

A photograph of two young women laughing together. The woman on the right has blonde hair and is wearing a dark jacket with a pink and purple floral pattern. The woman on the left has dark hair and is wearing a dark jacket. They are both smiling broadly and looking down. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be an indoor setting with a window.

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



CALGARY YOUTH
JUSTICE SOCIETY
Celebrating **25** Years



CONTENTS

About Us	01
You Are Here	02
A Message from the President and Executive Director	05
A Strong Plan	06
Celebrating 25 Years	07
Recognition	08
The Denise Blair Leadership Award	09
Board of Directors - Years of Recognition	10
In The Lead	12
In The Lead 180	13
Calgary Youth Justice Committees	14
Youth Justice Committee Program Testimonial	15
In The Lead Program Testimonial	16
Volunteers	18
Thank You Community Partners	20
Donors	21
CYJS Team	22



ABOUT US

Calgary Youth Justice Society connects adult volunteers in a positive way with young people who are at risk of or have involvement with the criminal justice system. Our approach is always strength focused, seeing beyond what's wrong to nurture what's strong. Our impact is young people who feel valued and supported to be a part of our community in a meaningful way.

IN THE LEAD PROGRAM

Youth participants, despite facing obstacles and challenges in their life, are not referred to the program based on need; rather, they are nominated for the program based on possibility. By attending a weekly class, in one school semester, Young Leaders (youth participants) recognize, nurture and practice individual strengths and character competencies that are known to build resilience. Upon completion, Young Leaders that are in the school system can earn credits towards their diploma. Beyond the contribution of valuable financial resources, our corporate partners are engaging their employees as Volunteer Coaches to connect one on one with Young Leaders, providing valuable encouragement and support.



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.



YOUTH JUSTICE COMMITTEE PROGRAM

A community-based alternative to court that gives young people a second chance on a bad decision. Youth Justice Committee 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.



CALGARY YOUTH
JUSTICE COMMITTEES

A black and white photograph of two young women sitting together and looking at a smartphone. The woman on the left has long dark hair and is wearing a light-colored button-down shirt. The woman on the right has long blonde hair and is wearing a dark floral top. An orange circle is superimposed over the center of the image, containing the text "YOU ARE HERE" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters.

**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 are not alone.

BECAUSE OF YOU they will see what's possible.

BECAUSE OF YOU they will believe in themselves.

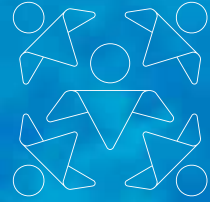
BECAUSE OF YOU they will create
a promising future.

VOLUNTEERS

COMMUNITY
PARTNERS

INVESTORS

YOU
ARE
HERE



**OUR VISION...
YOUNG PEOPLE
CONTRIBUTE TO
AND FLOURISH
IN, SAFE, CARING,
COMMUNITIES.**

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Difference-Maker – Having the courage, determination, and passion to make positive changes in the world. Not being content with things as they are, but instead striving to make a real impact and improve the lives of everyone around you.

Last year was an important milestone for CYJS, as we celebrated 25 years of Difference-Making. When a community comes together to help young people overcome adversity by leveraging their strengths, fostering positive connections with volunteers and peers, and providing opportunities to contribute to their community, they become more resilient, feel hopeful about their future, and take important steps toward realizing their full potential. At CYJS we see the immediate and long-term impact on the young people we reach, their families, and our community. It is the reason we are so grateful for everyone who has joined us in our efforts to realize our Vision of “Young people contributing to, and flourishing in, safe, caring communities.” A heartfelt thank you goes out to our supporters, volunteers, partners, Board, and staff for continuing to show up for the young people in our community.

We culminated the year with an event to mark our 25th year and celebrate Difference-Makers from our past, present, and future. It was also an opportunity for attendees to recognize and honor individuals in their lives who have been there for them. The positive energy in the room was palpable. We were overwhelmed with gratitude as we reflected on the contributions of so many people who have built the strong foundation that will propel CYJS into the future.

“Here we grow again” seems to appropriately capture 2023 for our organization. Across all programs, we saw a 24% increase in youth served since last year. For the first

time, we expanded our geographic footprint to serve young people across Alberta with the In the Lead 180 program. We are energized to work in new ways by collaborating with new program delivery partners and stakeholders. It is inspiring to know that we are on track to meet a very audacious goal set 5 years ago to double the number of young people served by the end of 2024. We are also pleased to say that we expect to meet or exceed the goals set in the 2019-2024 Strategic Plan. We are excited to start dreaming and planning as we embark on our next strategic planning cycle that will set a direction for our future path.

We are grateful to be looking ahead to the next 5 years of Difference-Making while standing on a strong foundation made possible through the continued generous support of our funders and individual donors. Thank you for the continued financial support for In the Lead from founding partner Cenovus Energy, FCSS, RBC, Shaw Charity Classic, City of Calgary Crime Prevention Investment Plan, Calgary Foundation, and Cadillac Fairview. Thank you to Alberta Justice and Alberta Law Foundation for supporting the Youth Justice Committee program. We also want to recognize the many individual donors who give generously to help us reach deserving young people.

We look forward to doing more great work together in 2024 and beyond.

Carrie Zimmerman
President - Board of Directors

Denise Blair
Executive Director

A STRONG PLAN REACHES MORE YOUNG PEOPLE.

By 2024, CYJS will double the youth we serve, our partners and our revenue to reach more vulnerable youth in Calgary. 2023 marked the 4th year of our Strategic Plan.

We increased program and general donation revenue through continued and new support from individual donors, corporate, foundation, and government partners. We served 24% more youth and are working towards meeting our goal of serving 800 youth by the end of this year. We welcomed new school and community partners, we increased awareness of CYJS in the community through events, conference presentations and social media. We also strengthened our organizational infrastructure through a Fund Development and Donor Stewardship Strategy as well as new positions to support Communications and Marketing, Volunteer Engagement and Strategy, Evaluation, and Impact. As we move into the last year of our Strategic Plan, we are on track to meet and exceed our goals by the end of 2024.

We will grow our impact amongst vulnerable youth in Calgary

- ✓ **Deliver programming in more high schools** and community settings
- ✓ Reach more youth facing multiple barriers, meeting the greatest need
- ✓ Continue to **increase the capacity of Youth Justice Committees**

We will grow revenue, profile & our community of support

- ✓ Invest in resources to increase fundraising, volunteer & alumni engagement, and communications
- ✓ Build relationships with new donors and partners
- ✓ Continue to be thought-leaders, expanding the reach of our strengths-based philosophy and serving as a resource for our community.

We will strengthen organizational infrastructure to support growth

- ✓ Maintain high functioning organization as we grow to serve more youth
- ✓ Enhance IT & human resource systems

It currently costs us approximately \$1770 per young person we serve, all-in. This investment is proven to pay dividends – to young people, their families and our community at large for years and lifetimes. **With more resources, we can ensure futures for more young people:**

YEAR	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
BUDGET	\$720,605	\$868,000	\$997,000	\$1,106,000	\$1,370,000
YOUNG PEOPLE SERVED	400	500	600	700	800



CALGARY
YOUTH
JUSTICE
SOCIETY

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS

1996

Denise Blair was hired as a half-time Coordinator to build a Youth Justice Committee program in Calgary.

1998

With 9 YJC's serving 36 Calgary communities in operation, CYJS became a Registered Society.

2005

CYJS became a Registered Charity.

2010

Started In the Lead with Founding Corporate Partner, Cenovus Energy. CYJS earned the Calgary Police Commission - Community Policing Award.

2012

Denise Blair earned the Rising Star Award from Athabasca University Faculty of Business for the development of In the Lead. Denise Blair also earned the Alberta Crime Prevention Award by Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security.

The Strong Not Wrong campaign launched.
Sgt. Mike Yanko, CYJS Board Member, received the Calgary Police Commission - Community Policing Award.
Denise Blair was recognized as an Inspired Albertan.
Jennifer Barroll, former ITL Director, was awarded Top 40 under 40.

2014

Started In the Lead 180.

2018

Denise Blair was inducted into the Athabasca University's Faculty of Business Hall of Fame for her innovative work, bringing together the In the Lead program and Corporate Calgary.
Tanya Leukefeld, YJC Operations Coordinator, received the Community Justice Award for her support of Youth Justice Committees.

2019

After being nominated by a Calgary Police Service partner, CYJS received the Alberta Community Justice Award - Innovation Category.

2021

Started In the Lead 180 Alberta, our first provincial program.

2023

RECOGNITION

Every year, CYJS recognizes a partnership and an individual or organization who have helped us along the way. Whether the contribution is short or long, big or small, it all makes a difference.

This year, we recognize two recipients for our **Strong Not Wrong Community Partner Award**. This award recognizes individuals or organizations who have contributed to the work of Calgary Youth Justice Society in a way that helps us do more by working together. As the teacher sponsor for the first In the Lead program in a junior high setting, Victoria Sandberg has played a vital role in helping us expand our reach. In addition to gracefully managing administrative tasks, Victoria was a positive role model to the student participants through her enthusiastic and authentic participation in classes. We are incredibly grateful for Victoria in ensuring our first junior high program was a complete success.

**Victoria
Sandberg**

Dr. Gladys McKelvie Egbert School

Terri Friio has been an outstanding and dedicated teacher sponsor for In the Lead through her repeated advocacy for the continuation and growth of the program at St. Anne Academy. She has fostered meaningful relationships with her students, encouraging them to explore their strengths and grow stronger as individuals.

Terri Friio

St. Anne Academy

An In the Lead staff member shared that because of Terri's support, student participants "walk taller, smile brighter and speak more confidently." Thank you, Terri, for being such an incredible champion of In the Lead.

The **2024 Cenovus Energy Difference Maker Award** is presented to Kevin Brennan, Designer, Developer, and Owner of Build Studio Inc. 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. Kevin has supported CYJS for over a decade by helping us share our work with others - through our website, program materials and Annual Reports. Kevin never hesitates to take on a project, big or small, he is always willing and ready to help. We are so grateful for Kevin and all of the incredible work he has done for us and are excited to continue our partnership.

**build
studio.**

cenovus
ENERGY

The Denise Blair Leadership Award

To commemorate her 25th Anniversary as the founder of the Calgary Youth Justice Society, a leadership award was created in Denise Blair's name. 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.

Throughout her journey with In the Lead, Chanelle Warris has consistently demonstrated natural leadership qualities including courage, intuitiveness, inclusion, compassion, vulnerability, and commitment to community. Chanelle is a source of thoughtful and considerate support for others and consistently shows positivity, dedication and

enthusiasm for her peers and family. Chanelle has a passion for animals, volunteering her time at a farm and is working diligently to complete her high school requirements so she can start her education towards becoming a veterinarian. Chanelle's commitment to giving back to her community, (two or four legged!) is commendable and inspiring and will continue to pave the way for future leaders.

**Chanelle
Warris**
Young Leader

Through 3 semesters of In the Lead, Akira has shown up as a determined, hardworking young person and has grown into an even stronger and more vocal leader with qualities such as creativity, tenacity, and integrity. As a returning Young Leader, she could be counted on to welcome new folks in and help them feel a sense of community. Outside of In the Lead, Akira brings her

strong value of community to her work alongside her school's GSA, encouraging folks to see the importance of inclusion and to speak up for others when they need it most. At a time when the rights of Two Spirit LGBTQ+ youth in Alberta are at risk, we are grateful for and inspired by Akira and her willingness to advocate for members of her community.

**Akira
Hesslein**
Young Leader

Congratulations to Chanelle, Akira, and all of the nominees. We are confident that your continued leadership will continue to grow the CYJS vision of young people contributing to and flourishing in a safe and caring community.

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

BOARD OF DIRECTORS YEARS OF RECOGNITION



Carrie Zimmerman

10-year Board Member

"I am proud to serve CYJS and honored to stand alongside a team committed to nurturing growth, building strengths, and fostering hope for youth in Alberta. It is a privilege to support an organization that embodies the transformative power of belief and possibility."



Dave Minions

10-year Volunteer & Board Member

"An advanced civilization is not judged by their productivity or their technology but by their ability to provide space and support to enable its citizens to become the best version of themselves. CYJS programs are the start of that journey."



Sgt. Mike Yanko

20-year Volunteer & Board Member

"Dedication to our youth is not just a measure of investment, but a testament to the seeds of change we plant in the hearts and minds of future generations."

YOUNG PEOPLE ON THEIR WAY TO A BRIGHTER FUTURE: **687**

Thank you for being a difference-maker.

Each and every person who has supported CYJS has made a difference in someone's life. Whether you are a donor, a corporate or community partner, a volunteer, an event attendee, a follower on social media, or you are someone who simply believes in us and our mission, you are making a difference. Not only are you impacting the lives of youth, but also their families, friends, and communities.

DIFFERENCE-MAKER

Definition:

Having the courage, determination and passion to make positive changes in the world. Not being content with things as they are, but instead striving to make a real impact and improve the lives of everyone around you.

"We can change the world and make it a better place. It is in your hands to make a difference."
Nelson Mandela



224 Young Leaders

122 In the Lead Coaches contributed **3415 hours** to help mentor and support **Young Leaders**

"I am feeling more motivated, more in tune with values and goals in life and the definite potential I have to achieve them."

- Young Leader

"I really feel like my confidence and ability to do things I'm not used to doing had vastly improved! I've taken on lots of leadership roles since I've started this program"

- Young Leader

In the Lead youth participants who had enhanced their awareness of new strengths or solidified their awareness of existing strengths relating to a Core Competency and developed their capacity to draw upon their strengths to navigate challenges and create success:

- Personal Confidence - 98%
- Personal Awareness and Stress Management - 97%
- Emotional and Social Intelligence - 98%
- Courageous Leadership - 100%
- Knowledgeable Judgement - 97%
- Resilience and Growth Mindset - 96%
- Motivation and Self-Directed Learning - 99%
- Moral Directedness and Integrity - 97%
- Interpersonal and Collaboration Skills – 100%
- Effective and Accountable Problem Solving - 97%



PARTICIPANTS LEARNED:

"To look at my strengths and how I can use them to be a better person."

- **ITL 180 Participant**

"Overcoming adversity can become simpler through altering perspectives in a positive manner."

- **ITL 180 Participant**

"To use my values when making choices and decisions."

- **ITL 180 Participant**

"Sometimes you need to take the first step in life to accomplish your goals."

- **ITL 180 Participant**

132 Youth Participants

Youth involved in the justice system developed key protective factors to reduce risk-taking behavior and re-offending

85% found ways to use their strengths to overcome challenges

89% learned about how to overcome failures and mistakes

87% identified positive influences and supports

84% are more confident to make good decisions

91% feel more positive about their future



CALGARY YOUTH JUSTICE COMMITTEES

"The extra trainings [CYJS] offers give you more knowledge on the youth justice system and the information surrounding that. These trainings offer more information to help make better volunteers, and therefore result in better consistency on how they deliver things."

- YJC Volunteer

"I'm a (School Resource Officer) and work with students every day so it's really nice to have options that I fully trust and believe are accomplishing something."

- CPS Officer

141 Youth Justice Committee

Volunteers provided an effective diversion option for **327** youth

Young people are taking accountability for their actions and growing through their mistakes:

- **90%** of youth successfully completed their sanctions
- **92%** of youth who complete the program are not charged again within one year of their involvement

The Calgary Police Service Youth Diversion Initiative increased awareness of Youth Justice Committees and diversion options for youth with CPS officers. As a result, a greater percentage of youth are being diverted from formal justice processes without having to attend court.

- **50%** increase in the ratio of pre-charge referrals to Youth Justice Committees over past two years
- Over **700** CPS officers received training presentations and **1866** officers completed required online training to increase their awareness and use of diversion options

The Community Awareness Initiative increases awareness of youth, parents, community agencies and the general public about Youth Justice Committees (YJCs) and the Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA) and builds capacity of YJC volunteers.

- Over **2300** people received information and education about the YJCs and the YCJA
- **97%** of general public, youth and community partners feel more confident about how to participate in the YCJA and YJCs
- **99%** of YJC volunteers have increased confidence in their abilities as volunteers



Preparing For and Seeing the Future

Using a strength-based approach, Youth Justice Committee volunteers help young people build skills and envision a brighter future.

Estelle* was referred to a Youth Justice Committee because of a complex situation arising from home. Upon listening to her story, the committee volunteers identified her needs as a teenager on the verge of young adulthood and enrolled her into the How to Adult program. Estelle also shared she was an artist and the committee volunteers, wanting to tap into Estelle's artistic talents, also assigned her to create a Vision Board.

Estelle found enjoyment and immense value in the How to Adult program, learning about things such as financial management, nutrition, healthy relationships, and post secondary and employment planning. Through her Vision Board, she created a vibrant and inspirational visual reminder of her future goals and aspirations. Because of the careful attention and care of the committee volunteers, Estelle was able to see a positive path forward through new skills and a clearer vision for her future.

*not actual name

-YJC Volunteer





The Difference of a Lifetime

When I started In the Lead, I was 20 years old in my fourth year of grade 12. I didn't see much of a future for myself and was surprised at my nomination letter; that people could see me in such a positive way.

During In the Lead, I spent time learning about my inherent worth as a person, which led me to believe I could dream bigger than I had been. I learned if I worked hard, there were few limits to what I could achieve in my life.

In the Lead helped me build the confidence I needed to apply to my Bachelor of Social Work program and they still help me with my education, most recently by giving me a practicum placement.

In the Lead changed my life and I contribute my success in university to being in the program. I would not be the person I am without this program and I am grateful every day for the path this program has helped me pave for myself.

- Sam Pigeau (They/Them), Past ITL Participant



I was a part of In the Lead nearly a decade ago - at that time, I felt lost in the world. I had been struggling with school, my relationships, my self-image, and my understanding of purpose.

In the Lead turned everything around for me. I was supported in discovering my strengths and felt confident enough to lower my walls and come out of my shell. I became inspired to create something out of my life.

Since finishing In the Lead, I have graduated from high school, SAIT, and the University of Calgary - where I earned my Bachelor's Degree in Communication and Media Studies, bought a house with my partner of 9 years, and have launched my career journey with CYJS.

I am so incredibly grateful for In the Lead. This program shaped me in many ways - I truly don't think I would be where I am today without it.

- Morgan McLeod (She/They), Past ITL Participant



The Difference of a Lifetime



I started In the Lead the fall of 2013 and graduated from ITL February of 2015. Being part of something bigger than myself gave me perspective on life, encouraging differences and not to judge based on what is on the cover. Learning to self-reflect and feel good about helping people has helped mold me into the person I am.

Years later, I have since graduated University with a Business Degree, I am completing my SCMP designation, and am working in Vancouver, BC. The positivity and confidence In the Lead encouraged, resonates in my day to day life in all aspects.

In the Lead and Calgary Youth Justice Society gave 17 year old Sebastian the ability to feel included and have a positive influence. To my fellow grads, keep making the difference we were meant to make; no contribution too small, no goal too big.

- Sebastian Castillo (He/Him), Past ITL Participant

10 years ago, before In the Lead, I wasn't making good choices. I felt insignificant to others and had very little hope for my future. I experienced a lot of internal conflict because my behaviours didn't align with my values.

ITL changed my mindset. 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.

Since finishing ITL, I have learned to see my own self-worth and live a life that aligns with my core values. I graduated from high school, was the first person in my family to receive a Bachelor's degree, and have broken the cycle of poverty.

I never would've thought that 10 years later I'd have the opportunity to work with ITL and contribute back to a program that once did so much for me. I wouldn't be the person I am today if it wasn't for ITL and I will forever be grateful for the program.

- Amanda Ervin (She/Her), Past ITL Participant





VOLUNTEERS WHO
MADE MEANINGFUL
CONNECTIONS WITH
YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR
COMMUNITY:

276

HOURS INVESTED:

**13,333
HOURS**



Volunteers with Calgary Youth Justice Society are changing the lives of young people in our communities every day, and in the process, they are changed too.

Here's what a few of our volunteers had to say about their experience:

"The biggest takeaway of participating in YJC's is that youth are diverse, and valuable, and that they are defined by much more than their circumstances if you give them a safe and honest place to open up with you. It is a privilege to do this work."

- YJC Volunteer

"Being involved with the Youth Justice Committees has made me feel more connected to my community. It has enabled me to be in a position to help kids who have found themselves in trouble move forward in a positive and meaningful way. I have also enjoyed working alongside other individuals in my community toward positive change and direct impact as opposed to apathy or judgment."

- YJC Volunteer

"I've learned that we all need each other, and coaching is valuable for everyone to learn, share, and be part of each other's lives. We thrive when we support and guide one another. By embracing interdependence and coaching, we can grow together, contribute to each other's development, and create a caring community."

- YJC Volunteer

"Implementing strength-based leadership in my personal and professional life has been really impactful, and resulted almost immediately in more positive, supportive relationships with family and coworkers, and is something I will carry forward in my life."

- ITL Coach

THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR INCREDIBLE COMMUNITY PARTNERS.

Here at CYJS, we cherish community connection and strive to foster a positive relationship between the youth we work with and their communities. Our community partners mean so much to us and are an integral part of achieving this goal. Their support not only helps us as an organization, but shows youth that there are people out there who truly care about them and their wellbeing.

The community partners we work with provide young people with the opportunity to understand the importance of giving back, helping others, and making positive choices. Whether it is through programming, volunteer work, or sponsorships, our community partners are invaluable. Each partner helps shape a more positive, caring and nurturing environment where young people can thrive.

We are truly grateful for our community partners and their continued support; thank you for believing in our mission and our youth. Together we are making a difference, not only in the lives of young people, but in our community as a whole. We look forward to expanding our impact with each of you by our side.

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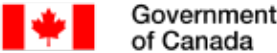
INDIVIDUALS

Aasen, Michael
 Batool, Saadia
 Baxter, Meaghan
 Bergen, Chase
 Bulman, Patrick
 Campbell, Beverly
 Floreani, Elvis
 Flynn, Mark
 Gourlay, Traci
 Grover, Karen
 Harris, Chelsea
 Latiff, Lyndsay
 Lynch-Proctor, Kim
 Marshall, Megan
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 McVeigh, Cathryn
 Moroz, Krista
 Mortenson, Lutina
 Pattanaik, Bhagabat
 Patterson, Alana

Penner, Rita
 Phelps, Candice
 Rogers, Kendra
 Simon, Arvin
 Stewart, Wayne
 Tamura, Sharlene
 Trafford, Susan
 Tsang Family
 Vandersteen, Jamie
 VanGastel, Rob
 Whitter, Brenda
 Williamson, Kaylee
 Wilson, Dick and Nancy
 Yardley, Kim
 Zimmerman, Carrie

IN MEMORIAM

Tanya Munroe
 Tegan Carmichael Legacy
 Fund
 Ronald Walter Reed



OUR TEAM

Calgary Youth Justice Society has an amazing team of dedicated staff and volunteers who are truly passionate about our cause.

AT YOUR SERVICE ARE:

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Amanda Lottermoser	Program Lead, In the Lead
Amanda Ervin	Program Lead, In the Lead
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Danae Pritchard	Program Coordinator, In the Lead
Alex Wan	Program Coordinator, In the Lead
Melody Clarke	Program Coordinator, In the Lead
Longar Abiem	Program Support, In the Lead
Morgan McLeod	Marketing and Communications Coordinator
Tanya Leukefeld	Operations Coordinator, Calgary Youth Justice Committee Program
Kelly Moriarity	Program Assistant, Calgary Youth Justice Committee Program
Courtney Bailly	Community Engagement Coordinator, Youth Justice Committee Program
Erik Birke	Community Engagement Coordinator, Youth Justice Committee Program
Rob Van Gastel	Law Enforcement Liaison, Youth Justice Committee Program
Mike Yanko	Agency Volunteer



CALGARY YOUTH
JUSTICE SOCIETY

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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

cyjs.ca



@intheleadyyyc



@calgaryyouthjusticecommittees



Calgary Youth Justice Society



Calgary Youth Justice Society