



2025 ANNUAL REPORT



CALGARY
YOUTH
JUSTICE
SOCIETY

I realized that I am valuable, I am capable of making a positive difference, and that I can use my strengths in healthy ways. I realized the importance of connection, kindness, and compassion... I have learned to see my own self-worth and live a life that aligns with my core values.

- Past Program Participant



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About Us

Calgary Youth Justice Society builds positive connections between young people and their communities through strength-based programs that focus on what's strong, not what's wrong. We believe that every young person matters. Our impact is young people who feel valued, supported, and meaningfully connected to their community.

Our Programs



In the Lead

In the Lead (ITL) is a strength-based leadership program where young people recognize their potential and build confidence in who they are. ITL empowers participants to see, use, and believe in their strengths. Through reflection, real-world leadership opportunities, and support from caring volunteers, young people in the program develop key skills that increase resilience. Participants leave the program with a renewed belief in themselves, their abilities, and a sense of belonging.



In the Lead 180

In the Lead 180 is a character and leadership development program designed for youth involved in the justice system. The objective is to build and enhance key protective factors that are known to reduce risk taking behavior and re-offending.



In the Lead Next Gen

In the Lead Next Gen was launched in 2024 and is a strength-based advanced leadership program for young adults who have completed ITL and want to continue their leadership journey. This program helps young adults maximize their unique strengths, take their leadership skills to the next level, and deepen their self-awareness.

Our Programs - Continued

Calgary Youth Justice Committees

A community-based alternative to court that gives young people a second chance on a bad decision. CYJC volunteers help young people move through and past a minor offence by holding them accountable without holding them back. With support, young people from all walks of life turn their mistakes into opportunities to grow and give back to their communities.



Alberta Youth Justice Committees

CYJS supports Youth Justice Committees across the province, working collaboratively with communities, volunteers, law enforcement agencies, Alberta Justice and Public Safety and Emergency Services Ministries, to ensure that all young people in Alberta have an opportunity to be diverted from the formal justice system.



**Alberta Youth
Justice Committees**

Our Mission

Through the power of restorative and strength-based practices Calgary Youth Justice Society inspires young people to realize their potential, build meaningful relationships and positively engage with their communities.

Our Vision

All young people contribute to and flourish in safe, caring communities



YOU ARE HERE

“You Are Here” is that mark on a map that we all look for as the starting point to get from where we are, to where we want to be.

Our young people are standing on that mark, ready to take a step in the right direction.

Because of you, they see what’s possible.

Because of you, they are more connected.

Because of you, they know their strengths.

Because of you, they have hope for their future.

Thank You!

Community connection is at the heart of everything we do at CYJS.

Together, we are creating a more positive world where young people are cared for and can thrive.
Thank you for your continued support and for believing in their potential.

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IN MEMORIAM

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Lawrence, Trevor - in memory of cousin Chris

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Sian Richards - in Honour of Trevor Lawrence

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Message from The President and Chief Executive Officer

"The first step towards getting somewhere is to decide you're not going to stay where you are."
- J.P. Morgan

CYJS bounded into 2025 eager to take on both challenges and opportunities that were in store. Our readiness was made possible by our many supporters, partners, and stakeholders, providing necessary funding, collaboration, and encouragement. We are grateful every day for the opportunity to work together with like-minded individuals and organizations who work alongside us to ensure that young people and families are in a better place because we were there for them at a time when they needed us most.

Guided by our Strategic Plan, CYJS made significant progress in 2025, marked by several notable achievements and organisational firsts.

Our strategic plan is grounded in three strategic pillars, the first of which is "Thriving Organization"; to ensure organizational sustainability and excellence. Throughout the year, we worked with Habitus Collective to develop, sharpen, and execute organizational effectiveness initiatives, deepen our organizational culture, and update our policies and procedures. The second pillar is "Flourishing Youth," with a priority of providing impactful and innovative programming. CYJS served 17% more young people in 2025, with the most significant growth of 67% occurring in our In the Lead 180 program that is now available to young people throughout Alberta. Another first for CYJS began in 2025 with our Youth Justice Committee provincial expansion initiative to ensure all eligible young people in Alberta have an opportunity to be diverted from formal court processes. Supporting YJCs across our province is an honor, and we are grateful to be a part of building this incredibly impactful community program, supporting our final strategic pillar, "Growing our Reach," by engaging champions, promoting best practices, and expanding our work beyond Calgary. In 2026, we look forward to some exciting developments as CYJS increasingly grows our mandate and presence throughout Alberta. We look forward to sharing our vision with everyone at a celebration event in the Fall.

Thank you for the continued financial support from Cenovus Energy, FCSS, RBC Foundation, Rogers Charity Classic, City of Calgary Crime Prevention Investment Plan, KPMG Foundation, Alberta Public Safety and Emergency Services, Alberta Justice, and Alberta Law Foundation. We also want to recognize the many individual donors who give generously to help us reach deserving young people.

Carrie Zimmerman, President - Board of Directors
Denise Blair, CEO



Celebrating

Carrie Zimmerman, Board President (2015 - 2026)

This annual report marks the last one from our President, Carrie Zimmerman. Carrie has been a beacon for CYJS for 13 years, lighting the way forward through extraordinary leadership, dedication, compassion, enthusiasm, sage guidance, and an awesome sense of humor.

Carrie, on behalf of the Board and Staff of CYJS, thank you for leading CYJS through more than a decade of growth and difference-making. You guided CYJS through challenges, helped us to embrace opportunities and celebrated with us through our accomplishments. You have led the building of a strong foundation that will continue to serve the organization and our community for many years to come. We are grateful for your excellent leadership. Thank you!

Here are the strengths we see in you, Carrie...

Strategic Decision Making Culinary Wizard Humility
Culinary Goddess Inclusive
Generous Collaborative Strong Perseverance Warm
Compassionate Reliable Organized Welcoming Funny
Passionate Committed Hardworking Dedicated
Humble Leadership Stability Inspiring
Selfless Zest Caring
Leading Hilarious Approachable Empathetic
Kind Trust Advocate Supportive
Knowledgeable Courageous Hospitable
Spectacular Chef
Energetic Visionary Accountability
Exceptionally Talented
Thoughtful Ambassador Wise Human Centric
Brilliant Confident Sharing Devoted
Coaching And Development



Carrie's Final Reflections as Board President

As I reflect on my final year as President of the Calgary Youth Justice Society, I am filled with immense pride and gratitude.

CYJS has always been more than an organization—it is a collective of passionate individuals united by a shared belief in the potential of every young person. I have had the privilege of witnessing firsthand the life-changing impact of our programmes, the dedication of our staff and volunteers, and the unwavering commitment of our partners and supporters. Together, we have navigated challenges, embraced opportunities, and continuously evolved to meet the needs of the youth we serve.

The future is bright, and I have every confidence the organization will continue to grow, adapt, and make a meaningful difference in the lives of young people across our community.

As I transition into the role of Past President, I am also delighted to welcome Krista Moroz as incoming President. Krista brings strong leadership and a deep commitment to CYJS's mission, and I look forward to supporting her and the Board in this next chapter.

Thank you to our Board, leadership team, staff, volunteers, and supporters. Your passion and belief in this work are what make lasting change possible.

It has been a true honour to serve. While I step away from this role, I remain a steadfast supporter and champion of CYJS and the important work that lies ahead.

With sincere appreciation,
Carrie Zimmerman

Meet our Incoming Board President:



Krista Moroz
Board President

CYJS welcomes Krista Moroz as Board President. Krista has been a friend of CYJS as a volunteer and supporter for more than a decade. Krista started her journey as a Youth Justice Committee volunteer in 2016, joined the Board in 2022, and moved into the role of Vice-President in 2025. Krista brings a wealth of experience from the non-profit sector, public relations, and corporate community investment. Krista is passionate about difference-making, and we look forward to her leadership as CYJS continues to inspire young people in our community to reach their full potential.

Recognition:

Strong Not Wrong Community Partner Award

This award recognizes individuals or organizations who have contributed to the work of CYJS in a way that helps us do more by working together.

A/Sgt. Kirby Adolph

Diversion Team, Calgary Police Service

A/Sgt. Kirby Adolph has taken a lead role in supporting the referrals of young people to our Calgary Youth Justice Committees. He has coordinated over 850 youth to participate with CYJS - representing a change in youth seen by CYJS of over 20%. By increasing other officers' awareness of our program and the benefits of diversion, he has created opportunities for youth and their families when they possibly thought they had lost hope.

A/Sgt. Kirby Adolph has gone above and beyond by helping volunteers navigate challenging situations, and by personally visiting young people and families to encourage participation. We are so grateful for how he has shown up for CYJS with enthusiasm and a willingness to always look for ways to support young people in our community.



Cenovus Energy Difference-Maker Award

This award recognizes an individual or organization who has helped CYJS to make a difference in our community that otherwise would not have been possible.

Rosemary Warman

In the Lead, Hamilton Manor

Rosemary has supported the planning and coordination of In the Lead volunteer events with Hamilton Manor. She has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to our program and her community. Her efforts have strengthened relationships across generations and created opportunities for trust, engagement, and genuine connection between youth and seniors. Rosemary is steady, dedicated, and deeply reliable — bringing a grounded wisdom and warm sense of humour that puts everyone at ease.

Because of her, In the Lead has been able to incorporate meaningful intergenerational programming. We are deeply grateful for the impact Rosemary has made and are excited to continue our partnership with her.



Denise Blair Leadership Award

This award recognizes a CYJS youth program participant who demonstrates leadership qualities that reflect the values Denise has instilled as pillars of the CYJS foundation. These include compassion, integrity, curiosity, collaboration, and commitment to community.

*** This Award is generously supported by local Calgary family Foundations and long time friends of CYJS.*



Asher Skibbe

In the Lead Participant

Asher has wrapped up his 4th and final semester of In the Lead, showing commitment and dedication to his ongoing leadership journey the entire time. Asher is someone who never compromises his integrity and chooses authenticity, making him a value-based and trustworthy leader. He is a great role model for his In the Lead peers and always treats those around him with compassion and respect. Asher has made incredible strides throughout his In the Lead journey. We have witnessed him consistently stretch and challenge himself to grow as a leader and community builder. We are so excited to see Asher continue to flourish and make strides in his personal life and his community.



Owen Mavin

In the Lead Participant

Owen freely gives of himself to the people around him without expecting anything in return and is dedicated to self-growth as a leader. He is a person who backs up his words with action and is not one to sit back and wait for someone else to make change. Owen is the epitome of a community builder. In all situations, Owen makes connections and ensures people feel welcome. He has volunteered to assist at ITL events on numerous occasions, is enthusiastic about sharing his experience, and has provided guidance and comfort to his peers. Owen has overcome challenges with poise and mindfulness, and we are ecstatic to see him move forward into his very bright future.

Impact Story: Strength Through Connection

At the heart of our work are three simple but powerful ideas: helping young people see their strengths, surrounding them with caring adults, and creating opportunities to belong and contribute.

Neil's* story shows what can happen when those three things come together.

When Neil first walked into the Youth Justice Committee process, he was carrying the weight of a serious charge—sparked by a moment that got out of control. But that wasn't all he carried. He was also a student-athlete, a teammate, a son, and a young person with real potential. The committee chose to start there.

They saw his leadership potential, his work ethic, and his future—and over time, Neil began to see those things in himself again. He started to understand that his choices mattered, not just in the moment, but for the life he was building.

As part of the restorative justice process, Neil was asked to take responsibility in meaningful ways. He completed a learning activity on the Youth Criminal Justice Act, helping him understand the real impact a charge could have on his future. He also participated in the In the Lead 180 program, where he developed leadership, self-awareness, and decision-making skills.

Just as important were the people who showed up for him. Through honest conversations, steady encouragement, and real accountability, caring adults created a space where Neil felt respected—not judged—and challenged him to grow.

Through these experiences, also Neil strengthened his connection to community. By the end, he was more reflective, more grounded, and more aware of how his actions affect others.

After his final court appearance, he shared: “Thank you so much for all you’ve done for me.”

It's a simple sentence—but it says everything. When young people are seen for their strengths, supported by people who care, and given real opportunities to learn, belong, and contribute, change doesn't just happen—it lasts.

** Name changed for anonymity*

2025 at a Glance

956

Young People
Served



257

Total Volunteers



13608

Volunteer Hours

Our Impact in 2025

Our programming is grounded in three core principles that guide everything we do: a relentless pursuit of strengths, meaningful relationships, and a positive connection to community. These principles form the foundation of our work, shape our approach, and result in **three key pillars of impact**:

- 1 **Connection to a strengths-based worldview**
- 2 **Connection between young people and positive supports**
- 3 **Connection with community**

Connection to a strengths-based worldview

We aim to inspire young people and their supporters to focus on strengths and possibility, helping them recognize and use their own strengths - and those of others - to thrive.

➔ **94% of ITL Young Leaders** deepened their awareness of their strengths and built the confidence to apply them in ways that supported success in their lives.

"Being part of In the Lead helped me feel more aware of my strengths, it gave me support, guidance, and encouragement when I needed it, and helped me think more positively about my future and goals."

- ITL Young Leader

➔ **91% of ITL 180 Participants** discovered new ways to use their strengths to overcome challenges.

"The important thing is to learn to get around obstacles and grow rather than let them take over you. You can always make better of a difficult situation."

- ITL 180 Participant

➔ **ITL Volunteer Coaches** developed a strengths-based mindset that shaped how they approached both their work and personal lives.

"My biggest takeaway has been trying to identify and communicate strengths to those around me, as positive feedback can really build on people's self perception and confidence."

- ITL Volunteer Coach

Connection between young people and positive supports

We create intentional opportunities for young people to develop meaningful relationships with agency volunteers and other supports, creating opportunities for learning, inspiration, and development.

ITL Coaches & YJC Volunteers cultivated a deeper respect for youth, alongside increased hope and belief in their potential.

"I was amazed by the wisdom many of the youth have at such a young age and while they have challenges in their lives, so many have a positive outlook on life."

- CYJS Volunteer

95% of ITL Young Leaders deepened connections with caring adults and 89% of Young Leaders strengthened their sense of acceptance and value at school.

"It has improved my confidence, social skills, and sense of community here at the school."

- ITL Young Leader

85% of ITL 180 Participants identified positive influences and built awareness of the people who encourage and support them

"I learned that whoever you're around, you can pick up the same behaviour so it's important to hang around people who can benefit you, and you can benefit them in positive ways"

- ITL 180 Participant

Connection with community

Our programming creates its own exclusive community for young people while also creating opportunities for young people to positively engage with and contribute to their own communities.

90% of ITL Young Leaders felt a stronger sense of belonging and importance in their communities.

"Its helped me become more confident and get out into the world and help others"

- ITL Young Leader

YJC Volunteers & ITL Coaches see their impact ripple beyond the individual, shaping stronger, more connected communities.

Youth Justice Committees strengthen communities by helping youth become better, more responsible citizens. They also reinforce the idea that the community shares a responsibility to support and guide young people toward positive choices."

- YJC Volunteer



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The Calgary Youth Justice Society is a registered charity. Donations are gratefully accepted. Thank you for your consideration.

Charity Number: 870837044RR0001

For more information:



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