



2023 Business Plan

REPORT BACK



INTRODUCTION

REACH Edmonton is a highly-trusted organization with a proven history of bringing together community, service agencies and government to get things done, with the ultimate aim of preventing violence to create safe communities. REACH leverages its extensive connections across the city, the province and the globe to get the right people to the table, to collaboratively address complex problems and make communities safer. REACH was created by the City of Edmonton in 2010 to do this work in a nimble and efficient way.

Issues that affect safety in Edmonton touch multiple sectors and systems. By facilitating partnerships with a wide variety of stakeholders, existing resources are leveraged to tackle safety issues in innovative and cost-effective ways.

Over the past year, REACH's work continued to be guided by its five strategic pillars:

Safe and Caring Communities

Building Communities Where All Belong

Strengthening Partnerships

Strengthening Trust in Communities

Strengthening Coalitions and Partnerships for Social Impact

Over the past year, REACH expanded staffing levels to meet the increased workloads of staff in every department, which is itself a reflection of the emerging needs of the community.

REACH continues to successfully do its complex work because of the trust that has been earned in the community and with its funders. In 2023, the City of Edmonton increased funding to expand capacity to better meet demand through the addition of new staff and vehicles to 24/7 Crisis Diversion, and the Government of Alberta asked REACH to convene the creation of the new Alberta Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons (AOCTIP). Other highlights included collaboration with the Rotary Club of Edmonton around Indigenization, and international involvement and exchange with Peace In Our Cities.

In 2023, REACH showed that it continues to be worthy of the trust placed in the organization by partners, collaborators, funders and local communities.

24/7 CRISIS DIVERSION

The 24/7 Crisis Diversion program helps people experiencing non-emergency crisis to get the support they need in the moment, freeing up police and emergency medical services to respond to more critical events. In early 2023, 24/7 Crisis Diversion mobilized two additional teams, bringing the total number of teams on the street over 24 hours up to eight from six. An additional team brought the total to nine in November. At Canadian Mental Health Association, 211 increased the number of staff available to answer Crisis Diversion calls on the dedicated 211 + press 3 line.

All these additions were welcome given that the demand for service continued to increase through 2023. Throughout the year, teams were involved with 55,115 individual client interactions (including dispatched response as well as proactive engagement), an increase of 23% over the previous year. In total, Crisis Diversion teams were dispatched 33,605 times, an increase of 24% over 2022.

Updates were made to the new 24/7 App which allows 211 staff to enter data into the same database as mobile teams. The updated app was launched on April 3, allowing for more streamlined dispatching and centralized data collection.

The 24/7 Steering Committee expanded to include representation from the business community, Native Counselling Services of Alberta, Edmonton Police Service (EPS) and the 911 communications centres for Emergency Medical Services, EPS and Edmonton Fire Rescue Services. This larger group met quarterly to discuss challenges and gaps in the community and strategize improved ways for Crisis Diversion to support.

REACH worked with an evaluation team to identify updated measurable outcomes that are clearly defined and can be directly linked with program activities, which will contribute to the evaluation framework. With the support of the evaluation team, the 24/7 Crisis Diversion Program completed an updated Systems Based Theory of Change which outlines the context in which it operates.

A partnership with PALcares, through a grant from the Edmonton Community Foundation, assisted with targeted data analysis and cleaning, with the goal of improved storytelling and reporting. The process to undertake a new Social Return on Investment for the program and its impact within the Edmonton social service ecosystem was initiated and will continue over the next three years with Catalyst Research & Development. Through a service agreement with Canadian Mental Health Association and PALcares, REACH received a developed data dictionary, data analyses and recommendations for app and data system improvements. The team worked to implement these improvements throughout the year.

In an effort to work towards decreasing wait times and responding to more Crisis Diversion calls, a team of front line staff and supervisors from each partner joined a working committee to develop shared program procedures, training and transition plans to support program operations. This team finalized new policies, procedures and training material in preparation to reduce the need for call consultations between 211 and mobile teams. Training of the new process took place in December in preparation of a January 2024 launch.

In December 2023, a policy regarding Displaced Encampment Calls was established to support community members displaced by encampment clearings coordinated by the City of Edmonton and Edmonton Police Service. At the request of the City, 24/7 Crisis Diversion teams were available on required days to support transportation and service connection needs of displaced community members during encampment removals.

Additionally, the 24/7 Crisis Diversion program continued to develop and foster relationships with communities beyond Edmonton agencies including Peace in Our Cities and Community & Social Impact Regina by hosting ride-alongs with each to offer first hand understanding of the program. Ride-alongs were also hosted with local agencies, the Mayor, some City Councillors, and the City Manager in 2023. 24/7 Crisis Diversion was also a participating member with the International Crisis Response Association.

24/7 Crisis Diversion: Highlights

<h1>55,115</h1> <p>Total client interaction (25% increase)</p>	<h1>33,605</h1> <p>Team dispatches (24% increase)</p>
<h1>9 Teams</h1> <p>Available over 24 hours (+3 from the previous year)</p>	<h1>New Procedures</h1> <p>Shared among stakeholders for increased efficiency</p>



ADDICTIONS DON'T DISCRIMINATE (ADD)

Addictions Don't Discriminate is an in-person, interactive exhibit that takes participants on the journeys of real people whose lives have been impacted by addiction. The exhibit is designed to inspire understanding, empathy and action.

In 2023, ADD was displayed in Medicine Hat, Lloydminster, Calgary, Westlock, High Level, Peace River, St. Paul, Lac La Biche and Edmonton.

A search is underway for funding to print a second exhibit and to cover the cost of transporting the exhibit to rural areas, which will allow REACH to help reduce the stigma of addiction in even more communities. Transportation costs are the main barrier to communities accessing the exhibit.

COALITIONS CREATING EQUITY (CCE)

CCE brings together regional community networks, organizations and individuals across Alberta to collaboratively address issues of discrimination, inequity and racism. While this initiative was unfunded in 2023, some key work continued.

Throughout the year, relationships were built to increase capacity between the Alberta Hate Crimes Commission and stakeholders, such as the Office for the Prevention of Violence, John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights and others. The board successfully recruited members from BIPOC communities and began collaborating with the Office for the Prevention of Violence and law enforcement around elevating [report recommendations](#).

Additionally, REACH provided support to a CCE working group through access to video production, as well as event promotions and communications that developed a modular training curriculum titled, Understanding and Responding to Hate, Discrimination and Racism on the Frontlines. This project was finalized as part of a community-based research project in collaboration with Shiloh Centre for Multicultural Roots and CCE Edmonton. Four video training modules and the accompanying curriculum were launched at an event on October 5, and made available online. These educational materials continue to be shared to create awareness and equip communities to effectively address hate, discrimination and racism in Edmonton.

CCE: Highlight

4 Free video training modules launched online

COMBATTING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Safer Way Out and Sexual Exploitation Working Group (SEWG)

The Safety Network Coordinator (SNC) position, funded by Safer Way Out and staffed by the Centre to End All Sexual Exploitation (CEASE), continued to support victims of human trafficking. The SNC provided support such as access to basic needs, navigating systems, and, if the victim was ready, reporting to Alberta Law Enforcement Response Team's human trafficking unit. With Safer Way Out set to end in March 2024 and data strongly supporting the value of this role, the Government of Alberta has committed to continuing to fund the position.

In 2023, Safer Way Out hosted training for frontline workers about the impacts of sex trafficking on 2SLGBTQ+ communities. As well, the project presented and received feedback on guidelines for shelters interested in participating in the Coordinated Community Response, to support victims in accessing shelter space that can meet the unique needs of individuals who are being trafficked.

An online training module is being designed for shelter workers to help educate them about working with survivors of human trafficking. The project is exploring potential platforms to deliver the training.

The project developed content on human trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation for the Alberta Gaming Liquor and Cannabis' Pro-serve and Pro-protect training programs and Best Bar None accreditation. The content was created in partnership with Action Coalition on Trafficking Alberta and #NotInMyCity.

The Project Advisory Circle, made up of human trafficking survivors, shared their feedback with the Canadian Centre to End Human Trafficking, on prospective policies related to the needs of human trafficking survivors regarding housing.

The Sexual Exploitation Working Group paused for some months due to a leadership change at the Centre to End All Sexual Exploitation, which plays a lead role in SEWG. This provided an opportunity to re-envision the purpose of SEWG, which re-launched in December with a focus on raising awareness of sexual exploitation. New members were also recruited to the group for 2024, including Native Counselling Services of Alberta. Activities of SEWG moving forward will centre on an annual Proclamation of Sexual Exploitation Awareness Week in May, and a biennial conference.

COUNTERING HATE-MOTIVATED VIOLENCE

Organization for the Prevention of Violence (OPV)

The OPV is a community and expert-led non-government organization devoted to understanding and preventing hate-motivated violence.

In 2023, OPV presentations reached 1,150 people, ranging from local law enforcement to the Canadian Association of Social Workers. The OPV also worked with local partners and stakeholders to design follow-up training for the Resiliency Project's Preventing Hate and Extremism education series on identifying and responding to hate and other forms of targeted violence. This training will continue in 2024.

The OPV is emerging as a global leader in developing effective, evidence-based intervention strategies for all forms of targeted violence. The OPV's Evolve program maintained an active caseload between 60 and 70 individuals characterized as either involved in some form of targeted violence (63%) or individuals negatively impacted by violence (37%). A noteworthy development was the number of people in the 'mixed' or 'other' category.

In the summer, a major report by members of the OPV was published in the Journal for Deradicalization titled Qollateral: The Impact of QAnon on Loved Ones and the Potential for P/CVE Programs to Help. Other research highlights included a study on hate crime in Alberta, a comprehensive assessment of online organizing and propaganda material, and articles on rehabilitation and reintegration programming for women and children. The OPV's website continued to grow as an authoritative source for information on hate-motivated violence and violence prevention, with more than 400 report downloads.

Design of an internal monitoring and evaluation tool is ongoing. REACH continues to provide financial administration support and mentorship to OPV.

OPV: Highlights

1,150

People were reached by OPV presentations

60-70

Active caseloads open at any given time

DON'T CLICK

Don't Click is a youth-led, online hate and extremism prevention initiative that gives people the tools to handle negativity online. REACH staff oversee the project, while students are empowered to lead.

In 2023, Don't Click reached approximately 900 students in 12 schools and 11 community youth groups. The feedback received from both schools and students has been overwhelmingly positive, underscoring the impact of these efforts.

The project intentionally recruited youth with BIPOC backgrounds. Don't Click youth leaders made strides in building confidence and acquiring knowledge on combatting hate while assuming leadership roles within their communities. Notably, they completed and delivered a PowerPoint on empathy in November. In December, they met with an evaluator who provided valuable insights on effectively studying survey results and initiating the evaluation process for the forthcoming evaluation report.

Heading into 2024, an opportunity to bring the Don't Click project to universities has emerged, with discussions to explore this set for January. The City of Edmonton's Neighbourhood Empowerment Team is using some of the Don't Click materials for digital literacy in their upcoming hate crime education series.

Don't Click: Highlights

900+

Students reached across schools and youth groups

Universities

Are the next focus for 2024



DOWNTOWN SAFETY AND KNOWLEDGE-SHARING

REACH played an advisory role in the governance and operation of the Healthy Streets Operations Centre (HSOC), along with Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society, Homeward Trust and other stakeholders. HSOC addresses downtown safety through close collaboration with agencies such as Alberta Health Services Paramedics, Edmonton Police Service, Edmonton Fire Rescue Services and community partners.

REACH also continued to coordinate efforts with the Integrated Call and Evaluation Dispatch Initiative and the Downtown Recovery Coalition. Data from initiatives like YEG Ambassadors and 24/7 Crisis Diversion was shared with HSOC and others in the spirit of collaboration.

When it comes to downtown safety and other aspects of community safety and well-being, sharing what works and what doesn't is important. While REACH is Edmonton-based, it brokered knowledge exchange provincially, nationally and internationally through networks such as the [Canadian Centre for Safer Communities](#), [Alberta Community Crime Prevention Association Conference](#) and [Peace In Our Cities \(PIOC\)](#).

Edmonton is the only PIOC member city in Canada, represented by REACH. In June, members gathered in Columbia to learn from each other, and in the fall REACH hosted PIOC and a cohort from Bristol, England working to recreate the REACH model. A local outcome from this visit was the exploration of new youth programming centred on risk reduction through boxing therapy. REACH was also featured in a PIOC [report on Offices of Violence Prevention](#).



NEIGHBOURHOOD ORGANIZING INITIATIVE (NOI)

Through NOI, REACH supports the convening of community partners, encourages activation of people and spaces, collaboration, and facilitates dialogue around safety issues in several neighbourhoods and geographic communities in Edmonton. Over the past year, NOI has aimed to support neighbourhoods that it previously had a relationship with, while identifying new opportunities to support within its capacity. Work continues on drafting and refining the NOI Equity Framework or criteria for how it offers support to neighbourhoods with an interest in NOI resources.

NOI continues to support the process of defining a Terms of Reference for Chinatown Safety Council (CSC) to help define roles and responsibilities for the area. The group will convene in 2024 to re-envision the goals of the CSC following changes in the safety landscape of the area with the decommissioning of encampments that took place in late 2023.

After receiving extensive bridging support from NOI and the City, the Leefield Safety Council decided to transition to project-based work with NOI, putting aside the original aim of creating an ongoing safety council due to the lack of interest in the community to maintain a formal safety council addressing a broad range of issues.

NOI was invited to engage in Ward Arniq in collaboration with Councillor Erin Rutherford by creating a survey for the community as a first step before possibly moving towards a safety council. The survey focused on safety and well-being for the neighbourhoods of Inglewood, Woodcroft, Sherbrooke, Prince Charles, Dovercourt and Crossroads Business Improvement Area. This was the largest survey of the NOI project to date, with results to be presented to the five communities in early 2024.

The results and recommendations of the Mill Woods Transit Survey's 52 responses were presented to Councillor Keren Tang, who committed to implementing some of the quick wins with the mall's new owners and to follow up in 2024 for another safety engagement.

Light Up McCauley successfully received funding from the City's Neighbourhood Revitalization Program for a second installment of the project which provided free motion detectors and decorative lighting to McCauley residents to improve the perception of safety. The first installment saw 100 residents accept the lighting equipment in 2022. In the fall of 2023, another 134 residents received lighting. NOI was the fiscal agent for this project, ownership of which has now been passed to the McCauley Community League.

NOI worked with the Green Alleys project in Alberta Avenue to create a series of short videos encouraging residents to “Make the Call” to 311 and non-emergency police telephone line about issues in the neighbourhood, which can improve the accuracy of City statistics, which could affect resources in the future. The videos were launched at an event at The Carrot Community Arts Coffee House. Additionally, NOI contributed to the alley’s beautification efforts by sponsoring the painting of several streets and participated in discussions by supporting Arts on the Ave, which organized gatherings for Alberta Avenue residents. This initiative offered a platform for the community to discuss concerns related to safety and well-being.

After a shooting near two Civida buildings that are largely populated by vulnerable immigrants from Africa and Ukraine, NOI began working with the affordable housing provider, Civida, and its building residents to offer supports. This has resulted in a dedicated program funded by the City of Edmonton’s Community Safety and Well-Being grant in the O’day-min Village to encourage tenant interaction and communal activities.

OUT OF SCHOOL TIME (OST)

The Out of School Time (OST) Collaborative is a partnership of community groups, community leaders, service delivery agencies and local institutions, who have been working together since 2008. The goal of the Collaborative is to ensure that quality OST programming is available to vulnerable children and youth.

The OST Funding Grant once again provided \$125,000 to OST groups to provide programming to vulnerable children and youth during Summer 2023. With the support of this grant and other training and capacity building opportunities provided by the OST Collaborative, programming was provided to 773 children and youth.

In partnership with the City of Edmonton and the Public, Catholic and Francophone school boards, the Joint-Use Summer Access program provides community organizations with access to local school spaces during the summer months. Through this program, OST provided 16 groups with 34 program sites, and supported programming for more than 2,000 vulnerable children and youth across the city.

The Child and Youth Services Map continued to be an incredible resource for families and community partners, updated five times per year with information on OST programs from across the city, and available in English and French. This project was funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

In partnership with many community and settlement organizations, REACH has been involved in efforts to build capacity and identify gaps among youth-serving agencies in particular. Community partners are brought together to discuss barriers and challenges, and identify areas of need for additional supports and training. In response to needs identified by community groups, a grant writing workshop was offered in partnership with the Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations for groups to increase their capacity for funding.

Our work with various community partners to enhance organizational and community capacity for supporting vulnerable children and youth is ongoing. We are consistently developing new partnerships and our work with the Middle Years and Natural Supports frameworks continues to develop.

The 2023 OST Conference held on June 22 was the first in-person conference held since the pandemic. This year’s conference offered a variety of learning opportunities including: supporting the mental health of children and youth, inclusive play and adapted physical activity, strategies and approaches to mindfulness activities, how to engage youth with reading, and more. OST service providers were once again offered accessible, subsidized First Aid training for their summer program staff, ensuring child and youth safety in their programs and enhancing staff skills and capacity.

OST: Highlights

\$125,000 Provided by OST for children’s programming	773 Children and youth involved with OST programs
34 Spaces Provided to 16 groups for summer programs	First Aid Training Was subsidized at the 2023 OST Conference



REACH OUTREACH

Outreach actively engages with the community in person and virtually in addressing systemic issues through education and awareness. REACH volunteers are often shared with community partners and stakeholders in this work.

Here are just a few of the ways REACH volunteers supported in 2023:

- Assisted with the Mill Woods Resource Fair, organized by MLA Christina Gray.
- Provided bottled water to the Edmonton Young Offender Centre and Niginan Housing Ventures.
- One REACH volunteer took it upon himself to organize meals for houseless community members at Hope Mission. This work continues monthly with the support of other volunteers.

The REACH volunteer database was updated with volunteers' skills and passions that can lead to better volunteer matching within REACH and partner organizations' activities. The volunteer team currently has about 50 members.

Outreach made connections with local French African athlete Kenny M'Pindou, who would like to be a champion in the community for REACH.

In 2023, virtual outreach moved to the new YEG Reconnect web portal and Facebook page for the local social sector to connect and stay informed on upcoming events and learning opportunities.

Please note: Additional information about virtual outreach can be found in the Resource Connect and YEG Reconnect section of this report.



REACH TRAINING

REACH works to offer necessary training to frontline staff from non-profit organizations that they would otherwise have a hard time accessing. REACH offers training to partners at a subsidized and more accessible level, which helps them develop practices and strategies for their work, including tools to better serve their clients and community. In 2023, nine public training opportunities were offered to the community on a variety of topics such as: mitigating bias, recognizing micro-inequities in the workplace and working with Muslim clients, to name just a few.

REACH connects trainers to the resources and content they need to successfully design and deliver their training, and helps connect trainers to relevant and engaged audiences in the community.

In addition to the nine training opportunities that were organized and designed in collaboration with the facilitators, REACH Training also supported learning through other initiatives such as Addictions Don't Discriminate, Allies For Youth and the Sexual Exploitation Working Group.

REACH continued to provide bias awareness and anti-racism training with the Centre for Race and Culture.

Using these training opportunities to support capacity building within organizations and to affect systems change remains a priority for REACH. Community organizations continue to request the Blanket Exercise, in support of Truth and Reconciliation. In 2023, this specific training was offered 10 times and was provided to various groups of educators ranging from elementary to post-secondary. This training helped educators to have positive and informed interactions and meaningful conversations with their students.

In 2024, REACH Training will offer new training opportunities including:

- **Rethinking Our Thoughts**, with Canadian Mental Health Association (Recovery College)
- **Mental Health and Well-being Sessions** (with Wellness Works Canada)
- **Mental Health First Aid Certification** (with Wellness Works Canada)

Please note: Additional education on addiction can be found in the Addictions Don't Discriminate section of this report.

REACH IMMIGRANT & REFUGEE INITIATIVES (RIRI)

RIRI works with newcomer communities to help them identify their gaps in knowledge and understanding, in order to connect them with learning opportunities that help address their concerns and build capacity. Additionally, this work often results in closer connections between the community and various service agencies. In 2023, this included education about citizenship, supports for queer and trans refugees, Canadian citizenship, addictions, family violence, housing and creating spaces for men to connect.

In 2023, the Police and Youth Engagement Program (PYEP), which was previously run by RIRI, was not held, as Edmonton Police Service Community Engagement continues to explore how to move forward with the program now that it is in their care.

In total, eight community information sessions were held in the community throughout the year. Specific sessions were held for men, women and youth, and included topics such as food security, English conversation classes and safety and well-being.

REACH also provided support to the Influencing Change committee as they explored funding options through the Law Society to help newcomers with issues related to access to justice.

Throughout the year, RIRI supported communities in having a voice to collaborate with landlords and rental systems to address safety issues in the newcomer community which is vulnerable to gang and youth violence. Solutions are being explored with support from REACH.

Parents were given supports and information about concerns they had around school curriculum, and misinformation spreading in the community about gender diversity in schools.

RIRI was instrumental in connecting Civida tenants to Neighbourhood Organizing Initiative (NOI) staff to create community-building activities and spaces for residents struggling with fear after a shooting in their affordable housing communities. Additionally, REACH and the Africa Centre hosted an information session to support that community on the topic of trauma.

RESOURCE CONNECT AND YEG RECONNECT

Resource Connect is a biennial event that brings together non-profit agencies and service providers in Edmonton and area to share their programs and services. One primary purpose is to foster collaboration and networking among non-profit organizations. Agencies can build relationships and identify opportunities for joint projects or initiatives to better serve the community. The event allows the sharing of resources, best practices, innovative approaches and lessons learned.

To extend this work to support community connections year-round, YEG Reconnect was created to connect, engage, empower and collaborate across the City of Edmonton. This ongoing work helps ensure Edmontonians are served by a thriving non-profit sector and also facilitates partnerships and connections to other REACH initiatives.

In 2023, YEG Reconnect expanded its activities to include monthly Evenings of Presentations by community agencies. This gave agencies a chance to share their work at live events, which were also livestreamed and recorded. Agencies were then able to use that professionally-produced recording for their own communication. Throughout the year, there were eight events, which featured presentations from 24 community agencies.

YEG Reconnect Quarterly Gatherings were another new project to come out of the 2022 Resource Connect. Surveyed exhibitors said they wanted more networking and collaboration opportunities. As a result, this group of over 90 agencies was invited to attend quarterly virtual meetings to discuss gaps in services and community challenges, and look for opportunities to support each other.

As the YEG Reconnect project grew, a new [website](#) was launched in the fall of 2023. This website gives community agencies a place to connect and share ideas, while also hosting all of the recordings of the Evenings of Presentations.

The next Resource Connect event will be held at Commonwealth Recreation Centre in October 2024.

YEG Reconnect Highlights

24 Agencies presented across 8 networking events

yegreconnect.ca
launched

Resource Connect
2024 in planning

SOLOSS

Soloss is a grassroots, community-based mental health prototype that meets people where they're at. Soloss received funding from the City of Edmonton, through the Recover fund, to complete its next iteration in 2023, focused on encampments.

Soloss' presence in encampments lasted through the summer until the end of September. The summer cohort featured 20 new members, 10 Losstenders and 10 Circle of Support members.

Soloss' recruitment and hiring processes are low-barrier, offer agency and allow people to apply for roles in multiple ways. Most applicants used videos, recordings and writing, which applicants said was very positive and refreshing. Questions about qualifications were purposefully omitted in order to focus on a desire to support community, experience learning, and be part of a prototype.

All Indigenous applicants were onboarded as Losstenders, as ethnography reflected that it was important to people who live in encampments to see that they could, themselves, be Losstenders.

Sharers and Losstenders experienced more than 50 interactions with Edmontonians who live in encampments, six of those people on a weekly basis as their camps had not been dismantled. Losstenders accepted the fact that most interactions will be single experiences, and created beautiful, gentle exchanges of time, listening and unexpected creative moments in these encounters.

Soloss had three pop-up events with the structure that was designed to welcome folks in encampments to add their own art, poetry, etc. to the moveable space. The structure had over 60 visitors over the month of September. This space offered delicious food, music, art making and listening. The hope was that rather than Losstenders going into peoples' camps, they could also invite folks into their space.

Also in 2023, street outreach workers notified Soloss of a death and asked for support to notify the family, as they were unable to do so in a timely manner and Losstenders had spent time with the family over the summer. These are just a few examples of the humanizing interactions Losstenders had with Edmonton's most vulnerable community members this year.

Soloss presented to the Community Standards and Neighbourhoods Branch at City of Edmonton. This was an offering to the branch which included Peace Officers on private property, Park Rangers and Bylaw enforcement. Feedback was

incredibly positive and the Soloss team is hopeful for ongoing partnership and support from this area in 2024.

[High-level findings of the impact of Soloss](#) in encampments has been provided to the City of Edmonton.

The program will continue to focus on encampments in 2024 in partnership with the City of Edmonton and InWithForward. Civida and REACH (through Soloss and the Neighbourhood Organizing Initiative) are also continuing to explore further ways it can support facilitating a stronger sense of safety as well as support social housing residents in connecting with neighbours who reside in encampments.

WrapED

WrapED aims to offer strength-based and culturally-relevant support, prevention and intervention to youth and their families to address root causes of social disorder, including supports for young people affected by high-risk lifestyles, who want to begin a new, healthier life journey.

WrapED supported 43 youth in 2023. Of these, 12 transitioned out of the initiative positively and 19 new youth were referred to the program.

WrapED had significant underspending due to understaffing and the Government of Alberta has approved and amended the agreement to extend the funding until the end of June 2024.

At the end of 2023, a collaborative evaluation with the RealMe program in Calgary was completed and is under review by the collaborative.

A “White Paper” was written to highlight needs related to the Youth Housing Upon Release program that is connected to WrapED for youth exiting the justice system. Senior level leaders from partner organizations will reconvene to determine next steps.

REACH’s experience as a convener in the community for gang issues led to the invitation to participate on the Steering Committee for the City of Edmonton’s Building Safer Communities Fund. This allowed REACH to work closely with the City in the knowledge development and planning phase of the program in 2023.

WrapED: Highlight

43 Youth supported throughout 2023

YEG AMBASSADORS

The YEG Ambassadors team has collaborated closely with the Business Improvement Areas (BIAs), business owners, social agencies, residents and community organizations to create connections, understand area needs and support businesses in alignment with goals of promoting economic development and community safety for the areas they support.

In 2023, YEG Ambassadors was extended to include additional small-to-medium sized Business Improvement Areas in Edmonton for a total of five partners. The project now includes the North Edge Business Association, Edmonton Chinatown BIA, Stony Plain Road Business Association, Crossroads BIA and Alberta Avenue Business Association. The program has continued to translate project specific information to additional languages to better communicate with businesses with language barriers.

A half-day strategic planning session was conducted in November to establish the vision for the newly expanded program, and objectives are set to be finalized in early 2024.

REACH continues to provide essential support in the areas of human resources, finance, communications and other resources, contributing significantly to the program's success.



EMERGING WORK

A number of projects related to anti-racism were started in 2023 in response to emerging needs in the community:

- The Centre for Race and Culture began leading an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Peacemaking Circle with the Gateway Association in November. REACH was involved in supporting this work.
- RIRI began exploring the possibility of a program in schools and communities to provide presentations related to community safety issues, with the aim of building capacity in ethnocultural communities and bridging the gaps between systems and communities.
- REACH, the Centre for Race and Culture, End Poverty Edmonton, and the Africa Centre began exploring ways to address women and gender equity, with a focus on youth.
- REACH also started to explore funding to support newcomer women economically so that women can be natural supports for the youth in their communities.

In July, the Government of Alberta announced the creation of the Alberta Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons (AOCTIP). The Office will work across multiple sectors to address human trafficking, with the voice of survivors informing each step. Along with Native Counselling Services of Alberta and #NotInMyCity, REACH was entrusted with establishing the Office over the next two years, in close partnership with the Government of Alberta. This work will include recruiting a board of directors and an Operational Advisory Committee, hiring staff and engaging survivors on the development of the Office.

Building on the work of the Alberta Human Trafficking Taskforce's work and [The Reading Stone Report](#), ongoing engagement with stakeholders is helping to get a sense of gaps in services and needs on the issue of human trafficking. This includes sex, labour and organ trafficking.



2023 Business Plan

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