

# Community Services



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# A Message from the Director of Community Services

Welcome to the 2023 Community Services Department Annual Report. This Report reflects the positive impact that the variety of high level programs, services and facilities offered have on our collective quality of life. It celebrates the partnerships and contributions of our community in achieving our mission.

The Department had a busy and rewarding year. The Community Services department continued to focus on bringing service levels and programming back to a pre-pandemic level, retaining memberships and recruiting residents to become members at the Allan & Jean Millar Centre, while continuing to offer a wide variety of programs, services, and facility operations to residents of the Town of Whitecourt, Woodlands County, and visitors to our community.

Staff and Community Services Advisory Board Members are proud of the accomplishments achieved in 2023; and look forward to continuing to maintain high standards, evaluate and build upon past work, and continue to meet the future needs of the community.

A special thanks to the Community Services Staff for all of their hard work in 2023, and to the following Community Services Advisory Board Members for their contributions in 2023:

**Current Members:**

Brigette Moore, Chair  
Stacey White, Vice-Chair  
Dave Arcand, Public Member  
Raelene Day, Public Member  
Derek Schlosser, Town Council Rep.  
Crystal Szybunka, Public Member  
Jeremy Wilhelm, County Council Rep.  
Logan Glidden, Youth Advisory Rep.

**Retired Members:**

Jennifer Keay, Chair  
Alan Deane, County Council Rep.  
Kahlen Johnson, Youth Advisory Rep.

We look forward to continuing to work together to build a healthy community in 2024!

Chelsea Grande,  
Director of Community Services



# FACILITIES



# Arena Annual Report

Annette Maxfield, Arena Coordinator, 2023 Annual Report

## January:

- Whitecourt Women's Hockey Tournament was a success.

## February:

- The U-7 Hockey Tournament was a success, with a large audience turn out.
- 50 people attended the Family Day Public Skate event.
- Had an ammonia leak on the weekend of the Hot Shot's Tournament. Because of the quick actions of our staff, we did not experience any ice melt, nor did we have to evacuate.

## March:

- The Annual Industries tournament was a success.
- Whitecourt Wolverines second round Playoff games.
- The Whitecourt Figure Skating Club Showcase Gala.

## April:

- The Pembina tournament was held on April 22. Staff had to enforce the alcohol use policy.
- Whitecourt Wolverines held their main camp.

## May:

- The Arena hosted Circus Cirque.
- The Arena hosted the annual Whitecourt Trade Show.
- With the hockey/skating season slowing down, Arena staff began working with Facilities staff to complete seasonal painting around various Town facilities.

## June:

- The Hilltop High School Graduation was held at the Arena.
- Relay for Life was held at the Arena due to wildfire smoke effecting their outdoor location.
- Maintenance installed new netting on the McLeod rink.
- New tube heaters were installed on the McLeod rink.

## July & August:

- The Arena utilized portable dehumidifier units while waiting for installation of the new dehumidifier.
- The Arena received a new hot water boiler system.
- A Circus event was held at the Arena.

## September:

- Whitecourt Wolverines' Home Opener game was held on September 15.
- Public skating was well attended.
- The Arena hired and trained casual Arena Operators, Labourers, and filled the Arena Coordinator Position to cover a leave.

## October:

- The Arena experienced a power outage, and brought some challenges with key fob access into the building. Due to the accessibility issues, Arena staff and Facilities staff were issued keys in the event of future outages or emergencies.

## November:

- The Arena experienced another power outage. An electrician came in and checked the main power supply and no issues were found. Staff and FORTIS are continuing to monitor the equipment to locate sources that could cause the breaker to trip.
- NAX event.

## December:

- New gas powered edger was purchased after the electrically-ran one died.
- Staff had time to deep clean various areas around the facility.
- Administration created a break schedule to increase visibility of staff.
- U-11 tournament was a success.
- Whitecourt Figure Skating Club Gala.

# Maintenance Annual Report

Rene Beaudoin, Maintenance Coordinator, 2023 Annual Report

## Successes:

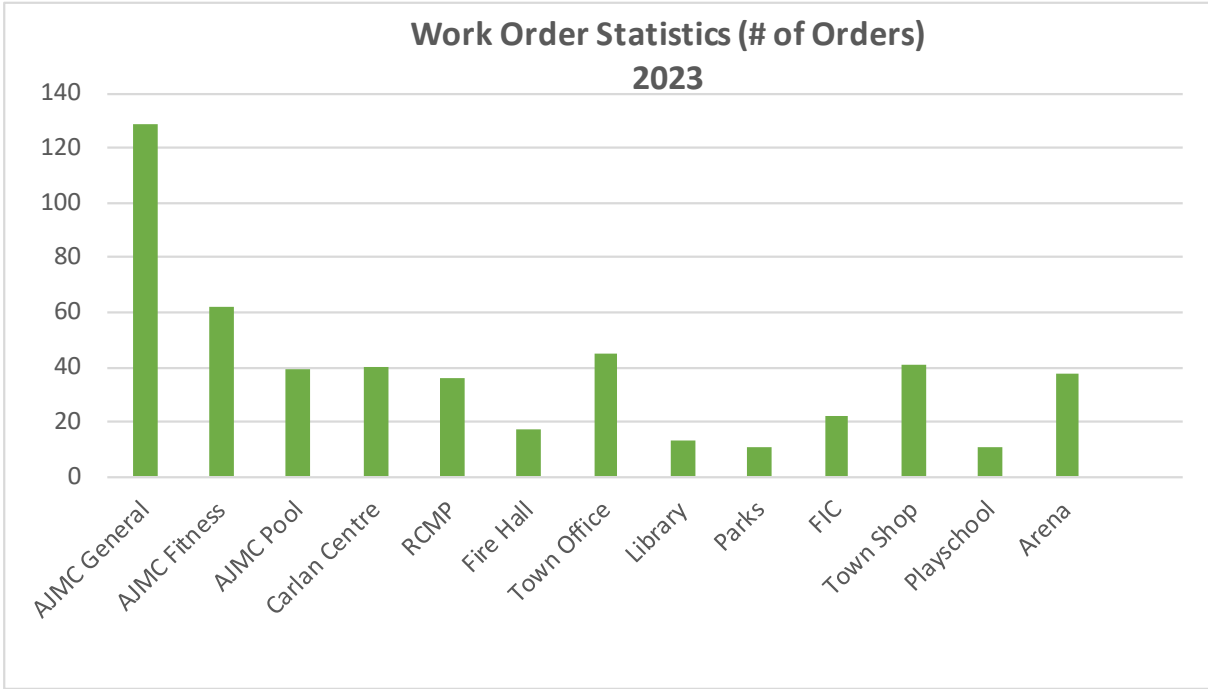
- New pool grates were installed (required for anti-entrapment through AHS).
- Hired for the Operator III position in October.
- Six hot water boilers were installed at JDA Place in August.
- Two furnaces were installed at the Forest Interpretive Centre in September.
- Six-tube heaters were installed at JDA Place in July.
- Installed LED lights in the cells at the RCMP detachment.

## Opportunities/Challenges:

- A third furnace and exhaust pipes will be installed at the Forest Interpretive Centre in 2024.
- It was a great opportunity to help work on the ball diamond upgrade with parks crew and minor ball association.
- Scheduling jobs throughout the year was challenging due to staff leave/vacancies.
- Receiving certain materials on time remains a challenge, especially electronic components and specialty items in timely manners. Staff have combated this issue by getting creative in methods to keeping facilities and equipment operating.

## Upcoming Highlights – Summary:

- Installing a new heating and ventilation and air conditioning unit on the Allan and Jean Millar Centre to replace unit 701 (fitness area).
- Installing a new makeup air unit to replace unit 801 Allan & Jean Millar Centre (Make up air unit for change rooms for pool).
- Installing new heating pump at the Carlan Community Resource Centre.
- Installing new accessible door closures at the Allan & Jean Millar Centre.







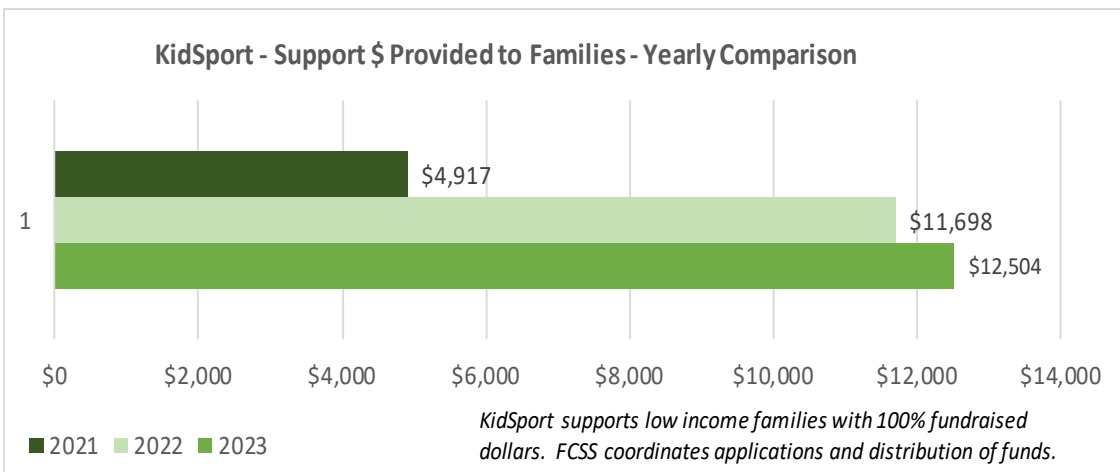
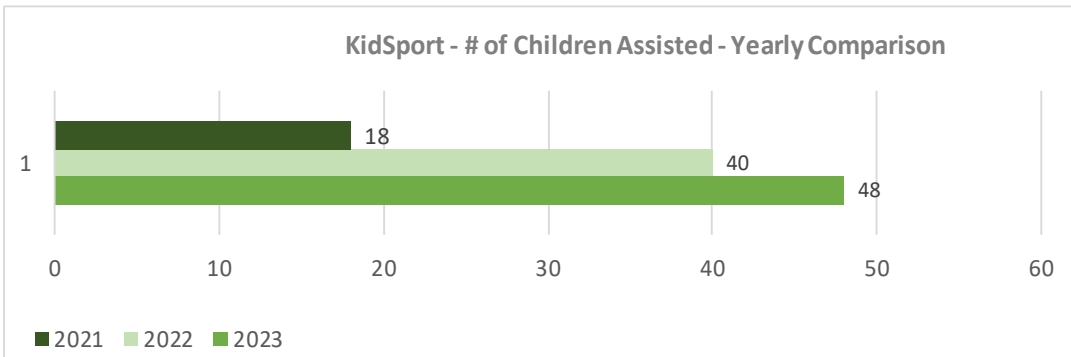
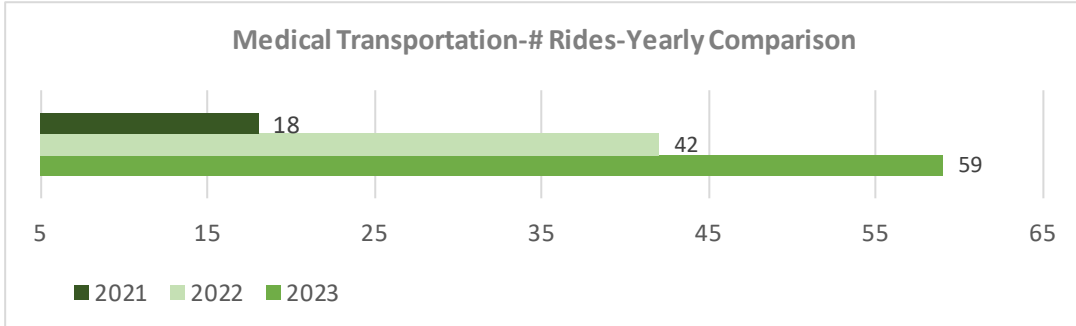
# FCSS



# FCSS Coordinator Annual Report

Fay Arcand, FCSS Coordinator, 2023 Annual Report

## Community Program Statistics:



## Trends:

- **Community Volunteer Income Tax Program:**  
190 tax returns completed by 5 volunteers. 9 of those individuals needed more than one year of tax returns completed, of the multi-year tax returns 2 needed 10 years completed.

## Outcomes:

- **Protecting Seniors Against Crime:** Information session presented in partnership with Family Violence Initiative and Whitecourt RCMP Detachment; where information was shared on the different types and signs of elder abuse, also scams happening in our community.
  - 18 registered, 25 attended/23 returned surveys.
  - 91% experienced positive change in their ability to recognize the signs of abuse. **This outcome aligns with the province's outcome 1; Individuals experience personal well-being, capacity to meet needs.**
- **Our Kids These Days:** Information on supporting youth was delivered in partnership with a private registered psychologist.
  - 13 participants, 6 returned surveys.
  - 100% experienced positive change in their confidence in their parenting skills. **This outcome aligns with the province's family outcome #1: Healthy functioning within families.**
- **Multiple events were held throughout the year to keep community connected and engaged:** These events included: Community Connections, Seniors' Week Trade Fair, and What Does Homecare Do?
  - 166 participants, 73 returned surveys.
  - 96% reported they know more about how to access the resources they need because of the attended event. **All of these events align with the province's community outcome #1: The community is connected and engaged.**

## Successes:

- **Social Prescribing:**
  - Social prescribing is a holistic approach to healthcare that bridges the gap between medical and social care services. Through this approach, healthcare professionals refer patients 55+ to the Social Prescribing program. Whitecourt received funding from Healthy Aging Alberta to employ a Seniors Resource Lead to receive social prescriptions and work with seniors to address their needs related to the social determinants of health by connecting to the variety of programs and services that exist within the community. The Seniors Resource Lead started in late November and through the month of December, introduced the program to a variety of healthcare providers throughout the Community.
- **Seniors Programming:**
  - Seniors' Week: 540 participants throughout the week long event.
  - Treks & Travels- 107 participants
    - This year marked out first intergenerational bus trip to Fort Edmonton Park.
    - Positive feedback was received from seniors. They would like to have more opportunities like this in the future.
  - Programs designed to reduce isolation and educate/inform seniors and their families such as Aging Solo, Protecting Seniors Against Crime and Armchair Travel were held throughout the year: 79 participants.

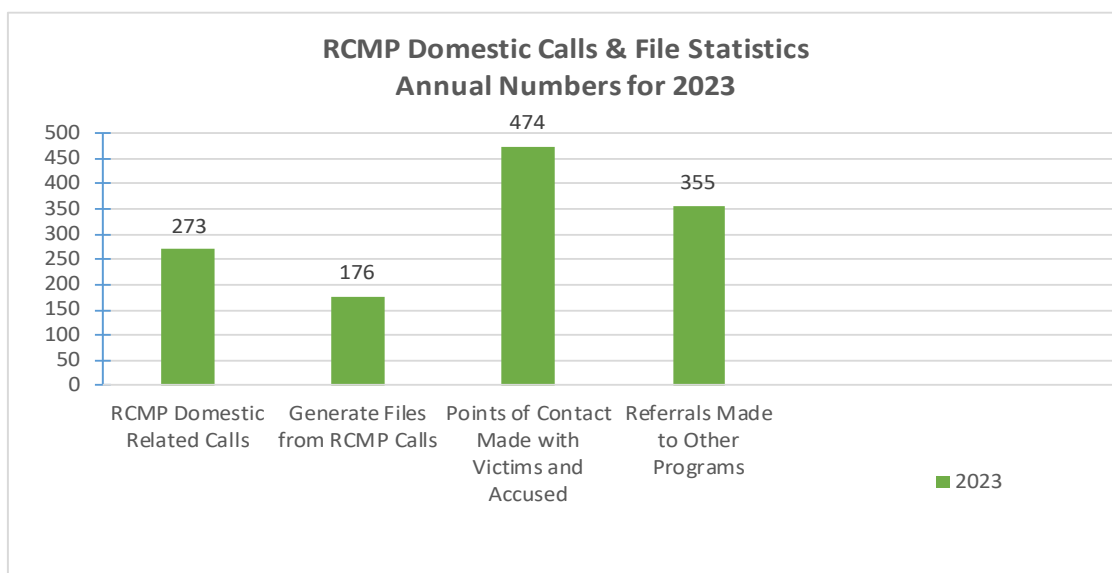
- **Youth Advisory Committee:**
  - After 9 years this program was handed back to the Youth Development Coordinator position in the fall. FCSS Program Coordinator continues to support the Committee on an as needed basis.
- **2023 FCSSAA Conference:**
  - During an information café break out session, the Town of Whitecourt's FCSS Coordinator and Youth Development Coordinator delivered a presentation about the Youth Advisory Committee. This information gained a lot of attention with 20 other communities signing up to receive more specifics through email.
- **Form Assistance:**
  - 22 individuals were assisted throughout the year with a variety of forms including Alberta Seniors Benefits, budget planning, and low income housing applications.

## Opportunities & Challenges:

- **Park Parties:**
  - Three annual community gatherings were planned for 2023; 2 were cancelled due to inclement weather.

# Family Violence Initiative Annual Report

Lynden Schwindt, Family Violence Liaison (FVL), 2023 Annual Report



## Trends:

- High conflict child exchanges and custody disputes, property disputes/retrievals, breach of No Contact Orders.

## Successes:

- Increase in victims in long-term committed relationships with a long history of domestics deciding to leave their partner.
- High level of supports given to victims with increased vulnerability factors from the Family Violence Liaison including supported referrals to other agencies and education and awareness about family violence.

## Challenges/Opportunities:

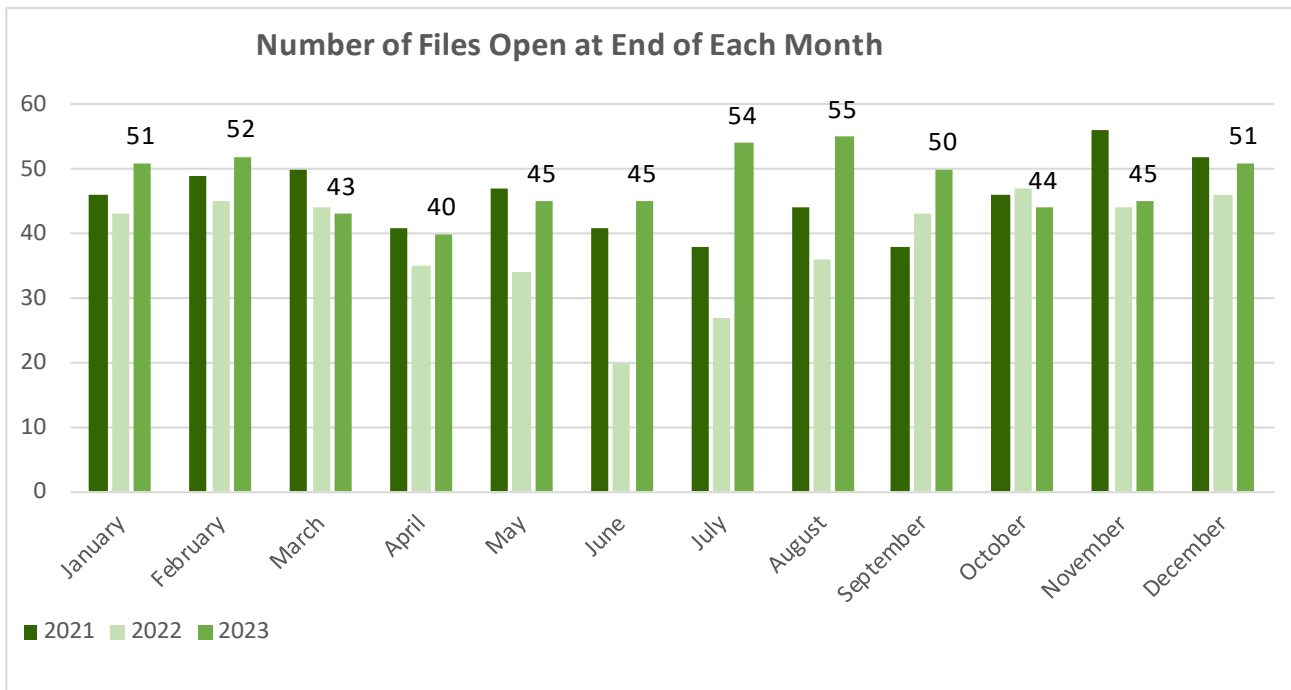
- Family Violence Liaison position working hours increased from 36 to 37.5 hours per week.
- The RCMP received 273 domestic-related calls in 2023.
  - Family Violence Liaison took action on 176 RCMP-generated files.
  - 474 individuals were contacted by the Family Violence Liaison; both victims and accused are offered support in the form of text messages, emails and phone calls for initial or ongoing support, case conferencing, court preparation, and court updates.
  - 355 client referrals were made for community and provincial supports.

- **Roots**
  - Successfully ran one 6-week community program for 9-13 year olds with the Family Violence Liaison and on Family Support Worker facilitating. The program ended with an RCMP member, along with Victim Services' service dog, Karson, in attendance, to discuss healthy relationships, and to present the children with certificates of completion.
- **Adult New Hope**
  - Moved from an 18-week format to a 2-day condensed format that is offered 4 times per year to both women and men. 9 individuals completed the course in September and 14 individuals completed the course in December. There are 8 individuals on the list for the next session scheduled for March 2024.

# Family Support Program (FSP) Annual Report

Michelle Robinson, Family Support Team Lead, 2023 Annual Report

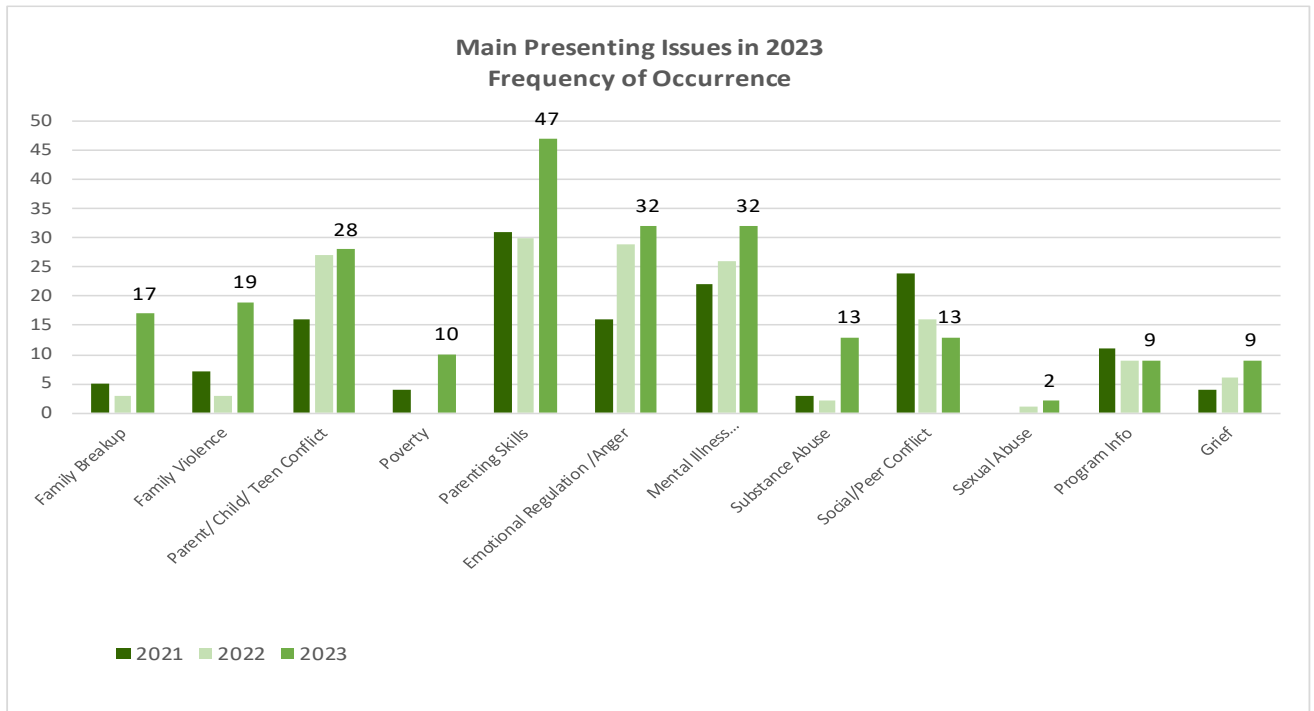
## Diversion Program Statistics:



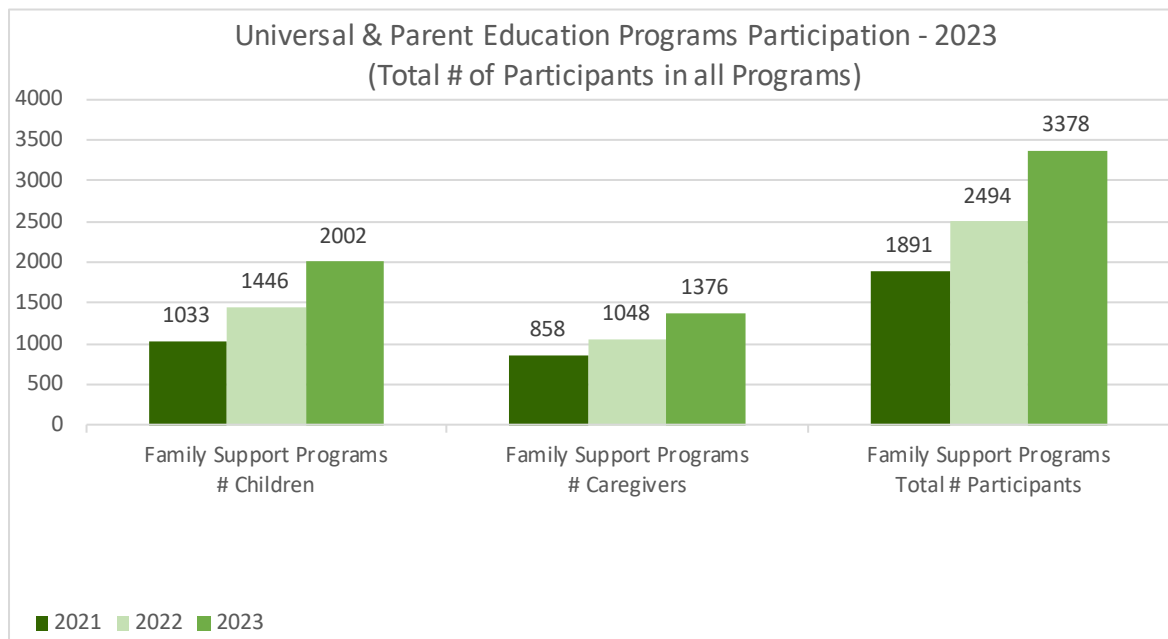
## Diversion Program Caseload Breakdown:

<b>Files Open at Start of 2023</b>	46
<b>New Files Opened During 2023:</b>	76
<b>Files Closed During 2023:</b>	71
<b>Total Individuals Served During the Year:</b>	122

## Diversion Program Presenting Issues:



## Universal Programming & Parent Education Participation Statistics:





## Referrals In (Families):

- 25 - Self
- 14 - Northern Gateway School Division
- 9 - Children's Services
- 7 - Community Agency
- 5 - AHS – Mental Health
- 2 - Healthy Families Healthy Futures
- 2 - SPARK FRN (Hub)
- 1 - Pembina Hills School Division
- 1 - Swan Hills FCSS
- 1 - Fox Creek FCSS

## Referrals Out (Individuals):

- 62 - Access Mental Health & Addictions
- 69 - Triple P Online
- 8 - Wellspring Family Resource Centre
- 19 - Whitecourt Food Bank
- 30 - Alberta Supports
- 12 - Kidsport/Jumpstart
- 16 - Canniff & Associates Private Therapy
- 5 - Whitecourt Christmas Hamper
- 6 - Healthy Families Healthy Futures
- 51 - Kindred Rapid Access Counseling
- 17 - Children's Services Intake
- 6 - New Hope/Roots
- 1 - School Mental Health & Wellness
- 6 - Alanon
- 7 - Private Psychological Practices
- 4 - Family Physician
- 1 - Victim's Services
- 2 - Alberta Works
- 7 - Lac Ste Anne Foundation
- 2 - Sexual Assault & Trauma Centre/Zebra
- 11 - Legal Aid
- 14 - Mental Health Crisis Line
- 12 - Kid's Help Phone
- 2 - Onoway Food Bank
- 6 - Alberta Works & Employment Services
- 2 - Multi-Cultural Health Brokers
- 2 - Community Adult Learning Program
- 1 - FASD Network
- 3 - AHS Community Nutrition
- 5 - Primary Care Network
- 3 - Alberta Adolescent Recovery Centre
- 1 - Expanding Hope
- 1 - Canadian Cancer Society
- 7 - Youth Development Programs
- 4 - BGC Programs

## Trends:

- In comparison to 2022 data, the 2023 program presenting issue trends indicate significant increases in the following presenting issues:
  - Parenting Skills: is tabulated when parents identify gaps in their understanding of child development and wellbeing, when they request skills to manage child's behavior, or access targeted parent education resources. Program staff accessed more professional

- development opportunities from the provincial Family Resource Network in Triple P Positive Parenting Programs to provide families with best practice strategies.
- Family Break Up: is tabulated when families identify separation and divorce challenges. The program noted more families requesting support for navigating coping supports, communication for boundaries, and managing blended family dynamics. Staff supported families with access to resources such as court resolution services, mediation, legal aid and Alberta Supports when requests were beyond the scope of program services.
  - Family Violence: is tabulated when families disclose active experiences with family violence. The program connects families to specialized family violence programs, Victim Services, and other trauma informed/intensive resources for healthy relationship education, court supports, counseling and safety planning. Staff have increased professional development to understand initiatives such as Clare's Law, Children's Services intake practices, and screening tools for intimate partner violence and family violence correlations.
  - Poverty: is tabulated when low income insecurities are identified. This year, program staff identified increases in families requiring concrete needs associated with low income risks such as food and housing insecurity. Rising inflation/cost of living and unemployment rates have been contributing factors. Program staff support families with access to food banks, community hampers, subsidy referrals, shelter/transitional housing resources, Alberta Supports, Alberta Works and employment agencies as well as adult learning centres for schooling, skill building, resume and job search supports.
  - Substance Abuse: is tabulated when families disclose struggles with addiction. When this presenting issue is identified, program staff support families to consider harm reduction approached and safety planning with referrals to addictions counseling and support and community al-anon groups.

## Successes:

- The Family Support Program completed the two-day accreditation review with adjudicators from the Canadian Accreditation Council (CAC). Staff spent months reviewing policy and procedures, establishing client satisfaction interviews and ensuring compliance in standards of practice and was successfully awarded a four-year license renewal. This process increased the confidence of program staff and was a catalyst for internal quality improvements, team building and professional development.
- The Family Support Program has been fully staffed since May of 2023 and has not hosted a waitlist for services since June of 2023. The program expanded service provision within the SPARK FRN to include universal programming and parent education opportunities to the communities of Valleyview and Fox Creek. The Family Support Coordinator has been active in making connections with community stakeholders to identify community needs and gaps. Programs are provided approximately 2-3 times a month in each community and is intended for caregivers and their children/youth between the ages of 0-18. All programming continues to be offered free of charge

and relies upon the partnership of local agencies/stakeholders for in-kind space and program promotion.

- The Family Support Program provided walk-in supportive counselling sessions for evacuee families that were affected by wildfires while they were hosted in our community. Program staff were active participants in filling emergency response/evacuation reception centre roles/duties and were present in providing families with concrete needs and support referrals to provincial resources. Program staff were accessed when individuals or families were identified with mental health concerns, substance abuse challenges, homelessness or domestic violence/high conflict relationships; in one circumstance, staff provided supportive counseling and resources to a wildfire evacuee that was experiencing grief and loss and post-traumatic stress from having lost a home in 2011 Slave Lake fires as well.
- Children’s Services continues its commitment to supporting the Triple P – Positive Parenting Program including the provision of all program resources and future Triple P training at no cost to communities. Staff have taken advantage of the provincial access to professional development and have increased their accreditation to include 3 diversion staff trained in Primary Care, Standard and Teen; this allows workers to access Triple P framework and resources and provide strategies to individuals and families during targeted diversion supports. One program staff is accredited to offer group parent education in Fear-Less (specific to parents of children with anxiety), Group Standard/Group Teen (adapting the standard/teen curriculums into larger group modalities). The Alberta Government continues to offer select Triple P – Positive Parenting Program courses online; the Family Support Program informs families of this self-directed learning opportunity and Family Support Workers have supported many families to personalize the modules and strategies upon completion.
- The Whitecourt & Area Family Support Program Facebook page continues to have online presence connecting families to local initiatives/events, parent education topics, youth development, craft/activity ideas and positive affirmations.

## Opportunities/Challenges:

- The Family Support Program diversion staff identified a challenge with funding parameters with the existing service providers on Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation. Sturgeon Lake receives federally allocated resources for home visitation, maternal health, youth development, and suicide prevention via the Western Tribal Cree Council (which also services two other nations across Northern Alberta and British Columbia). Partnership with these ‘on-nation’ supports requires our provincial diversion service providers to extend opportunity to all three reserve nations. The program capacity is not able to meet this mandate. As such, individuals and families from this local community are able to self-refer and access diversion supports through our staff in the neighboring community of Valleyview at the local FCSS office.
- In 2023, the Family Support Program offered 13 total parent education courses/opportunities; 77% of those parent education courses were canceled due to no/low registration. Staff explored various solutions to address the challenge of “participation” in the following ways:

- Program staff adapted parent education courses to morning, afternoon, evening, in-person and online modalities and increased from local (Whitecourt) to regional (SPARK Family Resource Network) registration pools.
- Child care, transportation and snacks were offered free of charge to reduce barriers.
- Program staff shifted frequency of Lunch and Learn opportunities from monthly to quarterly offerings and Coffee Chat from weekly to monthly offerings.
- Staff provided a “Learn to Earn” incentive program where participants that registered and completed parent education programs would receive ballot entries for donated door prizes to local recreation agencies.

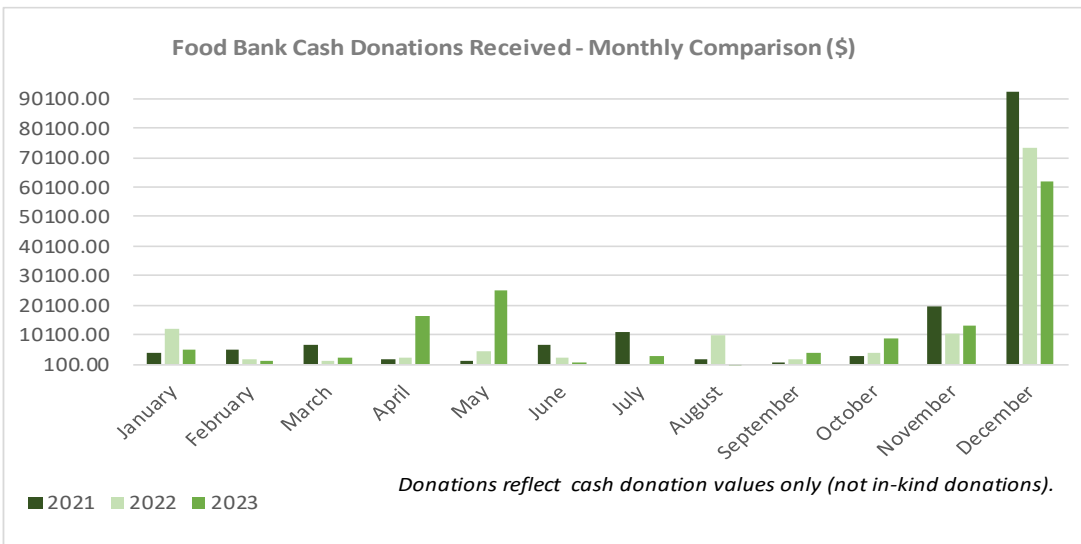
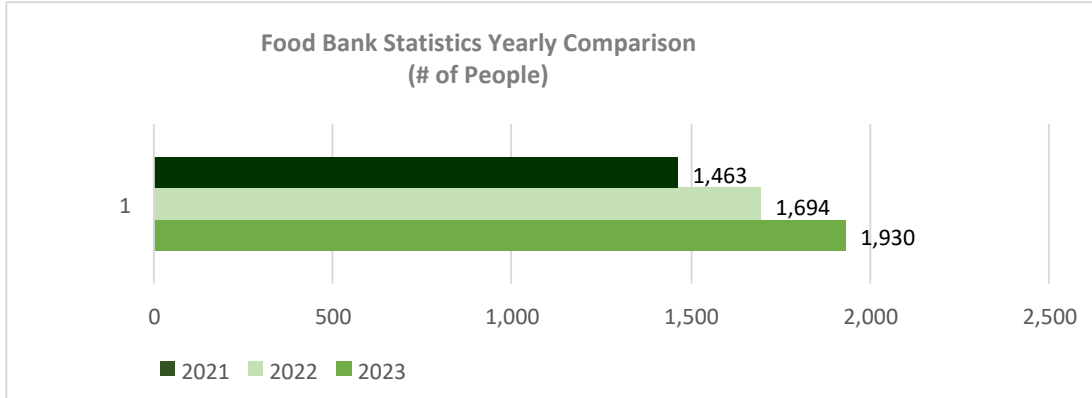
Program staff completed internal surveys of participants in universal programs and discovered that most families report “not having time,” and “both parents are working.”

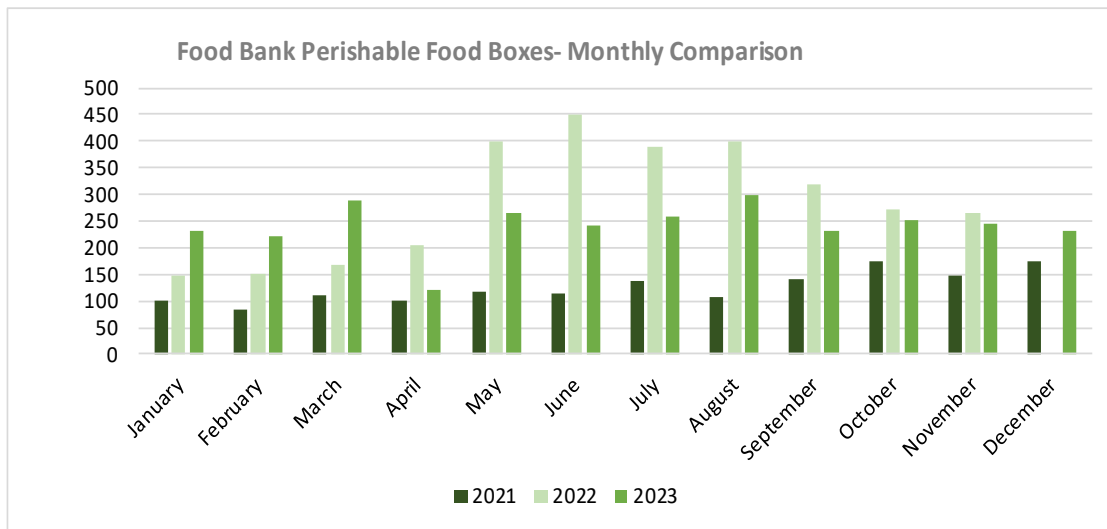
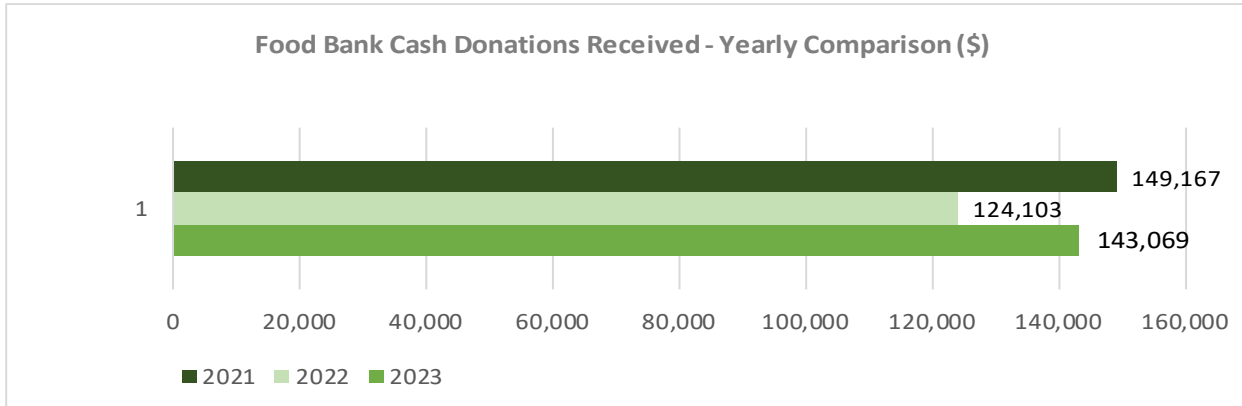
This challenge has been identified by several Family Resource Networks across the province and many community stakeholders at local interagency networking meetings.

# Whitecourt Food Bank Annual Report

Tara Bartsch, Food Bank Coordinator, 2023 Annual Report

## Food Bank Statistics:





## Food Bank Overview:

- Operates Monday/Wednesday/Friday from 11:00am to 2:00pm with the last intake at 1:45pm.
- Six (6) hamper fills are permitted each year with proof of identification and residency for each individual.
- The perishable box window opens at noon on Food Bank operating days. Boxes are given out on a first come, first served basis. No ID or proof of residency necessary.

## Trends:

- 14% increase in clients served compared to 2022.
- 15% decrease in community members accessing perishable food boxes (PFB) compared with the same time period in 2022. Although our perishable box distribution boxes were lower than the previous year, this number is skewed due to supporting evacuees in our community as distribution numbers were not tracked.

- PFB's are filled with close to expired goods and fresh food that is picked up from Walmart on days when the Food Bank is open.
- 2880 PFB's were distributed in 2023; these boxes seem to be favored as no formal intake or identification is required to obtain one.
- PFB's provided another food security option for individuals who have used their 6 annual hamper fills.

## Successes:

- The Food Bank received numerous amounts of cash, credit and food donations in 2023. In addition, the Food Bank obtained \$81,932.00 of grant funding.
  - \$143,069.63 – Cash donations: Christmas Tree Light Up, community residents, schools, churches, businesses and local industries.
  - \$1,587.00 – Foodbanks Canada: fresh fruits and vegetables and gift cards.
  - \$3,500.00 – Alliance Grant: Purchased fruit and vegetables weekly.
  - \$17,406.00 – Fight Hunger, Spark Change Grant: Gift cards for Walmart and Petro-Canada, Uline: shelving and operational materials (erase boards), the rest was spent on fresh and shelf stable food.
  - \$49,759.00 – FCSSAA Grant: Purchase food, wages, partial rent, and gift cards.
  - \$8,000.00 – FCSSAA Grant: Wages \$3088.84, Gift cards IGA \$2251.34, Fresh fruits and vegetables weekly (Jan 22 – Mar 30) \$2752.28.
  - \$1680.00 – After the Bell Program Purchased fresh fruit and vegetables to add to 560 packs of food that was also donated.
  - Walmart has a national agreement with Food Banks Canada. This year, No Frills was added to that list. Food donations are picked up three times per week.
- For the fourth year in a row, First Choice Truck & Car Wash Inc. sponsored the Food Bank van's fuel and car washes. Other sponsors include Whitecourt Transport, Store to Door Delivery, Trimline Design, GFL, Wal-Mart, Chevron, and Food Banks of Canada. OK Tire Whitecourt became our newest sponsor, taking on van maintenance, oil changes, and supplying summer and winter tires as needed.
- Procured 30 free pallets of food and free delivery and warehouse space to assist with wildfire evacuees. Our team built and delivered over 2,500 bags for Fox Creek and Valleyview residents.
- In August, 8 free pallets of food were received from Alberta Foodbanks to distribute to North West Territories evacuees. These food items were distributed in addition to perishable boxes to those evacuees who accessed the Food Bank.
- Received menstrual products through the Menstrual Pilot project to distribute to different facilities throughout the community and to families accessing the Food Bank.

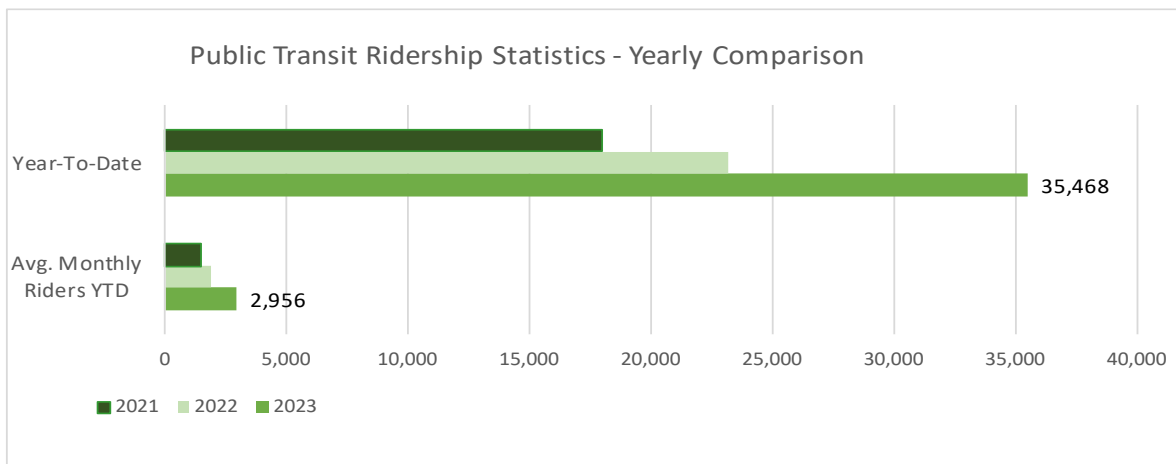
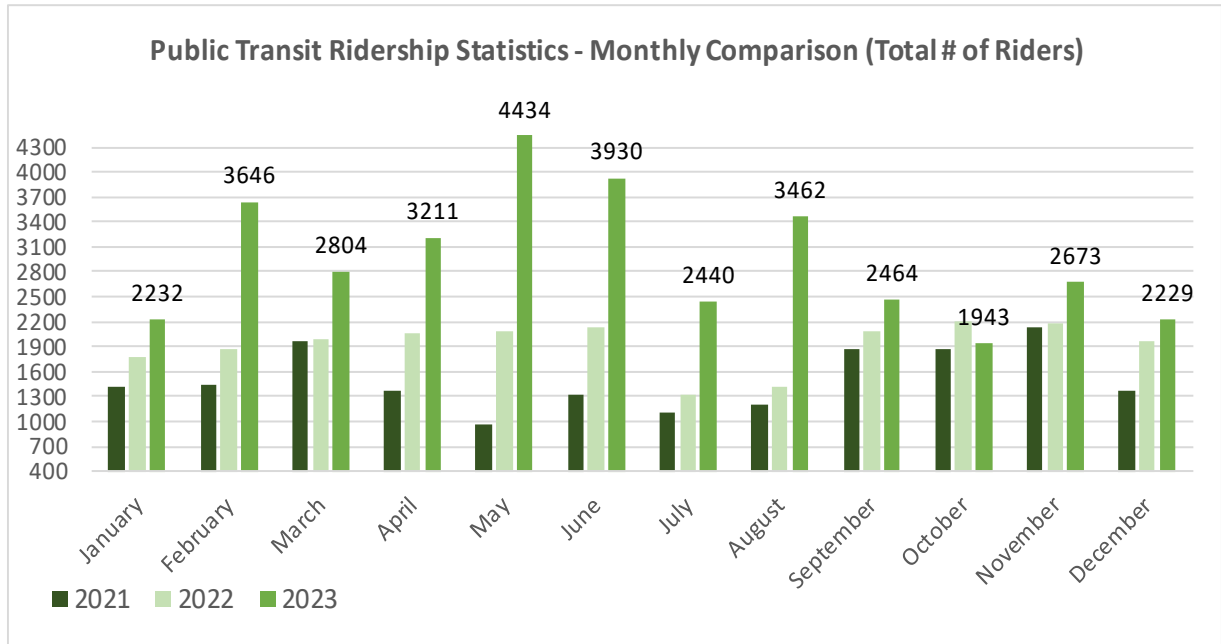
## Opportunities/Challenges:

- Excess food donations were regularly shared with other user groups. 232 boxes were shared with Mayerthorpe Food Bank and 52 with Tennille's Hope. To reduce Landfill waste, all other food that otherwise would have been thrown out was given out for animal feed.

# Public Transit Annual Report

Donna Gerber, Transit Coordinator and Kara Grywachski, Community Services Secretary, 2023 Annual Report

## Public Transit Ridership Statistics:





# Public Transit Ridership Summary:

	2023	2022	2021
<b>Yearly Total</b>	<b>35,468</b>	<b>23,193</b>	<b>18,008</b>
<b>Average Hourly Riders</b>	7.08	4.74	3.73
<b>Average Daily Riders</b>	116.09	77.63	60.56
<b>Average Monthly Riders</b>	2,956	1,933	1,501

## Successes:

### Annual Student Passes:

Annual Student Passes were offered at a 10% discount until September 30, with 27 discounted passes sold between August 1 and September 30. Annual Student Passes will continue to be sold for the regular price of \$275.00 for unlimited travel between September 1, 2023 and August 31, 2024.

### Bus and Shelter Advertising Agreements:

- In January, Whitecourt Communications signed a one-year contract for advertising on the back of one bus.
- In February, Whitecourt Transport Inc. secured a 4-month advertising agreement in one transit shelter
- In March, Chevron Canada Resources committed to sponsor the Whitecourt Community Resource Guide for two more months in one transit shelter; Family Violence Initiative committed to a 4-month advertising agreement for the Roots Program in one transit shelter.

### Public Transit Charters and Special Trips:

- Transit service was offered free on Friday, April 22 in recognition of Earth Day. 45 riders used the service on this day.
- Party In The Park used Transit for its annual event for the first time, with very positive feedback.
- Seniors’ group used Transit for a very successful Communities in Bloom tour.
- Rotary 2.0 Summer Camp chartered transit in June for an event with ECHO and families to go to Carson Pegasus.
- The Twinkle Tour was successful with two tours on December 16 and 17, from 5:30-6:30pm. Two buses were used and both were fully registered with 227 people, and a waitlist. A self-guided tour map was also available for people to use in their own vehicles.

### Group Rate Trips (\$1.00/rider):

- Doors Open: 675 youth
- Whitecourt Early Learning and Childcare Centre: 140 children
- Schools: 361 students
- Children under 6: 1,816 (FREE)



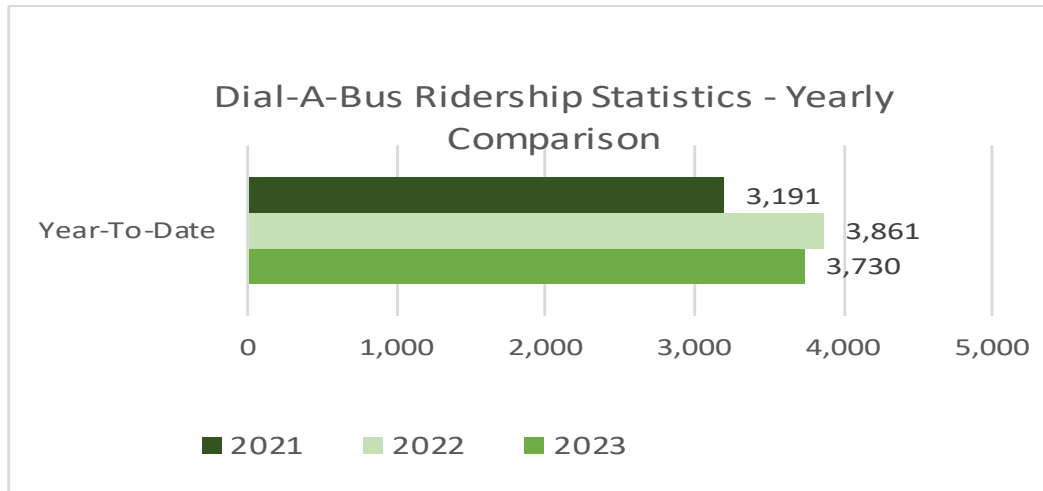
## Opportunities/Challenges:

- Dial-A-Bus was used frequently for Public Transit routes due to delays in receiving parts and supplies.
- 30 annual student passes were sold in 2023.
- In September, the Transloc Rider App contract was renewed for a three-year term.
- In October, Transloc installed new tech hardware into all three transit buses to prepare for the migration to the new Transloc rider system app.

# Transportation Grant Program and Dial-A-Bus Annual Report

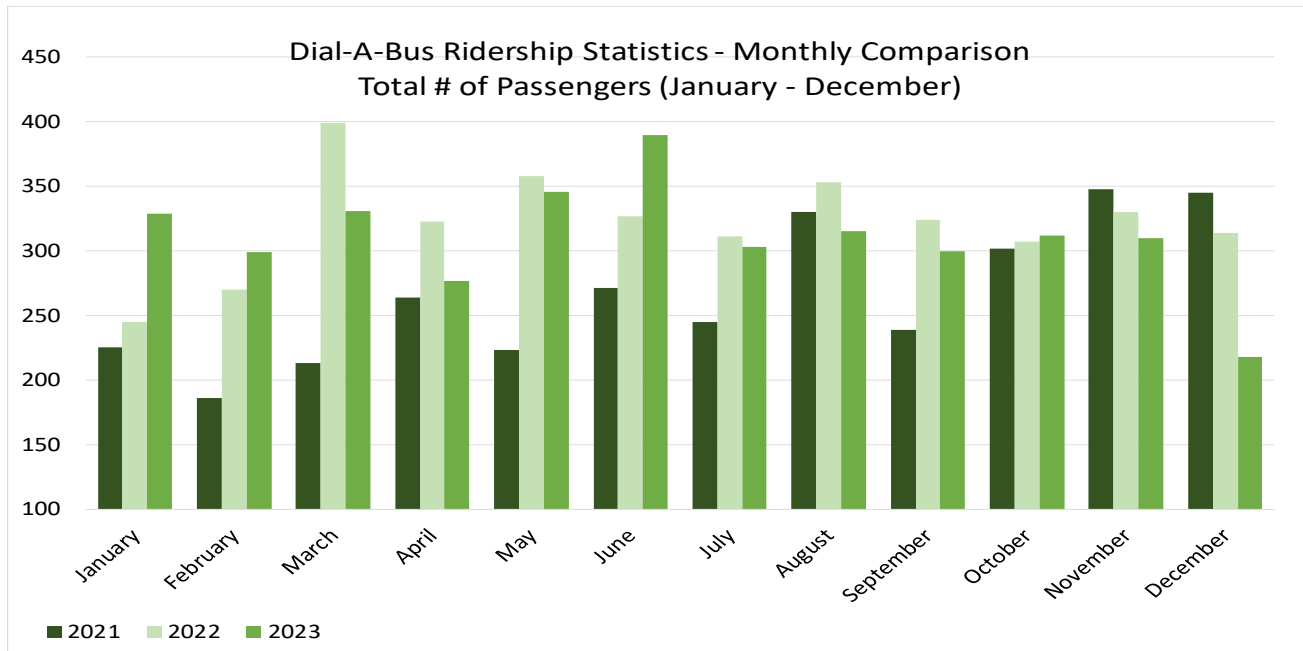
Kara Grywachski, Community Services Secretary, 2023 Annual Report

## Dial-A-Bus Summary Statistics:



## Dial-A-Bus Overview:

- Dial-A-Bus Hours: Monday to Friday 9:30am-Noon; 1:00-3:00pm.
- Service operated 247 days in 2023; out-of-service 11 days due to statutory holidays.



## 2023 Dial-A-Bus Annual Summary:

- 64 registered users with 47 active users at the end of 2023. An average of 18 unique individuals per month using the service.
- Average of 310 riders per month.
- 25 new applicants joined program this year.
- 20 registered users left the program due to moving, being deceased, or indicated they no longer needed the program (residents of the Spruceview Lodge).
- 183 monthly Dial-A-Bus passes sold for use on the Dial-A-Bus and Transit. 23 unique individuals purchased Dial-a-Bus passes.

## Dial-A-Bus Annual Ridership Demographics:

- 900 walkers; 259 wheelchairs; 2,571 foot passengers
- 1,013 rides provided to assistants/supervisors (not included in yearly total/ride provided at no cost).
- 38 of 62 registered users utilized the Dial-A-Bus in 2023.

## Dial-A-Bus Annual Fare Breakdown:

- 3,454 monthly passes; 196 transportation vouchers; 54 transit tickets; 75 cash rides.

## Trends:

- Highest ridership months: March (331), May (346), June, (390).

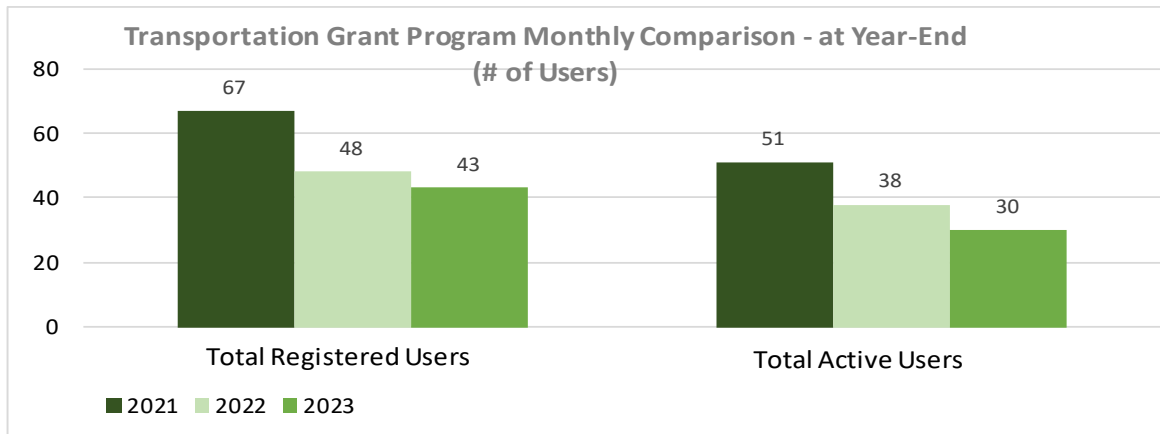
## Successes:

- Ridership decreased in 2023 with 131 (3.4%) less riders than in 2022.

## Opportunities/Challenges:

- Dial-A-Bus was used frequently for Public Transit routes due to delays in receiving parts and supplies.

## Transportation Grant Program Summary Statistics:



## Transportation Grant Program Overview:

This is a transportation voucher program that provides 12 vouchers twice per year to qualified recipients. Vouchers can be used in lieu of fare on Public Transit, and on the Dial-A-Bus (when approved for service), and in a taxi (taxi service charges an additional \$3.65). Taxi use is only permitted when Public Transit and/or Dial-A-Bus are not operating.

## 2023 Transportation Grant Program Annual Summary:

### Registered Users:

- 43 registered users with 30 active users as of December 2023.
- 9 new applications processed/approved this year; 12 individuals left program (moved, deceased, no longer use the program).

### Voucher Distribution:

These include vouchers used on Public Transit, Dial-A-Bus, and in a taxi. Vouchers are delivered to residents of the Spruceview Lodge and Villa via the Dial-A-Bus and are available for pick up by all others at the Allan & Jean Millar Centre.

- 61 unique individuals (57%) used vouchers for some form of travel in 2023.
- October 2022 to March 2023: 90 voucher sets were distributed; 29 individuals used vouchers for transportation at least once between January and March 2023.
- April to September 2023: 93 voucher sets were distributed; 44 individuals used vouchers for transportation at least once during the period.
- October 2023 to March 2024: 96 voucher sets were distributed; 28 individuals used vouchers for transportation at least once between October and December 2023.
- 460 vouchers were used in 2023: 154 used for Dial-A-Bus service; 112 on Public Transit; and 194 in a Taxi
- The voucher agreement with Caesar's Cabs was renewed and a new agreement was made with Candy's Cabs. The Town of Whitecourt is invoiced \$5.00 per one-way voucher used

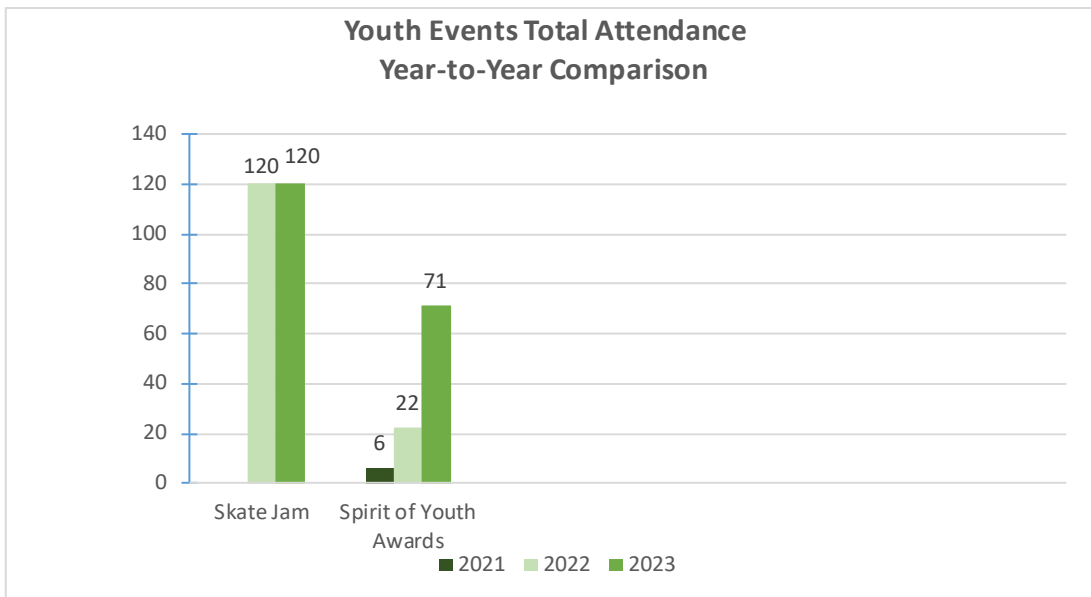
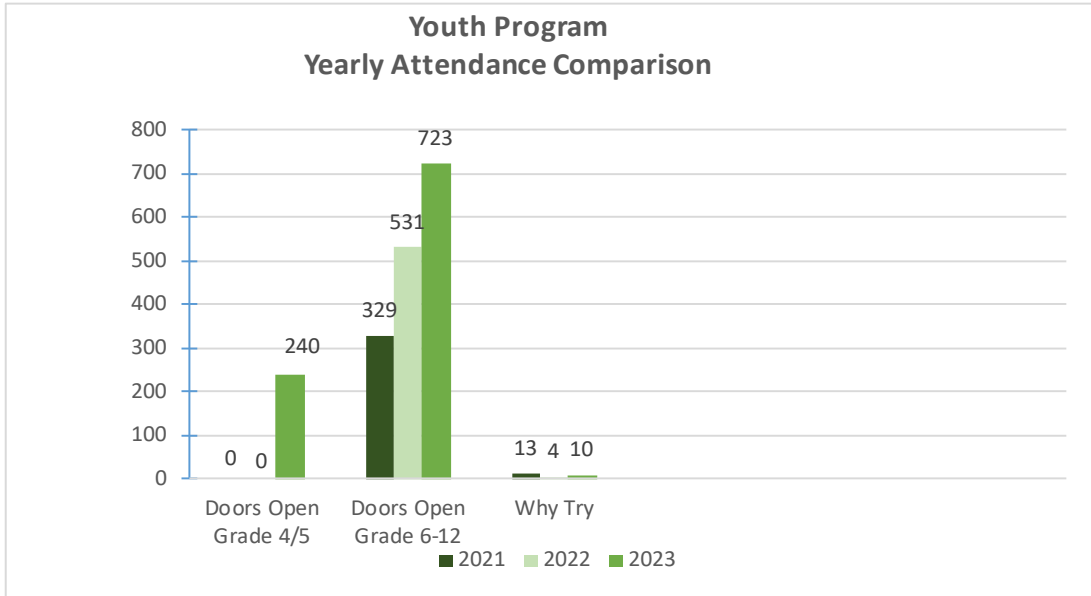
**Monthly Passes:**

- 80 monthly Public Transit passes were sold throughout year. Monthly passes are sold to all registered users at a cost of \$40/month. 19 unique individuals purchased Public Transit passes.

# Youth Development Coordinator Annual Report

Emma Harper, Youth Development Coordinator, Annual Report 2023

**\*Note – Doors Open Grade 6-12 started in September 2021 and Doors Open Grade 4/5 started in January 2023.**



## Successes:

- The Whitecourt In-School Mentorship Program has grown from one volunteer in 2022-23 to four volunteers in 2023-24.
- The Youth Advisory Committee set out three strategic goals for the year and was able to accomplish two of those goals, including the “Here for You” Menstrual Product Campaign which provides free menstrual products in select Town run facilities. The second goal focused on increasing youth communication through a revival of the YAC Instagram account and successfully moving two of the outdoor community bulletin boards to more high traffic areas.
- Spirit of Youth Award (ages 12-17) - Award program that recognizes Whitecourt and Woodlands County youth devoted to helping others within the community and display leadership and dedication in their involvement in programs, activities, and all they do.
  - Youth nominations tripled between 2022 and 2023 with the increase in sport and recreational activities available to youth again after the pandemic and coaches and teachers wanting to celebrate youth in their organizations.
  - Collected outcomes:
    - 85% of youth recipients agreed or strongly agreed that the Spirit of Youth event made them feel good about themselves.
- Skate Jam '23 – An event bringing youth and our community together through music, BBQ, and fun and interactive Skate Park challenges and demonstrations.
  - Collected outcomes:
    - 98% of participants that responded to the survey agreed or strongly agreed that as a result of Skate Jam, they are more connected with others in their community.
- Doors Open Program – An after school and PD program that provides activities for youth grades 4-12 throughout the school year.
  - Doors Open attendance has increased year over year as the program becomes more established and well known. The addition of the Grade 4/5 program also helped to introduce grade 5 students to the program last year and many of them continued to attend in Grade 6.
  - Collected outcomes:
    - 91% of the 35 participants that responded to the survey somewhat agreed, agreed, or strongly agreed that as a result of the Doors Open program they feel good about themselves more often.

## Challenges & Opportunities:

- The Mayor for a Day event has struggled for multiple years with low application numbers. The event has been discontinued for 2024.





# RECREATION, ARTS & CULTURE

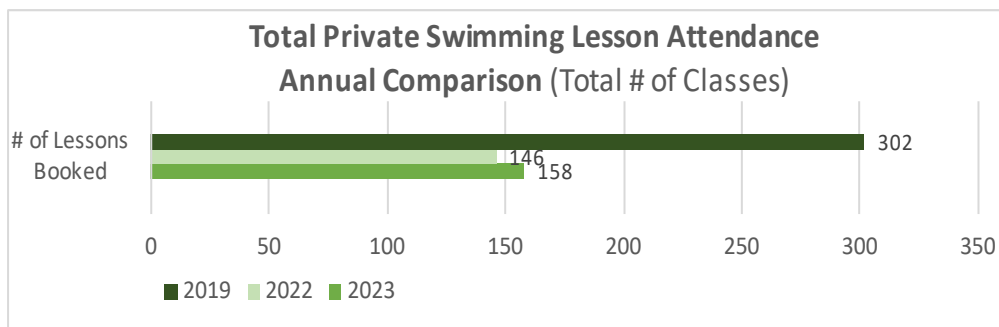
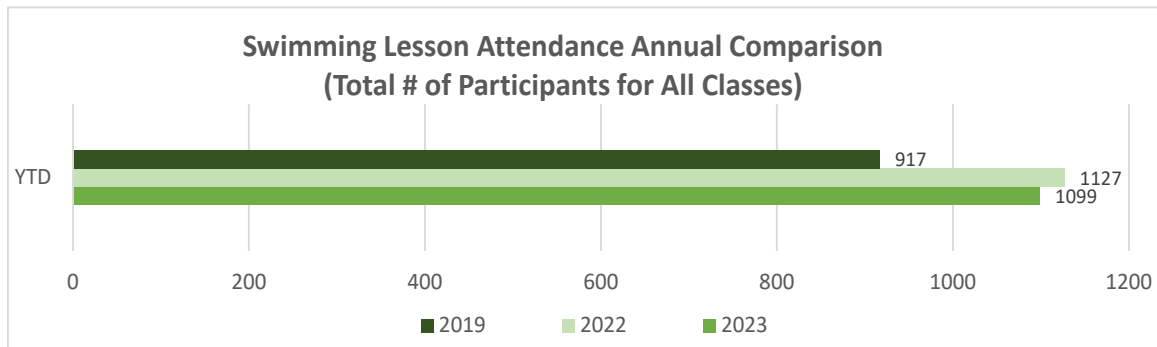
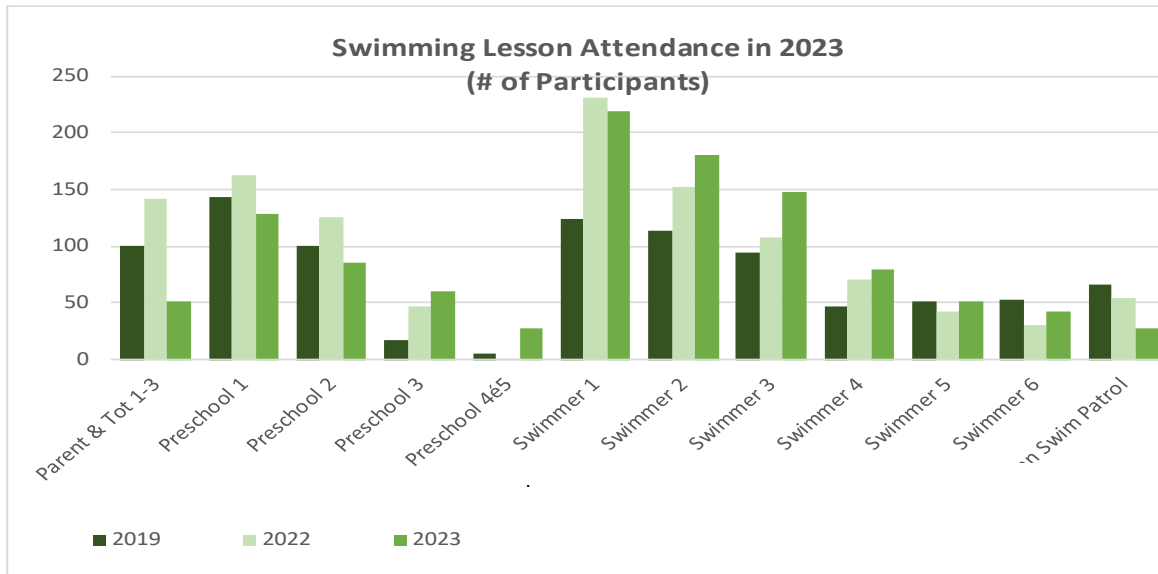


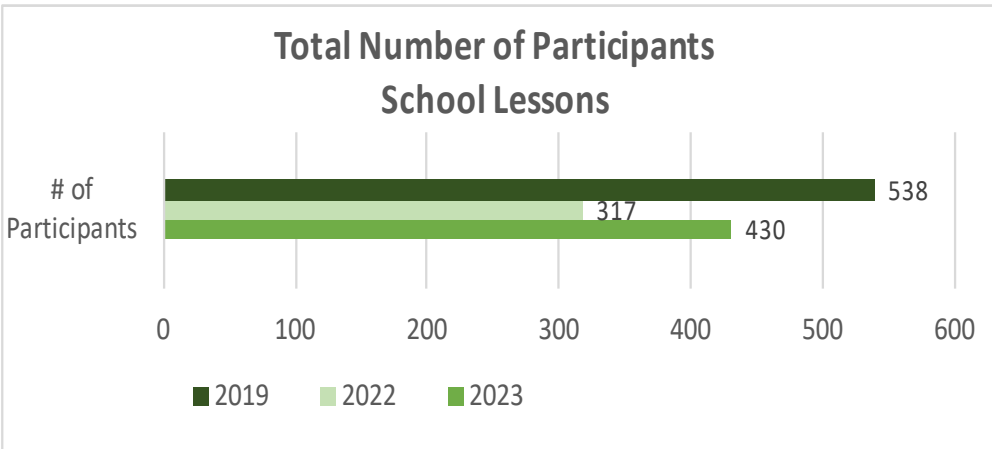
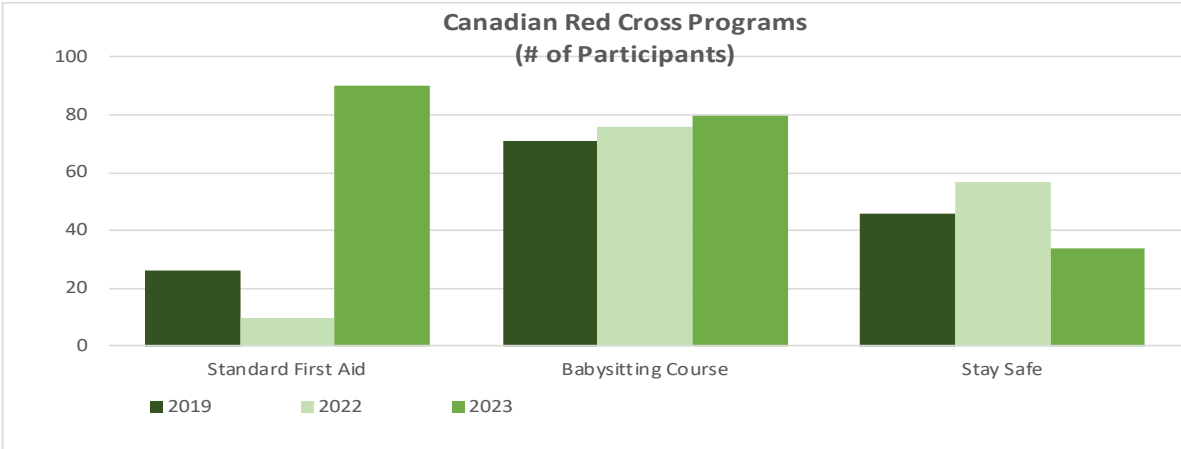
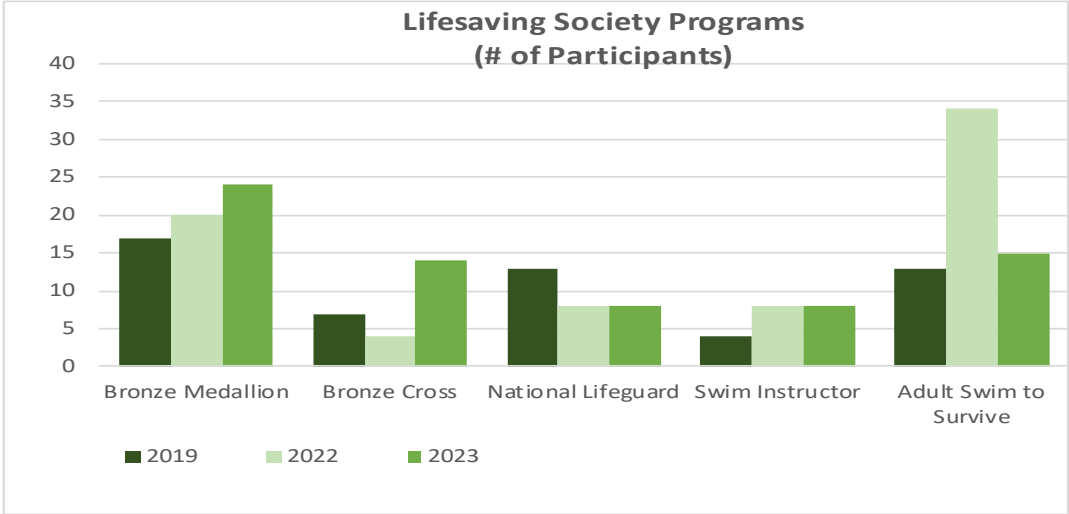
# Aquatic Coordinator Annual Report

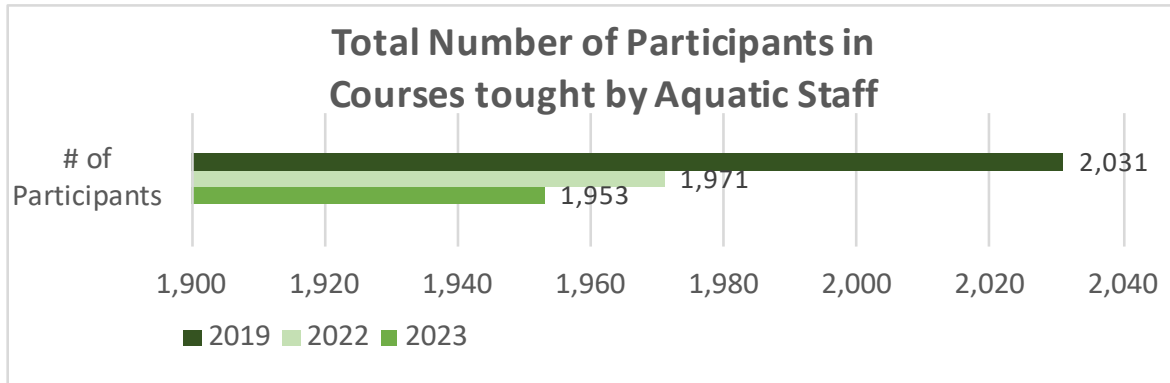
Jody Jager, Aquatic Coordinator, 2023 Annual Report

Please note that the 2023 stats are compared to 2019 and 2022.

## Aquatic Participation Statistics 2023:







## Trends:

- School Swim Lessons - Pat Hardy Elementary School had Kindergarten to Grade 2 enrolled in swim lessons. Grade 3 students from Whitecourt Central School used the Safe Community Initiative Fund for Swim to Survive lessons and transportation to and from the Allan & Jean Millar Centre. St. Anne's Grade 3's will be taking school swim lessons in the 2024 Spring.
- We offered many Standard First Aid courses in 2023. Two courses for the public, 8 for Town staff including recertification and full blended courses.
- Private lessons are offered when classes are cancelled due to insufficient registration. There was less opportunity to offer private lessons this year as most scheduled swim lessons ran with enough participants.
- Path to be a Lifeguard - we are getting a great response from the community in terms of wanting to become a lifeguard. We have not seen numbers of participants this high before. The Town of Mayerthorpe has created a grant for high school students to take lifeguard courses and get reimbursement for it, leading to many Mayerthorpe students registering in our courses.

## Successes:

- Free Family Swims are held on scheduled Sundays with sponsorship. The Rotary Club of Whitecourt sponsors two Sundays a month, typically the first and third. Pembina Gas Infrastructure sponsors the second Sunday of the month. There has been a positive response.
- Blue Dolphins Swim Club annual swim meet was held on June 10. They used a part of the fieldhouse during the swim meet to host the athletes. This was the second year set up like this and they will continue to use the fieldhouse in the future.
- Held a Tie Dye swim February 12, the night before the shutdown. Staff previously tie dyed t-shirts during a staff in-service to wear while guarding the swim. Guests who attended the swim were able to challenge the lifeguards in a variety of games and obstacles. At the end of the night, swimmers were given Kool-Aid packages and coloured the leisure pool right before it was drained.
- The Aquatic Centre got a name change. It is now called the Pembina Gas Infrastructure Aquatic Centre.
- Pirate Night took place on October 14. Sword fights on the wiggle bridge, cannon ball contests and diving for treasure (dimes, quarter, loonies and toonies) were big hits with the kids.

## Challenges/Opportunities:

- We had a scheduled shut down from February 13 to March 5. The Leisure pool had extensive changes done during the shutdown and was not ready to re-opened until March 11. The Lap pool, tot pool and steam room opened on schedule, on March 6. During the shutdown, lifeguards were busy helping with removing tile, teaching courses and recertifying certificates.
- The hot tub was closed after the shutdown. There was a leak and water was being lost. The hot tub fluctuated between being open and closed between March 6 to August 24. On August 25 the hot tub was opened and has stayed open for the remainder of the year.
- Lap Pool and Leisure Pool grates needed to be replaced due to a change in standards. The Leisure Pool was drained on Thursday evening, November 23. The grates were changed along with a few repairs. The Leisure Pool was cleaned, filled and opened by Monday morning, November 27. A Town employee with diving gear changed the lap pool grates, so the pool did not need to be drained. The lap pool was closed for 40 minutes while this took place on November 24.



Tie Dye Swim February 12



Shut Down February 13 to March 5

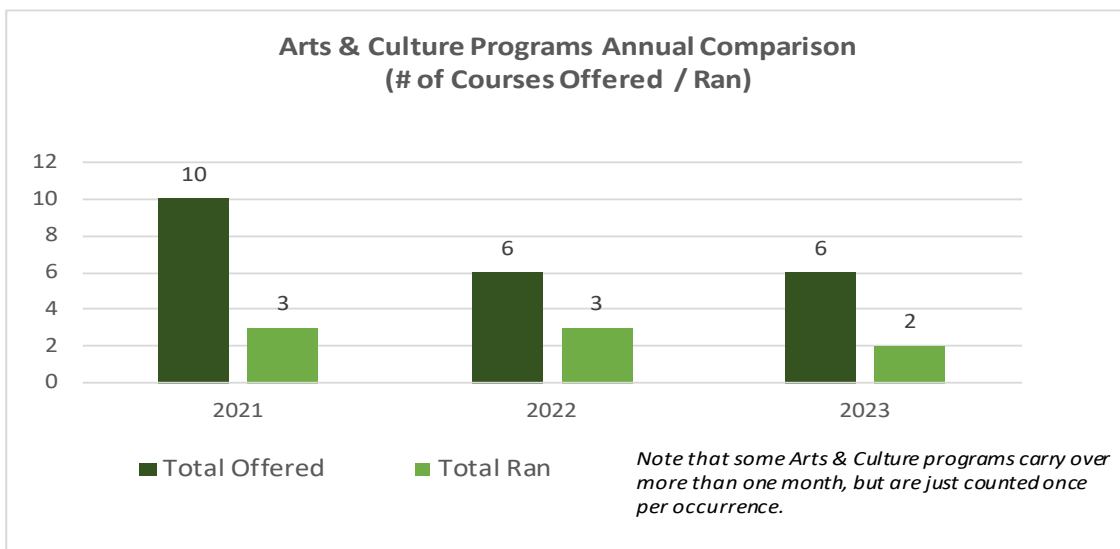


Changing Grates November 24

# Arts & Culture Coordinator Annual Report

Andrew Malmquist, Arts & Culture Coordinator, 2023 Annual Report

## Arts & Culture Statistics:



## Successes:

- The Arts & Culture Coordinator worked with the Whitecourt & Woodlands Performing Arts Society to put on three shows in their 2023 series. The shows were The Cheesecake Burlesque on January 21, Tim & The Glory Boys on April 21, and Jimmy Rankin Trio on September 29. All three shows in the series received great feedback.
- Party In The Park was held at Festival Park on June 16-17, 2023. The event ran from 5:00pm - 10:30pm on Friday, June 16 and 2:00pm - 10:30pm on Saturday, June 17. The headliners for the event were Fefe Dobson (Friday) and Jojo Mason (Saturday). The event included great opening acts and lots of local performers. Additionally, the event had face painters, a balloon artist, a painting workshop, mini putt, inflatables, bubble balls, laser tag, and roving performers. There were 8 food vendors at the event. Attendance was estimated to be over 2000 people per day.
- The Arts & Culture Coordinator partnered with Economic Development to offer Summer Street Fest. The event took place on August 12 from 2pm – 9pm. There were various activities throughout the event including live music, cultural performances, a beer garden, food vendors, face painting, a mountain bicycle obstacle course, farmers market, and more. It is estimated that 2000 attendees passed through the festival. Feedback on the event was generally positive, with

some suggestions from stakeholders to be considered for future events, such as greater food variety and different hours.

- The Arts & Culture Coordinator also organized/co-organized National Indigenous Peoples Day, Fall Fest/Culture Days, Improv & Cake, and Night at the North Pole, most of which saw an increase in attendance as compared to previous years.

## Trends, Opportunities/Challenges:

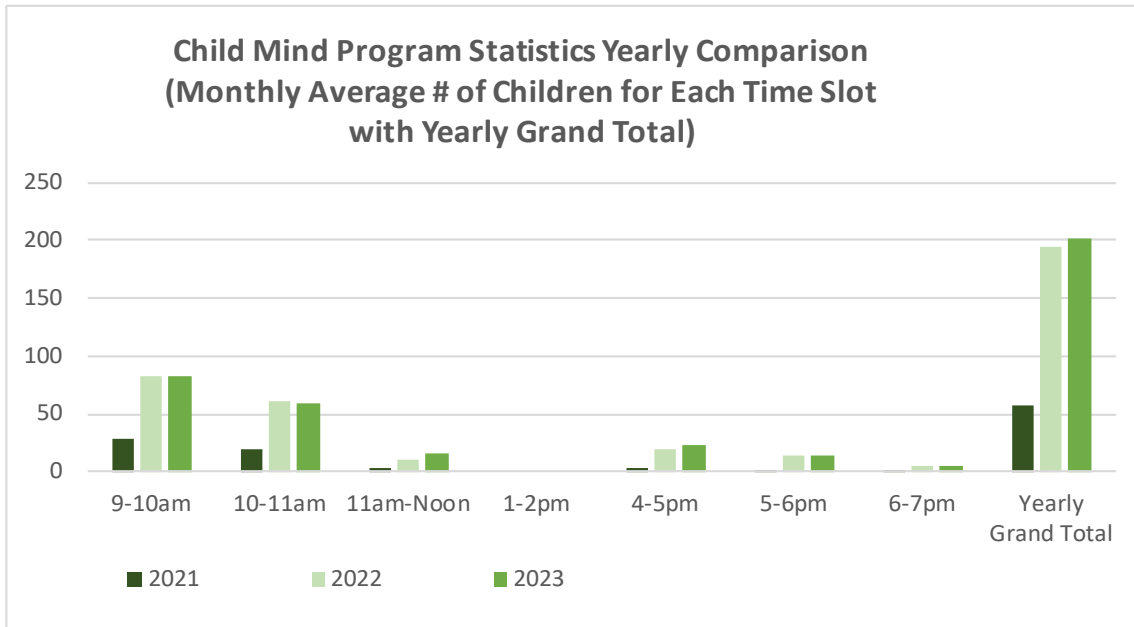
- Inflation has driven up the cost of organizing events. The most significant cost increase for events has been for sound/lighting production. However, artist fees have also increased.
- Three representatives from Whitecourt's sister community, Yubetsu, Japan visited Whitecourt from August 21 to August 25. The representatives included the Mayor of Yubetsu and two Yubetsu Town staff. The goal of their visit was to have discussions on the student exchange program between the two towns. During their visit, the representatives lodged with local families. The representatives also toured local industry, Town facilities, and local high schools. Yubetsu will be resuming the exchange program in the fall of 2024 by sending some of their students to Whitecourt, with Whitecourt's students to resume visiting Yubetsu in 2025.
- The Arts & Culture Coordinator is working with the Whitecourt & Woodlands Performing Arts Society to create a website to be launched with their 2024/2025 show season. The creation of the website will also allow the society to move to online ticket sales.
- Private-run arts workshops were prevalent in the community for 2023. The private workshops likely had an impact on Town arts workshop registrations.



# Child Mind Annual Report

Tamara Blackstock, Early Childhood/Child Mind Facilitator, 2023 Annual Report

## Community Program Participation Statistics:



### Trends:

- Numbers continue to remain steady.

### Successes:

- A number of new families have started to use the services.
- Saturday mornings continue to be very popular.

### Opportunities/Challenges:

- Three staff members were hired over the past year.
- Continuing to try and get the word out about Child Mind services and what is offered to families who come to the Allan & Jean Millar Centre.
- Families are more interested in drop-off services rather than pre-booking time slots.

# Facility Bookings Annual Report

Lynn Oliver, Facility Bookings Clerk, 2023 Annual Report

Please note that the figures do not include GST.

## Arena Revenue:

<b>Rental Group</b>	<b>2023 Revenue</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022 Revenue</b>	<b>2022</b>
		<b>Hours of use</b>		<b>Hours of use</b>
<b>Major Organizations</b>				
Adult Rec Teams	\$ 34,580.92	229	\$ 34,909.70	236
AJHL- Wolverines	\$ 53,146.50	450	\$ 44,228.73	376
Figure Skating	\$ 38,609.94	420	\$ 37,455.35	417
Ladies Teams	\$ 2,644.88	24	\$ 3,429.10	26
Minor Hockey	\$ 151,513.14	1627	\$ 119,659.10	1332
<b>Other Minor Organizations</b>				
3 on 3	\$ 4,566.08	50	\$ 5,434.14	61
Devon Malbeuf	\$ 2,344.01	26	\$ 2,672.14	30
Eagles Hockey	\$ 3,053.96	34	\$ 19,176.86	214
Fire Department	\$ 212.13	2	\$ 212.13	2
Pat Forseille-Coaching	\$ 7,408.53	115	\$ 8,415.86	129
Pat Hardy School		35	\$ 322.55	8
Trevor Carter Goaltending			\$ 359.28	3
Tru Grit Academy	\$ 7,114.46	77	\$ 11,878.81	132
Out of Town AJHL Teams	\$ 465.09	4		
Whitecourt Warriors Hockey	\$ 1,801.80	20		
Woodlands Wild	\$ 380.72	4		
<b>Private Bookings</b>	\$ 14,525.08	171	\$ 13,512.51	151
<b>Tournaments</b>				
Hockey Hero Game	\$ 647.84	4	\$ 611.36	4
Industries Tournament	\$ 3,181.70	23	\$ 3,182.04	23
Pembina Pipelines	\$ 2,732.66	19	\$ 2,455.11	16
Silentice Entertainment			\$ 1,347.30	15
Tournament of Hearts	\$ 5,091.12	23	\$ 4,949.84	35
<b>Non Ice Rentals</b>				
Arena meeting room			\$ 192.61	3
Circus	\$ 3,191.79	36	\$ 1,063.93	12
Hilltop Grad	\$ 200.00	88	\$ 200.00	62
Trade Fair	\$ 3,191.79	48	\$ 3,191.79	36
<b>Total Arena Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 340,604.14</b>	<b>3,526</b>	<b>\$ 318,860.24</b>	<b>3319</b>

## Arena Fees and Admissions

- On May 1, 2023 there was a fee increase for ice rentals:
  - Adult Prime 4-10pm: \$152.84/hr after May 1- \$161.96
  - Adult Non-prime \$127.03/hr. after May 1- \$134.61
  - Youth Prime (4-10pm): \$89.82/hr. after May 1- \$95.18
  - Youth Non- Prime \$64.51/hr. after May 1- \$68.36
  - Ladies ice: \$141.42 /hr. **after May 1- \$149.62**
  - Tournament ice: \$141.42/hr after **May 1- \$149.62**
  - Wolverines practices: \$89.82/hr.; Games: \$152.84/hr after **May 1- \$95.18 and \$161.96**
  - Note that Shinney is free with an Allan & Jean Millar Centre Membership.

## Facilities Use of School Facilities:

School- Community Groups	Community School Use Hours 2023	Community School Use Hours 2022
<b>St. Anne</b>		
Whitecourt Club Volleyball	7.5	
Whitecourt Minor Soccer Association	62	
<b>Total</b>	<b>69.50</b>	
<b>St. Mary</b>		
Wado Kai Karate	207.5	
Pumpjack Player	22	
Whitecourt & Woodlands Performing Arts Socie	4	
Whitecourt Minor Soccer Association	29.5	
<b>Total</b>	<b>263.00</b>	
<b>St. Joseph</b>		
Legends Volleyball	19	23
Peers 4-H Multi Club	6.75	
Wado Kai Karate	11	
Whitecourt Club Volleyball	150.5	42.5
Whitecourt Minor Ball	5.25	3
Whitecourt Minor Hockey		9
Whitecourt Minor Soccer Association	8	
Wolverines Kids Club		2
<b>Total</b>	<b>200.50</b>	<b>79.5</b>
<b>Percy Baxter</b>		
Whitecourt Club Volleyball	161	34
<b>Total</b>	<b>161.00</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Pat Hardy</b>		
Wado Kai Karate	63.5	85.75
Whitecourt Minor Ball	17.5	
<b>Total</b>	<b>81.00</b>	<b>85.75</b>
<b>Hilltop</b>		
Town of Whitecourt		16
Whitecourt Club Volleyball	44	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Central</b>		
FCSS - Town Of Whitecourt	10	0
PumpJack Players	328	78
Whitecourt Indigenous Friends Society,	6	0
Whitecourt Minor Ball	51	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Total Joint Use hours</b>	<b>1,214.00</b>	<b>301.25</b>

## School Use of Town Facilities:

School	Arena	Arena	Pool	Pool
	2023/hrs	2022/hrs	2023/sessions	2022/sessions
St. Anne			16	
St. Mary			16	6
St. Joseph			25	24
Hilltop	4	44.75	35	6
Pat Hardy	35	3	34	35
Central			10	0
Percy Baxter			0	0
No Shows			19	4
<b>Total Hours:</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>47.75</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>75</b>

## Swimming Lessons:

	2023/hrs	2022/hrs
St. Mary	0	14
Pat Hardy	24	12
Central	12	10
<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>36</b>

## Trends:

- Ice was being requested into May, further into our regular off season.
- Hockey Leagues outside of the Wolverines were booking practice ice when they were in town to play AJHL Games.
- Private bookings have increased.

## Successes:

- Whitecourt Minor Hockey increased their ice times. They are hosting more specialty events.
- Improved community awareness of opportunities with facility bookings.

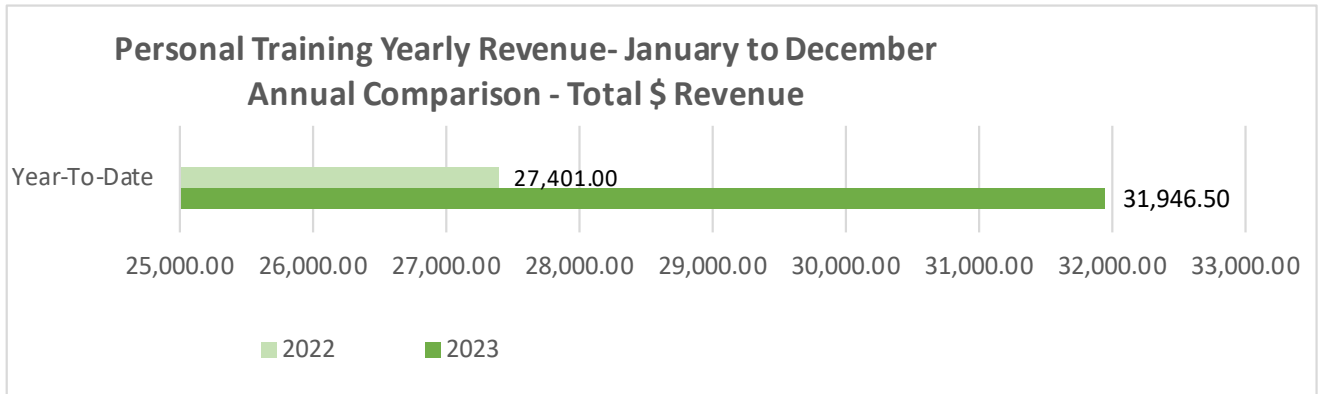
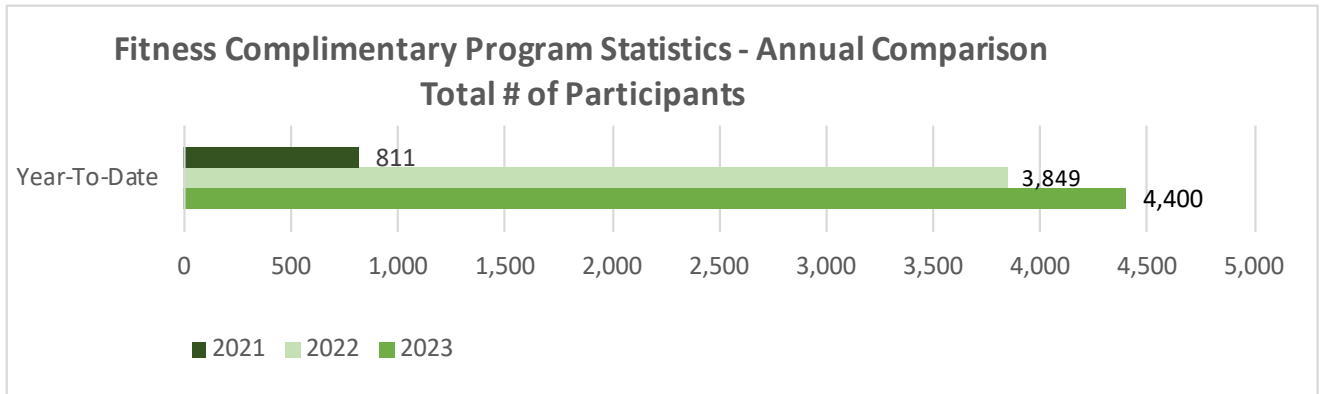
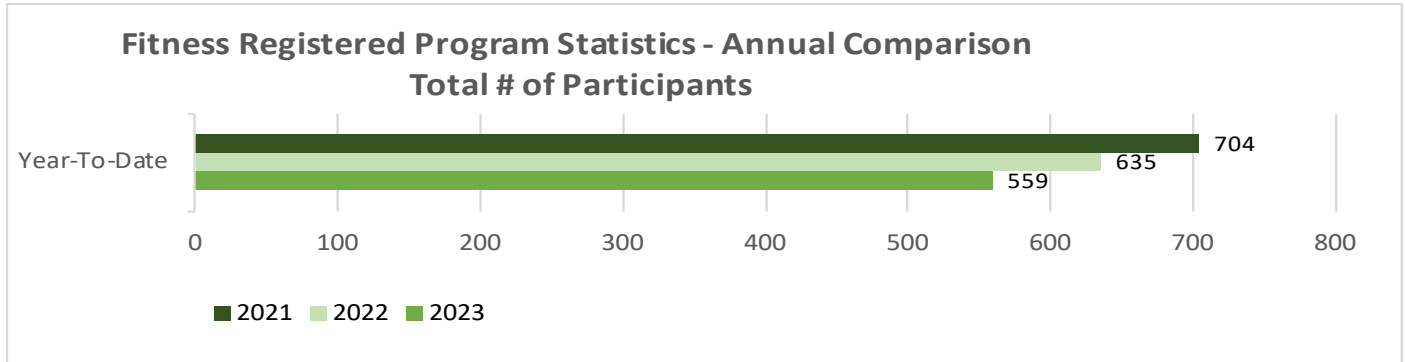
## Challenges/Opportunities:

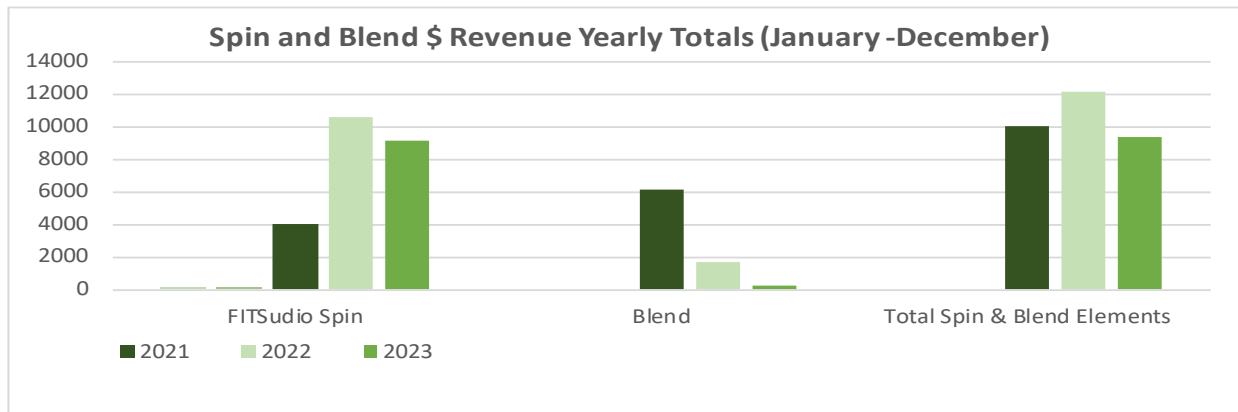
- Expansion of specialty teams in minor hockey is increasing booking inquires for ice time for camps on PD days and school holidays when our regular arena users are on breaks.

# Fitness Coordinator Annual Report

Jolene Rarick, Fitness Coordinator, 2023 Annual Report

## Fitness Statistics:





## Successes:

- Youth is a large demographic of our after school Fitness Centre usage on a daily basis.
- Mommy and me registered fitness classes were offered throughout the year with high attendance.
- Run 4 Fun on June 3 was well attended with 21 half-marathoners, 56 10km racers, 128 5km participants and 166 Kids Marathoners for a total of 371 registrants.
- Triple Crown Challenge took place this year in partnership with Hinton and Edson. Our three communities collaborated on prizes and logistics responsibilities.
- Purchased new replacement fitness equipment through a Request for Proposals process. Guests have had positive comments about the new equipment.
- Purchased a half rack and deadlift platform with bumper plates with our trending equipment budget. We find that even with the extra rack, there are times when people are still waiting for their turn.
- Began offering semi-private in-house Personal Training services. In December, we had a promo that allowed ½ payment of the largest package of personal training sessions in December then the other ½ payment was due January 15, 2024. A 30-minute session option was also offered.
- Get in Gear Adult Starter Pack programs were built.
- 3 Youth Starter Pack programs were created.
- PICK YOUR FIT launch took place from September 5-8 and 141 guests were tallied trying out the Fall fitness classes. We offered 22 classes throughout the week, had daily draws and end of the week draws. We decided to host 2 nights of Pick Your Fit workshops to celebrate the Allan & Jean Millar Centre’s 15 birthday. The nights highlighted 4 to 5 instructors and their classes and instructing styles. There was some team teaching throughout this week which was fun for participants and fitness instructors.
- The Indoor triathlon course and event was successful and there has been requests to host another training program and an outdoor triathlon.
- Team dryland sessions have been booked throughout the winter months in open studio space slots.
- Hosted Holiday Hoopla the week of December 19-22. We celebrated the holiday spirit of giving through holiday themed fitness classes.
- 48 single Class Passes were sold and 2 Packages of 10 Class Passes were sold in 2023.

## Opportunities/Challenges:

- Temperature fluctuations continue to be an issue upstairs.
- Complimentary fitness classes at 9:15am and 5:15pm are not as popular as they once were.

## Staffing Updates:

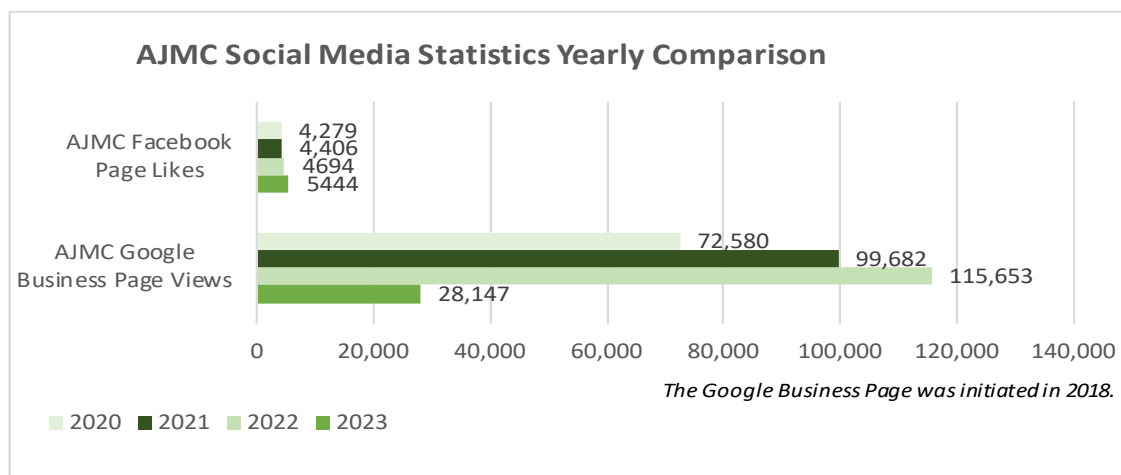
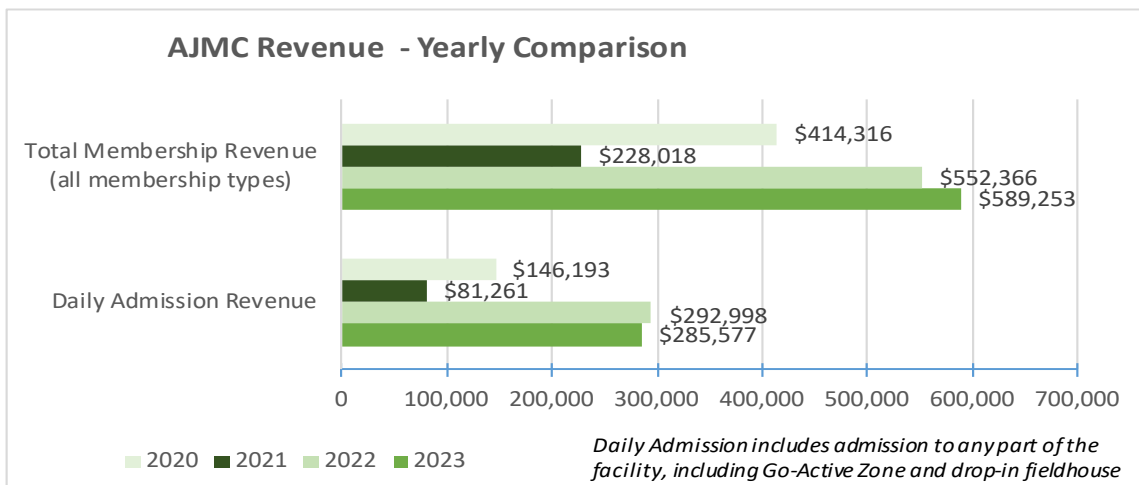
- Hired 2 casual Personal Trainers and 1 Fitness Instructor.
- Hired 4 Fitness Attendants.



# Guest Services Annual Report

Chloe Buck, Guest Services Coordinator, 2023 Annual Report

## Allan & Jean Millar Centre Membership and Admission Statistics:



## Marketing Initiatives and Successes:

- Instagram Followers: 809
- Gift Card Promotion Sale: \$33,622.31
- Summer Fun Passes Sold: 102
- Scanned Visits: 184,422
- 15 Year Anniversary membership sale on September 8, 2023 generated \$16,313.83 in membership sales.
- Trail kiosk posters are updated regularly to reflect our most recent events and promotions.

- The marketing team continues to meet weekly to determine priorities, progress action items and establish schedules for social media interactions and other displays in the community.
- Guest Services staff promoted the Allan & Jean Millar Centre at the Trunk or Treat event. Over 1004 treat bags were given to children attending the event.
- The Festival of Trees partnership with the Boys and Girls Club (BCG) brought many people into the AJMC to view the trees. The AJMC submitted a Barbie themed tree for this event.
- The AJMC participated in the Whitecourt & District Chamber Promotion this year. Clients would receive a card that would earn them a stamp for every \$10.00 the client spends. This provided them with the chance to win Whitecourt Dollars and other weekly prizes.
- BOGO passes were given for various hockey and volleyball tournaments throughout the year.
- Member Appreciation Check-in Challenge winners were awarded monthly to 3 members with the highest check in activity.
- Billboard advertisements were designed and installed to promote the Allan & Jean Millar Centre.
- Donated punch passes were utilized for evacuees to use the facility during the wildfire evacuations of 2023.
- The AJMC was the designated Emergency Evacuation Reception Centre for many communities throughout the year during wildfires and flooding. Guest Services assisted by collecting evacuee information over the phone, filing evacuee related paper work, as well as providing vouchers and resource information to those in need.
- Guest Services staff received Duty to Report training to be better equipped for any possible incidents or concerns.

## Opportunities/Challenges:

- Scheduling staff was challenging this year due to staff illness and shortages, the regular team lead rotation was altered Monday through Friday to help balance this.

# Parks and Open Spaces Annual Report

Kelly Magee, Parks & Open Spaces Coordinator, 2023 Annual Report

## Trends:

- Warm weather began in early March, which is unusual for Whitecourt.
- Littering is still a problem at the Festival Park parking lot, spurs parking lot and the parking lot off of Flats Road. Some residents help to pick up the garbage when they can. These areas are also part of the Community Clean-Up program.
- Vandalism to parks and playground equipment continues with ongoing tagging of benches, garbage receptacles, light poles, buildings, outdoor rinks and pavement.
- Staff were able to work on training programs throughout the fall including First Aid, Chainsaw Safety, Pesticide Usage, and various leadership courses.

## Successes:

- All of the outdoor rinks including Festival Park pond were in fine shape all season. Residents had access to 3 outdoor rinks, the pond ice surface and the ice “track”.
- The skating track (figure 8) was well received. Crokicurl was created for use before and after Family Day. Parks crews are already looking at ways to improve these two areas for future years.
- Completed and installed 8 new planter boxes for the Community Garden.
- Goose fence was completed on the north side of the pond along the tree line. This was to prevent geese from nesting in the areas just outside of the park and walking into the park once the goslings have hatched.
- Goose deterrents of lights, audio, and hazing started in May and continued until June 30. Crews looked for nests and hazed geese when present using trucks, people and RC boat. No geese were present in the pond at the end of June.
- Splash Park opened May 20. Prior to opening, it was discovered that some water pipes had moved with the freeze and thaw this year and made it difficult for the reinstallation of the back flow preventers. Facilities staff were able to alter the placement of the preventers to fix this issue.
- Mountain Pine Beetle project was completed by West Peak Forestry. Final number of trees controlled on Town property was 72; and 3 trees controlled on private properties.
- Repairs to outdoor rinks were completed in September.
- Ball Diamond edging at Graham Acres ball diamonds were re-cut; and low spots and edges were filled in with new shale.
- Christmas lights were repaired and were placed during good weather in late October. They were turned on after Remembrance Day.
- Prepared Riverboat Park for new playground installation.
- Removed dangerous playground equipment at Southlands Park.
- New winter banners put up in Festival Park.
- Great fall weather allowed us to do a lot of dead and dangerous tree removal in green spaces and parks around town.

- Because of lack of snow and warm temperatures, this season's ice making was a little more challenging. Started flooding outdoor rinks in November in the early morning hours when the temperatures were coldest. Started with small rain-like applications to create a more even base. This enabled us to be able to have ice on all 4 outdoor rinks and the pond weeks before Christmas.

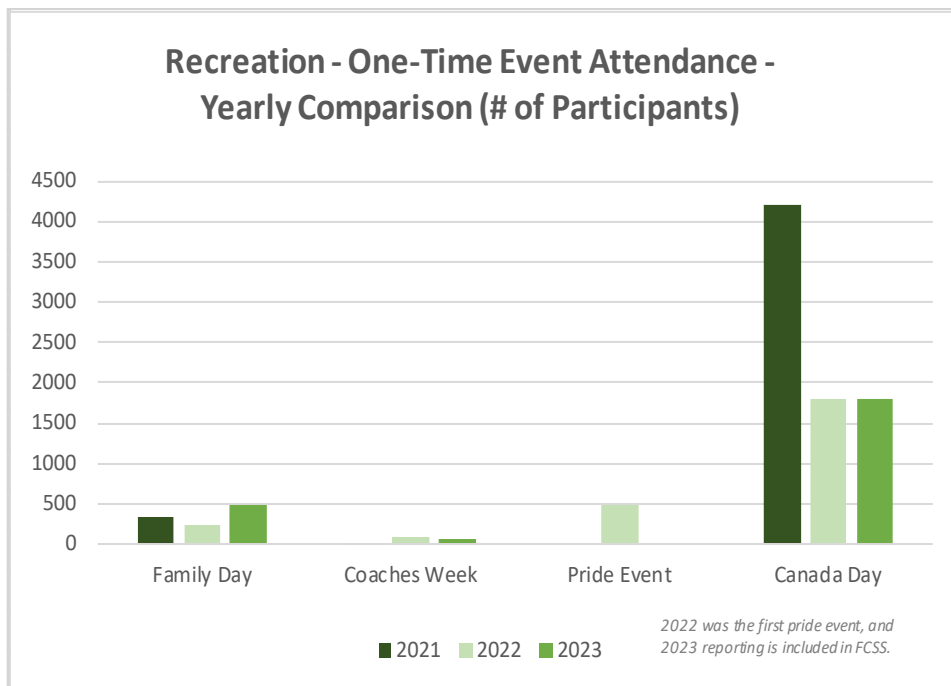
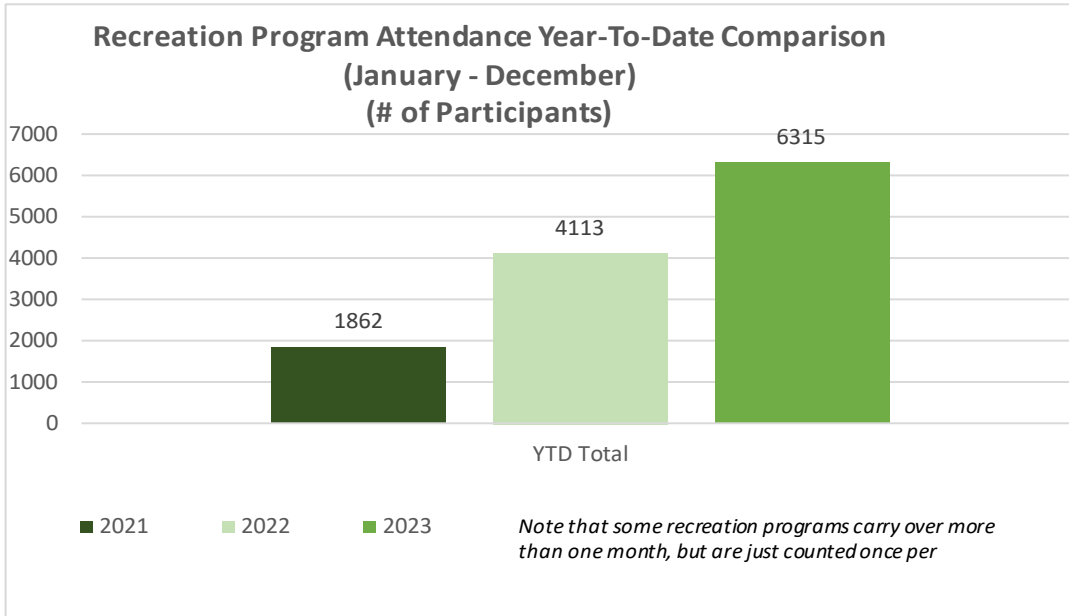
## Opportunities/Challenges:

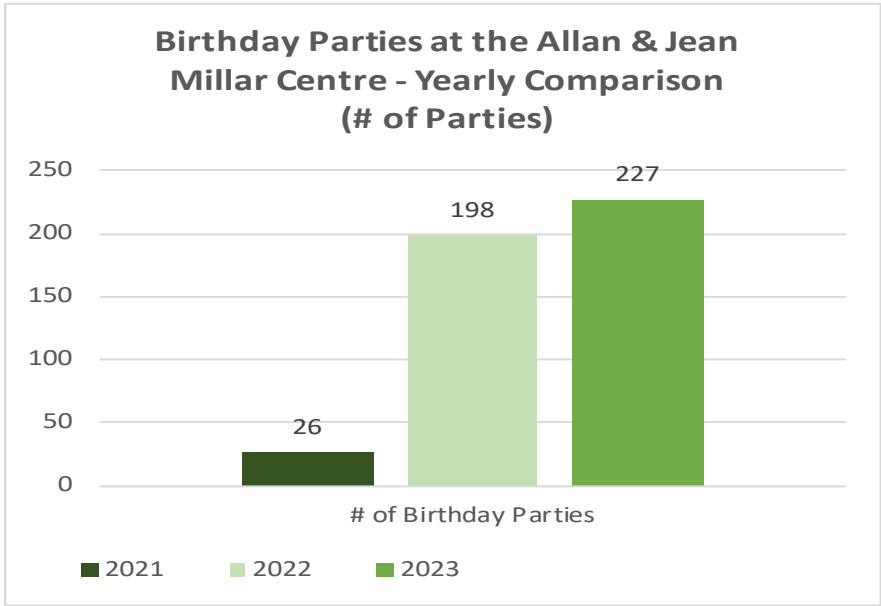
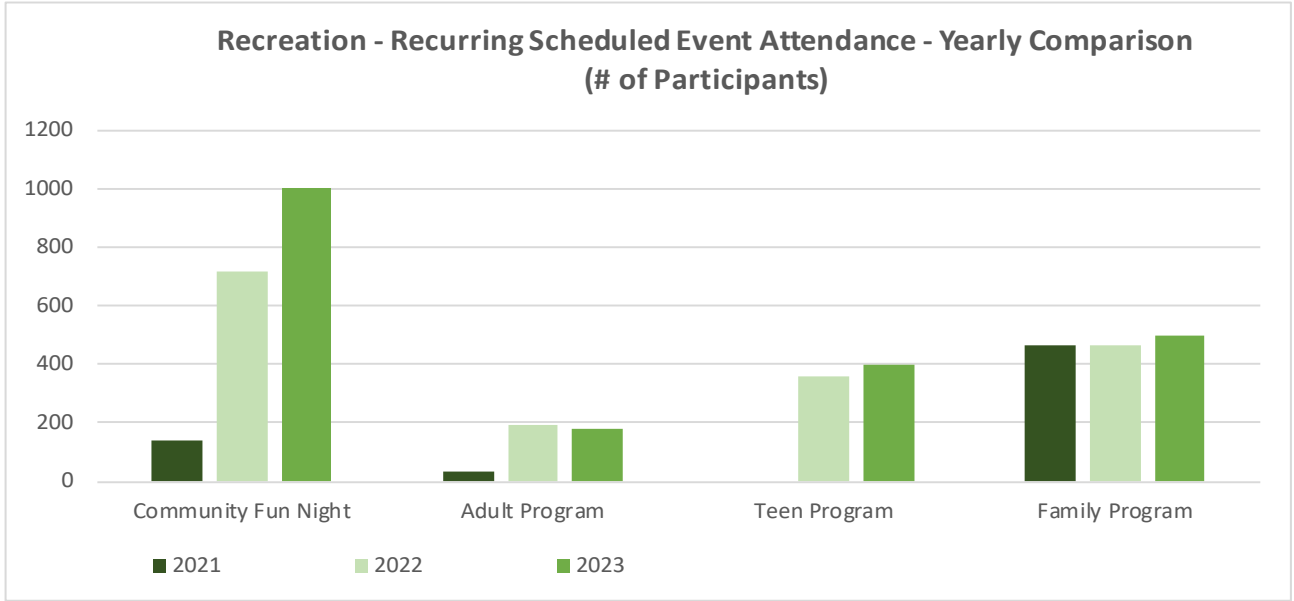
- Freeze and thaw weather created a lot of ice problems on pathways. Crews were able to keep most pathways clear of ice or well sanded for people to walk.
- Warmer temperatures had Parks staff worried about the ice surfaces. We were able to keep them flooded by coming in early and asking schools to stay off while wet. They were in fine shape for the Family Day event. Outdoor rinks closed March 20 for the season due to early warm weather; and the pond and skating track closed March 23.
- Weather was hot and dry, then wet. Annual plants were slow to fill in but looked good by end of July. We saw some problems with trees and shrubs due to the effects of the drought and then moist conditions. Saw an increase in some insects on trees and shrubs.
- Goose control: the fencing and hazing was working well and near the end of June, it looked promising that there would be no geese in the park. Then, we had a flood which brought geese up the creek and over the fences we had installed. Before the floods receded we had 7 adults and 23 goslings and had to work on another plan. We were able to herd the geese to the creek on the north side of the pond where the fence was built. Unfortunately, a week later, the gate was left open at the back of the park and some of the geese returned. It was a few more weeks before all the geese left the area on their own.
- Splash Park had some pressure difficulty to some of the elements. It was determined that there was a line broken to one of the elements. The element was kept off all season and will be repaired in spring of 2024.
- Waiting on the replacement equipment for Riverboat Park.

# Recreation Coordinator Annual Report

Nicole Tarves, Recreation Coordinator, 2023 Annual Report

## Recreation Participation Statistics:





**Successes:**

- Programs and events such as the Rotary Unplugged program and Community Fun Night have all increased from last year. The majority of other programming offered filled up as well.
- The Teen Halloween Dance was very popular this year, with nearly 400 in attendance.
- Numbers for adult drop-in have picked up, especially for soccer that is now back to utilizing the full fieldhouse.

- Party bookings continue to be popular. Although they slow down in the summer (just 6 each in July and August) there is an average of 22 party bookings each month. With introducing online booking in 2024, it will be interesting to see how this impacts our numbers.

## Challenges:

- We continue to look for creative ways to provide programming for adults that promotes socializing and friendship. This year we hosted the What's Out There event, and Dodgeball and Pickleball tournaments. We are looking at trialing registered programs in 2024, with some taking place outdoors.
- School days off (i.e. PD days or winter break) have led to a huge increase in fieldhouse attendance. Unfortunately this was also accompanied by unwanted behaviors such as wearing outdoor footwear, eating in the fieldhouse and more damaged equipment. We have started scheduling a daytime shift for these PD days and hope this will make a difference in the New Year. However, we are so pleased to see that youth feel safe and comfortable in our facility and spend so much of their free time here.
- Fieldhouse use – it was great to see the facility well utilized these past few months. The downside of so many evening bookings is that there were limited opportunities for facility users to use the fieldhouse, staff are working on balancing this for 2024.
- The weather continued to be a challenge when planning outdoor programs and events. For example, when trying to launch the cross country ski borrowing program, we did not have enough snow to start in December and had to reschedule for late January.



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