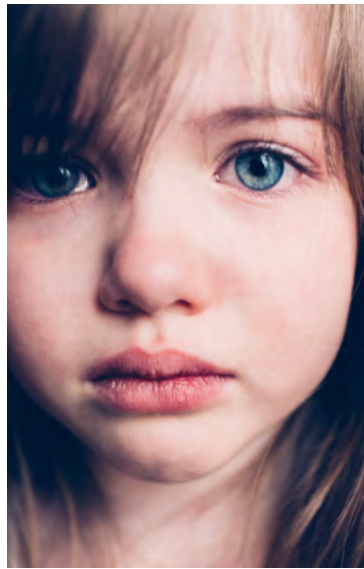
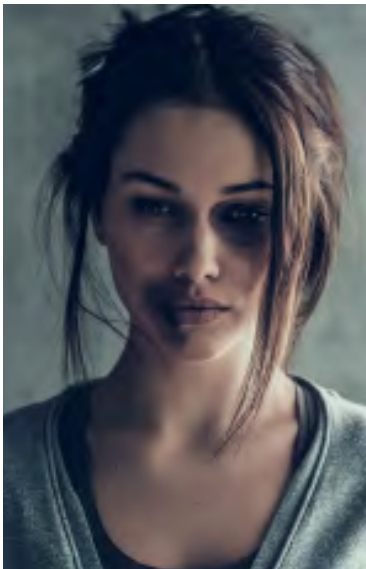




ANNUAL REPORT 2019 - 2020

THE ROAD AHEAD



www.victimsupport.ca

403-885-3355 • 4405 South Street, Blackfalds RCMP Detachment



MESSAGE FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & BOARD PRESIDENT

As Executive Director for the Central Alberta Victim and Witness Support Society, I would like to start by extending my sincere appreciation to our wonderful and amazing staff, volunteer Advocates, Board of Directors, community partners and generous sponsors. Your invaluable contribution has helped make a positive difference in so many lives.

The last fiscal year was indeed a year of change and challenge. CAVWSS has been tasked with a significant and steady increase in caseloads, financial uncertainties in relation to government funding along with fundraising and operational barriers as a consequence of Covid-19.

Our statistics show that we opened 882 new case files and served over 1226 clients (our team responds to an average of 70 service requests per month). This does not include previous ongoing case files that require continued services, such as court accompaniment, updates and support.

The CAVWSS team has continued to move forward, supporting victims and families in our communities on their road ahead. There is no better feeling than when we are able to assist our clients in bridging the gap from hurt to hope through our professional and compassionate provision of direct support, information, referral and education.

In regards to fundraising and community awareness, we unfortunately had to cancel our major sponsorship and community events such as galas, community information sessions and charity check stops. Although this has been a detrimental set-back, we continue to pursue alternative fundraising opportunities and hope to schedule these events in the coming year.

I hope you find our annual report informative and on behalf of CAVWSS I encourage you to assist us in sharing our message to ensure victims and witnesses of crime and tragedy know that they are not alone.

With the continued help and support of each other and our extended community, we look forward to making a difference in years to come.

Sincerely,
Executive Director

Gloria Derksen



On behalf of the Board of Directors I am honoured to present the annual report for Central Alberta Victim & Witness Support Society for the fiscal year ending August 31, 2020. The global pandemic plus the downturn in the economy created a challenging year for us, yet I believe we can be proud of our response.

The Challenge of COVID-19

The ubiquitous new coronavirus has had a major affect on our way of operating and is likely to affect our future fundraising for some time. Thanks to great leadership from our Executive Director and the terrific support of our RCMP partner, our staff and our volunteer Advocates, we've been able to adapt our operations, but the affect on our fundraising revenue will likely be more long-lasting.

The Funding Challenge

We're currently in the midst of a provincial government overhaul of victim services and are unsure of the direction it will take. The government has spoken strongly and often of its support for victims of rural crime. However, it has also indicated a desire to expand the use of the Victims of Crime Fund (VOCF), the major grant source for our Unit. At this point we can only guess what the final financial and structural picture for victim services will look like.

The Challenge of Increasing Caseloads

In 2020, the period January to September saw the number of new cases almost match the total number of new cases in all of 2019. Also, violent offenses in 2020 are on track to exceed those of 2019. This is the continuation of a long-term trend of increasing caseloads and caseload complexity for our Unit. These trends mean more responsibility for everyone on our front lines.

In spite of all the challenges, we continue to be blessed with significant strengths for which I'm very grateful: a highly competent, committed and stable staff, a full complement of volunteer Advocates, a strong Board, and a strong Unit. The results of our annual program evaluation suggest a healthy Unit that's doing very well at accomplishing its program's objectives and enacting its mission despite obstacles. I'm very happy to say that in 2019-20 we offered exemplary service to our clients, we worked very well together, and we exemplified our motto of **Onward and Upward!**

Sincerely,
Board President

Cynthia Edwards



Mission

To equip clients to engage positively and productively in their community through our professional and compassionate provision of direct support, information, referral and education.

Vision

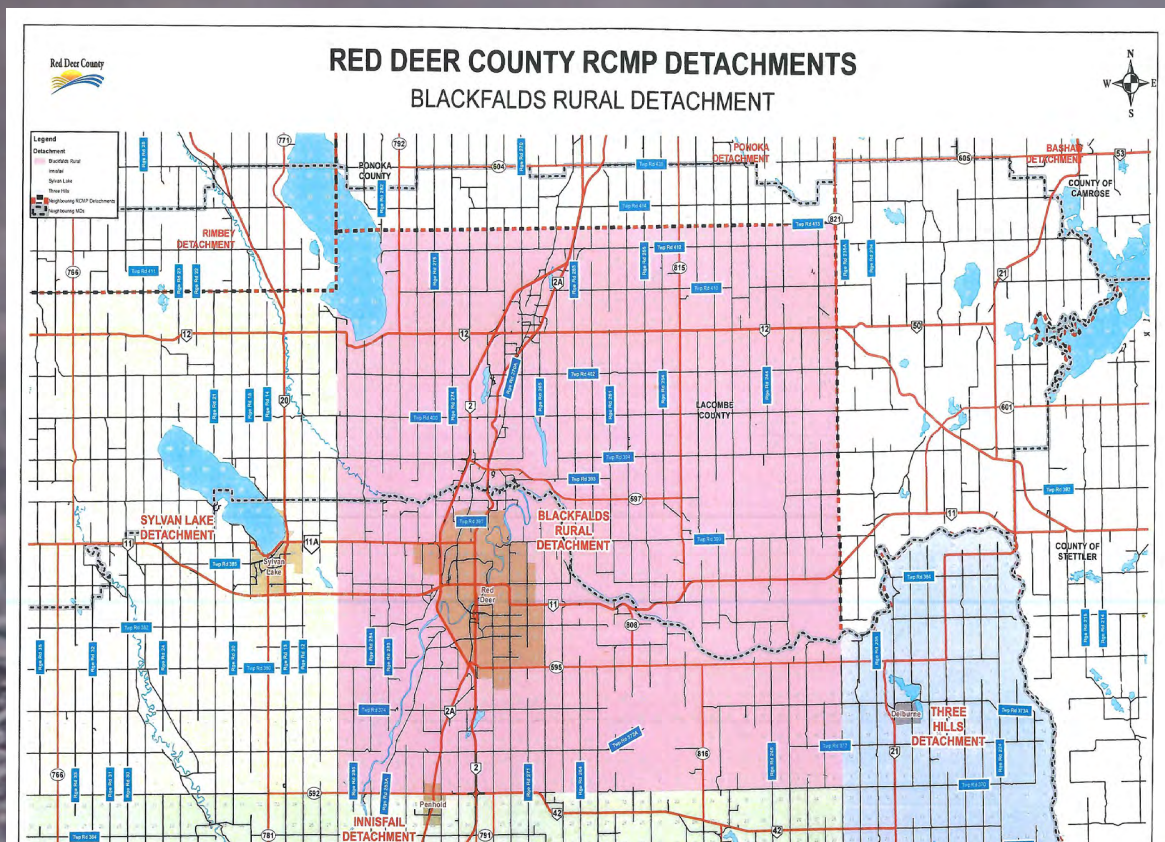
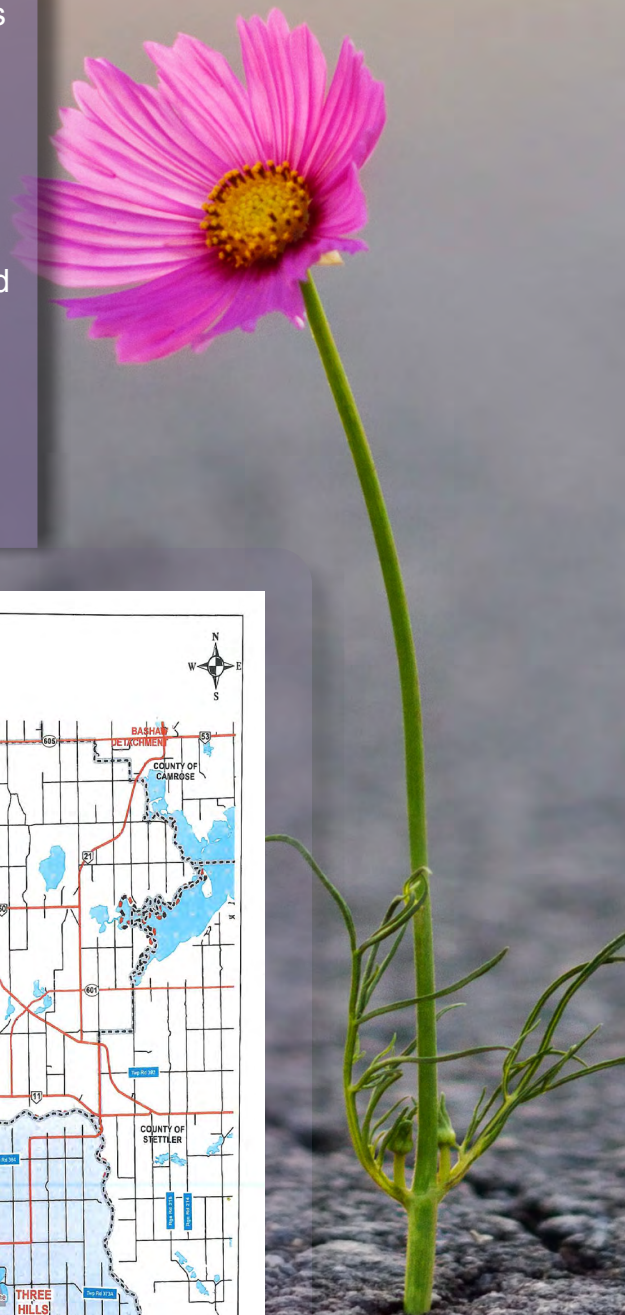
We assist in bridging the gap from hurt to hope to empower survivors of crime and tragedy to take control of their lives.

Our mandate is to provide direct support, information, referral and education for victims of crime or tragedy until their own support systems are in place. We can assist with cases such as:

- **Homicide**
- **Sudden Death**
- **Assaults**
- **Family/Relationship Violence**
- **Robbery**
- **Fraud, Thefts, ID Theft**
- **Break & Enter (Residential/Business)**
- **Vandalism/Mischief**
- **Serious Motor Vehicle Collisions**
- **Fire/Multi-Casualty Disaster**
- **Industrial Accidents/School Crisis**

Geographical area serving communities throughout Central Alberta

Our organization offers programs and services to the communities of **Blackfalds, Clive, Joffre, Springbrook, the Summer Village of Gull Lake as well as a large portion of Red Deer and Lacombe County.** The extensive geographic we serve (approximately 2,000 sq kms) requires staff and advocates to travel significant distances to deliver our services and engage in other activities on behalf of the unit (agency fairs, training etc). Population in this area is in excess of 40,000. In addition, using population data from a Red Deer County census, we provide services to approximately 33,000 customers, owners and employees of the businesses in the industrial areas within our service area. It is also estimated that over 75,000 motorists daily pass through our service area along the QE2 highway directly south of Red Deer – Gasoline Alley.



2019 - 2020 *Stats and Community Impact*

365 Days
24/7
Services
Available

1226
Victims
Helped

453 HRS
Court
Support

2046 HRS
Direct Victim
Support

1047
Adult
Victims

231
Family
Violence Files =
361
Victims of Bodily/
Emotional
Trauma

190
Youth/
Children
Victims

882
New Files
Opened

68
Crisis
Call-Outs

56
Volunteers
(Board, Advocates &
Community)

538 HRS
Training
(Board, Advocates &
Staff)

Note: These numbers reflect our last fiscal year cases only and do not include ongoing management of case files from previous years.

The Heart of Central Alberta Victim & Witness Support Society

At the very heart of victim services are the volunteers and staff who display their passion and commitment every day, providing trauma informed care to the residents of the communities we serve. This team responds by stepping in and assisting with many distressing tasks for our clients in addition to providing emotional support, helping clients cope and move forward after experiencing crime or tragedy. Whether it's the provision of extra safety measures, access to counseling and treatment, or supporting families as they cope with the aftermath of the loss of a loved one, to walking alongside a victim through the difficult criminal justice system, this team responds to over 70 requests for service monthly. In spite of the downturn in the economy and the COVID-19 pandemic resulting in an increased file load, we were fortunate to continue in our commitment to our community in the provision of direct support, information and referrals for victims and witnesses of crime and tragedy.



*Notes from
our clients:*

“ I am so grateful for the day that you walked into the house and I shared a little bit of myself with you. From day 1 and every day since you have been on the ball and ready to help in any way possible. I believe that you made my process, and my life much easier.

“ Thank you for all you do and all you have done for me. Especially thank you for your concern for me these past weeks in my time of crisis. Love and blessings.

“ I just want to again express my appreciation to you for your assistance. Thank you for responding with such kindness and grace.

“ Thank you for all you do and all you have done for me. Especially thank you for your concern for me these past weeks in my time of crisis. Love and blessings.

“ Just saying “Thank you” doesn’t seem enough. I hope you know how much your thoughtfulness is appreciated. Thank you for the phone calls & being so considerate, Bless you all.

“ Thank you for the support and the encouragement you gave me while I was in Alberta. I was so thankful for you taking time out of your busy schedule to pick me up at the hotel and for preparing me to testify and staying with me at the court house. I hope our paths cross again in better circumstances.

“ Your members were compassionate, concerned and supportive to our daughter at the time of our son’s accident. You helped her through a very difficult time and helped prepare her for what lay ahead for her. She has said many times she couldn’t have done it without you and wished she could thank you in person.

“ We are simply grateful for people like you. Thank you so much for thinking of me and for the grieving pin. Your calm, reassuring, and caring presence that awful day was a light in the dark. We are still on the emotional roller coaster. I guess it is “normal” to lose one’s self in the replay mode – at least I hope so.

“ We are so grateful for the timely response and support you provided to our family during our time of loss and sorrow. The work you do is wonderful and deeply respected. Our son was an amazing young man and was very hard to lose. Your help and guidance was greatly appreciated.



Notes from
our volunteer
advocates

“As an Advocate for Central Alberta Victim & Witness Support Services I never feel like I have the right things to say but I think that’s kind of the point. There never is a “right thing” to say. What I can do is show up for people in their hardest moments providing resources as necessary and a safe place to share and process their emotions. *Jenn*”



Notes from
RCMP
Members

“The role of a volunteer advocate is definitely not for everyone, but a role I feel privileged to do. I believe in the moral obligation to help others, using the tools and skills I have been graced with, and have come to realize that I can provide support to those in vulnerable, scary and at times shocking situations. Victims of crime or circumstance need to be able to trust the support offered them, and having this service is of utmost importance in order to deal with and heal from whatever they are going through. If I am able to help even just one person, I consider it all worthwhile. *Alaine*”

“Without victim services, we would not be able to provide the support and service we do to our clients. They are there for us and the clients 24/7 and take an enormous load off the shoulders of us officers so that we can focus on our investigation while ensuring the clients emotional needs are taken care of. *Anna*”

“I only became a member 1 year ago and was just starting to orientate to the office in January and February and then Covid...I am impressed with Gloria and Louise and how hard they try to keep people engaged despite the restrictions. I am also impressed with the educational opportunities available for advocates.

Ruth

“Being an advocate for Victim Services has changed my life. My role as a volunteer is going on call outs, attending a meeting every other month, and attending other events such as charity check-stops or Victims & Survivors of Crime Week. I’m so thankful Victim Services has given me the opportunity to find meaning in my life by giving back to my community and loving others.

McKenna

“Always willing to step up and help out however needed. Not just support for the community but for us as RCMP officers. Truly lucky to have such an amazing team. *Jeff*”



2019-2020 FINANCIAL STATEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

REVENUE

GRANT INCOME	\$150,000
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FUNDRAISING	\$27,155
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TOTAL: \$177,155

EXPENSES

DIRECT PROGRAM DELIVERY	\$172,205
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PROGRAM AWARENESS	\$2,815
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VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT & SUPPORT	\$7,980
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PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION	\$10,165
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TOTAL: \$193,165

******Balanced by withdrawal from financial reserves***

Community Events & Awareness

Central Alberta Victim and Witness Support Society works in partnership with the RCMP to provide support, information and referrals to victims of crime or tragedy. As a charitable not-for-profit society CAVWSS relies on the financial support of provincial and municipal grants, fundraising, in-kind donations and generous donations from community organizations, businesses and individuals.

Through various community events and fundraisers we continually raise awareness in the communities we serve and maintain great partnerships with other organizations and businesses.

We participate in events such as community and information fairs, we partner to promote school anti-bullying presentations and members of our organization attend various related training programs and professional development training and conferences. We have provided CISM (Critical Stress Management Training) to participants across Alberta for the past 9 years.

We have held fundraisers and awareness events such as Charity Check stops, Casinos, Galas, Golf Tournaments, Community BBQs /information sessions, and appreciation events for clients and staff.

THANK-YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!



How you can help...

How to Donate

You can help us continue our work in your community by;

- *Making a financial donation*
- *Becoming a corporate sponsor*
- *Donating goods and services*
- *Contributing to and/or attending our annual events*

We accept donations as cheques payable to Central Alberta Victim & Witness Support Society.

Cheques can be mailed to:

Central Alberta Victim & Witness Support Society, PO Box 1780, Blackfalds, AB, T0M 0J0

To make a cash donation you can call **1-403-885-3355**. Contact our funding development coordinator today to learn more about how you can help by emailing marketing@victimsupport.ca.

Donate Now Online!

Visit www.victimsupport.ca and click “**Donate Now**” on the home page or visit our donations page directly to find the link to donate through ATB Cares!

We receive 100% of your donation and ATB will match 15% of every dollar donated!



CAVWSS Wish List:

Our organization is always collecting items or gift cards that could be used to assist victims in times of crisis such as;

Grocery Gift Cards | Baby Items | Gas Cards | Cell Phone Cards (pay as you go minutes) |

Taxi or Uber Vouchers | Gift Cards to Cover School Lunches/Meals | Nonperishable Kid-Friendly Snacks

New Blankets | New Stuffed Toys/Activities for children | Prepaid Credit Cards

CAWSS CURRENT BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Chair

Cynthia Edwards



Vice Chair

Lynne Mulder



Secretary

Melodie Stol



Treasurer

Dan McKay



RCMP Liaison

St. Sgt. Dan Martin



Director

Karen Smilar

Our Board of Directors is an exciting group of individuals who are committed to the operations and success of the Central Alberta Victim & Witness Support Society and the communities that we support.

If you are interested in becoming a part of our board, visit our website at: www.victimsupport.ca to view board member requirements and to find our on-line application form.

Don't know where to turn?



We can help 24 Hour Crisis Support

The Canadian Victims Bill of Rights defines a victim as an individual who has suffered physical or emotional harm, economic loss or property damage as a result of a crime committed in Canada.

Victims of crime and tragedy are often overwhelmed, confused and unsure of how to deal with the events and procedures which follow. Our organization offers support, programs and services such as court orientation and accompaniment.

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