

SEPTEMBER 2021

FSC NATIONAL NEWS

Newsletter for members of Family Service Canada



Message from the Board

We have had to make the difficult decision to meet virtually for our fall Community of Learning (COL) and Annual General Meeting (AGM). A personal invite will be sent to you shortly however, in the interim, save October 26th as the date. I am very excited about the area we will be exploring this time round and hope you will all be able to join us. The content will be relevant for your Board of Directors as well. FSC will provide you with 2 tickets to the event as part of your membership.

The Board would also like to acknowledge September 30th as National Truth and Reconciliation Day. On this day we want to honor the lost children and families that were and continue to be impacted by the Residential Schools. It is a day of reflection, education and action. Here are some activities to participate in:

First Nations Child & Family Caring Society

<https://fncaringsociety.com/orange-shirt-day-and-national-day-truth-and-reconciliation-virtual-participation#:~:text=Educational%20Resources%20for,to%20our%20initiatives>

Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society

<https://www.facebook.com/events/863968157590812/>

Prime-time broadcast for the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation: <https://nctr.ca/new-prime-time-broadcast-special-to-mark-the-first-national-day-for-truth-and-reconciliation/>

Pauline Smale

Board Chair

Innovation in Governance and Leadership

Come hear about the trends and forces facing board governance and the impact on leadership!

We will enjoy three dynamic presentations that will speak to these realities for volunteers and leadership in the non-profit sector.

SAVE THE DATE

FSC Community of Learning
October 26 (virtual event)

Rapid Care Counselling

Rapid Care Counselling (RCC) is an innovative collaboration between Catholic Family Service (CFS) and CUPS who have been supporting Calgarians independently for 32 years (CUPS) and 64 years (CFS). With the support of the Calgary Homeless Foundation, CUPS and CFS provide rapid, responsive, and tailored mental health supports to Calgarians experiencing homelessness.

RCC is a low-barrier program that engages with Children, Youth, Singles, and Families who have current or lived experience of homelessness - for those who are housed, at risk of homelessness, or who are currently unhoused. The service is available to people from all faiths and from all backgrounds.

The overall goal of the program is to rapidly connect participants with low-barrier mental health supports when they need them, and provide a continuum of mental health care. RCC seeks to match the right mental health support with level of acuity and need of those impacted by homelessness.

The first step in the RCC program is a single Rapid Access Counselling session with a CFS counsellor. This 90-minute appointment is made up of a goal-based and solution focused counselling session followed by integrated care planning to determine what supports are required beyond the session. This may include access to future Rapid Access Counselling sessions, other community supports, or referral into long-term counselling provided by the CUPS Shared Care Mental Health team. With the support and guidance of the Calgary Homeless Foundation, CFS and CUPS are working together as one team where each organization's areas of expertise is leveraged to provide seamless and tailored care to this population.



Since launching in February 2021, CFS has conducted 403 single session appointments and 82 clients have been provided long-term care by the CUPS team. RCC is breaking down barriers to access by making in person sessions available on site at CFS, CUPS and partner shelter and place-based housing sites across the city, and also providing virtual sessions.

We are testing this model that reduces barriers and brings the service right to the client through a developmental evaluation. We are exploring applicability in other Canadian cities.

Participants in the RCC program have said the following about their experience:

"The session was extremely helpful. I achieved the mindset I was looking for".

"I feel more confident about my plans for the future."

For more information about Rapid Care Counselling, please contact the engagement team at 403-205-5292 or email rcc@cfs-ab.org.

Be Political, but Not Partisan

Our organizations support people and families as they face mental health and well-being challenges, poverty, racism, affordable housing, and more.

As these social issues (and how to solve them) become increasingly common discussion topics, it can be essential for us to wade into the dialogue. On behalf of those we serve, our agencies have a vested interest in how these conversations and policies evolve. We also have expertise and unique insight into where the issues come from and how to resolve them.

A few years ago, changes to the Income Tax Act removed the concept of “political activities” by registered charities. That means that we can engage in discussions, raise awareness about issues, and advocate for policy change without risking our charitable status—so long as we’re not partisan.

Charities are still not permitted to engage in partisan activity. When the issues become politicized, or even become campaign issues, as a few recently did, it can be challenging to discern the line between when our advocacy is political versus partisan.

If you plan to do any issues advertising or advocate for a policy change, being clear about what is considered political but not partisan can save you a big headache. Here are two resources that can help:

1. For an excellent (albeit election-focused) overview of allowable activities, read this short article from Imagine Canada: <https://imaginecanada.ca/en/360/how-engage-federal-election-2021-rules-charities-nonprofits>.
2. For more detailed guidance and examples, visit the CRA: <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/charities-giving/charities/policies-guidance/public-policy-dialogue-development-activities.html>

Don't forget that your fellow FSC members are also an excellent resource. Many of them navigate the political/partisan line and can share insight on how they ensure their charitable status is protected.