!

BROOKFIELD RESIDENTIAL believes strongly that a home should be a place that provides an unparalleled sense of safety and belonging. In times when crisis prevents a child's home from being that refuge, as a home builder and community developer, Brookfield proudly stands with Kids Kottage in creating a place where families get the help and support they need to conquer the crisis they face. This partnership matters to Brookfield because in order to make Edmonton the best place to call home, we need a strong, healthy and safe community and Kids Kottage is an integral part of that process.

PARTNERSHIPS MADE

- CASA Counselling & Mental Health
- Money Mentors Alberta
- Kids on Track
- Teen Time of Edmonton
- Tegler Youth centre – Hope Mission
- Christmas Bureau
- Homeward Trust
- Family Nexus
- Family Connections
- Mariam's Footsteps
- Mustard Seed
- Jewish Family Services, Edmonton
- Multicultural Health Brokers, Edmonton
- Bridge to Care
- C5 North East Hub(Terra Centre, Norwood Child and Family Resource Centre, Edmonton Mennonite
- Centre for Newcomers, Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society, Boyle Street Community Services)
- Today Centre
- Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women (IAAW)
- Catholic Social Services
- KARA Community Resources Centre
- Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton
- Pride Centre of Edmonton
- Family Futures Resource Network
- Red Road Healing Society
- ABC Head Start Society
- E4C
- Islamic Family Social Social Service Association)
- Edmonton John Howard Society
- The Canadian Native Friendship
- Centre
- YMCA Welcome Village
- Employabilities
- Canadian International Immigrant & Refugee Support Association (CIIRSA)
- The Family Centre
- The Salvation Army
- West View Primary Care (Spruce Grove)
- YWCA Edmonton
- Candora Society
- Crystal Kids, Edmonton
- Elves Special Needs Society
- Children's Autism Services of Edmonton
- Zebra Child Protection Centre, Edmonton



If you would like to support Kids Kottage Foundation, you can see our Wishlist or donate online at www.kidskottage.org.

For convenience, you can also scan the QR code below to visit our website.



Want to keep up with what we're doing?
Follow us on our socials!

