

Application Summary: 2026 - 3280 - Sustaining Grant - Strategic Partners Grant

Application ID

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Applicant Information

Organization Information

Autism Society of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo
21B-10019 MacDonald Avenue
Fort McMurray, AB, T9H 1S9

Primary Contact

Tina Delainey
21B-10019 Macdonald Avenue
Fort McMurray, AB, T9H 1S9

Phone: s.20(1)
Email: autismsupport@autismrmwb.org

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In the last year, have there been any significant changes to your organization or program?

No

What is your organization's Mission Statement?

We are committed to creating an inclusive community through programming, support, and understanding of autistic and neurodiverse individuals and all those living with a disability and their families across their lifespan.

Please summarize the proposed service(s) that your organization is requesting funding for.

Comprehensive Support Services for Families and Individuals with Autism, Neurodiversity, and Disabilities

The Autism Society of the RMWB is requesting funding to continue and to meet the growing need for our Comprehensive Support Services, designed to empower individuals with Autism, neurodiversity, and disabilities while supporting their families and building an inclusive community.

Our Resource Navigation and Caregiver Support connects families with programs and services tailored to their needs, ensuring they feel guided and supported. Through Training and Awareness, we deliver presentations and certification opportunities for educators, caregivers, businesses, and community members to foster empathy, acceptance, and practical inclusion strategies.

The Education Inclusion Program provides free classroom resource bins, lending materials, and professional development presentations for schools and organizations. This initiative promotes understanding of Autism and neurodiversity, encouraging inclusive practices across our region.

We also offer Specialized Programs across the lifespan, including:

Transitions Program (16+): A 12-week series that builds life skills, resilience, social connections, financial literacy, and workplace readiness. Continued with weekly social activities encourage independence, friendship, and community engagement throughout the year.

Social Respite (ages 3–17): Opportunities for children and youth with differing abilities to develop friendships, practice social skills, and explore community activities while parents benefit from respite care.

Camp Kids First summer camp (ages 4–17): An inclusive day camp offering experiences such as swimming, music, arts, and outdoor adventures, supported by trained staff who provide individualized

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attention.

Additionally, we deliver inclusive community events, sensory supports, and access to our sensory room, sensory store, and lending shelf. These services empower individuals, reduce barriers, and provide meaningful opportunities for connection.

Investing in staff development, program evaluation, and outreach, we ensure our services adapt to community needs and foster sustainable growth. Funding will allow us to continue providing these essential supports that help individuals and families thrive.

Please note any restrictions on participating in your organization's programs, projects, services or events.

Our organization is committed to inclusivity, ensuring that everyone, regardless of ability or age, has access to our programs and services. While some of our specialized programs are designed to meet the needs of individuals with complex needs, such as Autism, we welcome individuals of all abilities to participate.

We believe in creating inclusive opportunities where the community as a whole can engage in events and programs that foster understanding and connection. From sensory-friendly events to social programming, our offerings are designed to accommodate a wide range of participants, ensuring that no one feels excluded.

Whether you are seeking specialized support or simply wish to engage with the broader community, our services are open to everyone, promoting acceptance, awareness, and a sense of belonging for individuals of all abilities. There are no restrictions on participation, our goal is to create an accessible, supportive environment for all.

Minimum number of board members according to the organization's bylaws:

3

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Please list your current Board of Directors in the table:

Board of Directors

| Name | Board Position | Years on Board |
|-------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Corinna Pitzel-O'Hanley | President | 9 |
| Gerrie-Ann Fielder | Vice President | 8.5 |
| Loralie Volaric | Treasurer | 2 |
| Amanda Downey | Secretary | 2 |
| Fernanda Dutra | Member at Large | 3 Months |
| Chau Phuong | Member at Large | 3 Months |
| Hannie Lee Maraan | Member at Large | 3 Months |

Do one or more board representatives or program staff have lived experience or expertise reflective of the demographics your organization serves?

Yes

If Yes; please briefly explain the lived experience or expertise.

Our board is deeply connected to the community we serve. Four of our seven members are parents of children with Autism, Neurodiversity, or Disabilities, giving them personal insight into the challenges and needs of these individuals. Their lived experience fuels their passion and dedication to our mission. Two board members work in the special education field, specializing in supporting children with special needs, bringing professional expertise and a compassionate approach to the team. Together, our board members provide a unique blend of personal and professional perspectives, ensuring our programs are both empathetic and effective. One board member has finance education and background.

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Provide a brief overview of the organization's strategic priorities.

Our strategic direction is centered around three key pillars to foster a more inclusive and supportive community for individuals with Autism, Neurodiversity, and Disabilities:

1. Communication and Marketing:

We aim to increase awareness and understanding of Autism, Neurodiversity, and Disabilities through targeted communication and marketing efforts. By educating the broader community, we seek to build a more inclusive environment that embraces diversity and provides support for the population we serve.

2. Core Program Strategies:

Our commitment to ensuring our programs remain relevant, effective, and sustainable is at the heart of our mission. We continuously evaluate and adapt our core programs to meet the evolving needs of the community. This includes refining existing services and developing new, innovative programs to address gaps in support.

3. Financial Sustainability:

To maintain and grow our services, securing sustainable funding is essential. We are focused on building strong financial foundations through diverse revenue streams, ensuring that our organization can continue to operate and deliver high-quality programs long into the future.

Together, these strategic goals enable us to create lasting change, supporting individuals with Autism, Neurodiversity, and Disabilities to thrive in a more understanding and empowered community.

How many operational staff does the organization have? Please provide details in the table.

Operational Staff Information

| | Per Organization Chart | Currently Filled |
|---------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Full Time Positions | 6 | 6 |
| Part Time Positions | 50 | 30 |

Program/Projects Details

Are you applying for more than one program or project?

If you are unsure, please contact CIP@rmwb.ca for clarification.

Yes

Step 1: Click on the button below to enter the name of your program(s) or project(s).

Step 2: Click on the Save Draft button at the bottom of the screen.

Step 3: Click on the "Program/Project Details" button below to complete the details of each Program/Project. Please be sure to submit the current program/project information form before moving onto the next project information form.

Program/Project: Education Inclusion Program **Status:** Completed

Program/Project: Caregivers Network **Status:** Completed

Program/Project: Camp Kids First **Status:** Completed

Program/Project: Transitioning to Adulthood Program 16+ **Status:** Completed

Program/Project: Social Respite Program **Status:** Completed



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Finances

Organization's most recent Fiscal Year End date

Please click Save Draft to update the following two questions with this date.

12/31/2024

Unrestricted Net Assets

Unrestricted Net Assets (accumulated net assets/surplus that the organization has not set aside for a particular purpose or earmarked by a donor for a specific program or project) from your Financial Statements ending: 12/31/2024

\$41,374.00

Total Operating Expenses

Total Expenses from your Financial Statements Ending: 12/31/2024

\$867,957.00

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What efforts have been made in the past fiscal year to increase the financial support for your organization?

Our organization is a vital service in the region, delivering wrap-around care and supports from birth through every stage of life. We stand as the only organization of our kind locally, offering individualized, family-centered services that address the full spectrum of needs, making us an essential and unique resource within our community. Through professional disability support, we foster an inclusive community by respecting all people, valuing diversity, and committing to equality. Our highly qualified staff bring both personal and professional expertise, ensuring that every program we deliver is compassionate, informed, and impactful. We promote education and acceptance around autism, neurodiversity, and disabilities, empowering individuals to achieve their goals while creating a safe, supportive, and understanding environment for all.

In the past fiscal year, demand for our services rose sharply, with a 38% increase in support needs. We supported 281 new families in 2024, and by October 1st, 2025 an additional 182 families. Active membership has grown to 323, and we provided over 4,000 points of program access, demonstrating our reach and impact in 2024 and as of Oct 1st, 2025, 3500 points of program access. To date, 239 Autism and Neurodiversity Awareness Trainings have been delivered, reflecting strong demand for education and inclusion.

To meet these needs, we pursued a multi-pronged strategy to strengthen financial support:

- Grant Applications: Submitted 70, securing 15, resulting in a 39% increase in funding.
- Fundraising Campaigns: Targeted community and online efforts increased awareness and contributions.
- Business Partnerships: Expanded local collaborations for sponsorships, donations, and in-kind support.
- Diversification of Revenue: Introduced fee-for-service programs and sustainability initiatives.
- Volunteer Engagement: 30 volunteers contributed 1,053 hours.

These efforts have strengthened our foundation, enabling us to deliver impactful programs like Kids First Camp, Social Respite, Transitions, Education Inclusion, and the Caregivers Support Network, while continuing to expand our reach.

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Please explain any cost savings initiatives the organization has, or is planning, to implement:

Our organization is committed to maximizing efficiency and ensuring the sustainability of our programs. To achieve this, we have implemented and are planning several cost-saving initiatives: Streamlining Operations: We are reviewing internal processes to eliminate redundancies, automate administrative tasks, and improve resource allocation. This includes adopting digital tools for better workflow management, reducing the need for paper and manual labor.

To reduce operational costs, our organization has negotiated a more affordable facility with lower rent. Volunteer Engagement: By expanding our volunteer base, we have reduced labor costs while increasing community involvement. Volunteers assist with events, and administrative tasks, allowing us to direct more resources toward services. We are actively building partnerships with companies to secure in-kind donations, discounted services, and sponsorships. These collaborations help reduce costs for essential resources such as program materials, technology, and event supplies. By fostering these relationships, we can save on expenses while strengthening community ties and program sustainability. These cost-saving initiatives are essential to sustaining our impact while maintaining financial health.

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Please complete the following budget table:

Secured Revenue

| Revenue Sources | Description | Revenue (Jan-Dec) |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| Casino Revenue | Casino Revenue | \$42,908.00 |
| Other | FSCD Camp and Respite Wages | \$274,080.00 |
| Other | Program Fees Respite and Camp | \$29,700.00 |
| Fundraising | Camp 2025 for 2026 | \$20,000.00 |
| | | \$366,688.00 |

Revenue in Progress

| Revenue Sources | Description | Revenue (Jan-Dec) |
|-----------------|--|--------------------|
| Other | Sensory Store Sales | \$2,000.00 |
| Other | Tickets for member events and respite community activities | \$7,400.00 |
| In Kind Revenue | General Fundraising 2026 | \$3,000.00 |
| Other | Interest Income 2026 | \$15.00 |
| Donations | General Donations 2026 | \$21,179.51 |
| Fundraising | General Fundraising 2026 | \$20,320.45 |
| | | \$53,914.96 |

Expenses

| Type of Expense | Description | Total Expenses | Requested RMWB Grant |
|--------------------------------------|---|----------------|----------------------|
| Wages/Salaries/Benefits/MER CS | Staff | \$577,554.28 | \$300,000.00 |
| Rent - Venue/Facility/Room/Equipment | Rent | \$29,240.00 | \$0.00 |
| Administration Costs | phone/utilities/office/accounting/admin | \$100,705.15 | \$70,000.00 |
| Advertising / Marketing Fees | Advertising | \$4,050.00 | \$0.00 |
| Other (Provide Detail) | Sensory Store | \$1,500.00 | \$0.00 |
| Volunteer Appreciation | Volunteers/Board | \$2,050.00 | \$0.00 |



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| | | | |
|---|--|---------------------|---------------------|
| Insurance - Program, Project, Service or Event | Insurance | \$9,236.00 | \$0.00 |
| Transportation and Delivery | Community/Camp Travel/Transitions/Respite | \$17,100.00 | \$0.00 |
| Program Materials and Supplies | Materials | \$29,150.00 | \$0.00 |
| Other (Provide Detail) | Field Trips | \$9,800.00 | \$0.00 |
| Training | Staff Training/relations/recruit | \$4,800.00 | \$0.00 |
| Other (Provide Detail) | Family Events | \$7,200.00 | \$0.00 |
| Other (Provide Detail) | Presentations | \$3,200.00 | \$0.00 |
| | | \$795,585.43 | \$370,000.00 |

Shortfall

| Total | |
|--|--------------|
| (Total Secured Revenue - Total Expenses) | \$428,897.43 |

Total RMWB Grant Request

| Amount | |
|--------|--------------|
| Total | \$370,000.00 |

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Total Cost of Program, Project, or Service

Total cost includes all costs of the entire program, project or service.

\$795,585.43

Total Grant Amount Request

For the Community Sustaining Grant, up to 75% of total program, project or service cost

\$370,000.00

Grant request as percentage of total cost of program, project or service

Click on the Save Draft button to calculate the percentage.

47%

Outline any expected non-financial resources being leveraged for this program, project, service or event to demonstrate community support.

Our programs will leverage a variety of non-financial resources to demonstrate strong community support. Local businesses and organizations are providing venue spaces for workshops and events at no cost. Community volunteers will contribute their time, expertise, and mentorship, offering peer support and specialized services. In-kind donations, including educational materials, equipment, and participant refreshments, will further enhance the program experience. These contributions showcase meaningful community engagement and a shared commitment to the program's success, ensuring its impact extends beyond financial support while fostering collaboration and inclusivity across the community.

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Preferred Cash-Flow

| | Amount |
|------------------|--------------|
| January/February | \$92,500.00 |
| April | \$92,500.00 |
| August | \$92,500.00 |
| October | \$92,500.00 |
| Total | \$370,000.00 |

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Attachments

Upload Strategic Plan

[ASRMWB_Strat_Plan_2025.pdf](#)
1.2 MB - 09/22/2025 3:37 PM

Total Files: 1

Please attach a budget breakdown for each program, project, service or event if there are multiple requests included in this application.

[ASRMWB_2026_Caregivers_Network.pdf](#)
70.9 KB - 09/22/2025 4:18 PM

[ASRMWB_2026_Education_Inclusion.pdf](#)
74.7 KB - 09/22/2025 4:18 PM

[ASRMWB_2026_Kids_Camp.pdf](#)
73.7 KB - 09/22/2025 4:18 PM

[ASRMWB_2026_Social_Respite.pdf](#)
74 KB - 09/22/2025 4:18 PM

[ASRMWB_2026_Transitions.pdf](#)
71.5 KB - 09/22/2025 4:18 PM

Total Files: 5



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Please attach a Partnership Letter(s) of Support for the proposed program, project, service or event to demonstrate authentic partnership and collaboration.

Applicants may use the >Partnership Letter of Support Template or submit a customized letter.

Each letter should include the following five key elements:

1. Commitment to the partnership and shared initiatives
2. Confirmation of the community need
3. History of prior collaboration or rationale for a new partnership
4. Defined roles, responsibilities, and resource commitments
5. Contact information for the partner organization

Each letter must be signed by an authorized representative of the partner organization.

Please note: The partnership letter is a mandatory requirement for Community Sustaining applicants and optional for Community Impact Grant application.

[ASRMWB_Letter_Oct_2025.pdf](#)

127.7 KB - 10/10/2025 4:00 PM

[Autism_Society_Letter_of_Support.pdf](#)

631.7 KB - 10/08/2025 8:03 AM

[Letter_of_Partnership_-_Autism_Society.pdf](#)

201.5 KB - 10/02/2025 12:59 PM

[Letter_of_Support_Autism_Society.pdf](#)

76.2 KB - 10/06/2025 8:18 AM

[MCA_Letter_of_Support_-_Caregiver_Network_for_Tina.pdf](#)

314.4 KB - 09/26/2025 7:36 PM

[Oct25_Ltr_for_Autism_Soc.pdf](#)

67.3 KB - 10/08/2025 8:03 AM

[Partnership_letter_for_Autism_Society_BCOC.pdf](#)

128.6 KB - 09/26/2025 7:37 PM

[Support_For_Moms_Support_Letter.pdf](#)

63.2 KB - 09/22/2025 4:11 PM

Total Files: 8



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Please attach signed Financial Statements for the most recent fiscal year end.

Note: Year end date must fall between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025.

[Autism_Society_of_RMWB_-_2024_-_Financials.pdf](#)
285 KB - 09/22/2025 3:47 PM

Total Files: 1

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Declaration

Declaration: – In making this application, I , the undersigned, confirm:

- that I have read the appropriate Grant Guidelines;
- that I understand that this application form and all required attachments must be completed in full and received before 2025-10-14 4:30 p.m. MT;
- that I understand that this application form and any attachments shall be part of the Community Investment Program Approval Committee (CIPAC, Council Appointed) meeting agenda and accessible through all methods that the public meeting agenda is available;
- that I understand the term of the Grant is January 1 to December 31, 2026 and that all expenditures must happen during this term; and
- that I am authorized by the applicant organization to complete the application and hereby represent to the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo's Community Investment Program and declare that to the best of our knowledge and belief, the information provided is truthful and accurate, and the application is made on behalf of the above-named organization and with the Board of Directors' full knowledge and consent.
- that I understand the personal information collected in this application is collected under the authority of Section 4(c) of the Protection of Privacy Act and is managed in accordance with the Act. It will be used to process your application and contact you if needed during the review of this application. If you have questions about the collection or use of your personal information, you may contact the Manager, Community Partnerships and Initiatives, at 9909 Franklin Avenue, Fort McMurray, AB T9H 2K4 or at 587-919-5522.

Acknowledgement

I do hereby certify that to the best of my knowledge, this application contains a full and correct account of all matters stated herein.

Applicant Name

Tina Delainey

Position/Title

Executive Director

Date: 10/10/2025

Program, Project or Service Name

Education Inclusion Program

Beginning Date

01/01/2026

Completion Date

Note: The term of the grant is January 1 - December 31, 2026. The program, project, service or event and all expenditures must occur during this term.

12/31/2026

Location program, project or service will be provided:

Note: If the grant is approved, the communities served will be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection from all communities will be required.
Do not select the rural community if the service is provided to the clients from rural communities through the urban service area.

Anzac, Conklin, Fort Chipewyan, Fort McKay, Fort McMurray, Janvier

Please complete the following Program/Project or Event Delivery Details.

Program, Project, or Event Delivery Information

| Program/Project/ or Event Location | In Person (Yes/No) | Virtually (Yes/No) | Travel Budget Required (Yes/No) |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| Autism & Neurodiversity Awareness Training Certificate | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Professional Presentations | Yes | Yes | No |
| Classroom Lending Bins | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Information Presentations | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Additional Program Resources | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Caregivers Coffee | Yes | Yes | Yes |

How does your organization plan to address barriers related to delivering virtual services in rural areas. This may include limited internet access, lack of devices, and limited technical support. If applicable.

The Autism Society of the RMWB recognizes that rural communities face unique barriers in accessing virtual services, such as limited internet, lack of devices, and reduced technical support. To address these challenges, we prioritize flexibility and accessibility in our Education Inclusion Program. Resources are designed to be delivered in multiple formats, including physical lending bins, print materials, and in-person presentations when virtual access is not feasible. Educators, families, and community partners can borrow classroom bins and resource kits free of charge, ensuring inclusive materials are available without relying on technology.

Additionally, our Community Development Coordinator offers tailored in-person presentations and training sessions across the region, reducing reliance on unstable internet connections. By combining virtual, in-person, and resource-based delivery methods, we ensure that individuals and organizations in rural areas are not excluded due to digital barriers, while still receiving high-quality, inclusive support and training.

Please note that this program is offered in the closest region to support residents of Draper, Gregoire Lake Estates, and Saprae Creek Estates.

How does your organization plan to address transportation barriers to provide the program, project, service or event? If applicable.

The Autism Society of the RMWB recognizes transportation as a significant barrier, especially in rural and remote areas. To address this, we bring services directly to the community whenever possible through shared travel with other social non profits traveling, school lending bins, in-person presentations, and mobile resources. Many of our programs are designed to be delivered on-site at schools, businesses, or partner locations, reducing the need for participants to travel. We also offer flexible options such as virtual sessions, printed materials, recorded presentations, and lending resources that can be borrowed and returned at no cost. This blended approach ensures accessibility regardless of transportation challenges.

Council approved seven funding priorities. Please indicate which funding priority/priorities are applicable to this application.

Please select at least 3 funding priorities for the Community Sustaining and Subsidiary Grant applications.
Please select at least 1 funding priority for the Community Impact Grant (Community Programs and Projects or Community Events) application.

- ☒ Community support services and wellness
- ☒ Accessibility, inclusion and belonging
- ☐ Hosting events/new business and visitors
- ☐ Partnership and collaboration
- ☒ Rural and Indigenous Communities and Relationships
- ☒ Social participation
- ☐ Value of culture, heritage and regional pride

Describe how the proposed program, project, service or event align with these priorities.

The Program supports urban, rural and Indigenous communities by delivering free, accessible resources such as classroom lending bins, in-person presentations, and tailored training directly to schools and organizations, reducing barriers to participation. It encourages social participation by engaging students, families, and community partners in inclusive learning that celebrates differences. Through community support services and wellness, the program offers strategies, tools, and sensory resources that promote understanding, reduce stigma, and strengthen overall well-being. By fostering accessibility, inclusion, and belonging, the program ensures that all individuals regardless of location or ability have opportunities to feel valued, supported, and connected within their communities.

In the table below, please identify the total number of unique participants that you anticipate will access the funded program, project, service or event.

Target Population

| Age | Target Population |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Children (0-12 years) | 240 |
| Youth (13-18 years) | 30 |
| Adults | 735 |
| Seniors (65+) | 30 |
| Families | 175 |
| Community | 1590 |
| Total | 2800 |

Please identify the equity deserving population the program, project, service or event will serve.

People living with disabilities

How does your organization ensure that its programs, projects, services or events are accessible and inclusive for anyone who has an interest? Please share examples and success stories of accessibility and inclusivity.

The Autism Society of the RMWB ensures programs are accessible and inclusive by offering flexible delivery methods, adapting to participant needs, and embedding accessibility into every service. Our Education Inclusion Program provides free classroom lending bins, sensory tools, and tailored presentations to schools, organizations, and families, ensuring access regardless of financial or geographic barriers. Trainings are interactive, incorporating hands-on activities, visuals, fidgets, and personal stories that make learning relatable and engaging. Participants have praised the inclusion of activities like crosswords, transition exercises, and word searches that support different learning styles and neurodiverse needs.

We also consider physical and sensory accessibility providing breaks, snacks, and sensory tools to create welcoming spaces. Presenters share lived experience, which fosters connection and belonging. Success stories highlight increased awareness, reduced stigma, and participants applying strategies in classrooms, workplaces, and homes. One caregiver shared that the training was “eye-opening” and helped them better support their child, while educators valued the ready-to-use classroom resources.

By combining flexible resources, inclusive teaching strategies, and ongoing community feedback, our programs create spaces where all individuals feel respected, supported, and empowered to participate fully ensuring accessibility and inclusivity are not just goals, but daily practice.

If applicable, please explain how your program, project, service or event celebrates Indigenous culture, serves Indigenous communities and/or promotes Indigenous healing, language, cultural restoration, or reconciliation.

Our organization’s holistic approach ensures that all Indigenous service users feel valued and respected in their cultural identity. We honor Indigenous ways of knowing and being by integrating these teachings into every aspect of our services. By continuously learning from and engaging with Indigenous culture and community, we strive to provide culturally sensitive care.

Our vision is that an Indigenous child supported by our services thrives across all realms—physical, intellectual, spiritual, and emotional. We prioritize empowering each child to embrace their Indigenous identity, ensuring they feel honored, respected, and connected to their cultural roots, fostering their overall well-being and cultural integrity for all.

Logic Model

Statement of Need: What social problem or gap do you hope to address by delivering the program, project, service or event? What evidence do you have that this problem or gap exists?

The Education Inclusion Program addresses the critical need for an inclusive community that values diversity, promotes respect, and ensures equality for neurodiverse individuals. In our region, autistic and neurodiverse individuals, as well as those living with disabilities, often face stigma, discrimination, and exclusion, limiting their participation in education, employment, healthcare, social services, and community life. A lack of awareness, understanding, accessible resources, and supportive materials contributes to these barriers, leaving many feeling undervalued, unsafe, and isolated. These challenges can negatively impact mental health, well-being, and overall quality of life. The program is designed to fill these gaps by providing training, fostering inclusion, and empowering individuals and their caregivers to fully engage in education and community life.

Broad Strategy: How will the program, project, service or event address the social problem? (e.g., What approach are you taking that you hope will lead your program, project, service or event to support the social problem?)

To address the social problem of lack of awareness about autism and other disabilities, we need to raise awareness and understanding among the public. We need to promote the rights and interests of people with autism and ensure that they have equal opportunities and access to resources and support. We need to celebrate the diversity and contributions of people with autism and foster a culture of inclusion and respect for all.

Rationale: What evidence or research do we have that this strategy will work? To demonstrate for example, "If [my organization] does 'x' program, project, service or event, then [this] change will happen for the target population."

The need for accessible, inclusive supports for individuals with Autism, Neurodiversity, and Disabilities is well-documented. The Government of Canada (2018) reported that 1 in 66 children and youth are diagnosed with Autism, often resulting in significant emotional and financial challenges for families. Furthermore, Statistics Canada (2022) found that 27% of Canadians live with a disability, highlighting the broad scope of need. Based on the 2021 RMWB Census (106,059), this translates to approximately 28,636 residents in our region living with a disability.

If the Autism Society of the RMWB provides programs such as our Caregivers Network, Education Inclusion Program, and community-based supports, then families and individuals will have increased access to navigation, resources, and inclusive opportunities that reduce stress, improve wellness, and build community belonging. By addressing gaps in knowledge, access, and inclusion, our strategy empowers families to better navigate disability systems, strengthens the capacity of educators and service providers, and fosters a more inclusive community.

Research shows that early access to resources, supportive networks, and inclusive programming directly improves quality of life for individuals and families. Our programs ensure that no one in our region faces these challenges alone.

Inputs: What resources will be invested to achieve your goal? (e.g., staff labour, venue space, volunteers, computers, etc.)

- Executive Director
- Community Development Coordinator
- Support Staff
- Equipment and materials
- Transportation
- Volunteers
- Presenters
- Website
- Collaborative Partnerships
- Administration, office supplies, rent, insurance, utilities

Activities: What activities make up the program, project, service or event? (e.g., workshops, mentorship sessions, etc.)

- Maintain facility and open office hours
- Provide support for families to navigate resources rural and urban
- Deliver training for understanding and awareness on Autism, Neurodiversity and Disabilities and Difficulties these people experience
- Deliver program bins and orientate educators to materials
- Provide access to sensory store and room, and lending shelf
- Provide sensory family events
- Develop community relationships
- Assist with creating awareness and acceptance events
- Provide Social Adult Programming
- Staff Development
- Advertising to increase awareness and increase organization representation
- Evaluation of program

Outputs: What do you deliver? (e.g., # of total participants trained, # of organizations, # of sessions, # of events, etc.). Note, each activity should have outputs.

Note: If the program, project, service or event is approved, your outputs may be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection on the outputs is required.

- Provide 30 hours a week of open office hours
- Support 175 new families navigate resources
- Deliver Training for 150 people
- Provide 15 Community Awareness Training Events
- Provide 1 Awareness and Acceptance Day for Autism, Neurodiversity and Disabilities
- Provide a minimum of 2 Professional Information Sessions
- Provide 15 Educational Inclusion Bins requests and training
- Provide 15 Sensory Room and lending shelf requests
- Provide and organize 6 family sensory events
- Create 8 New Community Collaborations.
- Assist with 10 Awareness and Acceptance Month community events
- 2800 Participants directly impacted by the programming, 6000 indirectly through social media
- Review and revision of programs

Outcomes: What change do you want to see for the participants by running your program, project, service or event? Organizations are required to identify at least one outcome, that will be measured through the grant period, should the application be approved.

Note: If the program, project, service or event is approved, your outcomes will be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection on the outcomes is required.

- Increased awareness of Autism, Neurodiversity and persons with Disabilities
- Positive feedback and participation from the community
- Increased pathway and access to support and services
- Individuals are connected to others
- An increased sense of belonging in our community

What tools will you use to measure the outcomes of the program, project, service or event?

Note: If your organization is approved for funding, copies of the measurement tools selected will be requested.

Surveys, Observation, Other:

Other:

Feedback

Please provide details of how your program, project, service or event differs from other services being offered in the community.

Our program is the only one in the region specifically dedicated to supporting individuals with Autism, Neurodiversity, and Disabilities. What sets us apart is our comprehensive, inclusive approach, which combines specialized support services with a strong emphasis on individualized care. Unlike other programs, we provide tailored interventions that address each person's unique needs, fostering their strengths while supporting their challenges.

Additionally, we create an inclusive environment where neurodiverse individuals can thrive, offering therapeutic services, social integration opportunities, and life skills training. Our focus on accessibility and advocacy ensures that individuals with disabilities are empowered, engaged, and supported in their communities.

This grant is intended to promote an allied social profit sector within the Municipality. List the community groups or organizations that will be actively involved in the program, project, service or event delivery.

| Community Organization or Group | Role |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Boys and Girls Club | Referral of Services/Support for clients |
| Justin Slade Youth Foundation | Referral of Services |
| Taproot | Referral of Services |
| CHMA | Referral of Services/Support for clients |
| The Hub | Support for clients |
| Support 4 Moms | Supporter |
| Wood Buffalo Regional Library | Supporter |
| Some other Solutions | Referral of Services |
| Heritage Park | Event Support |
| Birchwood Circle of Care | Collaboration of Presentations |
| Public School Board | Collaboration of Presentations and Joint Grant |
| Catholic School Board | Collaboration of Presentations and Joint Grant |
| Multicultural Association | Support for clients |
| MacDonald Island | Supporter |
| Keyano College | Supporter/Practicum Students/Trainings |
| Fuse Wood Buffalo | Resource Agency |
| Wood Buffalo Pride | Collaboration |

Program, Project or Service Name

Caregivers Network

Beginning Date

01/01/2026

Completion Date

Note: The term of the grant is January 1 - December 31, 2026. The program, project, service or event and all expenditures must occur during this term.

12/31/2026

Location program, project or service will be provided:

Note: If the grant is approved, the communities served will be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection from all communities will be required.
Do not select the rural community if the service is provided to the clients from rural communities through the urban service area.

Anzac, Conklin, Fort Chipewyan, Fort McKay, Fort McMurray, Janvier

Please complete the following Program/Project or Event Delivery Details.**Program, Project, or Event Delivery Information**

| Program/Project/ or Event Location | In Person (Yes/No) | Virtually (Yes/No) | Travel Budget Required (Yes/No) |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| Caregivers Coffee | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Autism & Neurodiversity Awareness Training | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Professional Presentations | Yes | Yes | No |
| Information Presentations | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Additional Resources | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Gov't Applications | Yes | Yes | Yes |

How does your organization plan to address barriers related to delivering virtual services in rural areas. This may include limited internet access, lack of devices, and limited technical support. If applicable.

At the Autism Society of the RMWB, we recognize that delivering virtual services in rural areas can be challenging due to limited internet access, lack of devices, and minimal technical support. To reduce these barriers, our Caregivers Network and Disability Resource Coordinator provide flexible, individualized assistance that does not rely solely on online platforms. We offer phone-based support, mailed resources, and one-on-one guidance to ensure families in rural and remote areas can still access critical disability services.

Our Disability Resource Coordinator helps with applications and navigation for FSCD, PDD, Guardianship/Trusteeship, RDSP, Disability Tax Credit, and AADL, while also connecting families with local and provincial supports. When virtual meetings are not possible, we adapt by offering alternative formats, extended call support, or arranging in-person sessions when feasible.

In addition, our monthly Caregivers Coffee provides both virtual and in-person participation options, creating an inclusive space for connection regardless of technical limitations. By prioritizing flexibility, personal connection, and accessibility, we ensure that every individual and caregiver no matter where they live can receive the guidance and support they need.

Please note that this program is offered in the closest region to support residents of Draper, Gregoire Lake Estates, and Saprae Creek Estates.

How does your organization plan to address transportation barriers to provide the program, project, service or event? If applicable.

At the Autism Society of the RMWB, we recognize that transportation is often a barrier for families and individuals accessing programs and services. To address this, we offer flexible options such as virtual participation, outreach in community spaces, and programs delivered in accessible locations. When possible, we collaborate with partners to bring services closer to rural and underserved areas, reducing travel needs. We also provide one-on-one navigation support to help families connect with available transportation resources. By prioritizing flexibility, partnerships, and accessibility, we ensure individuals can participate meaningfully regardless of transportation challenges.

Council approved seven funding priorities. Please indicate which funding priority/priorities are applicable to this application.

Please select at least 3 funding priorities for the Community Sustaining and Subsidiary Grant applications. Please select at least 1 funding priority for the Community Impact Grant (Community Programs and Projects or Community Events) application.

- ☒ Community support services and wellness
- ☒ Accessibility, inclusion and belonging
- ☐ Hosting events/new business and visitors
- ☐ Partnership and collaboration
- ☒ Rural and Indigenous Communities and Relationships
- ☒ Social participation
- ☐ Value of culture, heritage and regional pride

Describe how the proposed program, project, service or event align with these priorities.

The program aligns with community support services and wellness by offering families and individuals personalized navigation, guidance, and access to disability-related resources that reduce stress and build resilience. It promotes accessibility, inclusion, and belonging by ensuring services are available in multiple formats—virtual, phone, in-person, and outreach—so that no one is left behind due to barriers. With a commitment to rural and Indigenous communities and relationships, the program extends beyond urban centers, meeting families where they are and respecting cultural values. Finally, it fosters social participation through initiatives like Caregivers Coffee, which creates opportunities for connection, peer support, and community engagement.

In the table below, please identify the total number of unique participants that you anticipate will access the funded program, project, service or event.

Target Population

| Age | Target Population |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Children (0-12 years) | 0 |
| Youth (13-18 years) | 0 |
| Adults | 525 |
| Seniors (65+) | 0 |
| Families | 60 |
| Community | 1280 |
| Total | 1865 |

Please identify the equity deserving population the program, project, service or event will serve.

People living with disabilities

How does your organization ensure that its programs, projects, services or events are accessible and inclusive for anyone who has an interest? Please share examples and success stories of accessibility and inclusivity.

At the Autism Society of the RMWB, we prioritize accessibility and inclusivity by designing our programs and services to meet people where they are. We recognize that every family and individual experiences disability and neurodiversity differently, so we provide flexible options such as virtual participation, phone-based support, and in-person gatherings in accessible community spaces. This ensures that anyone with an interest can meaningfully participate, regardless of location, ability, or circumstance.

One example is our monthly Caregivers Coffee, which offers both in-person and virtual attendance. This safe and welcoming space allows caregivers to share personal stories, build connections, and find encouragement among others who truly understand their journey. Many participants have expressed how uplifting it feels to connect in a judgment-free environment, with one noting, “We could spend the whole session sharing stories—it’s the first time I’ve felt heard.”

We also adapt our Education Inclusion Program resources to fit the needs of schools and organizations, ensuring materials are understandable, practical, and free of charge. By prioritizing choice, accessibility, and belonging, we help create an inclusive community where every voice matters and every participant feels valued.

If applicable, please explain how your program, project, service or event celebrates Indigenous culture, serves Indigenous communities and/or promotes Indigenous healing, language, cultural restoration, or reconciliation.

Our organization’s holistic approach ensures that all Indigenous service users feel valued and respected in their cultural identity. We honor Indigenous ways of knowing and being by integrating these teachings into every aspect of our services. By continuously learning from and engaging with Indigenous culture and community, we strive to provide culturally sensitive care.

Our vision is that an Indigenous child supported by our services thrives across all realms—physical, intellectual, spiritual, and emotional. We prioritize empowering each child to embrace their Indigenous identity, ensuring they feel honored, respected, and connected to their cultural roots, fostering their overall well-being and cultural integrity for all.

Logic Model

Statement of Need: What social problem or gap do you hope to address by delivering the program, project, service or event? What evidence do you have that this problem or gap exists?

The Caregivers Network responds to the urgent need for an inclusive and supportive community for families of autistic, neurodiverse, and disabled individuals. Many caregivers face challenges navigating education, healthcare, social services, and government supports, while their loved ones often experience stigma, discrimination, and exclusion. The lack of accessible resources, materials, and guidance leaves families feeling unsupported, isolated, and undervalued. This program addresses these gaps by providing safe space peer-to-peer support, equipping caregivers with tools, knowledge, and community connections to advocate for their family members, and promoting respect, understanding, and inclusion for all. In addition, the network supports the Education Inclusion Program through targeted training, helping caregivers navigate educational opportunities, enhance understanding of neurodiversity, and foster inclusive learning environments for their loved ones.

Broad Strategy: How will the program, project, service or event address the social problem? (e.g., What approach are you taking that you hope will lead your program, project, service or event to support the social problem?)

To address the social problem of lack of awareness about autism and other disabilities, we need to raise awareness and understanding among the public. We need to promote the rights and interests of people with autism and ensure that they have equal opportunities and access to resources and support. We need to celebrate the diversity and contributions of people with autism and foster a culture of inclusion and respect for all.

Rationale: What evidence or research do we have that this strategy will work? To demonstrate for example, "If [my organization] does 'x' program, project, service or event, then [this] change will happen for the target population."

The need for accessible, inclusive supports for individuals with Autism, Neurodiversity, and Disabilities is well-documented. The Government of Canada (2018) reported that 1 in 66 children and youth are diagnosed with Autism, often resulting in significant emotional and financial challenges for families. Furthermore, Statistics Canada (2022) found that 27% of Canadians live with a disability, highlighting the broad scope of need. Based on the 2021 RMWB Census (106,059), this translates to approximately 28,636 residents in our region living with a disability.

If the Autism Society of the RMWB provides programs such as our Caregivers Network, Education Inclusion Program, and community-based supports, then families and individuals will have increased access to navigation, resources, and inclusive opportunities that reduce stress, improve wellness, and build community belonging. By addressing gaps in knowledge, access, and inclusion, our strategy empowers families to better navigate disability systems, strengthens the capacity of educators and service providers, and fosters a more inclusive community.

Research shows that early access to resources, supportive networks, and inclusive programming directly improves quality of life for individuals and families. Our programs ensure that no one in our region faces these challenges alone.

Inputs: What resources will be invested to achieve your goal? (e.g., staff labour, venue space, volunteers, computers, etc.)

- Executive Director
- Disability Resource Coordinator
- Equipment and materials
- Transportation
- Presenters
- Website
- Collaborative Partnerships
- Administration, office supplies, rent, insurance, utilities

Activities: What activities make up the program, project, service or event? (e.g., workshops, mentorship sessions, etc.)

- Maintain facility and open office hours
- Provide support for families to navigate resources rural and urban
- Provide support to families in gov't applications
- Deliver training for understanding and awareness on Autism, Neurodiversity and Disabilities and difficulties these people experience
- Develop community relationships
- Assist with creating awareness and acceptance events
- Provide Social Adult Programming
- Staff Development
- Advertising to increase awareness and increase organization representation
- Evaluation of and revision of programs

Outputs: What do you deliver? (e.g., # of total participants trained, # of organizations, # of sessions, # of events, etc.). Note, each activity should have outputs.

Note: If the program, project, service or event is approved, your outputs may be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection on the outputs is required.

- Provide 20 hours a week of open office hours
- Support 60 new families in gov't applications
- Provide 15 Community Awareness Training Events
- Provide 1 Awareness and Acceptance Day for Autism, Neurodiversity and Disabilities
- Provide a minimum of 2 Professional Information Sessions
- Provide 20 Caregivers support sessions
- Create 1 New Community Collaborations.
- Assist with 10 Awareness and Acceptance Month community events
- Provide 30 people with social adult programming
- 2800 Participants directly impacted by the programming, 6000 indirectly through social media
- Review and revision of all programs



Outcomes: What change do you want to see for the participants by running your program, project, service or event? Organizations are required to identify at least one outcome, that will be measured through the grant period, should the application be approved.

Note: If the program, project, service or event is approved, your outcomes will be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection on the outcomes is required.

- Increased awareness of Autism, Neurodiversity and persons with Disabilities
- Positive feedback and participation from the community
- Increased pathway and access to support and services
- Individuals are connected to others
- An increased sense of belonging in our community

What tools will you use to measure the outcomes of the program, project, service or event?

Note: If your organization is approved for funding, copies of the measurement tools selected will be requested.

Surveys, Observation, Other:

Other:

Feedback

Please provide details of how your program, project, service or event differs from other services being offered in the community.

At the Autism Society of the RMWB, we recognize that navigating disability supports can be overwhelming for individuals and families. Our Caregivers Network stands out by offering personalized, one-on-one guidance through a dedicated Disability Resource Coordinator. Unlike other services in the community, we provide hands-on support with applications for Family Support for Children with Disabilities (FSCD), Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD), guardianship or trusteeship processes, and Registered Disability Savings Plans (RDSP). We also assist with Disability Tax Credit (DTC) applications and Alberta Aids to Daily Living (AADL) funding for medical and mobility aids. Beyond application support, we foster community connection through initiatives such as our monthly Caregivers Coffee, where participants can share experiences and access peer support in a welcoming environment. Our team also helps individuals and families navigate local and provincial resources, ensuring they receive the services that best meet their needs. By combining practical assistance with community-building opportunities, our Caregivers Network provides a holistic, accessible, and compassionate approach that is unique in the region, empowering families to access the supports and information they need with confidence.

This grant is intended to promote an allied social profit sector within the Municipality. List the community groups or organizations that will be actively involved in the program, project, service or event delivery.

| Community Organization or Group | Role |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| The Resource Hub | Collaboration |
| Support 4 Moms | Collaboration |
| Taproot | Referral of Services |
| Some other Solutions | Referral of Services |
| Multicultural Association | Referral of Services |
| CHMA | Referral of Services |
| Public School System | Support Services |
| Catholic School System | Support Services |
| ATC | Support Services |



Program, Project or Service Name

Camp Kids First

Beginning Date

07/06/2026

Completion Date

Note: The term of the grant is January 1 - December 31, 2026. The program, project, service or event and all expenditures must occur during this term.

08/14/2026

Location program, project or service will be provided:

Note: If the grant is approved, the communities served will be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection from all communities will be required.
Do not select the rural community if the service is provided to the clients from rural communities through the urban service area.

Fort McMurray

Please complete the following Program/Project or Event Delivery Details.

Program, Project, or Event Delivery Information

Council approved seven funding priorities. Please indicate which funding priority/priorities are applicable to this application.

Please select at least 3 funding priorities for the Community Sustaining and Subsidiary Grant applications. Please select at least 1 funding priority for the Community Impact Grant (Community Programs and Projects or Community Events) application.

- ☒ Community support services and wellness
- ☒ Accessibility, inclusion and belonging
- ☐ Hosting events/new business and visitors
- ☒ Partnership and collaboration
- ☐ Rural and Indigenous Communities and Relationships
- ☒ Social participation
- ☐ Value of culture, heritage and regional pride

Describe how the proposed program, project, service or event align with these priorities.

Camp Kids First aligns with accessibility, inclusion, and belonging by welcoming all children, regardless of ability or medical needs, and providing one-to-one support to ensure full participation. Through partnerships and collaboration with local organizations, venues, and experienced support staff, we deliver safe and engaging programming tailored to each child. The camp fosters social participation by creating opportunities for children to build friendships, practice communication, and engage in group activities in a supportive and inclusive environment, helping them feel valued, connected, and part of their community.

In the table below, please identify the total number of unique participants that you anticipate will access the funded program, project, service or event.

Target Population

| Age | Target Population |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Children (0-12 years) | 76 |
| Youth (13-18 years) | 24 |
| Adults | 0 |
| Seniors (65+) | 0 |
| Families | 0 |
| Community | 0 |
| Total | 100 |



Please identify the equity deserving population the program, project, service or event will serve.

Youth, Youth, People living with disabilities

How does your organization ensure that its programs, projects, services or events are accessible and inclusive for anyone who has an interest? Please share examples and success stories of accessibility and inclusivity.

Camp Kids First ensures accessibility and inclusivity by welcoming children of all abilities, medical conditions, and support needs. Each child receives one-to-one support from experienced staff, allowing participation in all activities—from swimming and horseback riding to arts, crafts, and boat trips—adapted to their individual physical, cognitive, sensory, and social-emotional needs.

This approach creates a safe and supportive environment where children can try new experiences without fear of exclusion. In 2024, 72% of parents reported their children felt a greater sense of community after attending, and 69% rated the overall camp experience 10/10. Parents consistently share success stories, such as children developing new friendships, confidently participating in activities they previously avoided, and enjoying “real” summer experiences alongside peers. One parent noted, “Finally, a camp that fits her needs! Having a support person made all the difference and helped her have a great time without getting in trouble like at other camps we’ve tried.”

By providing inclusive programming and individualized support, Camp Kids First ensures that every child, regardless of ability or need, can fully participate, build social skills, and experience the joy of summer camp in a welcoming and empowering environment.

If applicable, please explain how your program, project, service or event celebrates Indigenous culture, serves Indigenous communities and/or promotes Indigenous healing, language, cultural restoration, or reconciliation.

Our organization’s holistic approach ensures that all Indigenous service users feel valued and respected in their cultural identity. We honor Indigenous ways of knowing and being by integrating these teachings into every aspect of our services. By continuously learning from and engaging with Indigenous culture and community, we strive to provide culturally sensitive care.

Our vision is that an Indigenous child supported by our services thrives across all realms—physical, intellectual, spiritual, and emotional. We prioritize empowering each child to embrace their Indigenous identity, ensuring they feel honored, respected, and connected to their cultural roots, fostering their overall well-being and cultural integrity for all.

Logic Model

Statement of Need: What social problem or gap do you hope to address by delivering the program, project, service or event? What evidence do you have that this problem or gap exists?

Camp Kids First addresses the critical need for inclusive summer programming for children and youth who face barriers to attending mainstream camps due to cognitive, physical, or social communication disabilities. Autistic and neurodiverse individuals, as well as those with disabilities, often experience stigma, discrimination, and exclusion, which can limit access to recreational programs and negatively impact mental health, well-being, and quality of life. Our program responds to these challenges by creating a safe, supportive, and engaging environment that values diversity, promotes respect, and fosters equality for all participants. Designed to meet a regional gap, Camp Kids First ensures that children and youth with disabilities feel valued, empowered, and confident, while providing opportunities to connect with peers, build skills, and fully participate as active members of the community.

Broad Strategy: How will the program, project, service or event address the social problem? (e.g., What approach are you taking that you hope will lead your program, project, service or event to support the social problem?)

To address the social problem of stigma, discrimination, and exclusion related with autism, we need to raise awareness and understanding of autism among the public. We need to promote the rights and interests of people with autism and ensure that they have equal opportunities and access to resources and support. We need to celebrate the diversity and contributions of people with autism and foster a culture of inclusion and respect for all. Connecting the community, by providing resources, raising awareness and understanding of the unique challenges individuals face, thus helping to create a more inclusive and accepting community. Our organization provides education and resources to multiple agencies, employers, and organizations and supports advocacy for others who need the support of their community.

Rationale: What evidence or research do we have that this strategy will work? To demonstrate for example, "If [my organization] does 'x' program, project, service or event, then [this] change will happen for the target population."

Government of Canada 2018 reporting of ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) Among Children and Youth, indicated approximately 1 in 66 children and youth are diagnosed with Autism in Canada. For families, an Autism diagnosis can involve significant emotional and financial challenges. For those in health, education and social services sectors, Autism is an important issue due to the resources those living with Autism require for intervention and treatment and due to the on-going impact on the health and well-being of Canadian children, youth, adults and their families and communities.

A critical aspect in responding to Autism, Neurodiversity and Disabilities in Canada is addressing key knowledge gaps in our understanding of the number and characteristics of people diagnosed with Autism both across regions and over time.

In 2022, persons with disabilities made up 27% of the Canadian population. (statcan.gc.ca)

Based off 2021 RMWB Census (106,059) approx. 28,636 persons reside in our region with a disability.

Inputs: What resources will be invested to achieve your goal? (e.g., staff labour, venue space, volunteers, computers, etc.)

- Executive Director
- Program Director
- Support Staff
- Equipment and materials
- Transportation
- Camp activities
- Advertising
- Website
- Collaborative partnerships
- Administration, office supplies, rent, insurance, utilities



Activities: What activities make up the program, project, service or event? (e.g., workshops, mentorship sessions, etc.)

- Provide a Facility and camp hours
- Provide staff development with training, screening, mentorship and orientation
- Youths complex needs are supported, profiles reviewed, orientation, and training.
- Community involvement and engagement to increase understanding and awareness of Autism, Neurodiversity and difficulties persons with disabilities face daily
- Creating an environment with support staff to integrate children and youth with disabilities into mainstream community activities alongside their non-disabled peers
- Create sensory friendly camp
- Representation of our Organization in the Community
- Develop long term community relationships through collaborations and partnerships
- Evaluation of and revision of program

Outputs: What do you deliver? (e.g., # of total participants trained, # of organizations, # of sessions, # of events, etc.). Note, each activity should have outputs.

Note: If the program, project, service or event is approved, your outputs may be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection on the outputs is required.

- Provide employment for 20 summer students
- 15 staff are trained in Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (NVC)
- Provide the only day camp for children and youth with disabilities for 6 weeks of summer
- Engage in a minimum of 24 community activities
- Create 2 new community collaborations
- 100 Participants directly impacted by the program, 400 indirectly through social media and community involvement



Outcomes: What change do you want to see for the participants by running your program, project, service or event? Organizations are required to identify at least one outcome, that will be measured through the grant period, should the application be approved.

Note: If the program, project, service or event is approved, your outcomes will be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection on the outcomes is required.

- Increased awareness of ASD, Neurodiversity and persons with disabilities
- Individuals are developing positively
- Individuals are connected to others
- An Increased sense of belonging in our community

What tools will you use to measure the outcomes of the program, project, service or event?

Note: If your organization is approved for funding, copies of the measurement tools selected will be requested.

Surveys, Observation, Other:

Other:

Feedback

Please provide details of how your program, project, service or event differs from other services being offered in the community.

Camp Kids First (CKF) is a summer day camp for children and youth aged 4–17 with Autism and other exceptional needs in the Wood Buffalo region. Unlike other programs in the community, CKF is the only camp that accepts all children regardless of medical conditions, disabilities, or support needs, including those with Down Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, Spina Bifida, hearing and vision impairments, and complex medical conditions.

Each child receives one-to-one support from experienced staff, ensuring activities are adapted to meet individual physical, cognitive, sensory, and social-emotional needs. Camp experiences mirror typical summer activities—swimming, horseback riding, boat trips, arts and crafts, Science Day, and more—so children can enjoy the same opportunities as their peers in a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment.

Our intentional program design fosters social skills, communication, and a sense of belonging, which parents consistently highlight as transformative. In 2024, 72% of parents reported their children felt a greater sense of community, and 69% rated the overall experience 10/10. CKF stands apart in its commitment to inclusion, individualized support, and enriching experiences, creating a summer camp where every child can thrive, try new things, and build lasting friendships in a safe and welcoming environment.

This grant is intended to promote an allied social profit sector within the Municipality. List the community groups or organizations that will be actively involved in the program, project, service or event delivery.

| Community Organization or Group | Role |
|--|--------------------|
| Clearwater Horse Club | Collaboration |
| Local Hero Foundation | Collaboration |
| Regional Recreation Corp | Collaboration |
| Kids Sport | Supporting Partner |
| Fort McMurray Minor Hockey Association | Collaboration |
| Ptarmigan Nordic Ski Club | Collaboration |
| Fort McMurray Fire Department | Collaboration |

Program, Project or Service Name

Transitioning to Adulthood Program 16+

Beginning Date

01/01/2026

Completion Date

Note: The term of the grant is January 1 - December 31, 2026. The program, project, service or event and all expenditures must occur during this term.

12/31/2026

Location program, project or service will be provided:

Note: If the grant is approved, the communities served will be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection from all communities will be required.
Do not select the rural community if the service is provided to the clients from rural communities through the urban service area.

Fort McMurray

Please complete the following Program/Project or Event Delivery Details.**Program, Project, or Event Delivery Information**

Council approved seven funding priorities. Please indicate which funding priority/priorities are applicable to this application.

Please select at least 3 funding priorities for the Community Sustaining and Subsidiary Grant applications.
Please select at least 1 funding priority for the Community Impact Grant (Community Programs and Projects or Community Events) application.

- ☒ Community support services and wellness
- ☒ Accessibility, inclusion and belonging
- ☐ Hosting events/new business and visitors
- ☐ Partnership and collaboration
- ☐ Rural and Indigenous Communities and Relationships
- ☒ Social participation
- ☐ Value of culture, heritage and regional pride

Describe how the proposed program, project, service or event align with these priorities.

The Transitions Program directly aligns with the priorities of accessibility, inclusion, social participation, and partnership. By offering a 12-week series covering life skills, social-emotional learning, financial literacy, and self-advocacy, it empowers neurodiverse youth and adults to engage confidently in their community. Weekly social activities, from sensory-friendly movie nights to community outings, promote belonging and active participation. The program fosters collaboration with local organizations and leverages inclusive teaching strategies to ensure all participants can access learning and social opportunities. Through skill-building and community connection, it creates a supportive environment where every participant can thrive.

In the table below, please identify the total number of unique participants that you anticipate will access the funded program, project, service or event.

Target Population

| Age | Target Population |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Children (0-12 years) | 0 |
| Youth (13-18 years) | 25 |
| Adults | 75 |
| Seniors (65+) | 0 |
| Families | 0 |
| Community | 0 |
| Total | 100 |

Please identify the equity deserving population the program, project, service or event will serve.

Youth, Youth, People living with disabilities

How does your organization ensure that its programs, projects, services or events are accessible and inclusive for anyone who has an interest? Please share examples and success stories of accessibility and inclusivity.

The Transitions Program helps neurodiverse youth and adults develop essential life skills, build meaningful social connections, and gain the confidence they need to thrive in their community. Its 12-week learning series covers topics such as team building, transferable skills, financial literacy, social cues and conflict resolution, essential daily living skills, communication, resilience-building, pathways to success and work, community engagement, self-advocacy, and health and well-being.

Weekly social activities, including pizza parties with crafts and games, visits to the Wood Buffalo Regional Library, bowling at The Alley YMM, games and activities nights, physical activity, and sensory-friendly movie sessions, offer opportunities for participants to connect in fun, inclusive ways.

Our organization ensures accessibility and inclusivity by providing diverse programming that meets varying abilities, interests, and learning styles. Virtual and in-person options, choice in activities, and adaptive approaches allow all participants to engage at their comfort level. Certification training, community outings, and social skill development create meaningful pathways for employment, volunteering, and education. Success is evident, with 92% of participants reporting increased confidence in friendships, work, volunteer opportunities, and community engagement.

If applicable, please explain how your program, project, service or event celebrates Indigenous culture, serves Indigenous communities and/or promotes Indigenous healing, language, cultural restoration, or reconciliation.

Our organization's holistic approach ensures that all Indigenous service users feel valued and respected in their cultural identity. We honor Indigenous ways of knowing and being by integrating these teachings into every aspect of our services. By continuously learning from and engaging with Indigenous culture and community, we strive to provide culturally sensitive care.

Our vision is that an Indigenous child supported by our services thrives across all realms—physical, intellectual, spiritual, and emotional. We prioritize empowering each child to embrace their Indigenous identity, ensuring they feel honored, respected, and connected to their cultural roots, fostering their overall well-being and cultural integrity for all.

Logic Model

Statement of Need: What social problem or gap do you hope to address by delivering the program, project, service or event? What evidence do you have that this problem or gap exists?

The Transitions Program addresses the need for youth and adults with cognitive, physical, or social communication disabilities to build independence, confidence, and meaningful connections. Autistic and neurodiverse individuals often face stigma, discrimination, and exclusion, which can limit access to mainstream programs and negatively impact mental health, well-being, and quality of life. Specialized programming focuses on strengthening social connections, essential life skills, and personal development while supporting participants ages 16 and older achieving volunteerism, post secondary education, and financial education that creates empowerment and stability. By reducing barriers and creating inclusive opportunities, the Transitions Program helps participants build confidence, engage fully in community life, and thrive as valued, active members of society.

Broad Strategy: How will the program, project, service or event address the social problem? (e.g., What approach are you taking that you hope will lead your program, project, service or event to support the social problem?)

The Transitions Program addresses stigma, discrimination, and exclusion faced by neurodiverse youth and adults by fostering awareness, understanding, and inclusion within the community. The program empowers participants to develop essential life skills, build meaningful social connections, and gain the confidence needed to thrive socially, academically, and professionally. Through a 12-week learning series, participants explore team building, financial literacy, communication, resilience, self-advocacy, daily living skills, conflict resolution, pathways to work and volunteering, and community engagement.

Weekly social activities, including sensory-friendly movie nights, bowling, library visits, games, crafts, and physical activity, reinforce these skills in fun, inclusive settings. The program differs from others in the community through its integrated approach, combining structured skill development with individualized, adaptive support tailored to each participant's interests, abilities, and learning style. Collaboration with local organizations and inclusive teaching strategies ensures all participants can fully engage and apply learning in real-world contexts.

By removing barriers and promoting empowerment, the Transitions Program creates pathways for independence, social participation, and lifelong learning, fostering inclusion, belonging, and confidence in the community.

Rationale: What evidence or research do we have that this strategy will work? To demonstrate for example, "If [my organization] does 'x' program, project, service or event, then [this] change will happen for the target population."

Research and national data demonstrate the need for targeted programs supporting neurodiverse individuals. The Government of Canada's 2018 report on Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) among children and youth indicated that approximately 1 in 66 children and youth are diagnosed with ASD. Families often face significant emotional and financial challenges, while health, education, and social service sectors require additional resources to support intervention and treatment. Addressing ASD effectively requires closing knowledge gaps about the number and characteristics of individuals diagnosed across regions and over time.

In Canada, 27% of the population reported living with a disability in 2022 (statcan.gc.ca). Based on the 2021 RMWB Census (population 106,059), approximately 28,636 individuals in our region live with a disability. Programs like the Transitions Program are evidence-informed strategies that equip neurodiverse youth and adults with life skills, social connections, and confidence. By providing structured learning, social engagement, and skill-building opportunities, participants can improve independence, employability, and community participation.

If the Autism Society of the RMWB delivers the Transitions Program, then neurodiverse participants will experience increased social inclusion, improved life skills, and enhanced pathways to education, employment, and community engagement, addressing both personal and systemic needs identified in national and regional data.

Inputs: What resources will be invested to achieve your goal? (e.g., staff labour, venue space, volunteers, computers, etc.)

- Executive Director
- Transitions Coordinator
- Support Staff
- Equipment and materials
- Transportation
- Program activities
- Advertising
- Website
- Collaborative partnerships
- Administration, office supplies, rent, insurance, utilities

Activities: What activities make up the program, project, service or event? (e.g., workshops, mentorship sessions, etc.)

- Maintain facility and open office hours
- Provide staff development with training, mentorship and orientation
- Youth and Adult complex needs are supported, profiles reviewed, orientation, and training.
- Community involvement and engagement to increase understanding and awareness of Autism, Neurodiversity and difficulties persons with disabilities face daily
- Integrate youth and adults with disabilities into mainstream friendships, economic education and stability, volunteering, post secondary schooling and essential life skills alongside their non-disabled peers
- Helping to navigate youth and adults to find stable housing resources
- Helping to navigate youth and adults with Mental Health resources
- Develop long term community relationships through collaborations and partnerships
- Evaluation of program

Outputs: What do you deliver? (e.g., # of total participants trained, # of organizations, # of sessions, # of events, etc.). Note, each activity should have outputs.

Note: If the program, project, service or event is approved, your outputs may be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection on the outputs is required.

- Maintain 30 hours of open office hours
- Engage in a minimum of 3 -12-week Learning Series with groups of 8 max, 3 series per year, to include modules such as:
 - Team Building – fostering collaboration, cooperation, and group participation.
 - Transferable Skills – identifying and applying skills across different contexts.
 - Financial Literacy – budgeting, money management, and understanding financial responsibilities.
 - Social Cues & Conflict Resolution – navigating social interactions and resolving disagreements.
 - Essential Daily Living Skills – personal care, time management, and organization.
 - Communication – verbal, nonverbal, and digital communication strategies.
 - Resilience-Building – coping strategies, adaptability, and problem-solving skills.
 - Pathways to Success – goal setting, planning, and navigating opportunities.
 - Pathways to Work – resume building, interview skills, and workplace expectations.
 - Community Engagement & Volunteerism –building confidence and skills to participate in community activities and volunteer opportunities.
 - Self-Advocacy & Rights – understanding personal rights, communicating needs, and advocating for oneself in education, work, and social settings.
 - Health & Well-Being – strategies for physical, mental, and emotional wellness, including stress management, nutrition, and self-care.
- 75 participants are directly impacted by the program
- Provide 48 social interconnection sessions
- Provide 48 life skills sessions
- 150 indirectly through social media and community involvement.



Outcomes: What change do you want to see for the participants by running your program, project, service or event? Organizations are required to identify at least one outcome, that will be measured through the grant period, should the application be approved.

Note: If the program, project, service or event is approved, your outcomes will be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection on the outcomes is required.

- Individuals are developing positively
- Recognizing and celebrating diversity
- Increased pathways to friendships, economic education and stability, volunteering, post secondary schooling and essential life skills
- A sense of belonging in our community

What tools will you use to measure the outcomes of the program, project, service or event?

Note: If your organization is approved for funding, copies of the measurement tools selected will be requested.

Surveys, Observation, Other:

Other:

Feedback

Please provide details of how your program, project, service or event differs from other services being offered in the community.

The Transitions Program stands out from other services in the community by offering a comprehensive, life-skills-focused approach specifically for neurodiverse youth and adults. Unlike general recreational or social programs, it combines a structured 12-week learning series with interactive social activities, covering essential topics such as financial literacy, communication, self-advocacy, resilience, and pathways to employment and education.

Our program is uniquely tailored to address both personal development and community integration. Weekly social activities—ranging from physical activity, sensory-friendly movie nights to community outings like library visits and bowling, allow participants to practice skills in real-world, supportive environments. Additionally, the program emphasizes inclusion, accessibility, and choice, ensuring all participants can engage at their comfort level.

Partnerships with local organizations, skill certifications, and targeted mentorship opportunities further differentiate the program, providing participants with tangible pathways to independence, employment, and social connection. By combining education, social engagement, and skill development in a holistic, participant-centered model, the Transitions Program fills gaps left by other services and directly responds to the unique needs of neurodiverse individuals in the region.

This grant is intended to promote an allied social profit sector within the Municipality. List the community groups or organizations that will be actively involved in the program, project, service or event delivery.

| Community Organization or Group | Role |
|---------------------------------|---------------|
| Regional Recreation Corp | Collaboration |
| Ptarmigan Nordic Ski Club | Collaboration |
| Fort McMurray Fire Department | Collaboration |
| Wood Buffalo Library | Collaboration |
| Clearwater Horse Club | Collaboration |
| Local Hero Foundation | Collaboration |
| The YMM Alley | Collaboration |
| Heritage Park/Ship Yard | Collaboration |
| Vista Ridge | Collaboration |
| Wild Bear Adventures | Collaboration |
| Wood Buffalo Art Council | Collaboration |
| Keyano E Sports | Collaboration |
| Safe Wood Buffalo | Collaboration |
| Support Services Wood Buffalo | Collaboration |
| Royal Canadian Legion | Collaboration |
| Discovery Center | Collaboration |
| Wood Buffalo Housing | Collaboration |



Project Summary Social Respite Program

Program, Project or Service Name

Social Respite Program

Beginning Date

01/01/2026

Completion Date

Note: The term of the grant is January 1 - December 31, 2026. The program, project, service or event and all expenditures must occur during this term.

12/31/2026

Location program, project or service will be provided:

Note: If the grant is approved, the communities served will be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection from all communities will be required.
Do not select the rural community if the service is provided to the clients from rural communities through the urban service area.

Fort McMurray

Please complete the following Program/Project or Event Delivery Details.

Program, Project, or Event Delivery Information

Council approved seven funding priorities. Please indicate which funding priority/priorities are applicable to this application.

Please select at least 3 funding priorities for the Community Sustaining and Subsidiary Grant applications. Please select at least 1 funding priority for the Community Impact Grant (Community Programs and Projects or Community Events) application.

- ☒ Community support services and wellness
- ☒ Accessibility, inclusion and belonging
- ☐ Hosting events/new business and visitors
- ☒ Partnership and collaboration
- ☐ Rural and Indigenous Communities and Relationships
- ☒ Social participation
- ☐ Value of culture, heritage and regional pride

Describe how the proposed program, project, service or event align with these priorities.

The Social-Respite program promotes accessibility, inclusion, and belonging by engaging children with differing abilities in community activities and peer interactions. It fosters social participation through skill-building, role-playing, and practical experiences such as managing money and public transport. By partnering with parents, libraries, and local recreational facilities, the program emphasizes partnership and collaboration, ensuring youth co-create activities and gain independence while parents receive vital respite support. This structure strengthens connections, encourages peer friendships, and equips youth with lifelong social and life skills.

In the table below, please identify the total number of unique participants that you anticipate will access the funded program, project, service or event.

Target Population

| Age | Target Population |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Children (0-12 years) | 64 |
| Youth (13-18 years) | 26 |
| Adults | 0 |
| Seniors (65+) | 0 |
| Families | 0 |
| Community | 0 |
| Total | 90 |



Project Summary Social Respite Program

Please identify the equity deserving population the program, project, service or event will serve.

Youth, Youth, People living with disabilities

How does your organization ensure that its programs, projects, services or events are accessible and inclusive for anyone who has an interest? Please share examples and success stories of accessibility and inclusivity.

Our organization ensures accessibility and inclusivity by designing programs that meet diverse needs, removing barriers to participation, and providing individualized support. For example, our Social-Respite program welcomes children aged 3–17 with differing abilities, offering activities tailored to their interests, sensory needs, and social skill levels. We provide structured support for social interactions, practical life skills, and peer engagement, while allowing youth to contribute to planning activities, fostering empowerment and belonging.

We partner with local schools, libraries, and community organizations to expand access and create inclusive experiences, such as sensory-friendly movie nights, adaptive rock climbing, and PEERS® social skills training for teens with Autism and other neurodiverse conditions. Parents are included as partners, helping reinforce learning and supporting youth in real-life social situations.

Success stories include children forming lasting friendships, gaining confidence in social interactions, and learning practical skills like public transit navigation and self-advocacy. Parents report reduced stress due to meaningful respite time, while youth describe the program as a safe, welcoming space where they feel understood and included. This holistic approach ensures every participant, regardless of ability, can engage fully, thrive socially, and feel a true sense of belonging.

If applicable, please explain how your program, project, service or event celebrates Indigenous culture, serves Indigenous communities and/or promotes Indigenous healing, language, cultural restoration, or reconciliation.

Our organization's holistic approach ensures that all Indigenous service users feel valued and respected in their cultural identity. We honor Indigenous ways of knowing and being by integrating these teachings into every aspect of our services. By continuously learning from and engaging with Indigenous culture and community, we strive to provide culturally sensitive care.

Our vision is that an Indigenous child supported by our services thrives across all realms—physical, intellectual, spiritual, and emotional. We prioritize empowering each child to embrace their Indigenous identity, ensuring they feel honored, respected, and connected to their cultural roots, fostering their overall well-being and cultural integrity for all.

Logic Model

Statement of Need: What social problem or gap do you hope to address by delivering the program, project, service or event? What evidence do you have that this problem or gap exists?

The Social Respite program addresses the need for children and youth with cognitive, physical, or social communication disabilities who require structured programming to develop practical life skills, promote independence, and support positive personal development. Many young people with Autism and other disabilities face stigma, discrimination, and exclusion, limiting access to mainstream programs and contributing to social isolation, reduced well-being, and barriers to participation in community life. Our program responds to these challenges by providing a safe, inclusive environment that fosters respect, values diversity, and promotes equality for all neurodiverse individuals. By filling gaps in respite services within the region, the Social Respite program empowers children and youth to build social skills, build confidence, acquire essential life skills, and engage meaningfully as active, valued members of their communities.

Broad Strategy: How will the program, project, service or event address the social problem? (e.g., What approach are you taking that you hope will lead your program, project, service or event to support the social problem?)

The Social Respite Program addresses stigma, discrimination, and exclusion related to autism by fostering awareness, understanding, and inclusion within our region. By offering tailored programs for children aged 3–17 with diverse abilities, the program ensures every participant can engage meaningfully, build social skills, and develop practical life skills in a supportive environment. Activities are designed to meet individual interests, sensory needs, and social skill levels, while structured supports guide peer interaction, collaboration, and empowerment.

Unique to our region, this program combines individualized support, skill development, and community connection in ways not otherwise available locally. Youth actively contribute to planning activities, promoting confidence and belonging. Partnerships with local schools, libraries, and community organizations expand access and provide inclusive experiences, such as sensory-friendly movie nights, adaptive rock climbing, and PEERS® social skills training for teens. Parents are included as partners, reinforcing learning and supporting youth in real-world social situations.

This holistic approach helps youth form friendships, gain confidence, and acquire practical skills while providing meaningful respite for families. By celebrating neurodiversity, removing barriers, and promoting inclusion, the Social Respite Program offers a safe, welcoming space where all participants can thrive socially and participate fully in our community.

Rationale: What evidence or research do we have that this strategy will work? To demonstrate for example, "If [my organization] does 'x' program, project, service or event, then [this] change will happen for the target population."

Research demonstrates that targeted social and skill-building programs significantly improve outcomes for children and youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and other differing abilities. The Government of Canada (2018) reports that approximately 1 in 66 children and youth are diagnosed with Autism, with families facing emotional, social, and financial challenges. The 2019 Canadian Health Survey indicated that 1 in 50 children aged 1–17 years have an ASD diagnosis, highlighting growing demand for evidence-based supports.

Programs like Social-Respite, which combine structured social skills training (e.g., PEERS®), peer interaction, and parent involvement, are supported by research showing improvements in social responsiveness, friendship formation, and practical life skills. These interventions directly address knowledge gaps in social development and equip youth with independence, confidence, and coping strategies.

In our region, the 2021 RMWB Census shows approximately 28,636 individuals live with a disability (27% of the population in Canada as of 2022), emphasizing the need for inclusive, accessible community programming. By providing evidence-informed supports, our organization ensures that youth engage socially, gain critical life skills, and experience a sense of belonging, while families receive respite and guidance, demonstrating measurable improvements in both individual and community well-being.

Inputs: What resources will be invested to achieve your goal? (e.g., staff labour, venue space, volunteers, computers, etc.)

- Executive Director
- Program Director
- Program Leaders
- Respite Staff (20+)
- Staff development
- Equipment and materials
- Transportation
- Respite activities
- Advertising
- Website
- Collaborative partnerships (FSCD)
- Administration, office supplies, rent, insurance, utilities



Activities: What activities make up the program, project, service or event? (e.g., workshops, mentorship sessions, etc.)

- Facility and Respite Hours
- Provide staff training, screening, mentorship, and orientation
- Youths complex needs are supported, profiles reviewed, orientation, and training.
- Community involvement and engagement to increase understanding and awareness on ASD and difficulties persons with ASD
- Youth are physically active in recreational activities
- Creating an environment with support staff to integrate children and youth with disabilities into mainstream community activities alongside their non-disabled peers
- Create sensory friendly space
- Representation of our Organization in the Community
- Build long-term community relationships through collaborations and partnerships
- Evaluation of and revision of program

Outputs: What do you deliver? (e.g., # of total participants trained, # of organizations, # of sessions, # of events, etc.). Note, each activity should have outputs.

Note: If the program, project, service or event is approved, your outputs may be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection on the outputs is required.

- Provide employment of 20+ staff
- 12 staff are trained in Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (NVCi)
- 40 friendships made and retained
- 6000 of respite hours provided to families
- 12 adolescents completing PEERS Social Skills program
- Create 2 new community collaborations
- 90 Participants directly impacted by the program
- 300 indirectly through social media and community involvement.



Outcomes: What change do you want to see for the participants by running your program, project, service or event? Organizations are required to identify at least one outcome, that will be measured through the grant period, should the application be approved.

Note: If the program, project, service or event is approved, your outcomes will be included in the Grant Agreement and data collection on the outcomes is required.

- Increased awareness of ASD, Neurodiversity and persons with disabilities
- Individuals are developing positively
- Individuals are connected to others
- An Increased sense of belonging in our community

What tools will you use to measure the outcomes of the program, project, service or event?

Note: If your organization is approved for funding, copies of the measurement tools selected will be requested.

Surveys, Observation, Other:

Other:

Feedback

Please provide details of how your program, project, service or event differs from other services being offered in the community.

Our Social-Respite program is unique in the region, as no other local agency currently offers a social-based program specifically designed for children and youth with differing abilities. Unlike traditional respite services that primarily provide supervision, our program emphasizes peer interaction, social skill development, and community participation. Youth actively engage in planning and implementing activities, giving them agency over their experiences and fostering independence, responsibility, and self-advocacy.

We combine recreational activities, such as swimming, rock climbing, library visits, and sensory-friendly events with evidence-based social skills training like the PEERS® program. This supports adolescents and teens in learning to make and maintain friendships. Parents participate alongside their children, receiving guidance to reinforce social learning at home, creating a holistic family-centered approach.

By focusing on social engagement, skill-building, and community inclusion, our program fills a significant gap in local services. Youth gain meaningful opportunities to connect with peers who share similar interests, while families benefit from structured respite, guidance, and support. This integrated, social-first approach distinguishes our program from all other services currently offered in the region.

This grant is intended to promote an allied social profit sector within the Municipality. List the community groups or organizations that will be actively involved in the program, project, service or event delivery.

| Community Organization or Group | Role |
|---------------------------------|---------------|
| Clearwater Horse Club | Collaboration |
| Local Hero Foundation | Collaboration |
| Regional Recreation Corp | Collaboration |
| Fort McMurray Fire Department | Collaboration |
| Wood Buffalo Housing | Collaboration |
| Boys and Girls Club | Collaboration |
| Heritage Park/Ship Yard | Collaboration |
| Wood Buffalo Library | Collaboration |



STRATEGIC PLAN

2024 - 2028

AUTISM SOCIETY OF THE RMWB

21B, 10019 MacDonald Ave,
Fort McMurray, AB, T9H 1S9

Email: autismsupport@autismrmwb.org
Website: www.autismrmwb.org
Tel: 587-452-9334

**APPROVED SEPT 2025
TO BE REVIEWED MAY 2026**

Connecting the Pieces of our Community!

Registered Charity# 707604492RR0001

WHO WE ARE

We are committed to creating an inclusive community through programming, support, and understanding of autistic and neurodiverse individuals and all those living with a disability and their families across their lifespan.

ABOUT US

The Autism Society of the RMWB originated from a group of parents and professionals looking to create a support network for families in our community. Today, the organization offers programming for children and adults of all differing abilities.

We have the capacity to assist families and individuals in navigating additional services and support them through their journey. By providing a variety of educational presentations and engaging in community events, we continue to strive to create an inclusive community.

OUR VISION

A region where autistic and neurodiverse individuals and all those living with a disability are valued and are participating members of the community. A region that recognizes that all citizens have the right to live, work, and play.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- **Support an inclusive community by respecting all people, valuing diversity, and a commitment to equality.**
- **Promoting education and acceptance around autism, neurodiversity, and disabilities to create an understanding and inclusive community.**
- **Empowering autistic and neurodiverse individuals and those with disabilities to achieve their goals.**
- **Inspiring optimism in the community.**
- **Provide an emotionally safe and supportive environment.**



STRATEGIC PLAN

The Autism Society of the RMWB Board of Directors, leadership, and staff developed this strategic plan after holding an in-depth reflection and planning session in January 2024, utilizing the direction of our stakeholders survey. The Autism Society of the RMWB will implement initiatives between 2024 and 2028 and review them yearly to ensure the achievement of the goals, objectives, and outcomes outlined in this plan.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The term “key stakeholders” refers to the individuals and groups within the community that a social profit organization is accountable to serve and support.

The Autism Society of the RMWB believes our key stakeholders are:

- All autistic and neurodiverse individuals and those with disabilities.
- Those who care for autistic and neurodiverse individuals and those with disabilities.
- Partner organizations in the social profit sector.
- Funders, donors, and philanthropic investors.
- Private businesses.
- Volunteers.
- Leaders and staff.
- Board members.

KEY STRATEGIES

Our key strategies are to address issues of inclusion, equity, diversity, and access (IDEA) by implementing key components in all aspects of our organization. We include:

- Contributing to the development and implementation of IDEA within our programming materials.
- Creating a positive change and impact on our participants' lives.
- Actively engaging community partners in respectful, meaningful, and collaborative ways.
- Providing knowledge and resources about the needs of our participants.
- Breaking down the systemic barriers for our underserved neurodiverse community by raising awareness.
- Listening to participants, caregivers, and professional voices and experiences, and value their input and feedback.
- Seeking to build trust and mutual understanding and to foster a sense of belonging and empowerment.

STRATEGIC GOALS #1

COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING STRATEGIES

To increase and enhance the knowledge of autism, neurodiversity, and disabilities and to build a more inclusive and supportive community for the population we serve.

KEY OBJECTIVES:

Active Community Engagement:

- Education, training, and an open dialogue about the needs and strengths of autistic and neurodiverse individuals and those with disabilities.
- Increased knowledge of the challenges autistic and neurodiverse individuals and those with disabilities may face and the unique contributions they can make.
- Increased awareness on how to create a more accommodating environment for everyone.
- Increased awareness of offered programs and potential new programming.
- Create opportunities for public participation and create a deeper connection to our organization.
- Join more agencies, boards, and meetings from which both parties can benefit.
- Call for more feedback from stakeholders to encompass all voices.
- Research and utilize best practices and trends by benchmarking against compatible organizations with a healthy, visible presence.
- Grow our board and volunteer base.

Brand Awareness:

- Increase a variety of communication channels through events, workshops, webinars, newsletters, social media campaigns, sponsorships, partnerships, or volunteer opportunities.
- Deliver a consistent and memorable brand by maintaining a clear visual identity, consistent messaging, and excellent clientele experience.
- Share and celebrate the successes and impacts of community engagement with internal and external audiences.
- Expand the team by hiring personnel dedicated to creating and managing communications, social media, external relations, and events.

Information Systems:

- Maintain and monitor secure integrated information systems and data collection.

Measurement Outcomes and Success Criteria:

Increase in community reach, engagement, and participation:

- Community participation and engagement growth through attendance rate, registration rate, feedback forms, or social media.

Increase in community trust, support, and collaboration:

- Increase community trust and collaboration by analyzing referrals, testimonials, endorsements, or partnership agreements.

Increase in brand awareness, recognition, and recall:

- Growth in audience awareness and memory of the organization's visual identity using surveys, polls, or focus groups.



STRATEGIC GOAL #2

CORE PROGRAM STRATEGIES

To evaluate and ensure core programs are relevant, effective, efficient, and sustainable in meeting the community's needs and developing new programs.

KEY OBJECTIVES FOR ALL PROGRAMS:

1. Evaluate the current core programs:
 - Identify areas for improvement and highlight areas of strength.
2. Maintain and create logic models and evaluation plans.
3. Conduct annual assessments to identify gaps, challenges, and emerging issues using surveys, observations, and client feedback.
4. Creation of or acquiring new programs if funding is available and sustainable.
5. Provide exceptional client services, improve the quality of life, and respond to our clients' complex needs.
6. Providing continuous learning, mental health support, and well-being for all staff.
7. Cross-training and succession planning to ensure no disruptions in operations.
8. Partner with non-profit organizations for program collaborations.

EDUCATIONAL INCLUSION AND CAREGIVERS NETWORK PROGRAM:

The Education Inclusion and Caregivers Program promotes awareness and understanding of autism, neurodiversity, and disability while supporting caregivers through every step of their journey. By building a strong caregivers' network, the program fosters acceptance, provides education on embracing differences, and encourages adapting environments to meet diverse needs, creating inclusive spaces where individuals and families can thrive.

Key Objectives:

- Increase messaging on whom we provide services and programming, utilizing social media, posters, newsletters, and our website.
- Increase sharing of content of supports and resources.
- Increase indigenous relationships by utilizing supporting agencies and interagency meetings.
- Creation of a portable sensory room.
- Increase parent and family events in the evening.
- Increase fund development for additional hours of programming.

TRANSITIONS PROGRAM:

The Transitions Program supports autistic and neurodiverse individuals ages 16+ to build skills, confidence, and opportunities for independence. Through social connections, life skills, volunteerism, and pathways to schooling, employment, and financial stability, the program reduces barriers and fosters inclusion, empowering participants to achieve their goals and thrive in community life.

Key Objectives:

- Increase messaging on whom we provide services and programming, utilizing social media, posters, newsletters, and our website.
- Increase sharing of content of supports and resources.



SOCIAL RESPITE PROGRAM:

Focuses on opportunities for children aged 3-17 with differing abilities to build stronger foundations for social interactions and community involvement. Children and youth get to be a part of the community and make friendships, while parents benefit from respite support.

Key Objectives:

- Source and develop options for pick up and drop off sessions.
- Develop additional staff to maintain the increased demand for services.
- Increase fund development for a full-time program director.
- Implement additional training and employee retention strategies for long-term staff retention.
- Create and implement a tiered system based on hours worked to absorb training and screening expenses.

CAMP KIDS FIRST:

A summer day camp for autistic and other exceptional children aged 4-17 in the Wood Buffalo region. Participants can experience typical summer camp experiences as their peers do.

Key Objectives:

- Implement an adult camp - a pilot project in the summer of 2024.
- Source and develop options for pick up and drop off sessions.
- Maintain camp fees at an affordable cost to families.
- Maintain the demand for camp to available spots.

NEW PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT:

Creating potential adult day programs for persons with developmental disabilities (PDD) opportunities to socialize, participate in community activities, and grow their skills.

Key Objectives:

- Research potential program(s) ideas.
- Ensure the program aligns with the community's needs.
- Create a feasibility plan with a budget.
- Research grants and funding streams.
- Research accreditation process.
- Implement the program only if it is sustainable and feasible.
 - Obtain funding and support the launch of the new program.
 - Hire and train staff and implement the logic model.
 - Pilot test and support development of the program for one year.
 - Review and evaluate if the program becomes a core program.

Measurement Outcomes and Success Criteria of core and new programs:

Number of core programs assessed:

- Track the total number of core programs evaluated yearly to ensure ongoing program evaluation.

Number of core programs maintained:

- Based on evaluation and validation, count the core programs that remain in the organization's portfolio.

Number of core programs discontinued:

- Calculate the number of programs that are discontinued or replaced as a result of the assessment and review.

A number of innovative programs have been added:

- Measure the introduction of innovative programs that align with community needs and have been evaluated for viability.

Cost recovery ratio for each program:

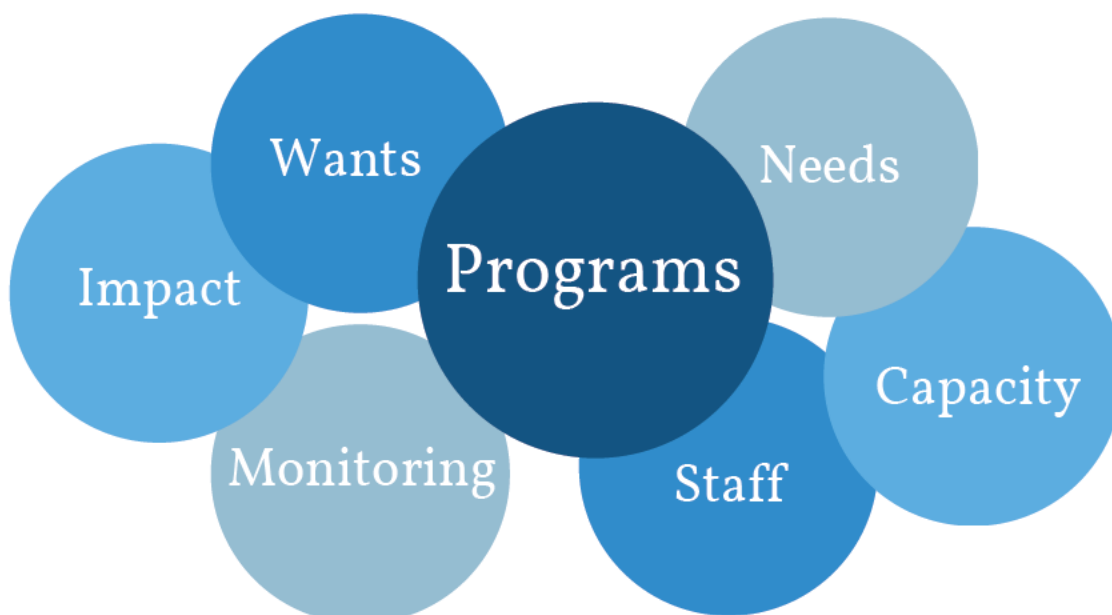
- Evaluate the ability of each program to recover its costs through revenue generation, ensuring financial sustainability.

Program value score:

- Evaluate the perceived value of each program as reported by participants, stakeholders, and funders.

Program impact score:

- Measure the tangible impact of each program on participants, stakeholders, and the community.



STRATEGIC GOAL #3

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

To secure adequate and sustainable funding to cover the operational costs of the organization and its programs.

KEY OBJECTIVE:

1. Evaluate historical financial records and create an accurate estimation and reasonable yearly budget, incorporating all foreseeable expenditures and revenues and identifying any unforeseen expenses and revenue losses.
2. Increase grant applications by utilizing the Executive Director, outsourcing a grant writer, and providing additional training to develop board members' skill sets.
3. Seek sponsorship and donations from individuals and businesses by creating sponsorship packages and developing relationships, celebrating, and promoting meaningful impact connections for sustaining long-term funders.
4. Partner with other business and non-profit organizations for fundraising events.
5. Increase membership and fundraising meetings.
6. Research and develop a large-scale yearly fundraising event.
7. Evaluate and implement program fees and cost recovery to ensure the program's sustainability. Develop a communication plan with clients and give them notice of upcoming changes.
8. Initiate a Capital Fundraising Campaign:
 - Begin pre-campaign planning.
 - Obtain a feasibility study.
 - Implement a quiet phase.
 - Implement a public phase.
 - Demonstrate gratitude and stories of the campaign.

Measurement Outcome and Success Criteria by:

- Total revenue generated yearly.
- Revenue breakdown by source.
- Revenue growth rate.
- Measuring recovery cost ratio for program expenses to revenues.
- Budget variance quarterly and yearly.
- Evaluate cash flow statements quarterly.

EXECUTION OF STRATEGIC PLAN

Implementation of the Autism Society of the RMWB's Strategic Plan will be accomplished by mapping each Strategic Goal, Objectives, and Implementation Plan to ensure organizational accountability.

Each strategic goal will have an executive board chair leading the implementation plan, and other members will collaborate and contribute to additional aspects of the plan. These Implementation Plans will be prioritized to balance the following factors:

- Impact and importance of the goal.
- Organizational capacity.
- Logical interdependencies.

Each Implementation Plan will present specific details to make the plan actionable and sustainable and will include:

- Specific outcomes and outputs.
- Performance measures.
- Implementation approach.
- Key stakeholders and their roles.
- Major activities.
- Required resources.
- Required organizational support.

CONCLUSION

The Autism Society of the RMWB commits to being transparent, accountable, innovative, and effective while delivering strategic goals. Communication and collaboration are the keys to successful outcomes. Recognizing the current global changes that may affect areas of this Strategic Plan, the Society pledges that its number one priority will be to continue to deliver on its mission to create an inclusive community through programming, support, and understanding of autistic and neurodiverse individuals and all those living with a disability and their families across their lifespan.



Connecting the Pieces of our Community!



Caregivers Network Program 2026

| Facility | Expense |
|-----------|-------------|
| Rent | |
| Telephone | \$ 1,020.00 |
| Insurance | |
| Utilities | |
| Total | \$ 1,020.00 |

| Administration | Expense |
|--------------------|---------|
| Accounting & Legal | |
| Advertising | |
| Courier & Postage | |
| Office Supplies | |
| Total | \$ - |

| Program Materials | Expense |
|-------------------|-------------|
| Program Materials | \$ 1,250.00 |
| Total | \$ 1,250.00 |

| Staffing | Expense |
|----------------------|--------------|
| Resource Coordinator | \$ s.20(1) |
| CPP/EI/Benefits | \$ |
| Administration Staff | \$ |
| Travel | |
| Staff Relations | |
| Total | \$ 51,066.67 |

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| Total Program Expense | \$ 53,336.67 |
|-----------------------|--------------|



Education Inclusion Program 2026

| Facility | | Expense |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Rent | \$ | 5,430.00 |
| Telephone | \$ | 963.00 |
| Insurance | \$ | 2,309.00 |
| Utilities | \$ | 2,037.50 |
| Total | \$ | 10,739.50 |
| Administration | | Expense |
| Accounting & Legal, Business Licence | \$ | 5,027.55 |
| Advertising | \$ | 200.00 |
| Bank Fees | \$ | 1,000.00 |
| Courier & Postage | \$ | 75.00 |
| Office Supplies | \$ | 500.00 |
| Sensory Store COGS | \$ | 1,500.00 |
| Total | \$ | 8,302.55 |
| Charitable Community Program | | Expense |
| Materials for Bins | \$ | 500.00 |
| Family Events | \$ | 7,200.00 |
| Info Sessions | \$ | 3,200.00 |
| Swag | \$ | 3,000.00 |
| Lending Shelf | \$ | 200.00 |
| Community Sensory Room | \$ | 200.00 |
| Total | \$ | 14,300.00 |
| Staffing | | Expense |
| Wages Community Officer | \$ | s.20(1) |
| CPP/EI/Benefits | \$ | |
| Administration Staff | \$ | |
| Staff Relations | \$ | 100.00 |
| Staff Training | \$ | 500.00 |
| Mileage Community | \$ | 1,500.00 |
| Total | \$ | 85,914.68 |
| Total Program Expense | \$ | 119,256.73 |



Kids First Camp 2026

| Facility | | Expense |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Rent | \$ | 7,520.00 |
| Insurance | \$ | 2,309.00 |
| Total | \$ | 9,829.00 |
| Administration | | Expense |
| Accounting & Legal | \$ | 4,033.00 |
| Advertising | \$ | 100.00 |
| Courier & Postage | \$ | 50.00 |
| Office Supplies | \$ | 250.00 |
| Total | \$ | 4,433.00 |
| Program Materials | | Expense |
| Camp Materials | \$ | 9,500.00 |
| T-Shirts | \$ | 3,000.00 |
| Photos | \$ | 200.00 |
| Field Trips | \$ | 9,800.00 |
| Total | \$ | 22,500.00 |
| Staffing | | Expense |
| Wages Director | \$ | s.20(1) |
| CPP/EI/WCB/Benefits | \$ | |
| Administration Staff | \$ | |
| Leaders | \$ | 17,035.20 |
| CPP/EI/WCB | \$ | 3,171.76 |
| Camp Counsellors | \$ | 67,760.00 |
| CPP/EI/WCB | \$ | 4,464.25 |
| Camp 30 min Cleaning | \$ | 3,680.52 |
| Mileage Camp | \$ | 6,500.00 |
| Staff Relations | \$ | 800.00 |
| Staff Recruitment | \$ | 500.00 |
| Staff Training | \$ | 1,000.00 |
| Total | \$ | 128,677.34 |
| Total Program Expenses | \$ | 165,439.34 |



Social Respite 2026

| Facility | Expense |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|
| Rent | \$ 10,860.00 |
| Telephone | \$ 3,000.00 |
| Insurance | \$ 2,309.00 |
| Utilities | \$ 4,075.00 |
| Total | \$ 20,244.00 |
| Administration | Expense |
| Accounting & Legal | \$ 4,967.55 |
| Advertising | \$ 300.00 |
| Bank Fees | \$ 1,000.00 |
| Courier & Postage | \$ 75.00 |
| Office Supplies | \$ 500.00 |
| Total | \$ 6,842.55 |
| Charitable Social Respite Program | Expense |
| Program Materials | \$ 8,500.00 |
| Total | \$ 8,500.00 |
| Staffing | Expense |
| Wages Program Director/Assist/Leaders | \$ s.20(1) |
| CPP/EI/Benefits | \$ |
| Administration Staff | \$ |
| Respite Staff | \$ 170,000.00 |
| CPP/EI/WCB | \$ 17,147.02 |
| Staff Relations | \$ 1,000.00 |
| Staff Recruitment | \$ 300.00 |
| Staff Training | \$ 1,500.00 |
| Mileage Respite | \$ 6,500.00 |
| Total | \$ 289,454.49 |
| Total Program Expense | \$ 325,041.04 |



Transitions Program 2026

| Facility | Expense |
|--------------|---------------------|
| Rent | \$ 5,430.00 |
| Telephone | \$ 1,020.00 |
| Insurance | \$ 2,309.00 |
| Utilities | \$ 2,037.50 |
| Total | \$ 10,796.50 |

| Administration | Expense |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| Advertising | \$ 250.00 |
| Accounting and Legal | \$ 3,708.86 |
| Courier & Postage | \$ 50.00 |
| Office Supplies | \$ 700.00 |
| Total | \$ 4,708.86 |

| Program Materials/Activities | Expense |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Program Materials | \$ 6,000.00 |
| Presentations | |
| Total | \$ 6,000.00 |

| Staffing | Expense |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Wages Transitions Facilitator/Assist | \$ s.20(1) |
| CPP/EI/Benefits | \$ |
| Administration Staff | \$ |
| Staff Relations | \$ 100.00 |
| Mileage Transitions | \$ 2,000.00 |
| Total | \$ 111,006.29 |

| | |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Total Program Expense | \$ 132,511.65 |
|------------------------------|----------------------|



Birchwood Circle of Care

780-607-8376

birchwoodcoc@gmail.com

September 25th, 2025

Subject: Letter of Support for the Autism Society of the RMWB

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of Birchwood Circle of Care, I am pleased to express our strong support for the Autism Society of the RMWB in the implementation of their Education Inclusion Program/Respite/Kids First camp. This initiative aligns with our shared mission to provide exceptional services to the Children in our communities. As a care provider in the same community, I am deeply familiar with the challenges faced and the necessity for respite and care within the community and families.

We are committed to working collaboratively with the Autism Society of the RMWB to ensure the success of this project. We recognize the pressing need for services for Children with Disabilities in our region. Our organizations have a history of successful collaboration, including providing professional development and training for parents and members of the Autism Society of the RMWB as well as promoting programs and connecting with families and caregivers, which demonstrates our ability to work effectively together.

We believe our partnership is a natural and strategic fit. Our complementary strengths – working with children with disabilities and providing support for families who have children with disabilities within the regional municipality of Wood Buffalo position us well to deliver this project collaboratively and effectively. As a committed partner, Birchwood Circle of Care will contribute to the project in the following ways:

- Support with outreach & engagement: Promoting programs, and connecting with families and caregivers to the Autism society.
- Utilizing Autism society community sensory room to support and foster sensory



Birchwood Circle of Care

780-607-8376

birchwoodcoc@gmail.com

awareness and understanding for caregivers.

- Collaborating on works shops for urban and rural community members, on topics such as behavioural, therapeutic, communication and emotional support systems.

For any further information or clarification, please contact:

Veronique Boisvert

Owner / Registered Speech Language Pathologist

Birchwood Circle of Care

41-8106 Fraser Avenue, Fort McMurray AB

780-607-7879

We look forward to the opportunity to collaborate on this important initiative and are confident in the positive impact it will have on our community.

Sincerely,

Veronique Boisvert

Owner / Registered Speech Language Pathologist



October 2, 2025

Subject: Letter of Support and Partnership for the Autism Society of the RMWB

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of BGC Fort McMurray, I am pleased to express our strong support for the Autism Society of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo and their programs. Their initiatives align closely with our shared mission of supporting children, youth, and families through inclusive programming, resources, and community partnerships.

BGC Fort McMurray and the Autism Society have previously built a meaningful partnership grounded in collaboration, mutual respect, and a shared vision of strengthening supports for families in our region. Together, we work to ensure that children, youth, and parents have access to high-quality programs, referrals, and services that meet diverse needs. We recognize the pressing need for increased supports for neurodiverse children, youth, and families in Wood Buffalo, and we are committed to helping address these gaps.

Our history of collaboration with the Autism Society includes programming, shared referral pathways, and resource sharing. These efforts have already created positive outcomes for many children and youth, demonstrating the strength and value of our partnership.

If you require any additional information, please contact me at the information listed below.

Sincerely,

Caitlín Clarke

Caitlin Clarke
Director of Operations
BGC Fort McMurray
780-791-7775 Ext 1
caitlin.clarke@fmbgc.ca



Clearwater Horse Club, 269 Rodeo Drive, Fort McMurray. T9H 5K5



October 8th, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

Subject: Letter of Support for the Autism Society of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

On behalf of Clearwater Horse Club, I am pleased to express our strong support and commitment to partnering with the Autism Society of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo in the implementation of social programming. This initiative aligns with our shared mission to support strong and inclusive communities. We are committed to working collaboratively with the Autism Society to ensure the success of this project. We recognize the pressing need for programs for neurodiverse individuals of all ages in our community.

Our organizations have a history of successful collaboration, including equine education programs for children with disabilities as well as summer camp field trip experiences, which demonstrates our ability to work effectively together.

As a committed partner, Clearwater Horse Club will continue to support the Autism Society of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo programs in the following ways:

- Provide opportunities for therapeutic equine programs. Work collaboratively to provide programs that are inclusive of the diverse needs of the individuals attending. Plan engaging and educational programs that meet the needs (physical, cognitive and social) of the youth in attendance.
- Offer summer camp field trips for children with disabilities. Providing an inclusive opportunity for young people with diverse needs to meet, interact and ride horses.

For any further information or clarification, please contact:

Ella Rankin

President

Clearwater Horse Club

780-881-0530

www.clearwaterhorseclub.ca



October 6, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

Fort McMurray Catholic Schools (FMCSD) is pleased to offer this letter of strong support for The Autism Society of the Rural Municipality of Wood Buffalo in their application to secure funding for the Transitioning to Adulthood Program 16+.

This program is integral to addressing a critical service gap. It directly aligns with our shared mission to provide comprehensive support for youth, parents, and families by offering specialized resources to students and young adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder and neurodiversity as they prepare for life after high school. We recognize the profound need for this targeted support.

FMCSD is committed to working collaboratively with The Autism Society of the RMWB. The free and flexibly-offered nature of this program ensures it is easily accessible to all families in need, removing significant barriers to participation.

We deeply value our longstanding partnership with The Autism Society of the RMWB, which began in 2016. For many years, The Autism Society of the RMWB has provided essential services, direct family support, and invaluable professional learning opportunities to our staff.

Not only do our students and families benefit directly from The Autism Society of the RMWB's programs, but we also greatly appreciate their collaboration both inside and outside the school setting. We have welcomed The Autism Society of the RMWB to deliver presentations on topics ranging from general autism and neurodiversity awareness to complex subjects like the application process for Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD). The feedback on these offerings is consistently that they are well-received, compassionate, and delivered with the utmost professionalism.

Based on our successful history of effective collaboration and our understanding of the community's need, FMCSD fully and enthusiastically supports The Autism Society of the RMWB's application for funding for the Transitioning to Adulthood Program 16+.

Thank you for considering funding this vital community program. Please do not hesitate to contact us directly to discuss our partnership and the importance of this initiative further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "K. McConnell".

Kirsten McConnell

FMCSD Director of Inclusive Education

kirsten.mcconnell@fmcscd.ab.ca | 780-799-5700

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "V. Dyck".

Valerie Dyck

FMCSD Director of Inclusive Education

vdyck@fmcscd.ab.ca | 780-799-5700

October 7, 2025

Subject: Letter of Support and Partnership for the Education Inclusion Program

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of the Fort McMurray Public School Division, I am pleased to express our strong support and commitment to partnering with the Autism Society of the RMWB in the implementation of the Education Inclusion Program. This initiative aligns with our mission of being a learning community dedicated to educating all students for their personal excellence. Our work with the Autism Society solidifies our commitment to Doing What's Best for Kids, by bringing awareness of autism and neurodiversity as a pathway to ensuring that inclusion is embraced within the Region of Wood Buffalo.

We are committed to working collaboratively with Tina Delainey and the team at the Autism Society of the RMWB to ensure the success of this service to the community and to our mutual target audience of staff, students and families. We recognize the pressing need to raise awareness for autism and neurodiversity and to support our community embrace inclusivity. An inclusive community works to support all people to understand neurodiversity, value their contributions, and creates opportunities for everyone to thrive in the community.


Our organizations have a history of successful collaboration, including the Education Inclusion program, where training has been offered to school staff to support raising awareness and providing resources in the school community. We have partnered with the Autism Society of the RMWB in many ways, but most recently collaborated with a two year grant cycle that supported Mental Health in schools for students who are neurodiverse. This was a partnership between the Fort McMurray Public School Division, the Fort McMurray Catholic School Division, the Canadian Mental Health Association and the Autism Society of the RMWB that supported regulation of students by supporting the co-regulation of adults through a Framework called The Regulated Classroom™. By working with the four partners, we were able to provide much needed training to adults (ie: staff, parents) in the rural and urban areas of the RMWB. This partnership positively impacted hundreds of adults and thousands of students. This learning strengthened participants' self-awareness and helped them gain valuable knowledge of regulation strategies. We have a long history of working effectively together.

For any further information or clarification, please contact:

Cynthia Shelley-Lewis
Director of Inclusive Learning
Fort McMurray Public Schools
Phone: 780-799-7900
Email: cynthia.shelley-lewis@fmpsds.ab.ca
Website: <https://www.fmpsdschools.ca>

We look forward to the opportunity to collaborate on this important initiative and are confident in the positive impact it will have on our community.

Sincerely,



Cynthia Shelley-Lewis

Dr. Jane Barter, MSW, RSW
Keyano College
Email: Jane.barter@keyano.ca
October 3, 2025

Autism Society of the RMWB

Dear Funders,

I am pleased to provide this letter of support for the Autism Society of the RMWB's Education Inclusion Program, Respite, and Transitions initiatives, in recognition of their ongoing commitment to supporting children, youth, and adults with autism and their families in our community.

Keyano College is dedicated to fostering meaningful partnerships that enhance practical learning opportunities for our Social Work and Child Youth Care practicum students. We value our collaboration with the Autism Society of the RMWB and are committed to strengthening this partnership through shared initiatives that improve community outcomes.

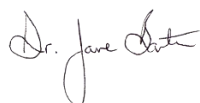
There is a clear and ongoing need within our community for inclusive programs, respite supports, and transition services that address the unique needs of individuals with autism and their families. The Autism Society of the RMWB's efforts directly contribute to filling these vital gaps, providing essential services that promote inclusion, well-being, and development across the lifespan.

Our history of collaboration has laid a solid foundation for this partnership, and we recognize the importance of expanding these efforts to serve more families and increase practical learning opportunities for our students. This new collaboration intends to deepen our joint commitment and maximize our collective impact.

In recognition of their commitments, Keyano College will continue to support practicum placements by providing well-trained social work and child and youth care students supervised by our faculty. In turn, the Autism Society of the RMWB is committed to offering practicum sites, mentorship opportunities, and relevant community engagement experiences for these students. Additionally, resources such as training, program information, and volunteer support will be shared to enhance student learning and service delivery.

Please feel free to contact me at Jane.barter@keyano.ca or by phone at 709-649-1500, should you require further information. We look forward to continuing our collaboration toward a more inclusive and supportive community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dr. Jane Barter".

Dr. Jane Barter, MSW, RSW
Social Work Instructor
Keyano College



November 12, 2024

To Whom it may concern,

The Autism Society of RMWB has worked closely with the Support 4 Moms Society for a number of years. Often our support group is one of the first points of contact for a family with a newly diagnosed child, and being able to refer families to the Autism Society is a very valuable resource during an overwhelming time. We have referred our families to a variety of their services, including Social Respite, Kids First Camp, and the Family Resource Coordinator. In the past year, The Autism Society has presented educational material at one of our support group meetings, as well as lent us space for our Annual General Meeting. Many of our members attended the family programming of Tubing Day at Vista Ridge and the Halloween party. These events encourage connections between individuals with special needs, as well as parents and siblings who need support.

We are thankful for this organization and all of the support they provide the many families with disabled children in Fort McMurray.

Sincerely,

Mandy Norman
President

FILE COPY

AUTISM SOCIETY OF THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WOOD BUFFALO

Financial Statements

Year Ended December 31, 2024

AUTISM SOCIETY OF THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WOOD BUFFALO
Index to Financial Statements
Year Ended December 31, 2024

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| INDEPENDENT PRACTITIONER'S REVIEW ENGAGEMENT REPORT | 1 |
| FINANCIAL STATEMENTS | |
| Statement of Revenues and Expenditures | 2 |
| Statement of Financial Position | 3 |
| Statement of Changes in Net Assets | 4 |
| Statement of Cash Flows | 5 |
| Notes to Financial Statements | 6 - 9 |

INDEPENDENT PRACTITIONER'S REVIEW ENGAGEMENT REPORT

To the Members of Autism Society of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

We have reviewed the accompanying financial statements of Autism Society of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (the Society) that comprise the statement of financial position as at December 31, 2024, and the statements of revenues and expenditures, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations (ASNPO), and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Practitioner's Responsibility

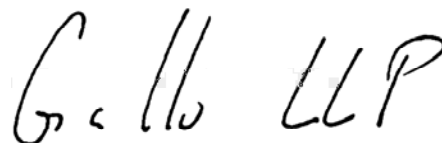
Our responsibility is to express a conclusion on the accompanying financial statements based on our review. We conducted our review in accordance with Canadian generally accepted standards for review engagements, which require us to comply with relevant ethical requirements.

A review of financial statements in accordance with Canadian generally accepted standards for review engagements is a limited assurance engagement. The practitioner performs procedures, primarily consisting of making inquiries of management and others within the entity, as appropriate, and applying analytical procedures, and evaluates the evidence obtained.

The procedures performed in a review are substantially less in extent than, and vary in nature from, those performed in an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Accordingly, we do not express an audit opinion on these financial statements.

Conclusion

Based on our review, nothing has come to our attention that causes us to believe that the financial statements do not present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Autism Society of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo as at December 31, 2024, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with ASNPO.



Sherwood Park, Alberta
February 20, 2025

CHARTERED PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS

AUTISM SOCIETY OF THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WOOD BUFFALO**Statement of Revenues and Expenditures****Year Ended December 31, 2024**

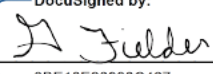
| | 2024 | 2023 |
|--|------------------|----------------|
| REVENUES | | |
| Grants and subsidies | \$ 467,250 | \$ 336,298 |
| Respite care services | 240,036 | 217,398 |
| Fundraising income | 55,761 | 61,809 |
| Charitable programs fees | 33,293 | 27,920 |
| Donation income | 83,605 | 27,839 |
| Retail sales | 1,702 | 7,627 |
| Membership fees | 2,020 | 2,315 |
| | <u>883,667</u> | <u>681,206</u> |
| EXPENSES | | |
| Salaries and wages | 623,889 | 445,413 |
| Charitable programs | 81,508 | 76,938 |
| Rental | 63,478 | 70,240 |
| Travel | 17,002 | 11,307 |
| Office | 11,866 | 4,749 |
| Advertising and promotion | 10,997 | 11,203 |
| Utilities | 10,671 | 11,183 |
| Workers compensation board | 9,006 | 5,760 |
| Professional fees | 8,400 | 7,386 |
| Fundraising | 8,530 | 14,274 |
| Telephone | 6,278 | 4,832 |
| Insurance | 4,573 | 6,178 |
| Volunteers | 4,286 | 716 |
| Amortization | 2,678 | 1,480 |
| Interest and bank charges | 2,073 | 1,787 |
| Meals | 1,681 | 691 |
| Retail expenses | 907 | 6,594 |
| Shipping | 134 | 653 |
| | <u>867,957</u> | <u>681,384</u> |
| EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES FROM OPERATIONS | 15,710 | (178) |
| OTHER INCOME | | |
| Interest income | 121 | 118 |
| EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES | \$ 15,831 | \$ (60) |

AUTISM SOCIETY OF THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WOOD BUFFALO**Statement of Financial Position****December 31, 2024**

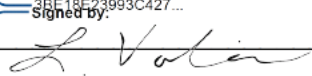
| | 2024 | 2023 |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|
| ASSETS | | |
| CURRENT | | |
| Cash (Note 5) | \$ 178,498 | \$ 198,757 |
| Accounts receivable | 24,640 | 52,296 |
| Prepaid expenses | 4,413 | - |
| | <u>207,551</u> | <u>251,053</u> |
| EQUIPMENT (Net of accumulated amortization) (Note 3) | 3,983 | 3,431 |
| | <u>\$ 211,534</u> | <u>\$ 254,484</u> |
| LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS | | |
| CURRENT | | |
| Accounts payable | \$ 5,146 | \$ 3,324 |
| Wages payable | 24,893 | 15,161 |
| Deferred income (Note 4) | 75,121 | 139,251 |
| | <u>105,160</u> | <u>157,736</u> |
| NET ASSETS | | |
| Unrestricted fund | 41,374 | 25,543 |
| Internally restricted fund | 65,000 | 71,205 |
| | <u>106,374</u> | <u>96,748</u> |
| | <u>\$ 211,534</u> | <u>\$ 254,484</u> |

LEASE COMMITMENTS (Note 6)

APPROVED BY THE DIRECTORS



 Signed by: _____ Director



 Signed by: _____ Director

See notes to financial statements

AUTISM SOCIETY OF THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WOOD BUFFALO
Statement of Changes in Net Assets
Year Ended December 31, 2024

| | Unrestricted Fund | | Internally Restricted Fund | | 2024 | 2023 |
|---|-------------------|--------|----------------------------|---------|------------|-----------|
| NET ASSETS - BEGINNING OF YEAR | \$ | 25,543 | \$ | 71,205 | \$ 96,748 | \$ 92,526 |
| EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES | | 15,831 | | - | 15,831 | (60) |
| Excess of revenue over expenses - restricted fund | | - | | (6,205) | (6,205) | 4,282 |
| NET ASSETS - END OF YEAR | \$ | 41,374 | \$ | 65,000 | \$ 106,374 | \$ 96,748 |

See notes to financial statements

AUTISM SOCIETY OF THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WOOD BUFFALO**Statement of Cash Flows****Year Ended December 31, 2024**

| | 2024 | 2023 |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| OPERATING ACTIVITIES | | |
| Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses | \$ 15,831 | \$ (60) |
| Items not affecting cash: | | |
| Amortization of equipment | 2,678 | 1,480 |
| Excess of revenues over expenditures - restricted fund | (6,205) | 4,282 |
| | <u>12,304</u> | <u>5,702</u> |
| Changes in non-cash working capital: | | |
| Accounts receivable | 27,656 | (30,315) |
| Accounts payable | 1,821 | (600) |
| Wages payable | 9,732 | 4,336 |
| Deferred income | (64,130) | 127,837 |
| Prepaid expenses | (4,413) | - |
| | <u>(29,334)</u> | <u>101,258</u> |
| Cash flow from (used by) operating activities | <u>(17,030)</u> | <u>106,960</u> |
| INVESTING ACTIVITY | | |
| Purchase of equipment | <u>(3,229)</u> | <u>(1,785)</u> |
| INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH FLOW | (20,259) | 105,175 |
| Cash - beginning of year | <u>198,757</u> | <u>93,582</u> |
| CASH - END OF YEAR (Note 5) | <u>\$ 178,498</u> | <u>\$ 198,757</u> |

AUTISM SOCIETY OF THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WOOD BUFFALO**Notes to Financial Statements****Year Ended December 31, 2024****1. PURPOSE OF THE SOCIETY**

Autism Society of Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo was incorporated for charitable purposes under the Societies Act of the Province of Alberta. The Society was formed to create an inclusive community through programs that support and understand autistic individuals in the region and all those living with neurodiversity and disabilities and supporting their families across their life span. Autism Society of Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo is a not-for-profit organization under the Income Tax Act and, accordingly, is exempt from income tax, provided it maintains its registration.

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIESCash

Cash includes balances with banks. Cash subject to restrictions that prevent its use for current purposes is included in restricted cash.

Basis of presentation

The financial statements were prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations (ASNFPO).

Revenue recognition

Autism Society of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions.

Restricted contributions are recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

Equipment

Equipment is stated at cost or deemed cost less accumulated amortization and is amortized over its estimated useful life on a declining balance basis at the following rates and methods:

| | |
|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Computer equipment | 55% declining balance method |
| Office equipment | 20% declining balance method |

The Society regularly reviews its equipment to eliminate obsolete items. Government grants are treated as a reduction of equipment cost.

Equipment acquired during the year but not placed into use are not amortized until they are placed into use.

Measurement uncertainty

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amount of assets and liabilities, disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the period. Such estimates are periodically reviewed and any adjustments necessary are reported in earnings in the period in which they become known. Actual results could differ from these estimates.

Contributed services

The operations of the organization depend on both the contribution of time by volunteers and donated materials from various sources. The fair value of donated materials and services cannot be reasonably determined and are therefore not reflected in these financial statements.

(continues)

AUTISM SOCIETY OF THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WOOD BUFFALO**Notes to Financial Statements****Year Ended December 31, 2024****2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)**Use of estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosures of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Significant estimates made by management include the useful life and amortization policy of capital assets, collectible amounts of accounts receivable and completeness of accounts payable and accrued liabilities. Actual results could differ from these estimates.

3. EQUIPMENT

| | Cost | Accumulated amortization | 2024 Net book value | 2023 Net book value |
|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Computer equipment | \$ 5,614 | \$ 3,279 | \$ 2,335 | \$ 1,761 |
| Office equipment | 2,527 | 879 | 1,648 | 1,670 |
| | \$ 8,141 | \$ 4,158 | \$ 3,983 | \$ 3,431 |

4. DEFERRED REVENUE

| | 2023 | Additions | Allocations | 2024 |
|--|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Alberta Gaming, Liquor & Cannabis (AGLC) | \$ 33,089 | \$ 4,532 | \$ - | \$ 37,621 |
| Community Initiatives Program (CIP) | 26,722 | - | 26,722 | - |
| Canadian Red Cross | 8,190 | - | 8,190 | - |
| Unity for Autism | 8,000 | - | 8,000 | - |
| Els for Autism Canada | 7,500 | - | 7,500 | - |
| Autism Society of Alberta | 4,000 | - | 4,000 | - |
| Alberta Blue Cross | 1,000 | - | 1,000 | - |
| Servus Credit Union | 1,000 | - | 1,000 | - |
| Wood Buffalo Community Foundation | 49,750 | - | 49,750 | - |
| Reserved Operations | - | 20,000 | - | 20,000 |
| Telus | - | 15,000 | - | 15,000 |
| 2025 Autism Awareness Event | - | 2,500 | - | 2,500 |
| | \$ 139,251 | \$ 42,032 | \$ 106,162 | \$ 75,121 |

AUTISM SOCIETY OF THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WOOD BUFFALO

Notes to Financial Statements

Year Ended December 31, 2024

5. CASH

| | <u>2024</u> | <u>2023</u> |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Unrestricted cash | \$ 55,877 | \$ 94,463 |
| Internally restricted cash | 85,000 | 71,205 |
| Externally restricted cash - casino | 37,621 | 33,089 |
| | <u>\$ 178,498</u> | <u>\$ 198,757</u> |

The regulations of Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis provide that the use of the net proceeds from casinos is restricted to certain approved expenditures of the Society. The Society defers recognition of casino revenues until such time as the allowable expenditures are incurred.

The Board members of Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo passed a motion to restrict the allocation of funds designated for the kids camp program. This decision reflects the Board's dedication to prioritising the needs of the youth community and ensuring the sustainability of the program. As a result, the funds earmarked for the kids camp will be utilized exclusively for that purpose, subject to the guidelines outlined in the board resolution.

6. LEASE COMMITMENTS

The Society has 3 long term leases with respect to its premises. Future minimum lease payments as at year end are as follows:

| | |
|------|------------------|
| 2025 | \$ 69,437 |
| 2026 | 14,444 |
| | <u>\$ 83,881</u> |

7. ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE

The Society, like many not for profit organizations, is dependant on funding from government agencies and donations in order to provide services. The level of services performed is dependant on the level of funding obtained.

AUTISM SOCIETY OF THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WOOD BUFFALO

Notes to Financial Statements

Year Ended December 31, 2024

8. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The Society is exposed to various risks through its financial instruments and has a comprehensive risk management framework to monitor, evaluate and manage these risks. The following analysis provides information about the Society's risk exposure and concentration as of December 31, 2024.

Credit risk

Credit risk arises from the potential that a counter party will fail to perform its obligations. The Society is not currently exposed to credit risks due to the fact that funding and levels of service are predetermined via grants and subsidies.

Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that an entity will encounter difficulty in meeting obligations associated with financial liabilities. The Society is exposed to this risk mainly in respect of its accounts payable.



**MULTICULTURAL ASSOCIATION
OF WOOD BUFFALO**

September 24, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

Subject: Letter of Support and Partnership for Caregivers Network Sustaining Grant

On behalf of the Multicultural Association of Wood Buffalo, I am pleased to express our strong support and commitment to partnering with the Caregivers Network that is provided by the Autism Society of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo for the delivery of vital supports for newcomers and families in our community. This initiative aligns with our shared mission to build an inclusive, supportive, and thriving community for all.

We recognize the pressing need for accessible and culturally responsive supports for families navigating government applications, FSCD/PDD/Guardianships, and for parents seeking resources such as respite, sensory-friendly events, and camps. The Caregivers Network plays an essential role in addressing these needs, ensuring that caregivers and families are not left behind in accessing critical supports.

While our organizations have collaborated informally in the past, we see this as a natural and strategic partnership. The Caregivers Network brings expertise in family and caregiver supports, while the Multicultural Association provides translation services, cultural bridging, and connections with diverse communities. Together, we are uniquely positioned to strengthen family resilience and community well-being.

As a committed partner, the Multicultural Association of Wood Buffalo will contribute to this initiative in the following ways:

Roles and Responsibilities: Provide outreach and engagement with newcomer families, translation and interpretation support, and referrals to cultural and community resources.

Resources Committed: Dedicated staff time for cultural navigation, access to our communication networks, and in-kind support through community partnerships and events.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you require any additional information or have any questions, please do not hesitate to email me at executivedirector@mcawb.org or call us at 780-791-5186. We stand ready to support St. Aidan's Society in any way possible and look forward to the positive impact this grant will help create.

Sincerely,

Muna Ali

Muna Ali
Executive Director

www.mcawb.org

780.791.5186

P.O Box 5298

Fort McMurray AB, T9H 3G3