

CONNECTED BY COMMUNITY

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the spirit of respect, reciprocity and truth, Distress Centre Calgary honours and acknowledge Moh'kinsstis, and the traditional Treaty 7 territory and oral practices of the Blackfoot confederacy: Siksika, Kainai, Piikani, as well as the Îyâxe Nakoda and Tsuut'ina nations. We acknowledge that this territory is home to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government of the Métis Nation within Alberta Districts 5 and 6. Finally, we acknowledge all Nations – Indigenous and non – who live, work and play on this land, and who honour and celebrate this territory.

A MESSAGE FROM ROBYN ROMANO

2025 was a remarkable year for Distress Centre Calgary, and I am so grateful to have been part of it. The team showed up with the compassion, curiosity, and a commitment to human connection that have always defined this work. And behind all of it, our partners, funders, and donors stood with us in ways that remind me how much of this work is truly shared. I could not be prouder of what we built together.

As I look ahead, I do so with a full heart and real confidence in what comes next. Matt Nomura is stepping into an organization that is strong, ready, and anchored by an extraordinary team, and he brings the vision, integrity, and care that Distress Centre Calgary deserves. Thank you for the partnership, the shared purpose, and the collective belief that no one should have to face crisis alone. I will always be a proud champion of this work, and of every one of you.



Robyn Romano, former CEO, with Matt Nomura, who stepped into the role in 2026

MESSAGE FROM BOARD CHAIR

Serving as Board Chair of Distress Centre Calgary is one of the greatest privileges of my life. Mental health challenges have been woven into my own story; they have shaped people I love, and they affect so many of the individuals I work alongside every single day. I carry a deep, personal understanding of what it means to be met exactly where you are – without judgment, without hesitation, and without any conditions. That is what Distress Centre does, unfailingly, every single time for thousands of people.

I serve on this Board, and I give back to this organization, because of a call I made to Distress Centre Calgary twenty years ago when I was in crisis. That call changed what was possible for me. It gave me courage at a moment when I had very little, and it opened the door to a future I wasn't sure I would ever get to imagine. I believe that every interaction with Distress Centre carries that same potential – a turning point, a lifeline, a moment where someone's world shifts just enough to keep going.

I am profoundly grateful for the people who pour their hearts and minds into this organization, and for everyone who supports and strengthens this work through funding, volunteering, advocacy, and belief. Distress Centre is built on compassion, skill, and community and I am honoured to stand alongside all who make this mission possible.

As we move forward into another year and into a new chapter under the guidance of a new leader, we do this work knowing the need is real, and it is growing. Twenty two percent of people feel lonelier now than they did during the pandemic. Here in Calgary, more than half of us have needed mental health support, and for 70 percent, those needs emerged within just the past year. And one in three people still don't know where to turn for help.

Distress Centre exists for those moments. Across our crisis line, ConnecTeen, counselling, and our coordinated entry programs, our teams meet people with care, expertise, and the patience to listen. It happens around the clock, in moments of acute crisis and over longer journeys toward stability.

In 2025, Distress Centre supported people 148,111 times across our programs. I am so proud of what this team accomplished, and grateful to every staff member, volunteer, donor, funder, and partner who made it possible.

After fifty five years, the heart of this organization remains steady and unwavering. The foundation we stand on is strong, built by decades of compassion, commitment, and community. The work ahead is meaningful, and it matters more now than ever. I have never been more confident that we are ready for the challenges before us. We are prepared, we are focused, and we are united in our purpose.

This is a moment to invite our community to stand with us. It is a moment to get involved, to lend your voice, your time, your resources, and your belief. Distress Centre Calgary supports so many of us, directly and indirectly, and together we can ensure that support remains strong for the next fifty five years and beyond.

Kiersten Mohr,

Distress Centre Calgary, Board Chair

Distress Centre
supported people

148,111

times across
our programs



CONNECTING IN THE MOMENT OF CRISIS

When someone reaches out in their most difficult moment, human connection matters most.

Through Distress Centre Calgary's Crisis Services, crisis support is available any time of the day or night. This service is absolutely free, and confidential.

For people who need more than a single conversation, DCC offers no-cost **crisis counselling** — typically within five days. Nine out of ten people who completed counselling reported being better able to cope, both at the end of their sessions and months later.




Through the **9-8-8 Suicide Crisis Helpline**, DCC answers calls and texts from people across the country. This year, demand grew significantly — reflecting both the scale of the need and the trust people place in this national lifeline.

And through **ConnecTeen**, young people ages 12–18 connect with trained teen volunteers who understand what it's like to navigate hard things.

“Knowing you've helped them find something to fight for — it's a feeling I can't compare to anything else.”

— ConnecTeen volunteer

TOP REASONS PEOPLE REACH OUT

-  Anxiety and depression
-  Relationship issues
-  Self-harm

For many people, reaching out to DCC is the first step toward feeling heard – and toward finding a way forward.



48,256

crisis contacts
Compared to 47,705
in 2024

787

emergency interventions

19,037

calls and texts to the 9-8-8 Suicide Crisis Helpline
Compared to 13,256
in 2024

Our **mission** is to provide compassionate, accessible crisis and navigation support that enhances the health, well-being and resiliency of individuals in distress.

Our **vision** is to ensure everyone is heard. To do this, we abide by a specific set of values:



BELONGING



SERVICE TO OTHERS



EXCELLENCE



VOLUNTEERISM



INTEGRITY



COLLABORATION



INNOVATION



LEADERSHIP

2025 HIGHLIGHTS

COUNSELLING PROGRAM ACCREDITATION

DCC's Counselling Program was accredited by the Canadian Accreditation Council (CAC) — with zero non-compliant findings across every standard reviewed.

Participants gave the program an overall rating of 9 out of 10. Every person surveyed reported being satisfied with the services they received. Participants finished the program feeling understood, safe and involved in their own care planning.

373
people received professional counselling support
Compared to 400 in 2024

1,994
counselling contacts
Compared to 2,420 in 2024

CONNECTEEN REACHES 72% MORE YOUTH

ConnecTeen reached more than 6,350 young people in 2025, through school presentations, events, and partnerships — up from approximately 3,680 the year before.



411
ConnecTeen calls
Compared to 473 in 2024

2,464
ConnecTeen contacts
Compared to 2,843 in 2024

762
ConnecTeen chats
Compared to 610 in 2024 (+23%)

1,290
ConnecTeen texts
Compared to 1,757 in 2024

6,351
young people reached through community outreach
Compared to 3,679 in 2024 (+73%)

STORIES OF CONNECTION

Inspired by real experiences

TAYLOR

When Taylor called ConnecTeen, he was in middle school and struggling with isolation, thoughts of suicide, and self-harm. He told the volunteer responder he couldn't see a way out.

The volunteer didn't try to fix things. Instead, they listened — asking questions, making space for Taylor to unravel the emotions he'd been carrying. During the conversation, Taylor mentioned he loved writing music. The volunteer asked to hear some of his lyrics.

What followed was more than an hour talking about Taylor's future as a musician. Together, they discovered that songwriting wouldn't make everything better — but it was a way to process what he was going through. A healthier outlet. Something to hold on to.

By the end of the call, Taylor said he was going to put more energy into creating music. He even promised the volunteer that one day, he'd put out an album.

That is what human connection in a crisis looks like. Conversations don't follow a script or offer a diagnosis. They're simply an opportunity for someone to connect. To stay present long enough for the weight to shift, for the crisis to pass.



CONNECTION POWERED BY COMMUNITY

Behind every crisis contact is a person who chose to show up because they believe no one should face their hardest moments alone.

DCC's volunteer crisis responders answer calls, texts, and chats at all hours, bringing compassion, patience, and skill to every conversation. Each one completes extensive 60 hours of training before ever picking up a line – and continues to grow through ongoing learning and support.

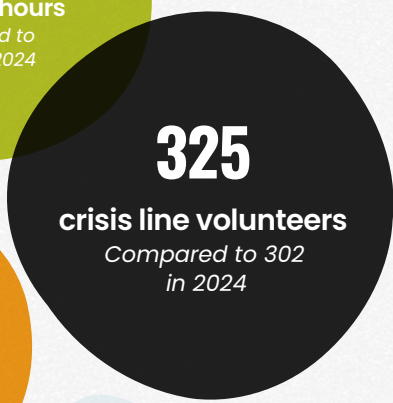
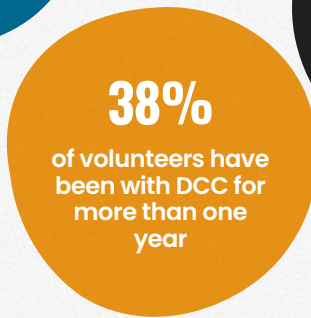
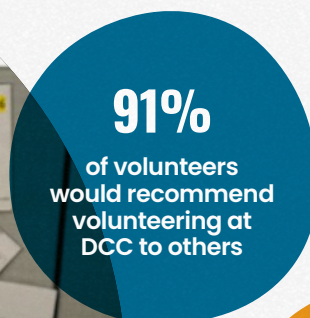
Crisis responders aren't the only volunteers who keep DCC running.

Administrative volunteers, event supporters, board members, and community ambassadors all play a role in making sure DCC can continue

to serve our community. From behind-the-scenes coordination to public-facing events, every volunteer contributes to the connection that defines DCC's work.

“ There have been a few times when a service user specifically said at the end of our conversation, 'You helped me today.' ”

— DCC volunteer



VOLUNTEERS & RESPONDERS VOICES

"Feeling like I make a difference."

"Everyone is respectful and everyone wants to learn. Something rare in today's workplace."

"The sense of being connected to my community and city."

"Being there for people who really need it."

Every hour given by a volunteer is an hour where someone in crisis doesn't have to be alone. To every person who gave their time this year — on the lines, behind the scenes, and in the community — thank you for making connection possible.

CONNECTING PEOPLE TO THE RIGHT SUPPORT

Sometimes the hardest part isn't asking for help, it's knowing where to find it.

In moments of uncertainty, people need more than information. They need connection, clarity, and someone to help them find their way.

211 Alberta, operated by DCC, provides exactly that — 24 hours a day, by phone, text, and chat, in over 170 languages. One call can open the door to housing support, food programs, financial assistance, mental health services, and more.

Through the **911 Call Diversion program** — a partnership with Calgary Police Service and Calgary 911 — DCC helps redirect non-emergency crisis calls away from the emergency system and toward community-based supports.

When someone calls 911 in distress but doesn't need police or paramedics, they're connected to a trained DCC responder who can listen, de-escalate, and guide them to the right help.

Together, 211 and the 911 Call Diversion program represent something powerful: a community that doesn't just respond to crisis, but meets people where they are and connects them to what they actually need.



We have criminalized mental health, we have criminalized poverty, we have criminalized homelessness, and this is our opportunity to take a different approach. We can start addressing what's going on underneath — all the intersectionality and interconnectedness that precipitates that crisis — and hopefully get people connected into longer-term supports.”

— Robyn, DCC, on the 911 Call Diversion partnership



58,546

contacts through
211 Alberta
Compared to 52,180
in 2024

7,758

calls diverted
from Calgary 911
to community
supports

6,316

follow-up
contacts
offered

170+

languages
available through
211

STORIES OF CONNECTION

Inspired by real experiences




ADITYA

After leaving his doctor's office with a handful of referrals, Aditya felt more overwhelmed than before. Searching online only made things worse — flooding him with options but no clear way to know what was right for him. Feeling lost, he reached out to DCC's Community Resource Specialists through 211 Alberta.

Instead of another list, he was met by a real person who listened without judgement and took the time to understand his experience. He left the conversation with tailored resources that made sense for his needs — and with the clarity and confidence to move forward.

Aditya's story reflects a reality many people face. DCC provides a solution.

TOP REASONS PEOPLE CONTACT 211

-  **Housing & shelter**
-  **Temporary financial assistance**
-  **Information services**

No one should have to navigate a complex system alone — especially in a moment of need. Through 211 and the 911 Call Diversion program, DCC helps ensure that people are met with the right support, not just the nearest one. That's connection at work.

CONNECTION BEYOND THE CRISIS

A crisis doesn't end when the call does. For many people, the path forward means addressing what's underneath — and having the right support to get there.

BASIC NEEDS FUND

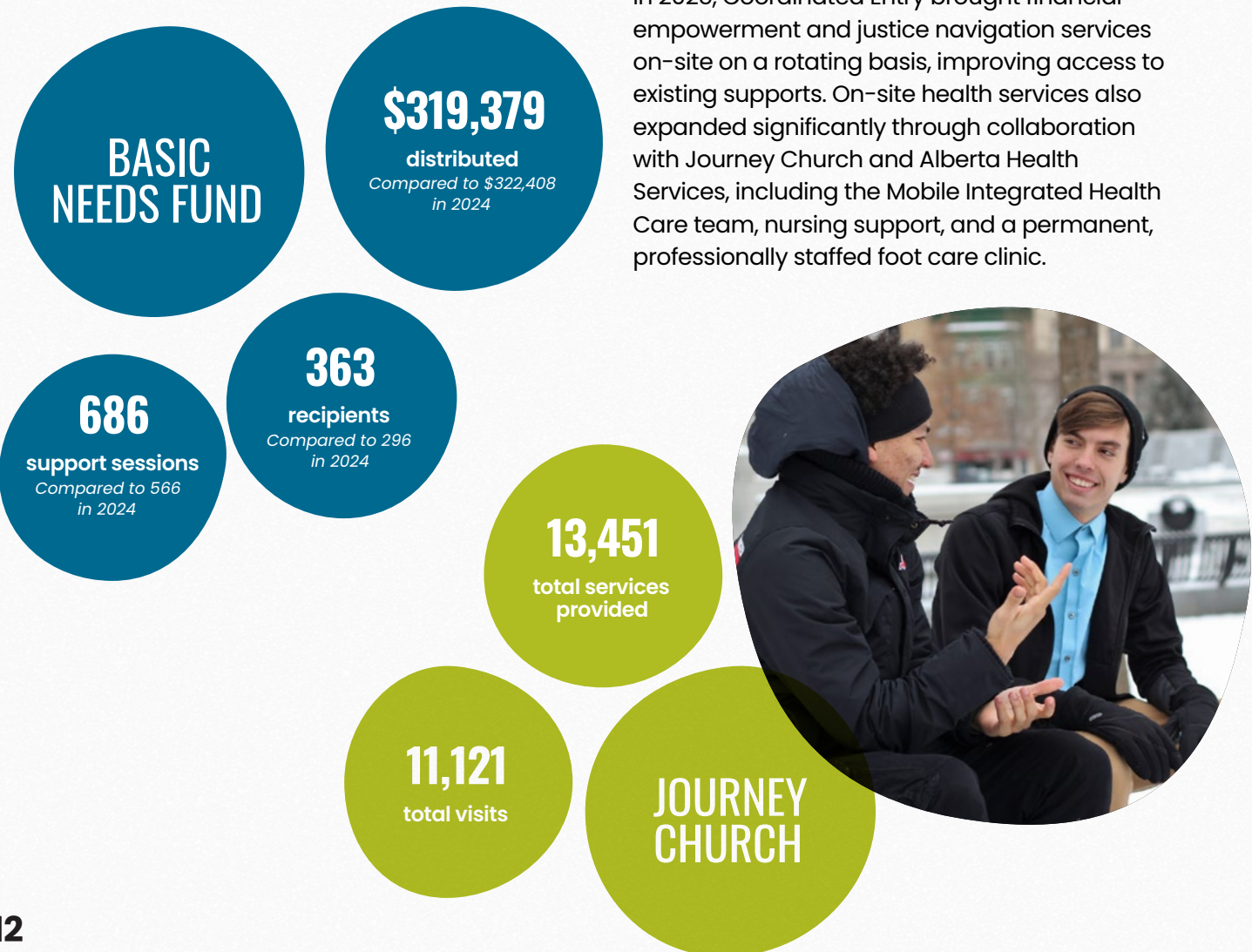
It's often a single moment of financial crisis that separates someone from losing everything. An unexpected bill. A missed paycheque. An eviction notice.

The Basic Needs Fund is a collaboration between DCC, CUPS, and Rise Calgary — providing emergency financial assistance to Calgarians at that breaking point.

DAY SPACE AT JOURNEY CHURCH

At the Journey Church Day Space, Distress Centre provides integrated supports that help individuals stabilize, connect to housing and services, and move toward their goals. This work is made possible through our valued partnership with Journey Church, which creates a welcoming and supportive environment for participants.

In 2025, Coordinated Entry brought financial empowerment and justice navigation services on-site on a rotating basis, improving access to existing supports. On-site health services also expanded significantly through collaboration with Journey Church and Alberta Health Services, including the Mobile Integrated Health Care team, nursing support, and a permanent, professionally staffed foot care clinic.





CALGARY COMMUNITY INFORMATION EXCHANGE

The **Calgary Community Information Exchange (CIE)** connects health, social, and government services through one secure platform (with the person's consent) so providers can collaborate in real time. Instead of being bounced between systems, a person gets a unified, responsive, and dignified experience. The right help, from the right places, at the right time.

The CIE is supported by an investment of \$1 million from Calgary Foundation, alongside funding from the Government of Alberta, the United Way of Calgary and Area, and the City of Calgary. It's a collaborative effort made possible by partners across the sector.

CIE PARTNERS

- 211 LA
- Action Dignity
- Alberta Health Services
- Aventa
- The Alex Community Health Centre
- Brightsquid Secure Communications
- Calgary Homeless Foundation
- Calgary Police Service
- Calgary Urban Project Society (CUPS)
- City of Calgary
- Converge Mental Health and Addictions
- Inn From the Cold
- Kindred Connections Society
- Ladies in the Family Foundation
- Lionheart Foundation
- PolicyWise
- Recovery Alberta
- Trellis
- United Way of Calgary and Area
- YW Calgary

COORDINATED ENTRY PROGRAM

The Coordinated Entry Program (CEP) is the community's front door for individuals and families facing a housing crisis, offering low-barrier access to support with no eligibility requirements.

CEP helps resolve housing crises by connecting people to housing options, income, and essential services, while coordinating support around urgent needs. In 2025, CEP strengthened access by bringing services to key entry points across the community, making it easier for people to get help when and where they need it. Operating primarily out of SORCe, CEP plays a central role in reducing barriers and supporting transitions out of crisis toward housing and improved well-being.



A HUB FOR CONNECTION

Operated by Distress Centre Calgary

SORCe is a place where people can walk in and access housing & system navigation, tax & benefits navigation, justice support, health services, cultural connection, and basic needs, all under one roof, in one visit. As a community hub, it brings together Distress Centre Calgary, the Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary (AFCC), Recovery Alberta, and a network of partners to support people experiencing homelessness.

At SORCe, partners work side by side, so every person who enters is met with compassion, dignity, and coordinated care. By offering multiple services in one place, this model reduces barriers, minimizes the need to navigate multiple systems, and helps people get support more quickly, creating a safer, more connected space for the community.

HOUSING AND COMMUNICATIONS HUB AT SORCE

A COORDINATED ENTRY PROGRAM

The Housing & Communications Hub provides access to computers and phones so people can search for housing, apply for income supports, build resumes, file taxes, and connect directly with landlords, employers, and their natural supports. With staff support, this access gives people the tools to take the next step on their own.

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS

The Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary (AFCC) expanded its presence at SORCe with Cultural Outreach Coordinators, the Smudge Vow Program, and Homeward Bound housing services, bringing culturally grounded, Indigenous-led programming directly into the SORCe environment. Using a Two-Eyed Seeing approach, Cultural Outreach Coordinators support Urban Indigenous community members through advocacy and navigation while honouring cultural values and protocols.

SORCE PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS





3717

people supported
compared to 3891
in 2024

17,523

interaction
compared to 17128
in 2024

**COORDINATED
ENTRY
PROGRAM**

STORIES OF CONNECTION

Inspired by real experiences

JANE

When she first walked into SORCe, she was looking for \$50 to keep a roof over her head. She'd been living in an informal rental arrangement with no lease, and the situation had become unstable.

Rather than addressing only the immediate request, staff took a different approach. They listened. They explored options. Within a day, they'd connected her with a trusted landlord and arranged a viewing for a safe, affordable room with a formal lease.

Her application was approved within days. Her damage deposit and first month's rent were covered. She received gift certificates and a voucher to help furnish her new space.

What started as a request for \$50 became a pathway to stable housing — because someone took the time to look beyond the surface. That's what SORCe is built to do.

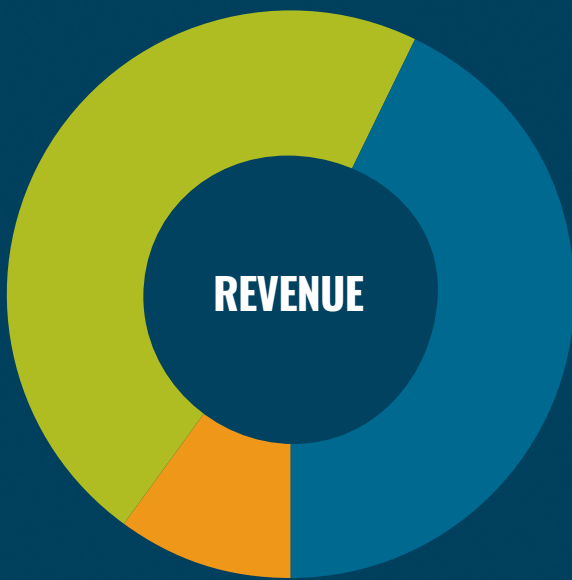
SORCe exists because no one's challenges fit neatly into a single category. When housing, health, finances, justice, cultural connection, and community come together in one place, people can focus on what matters most.

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

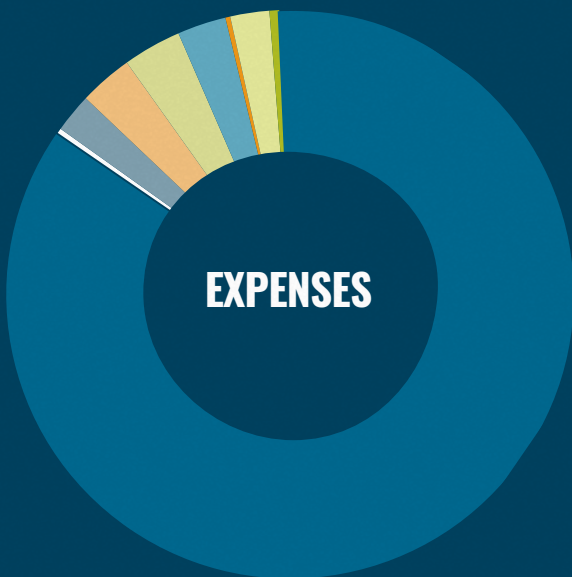
Every dollar invested in DCC supports a community where no one has to face crisis alone.

This snapshot reflects how funds were allocated across programs and operations in 2025.

DCC is committed to transparency and responsible stewardship. The majority of funds go directly to programs and services — ensuring that support reaches the people who need it most.



- 43% Government
- 47% Community support
- 10% Other Fundraising



- 85.5% Workforce
- 3.3% Building
- 3.1% Office administration
- 2.8% Technology
- 2.4% Basic Needs Fund
- 2.1% Marketing and fundraising
- 0.4% Programs
- 0.2% Volunteer and training
- 0.2% Communications and finance

CONNECTION IS A COLLECTIVE EFFORT

None of this work happens alone.

Every connection DCC makes — every crisis call answered, every housing assessment completed, every young person who finds someone to talk to, is powered by the people who give their time, their dollars and their trust.

From long-time monthly donors to first-time event attendees, from corporate partners to community fundraisers, every contribution fuels the support that Calgarians rely on every day.

This year, supporters came together through events like the Drive for Distress, Business For Calgary Kids, the Rogers Charity Classic, and Darkness Into Light — along with dozens of community-led fundraisers.

Connection changes lives. Thank you to all who generously make that connection possible each and every day.

DONOR STORY

Connection That Saves Lives

At Distress Centre Calgary, connection is at the heart of everything we do.

Alex is proof that connection changes lives, powered by loyal supporters and delivered by highly trained volunteers. Connection makes all the difference.

Years ago, Alex reached out during one of the hardest moments of their life. Living with a mental health diagnosis had left them isolated and overwhelmed. When life felt unbearable, Alex made the call.

On the other end was a warm voice and genuine compassion.

Today, Alex is a \$100 monthly donor and has been a loyal supporter since 2018. They give because the support they received gave them their life back, one moment of connection at a time.



At first, I was reluctant to call, but I had nothing to lose. I kept calling because I realized I didn't have to face my challenges alone."

Alex, DCC monthly donor since 2018

IMPACT FUNDERS



COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS (\$10,000+)

- Acera Insurance
- Alberta Gaming Liquor & Cannabis (AGLC)
- Alberta Law Foundation
- ATB Financial
- Calgary Flames Foundation
- Calgary Foundation
- Cenovus Energy Community Emergency Fund
- Children's Hospital Aid Society
- CNOOC International
- ENMAX Corporation
- Frank J. Flaman Foundation
- Gary & Janeen Nissen
- Gibson Energy Inc
- iA Financial Group
- John Kousinioris
- Nickle Family Foundation
- Peter McKeen
- Poelzer Family Foundation Fund
- Telus Friendly Future Foundation
- The Lecky Foundation
- The Tenaquip Foundation
- Vitality Fund
- W. Brett Wilson Family Fund for Adolescent Wellness
- William S. Herron Family Charitable Foundation

COMMUNITY CONNECTORS (\$1,000–\$9,999)

- AD Cheng Foundation
- Alan MacDonald
- Allard Foundation Ltd
- Amanda McNulty
- Annapolis Capital Limited
- Baher Family Fund
- Barbara McFarlane
- Beverly Quail
- Brad Regier
- Brent and Linda White
- Carolyn Armstrong
- Charitable Foundation of the Family
- Christopher Branch
- David Grindell
- Don Rempel
- Douglas Bradley
- Ecclesiastical Insurance
- Eleanor Jane Sidnell
- Federated Co-operatives Limited
- GFL Environmental Inc.
- GLJ Ltd.
- Gordon Dibb
- Graydon and Dorothy Morrison Flow Through Fund
- Jeff and Cathy Wilson
- Jeff and Krista Leitl
- John Chambers
- Jolayne Leger
- Judy Ginther
- Judy and Steele Curry
- Karla Watson
- Keith Wakelam
- Kiersten Mohr
- KPMG Foundation
- Lila Swiatylo
- Mary and Patrick Kramer
- Martha Nystrom
- Mayfair Diagnostics
- MEG Energy
- Michael Parnis
- New Covenant Assembly, Calgary
- Norreep Foundation
- Peter MacKinnon
- Randel Dalgleish
- Randy Moore
- Richard Begg
- Richard Tesche
- Ross-Lynn Charitable Foundation
- Rotary Club of Calgary Chinook
- Rotary Club of Calgary Fish Creek
- Sam Ousher Switzer Charitable Foundation
- Sarah Wilson Cook
- Saskatoon Community Foundation
- Scott Elliott
- Sean Pollock
- The Kuzek Foundation
- The Wagemakers Foundation
- TREC Dental Foundation
- Troy McPhee
- United Way Centraide Canada
- Walter Benstead



COMMUNITY FUNDRAISERS (THIRD PARTY EVENTS)

- Business Fore Calgary Kids
- Darkness Into Light
- Rogers Charity Classic
- Ship and Anchor
- Bespoke Grand Finale Car Show
- CAGC 39th Annual Tough Times Golf Tournament
- Calgary Marathon
- Listen Up Calgary
- Okotoks on Deck Tournament
- Paint with Purpose
- Youth and Philanthropy Initiative Canada (YPI) (Bob Edwards School)
- YYC Rocks Against Bullying

DRIVE FOR SUCCESS SPONSORS

- LAN Solutions Corp.
- TransAlta Corporation
- Altitude Communications
- Bragg Creek Distillers Inc.
- CNOOC International
- Daytona Homes Calgary
- Desjardins Insurance
- DTR Financial
- ENMAX Corporation
- Goodfellow & Schuettlaw
- Mechanical Equipment Sales Co. Ltd.
- Moser Public Affairs
- Owen Hart Foundation
- Precede Occupational Health Services Inc.
- Viewpoint Charitable Foundation



Thank you to the 100+ attendees, volunteers and supporters on the day of the event, that came out to support Distress Centre Calgary!

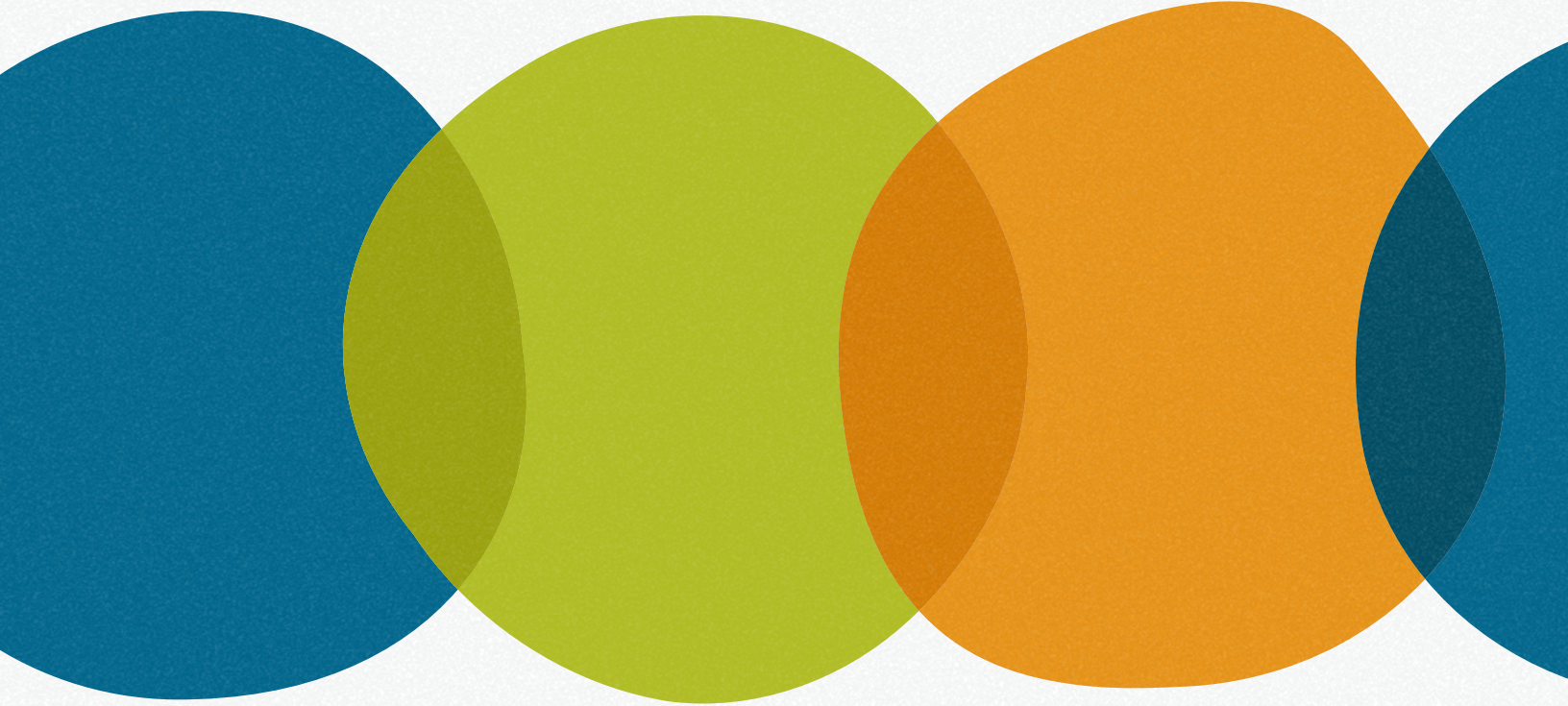
Because of you, we are able to connect and ensure no one faces their darkest moments alone. ***Thank you.***



CONNECTED BY COMMUNITY

SUPPORT IS ALWAYS HERE.

Donate today at distresscentre.com.



Crisis Support

Call or text: 403-266-4357

Chat: distresscentre.com

211 Alberta

Call or text: 211

Chat: ab.211.ca

ConnecTeen (Youth ages 12-18)

Call: 403-264-8336

Text: 587-333-2724

Chat: calgaryconnecteen.com

9-8-8 Suicide Crisis Helpline

Call or text: 988