

Transforming Alberta's Reading Landscape

CALGARY READS EXPANDS OPPORTUNITIES
FOR CHILDREN TO READ, LEARN AND GROW



calgary **reads**

REPORT TO COMMUNITY 2016-17

A Message from Steacy and Vicki

Uplifting tenacity moves mountains

At Calgary Reads, we're driven by the firm belief that every child deserves the gift of reading. It's been the focus of our work since we started 16 years ago.

In 2016-17, we experienced another great year of growth and accomplishments. Our primary focus was to enrich existing relationships while seeking out new ones that can strengthen our organization and expand our impact. We accomplished that in a variety of ways:

- Expanded the Alberta Reads Network into new communities and more schools across the province
- Created more inspiring reading spaces for families by opening our new Children's Reading Place
- Energized the childhood literacy movement through strong partnerships with 90 individuals, foundations, businesses and community groups
- Took on a greater leadership role in early literacy advocacy by establishing a Calgary chapter of the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading



None of the gains we make come easy. They take passion and persistence. But most of all, success takes many hands, many minds and many kind souls working together to give all Alberta children the opportunity to become confident and joyful readers.

This year, along with reaching out, we also took time to look inward. We worked with a consulting group to conduct a brand and reputation review to help us take stock of where we are and where we want to go. We received input from educators, donors, community partners, volunteers and parents. They told us what they thought about what we are doing and ways we could do it better. Their feedback was positive and inspirational, and their suggestions will help guide our initiatives in the year ahead.

The process gave us a new way to define our passionate and persistent spirit: uplifting tenacity. We think that's a perfect description of how we face every challenge with a can-do attitude and an open heart.

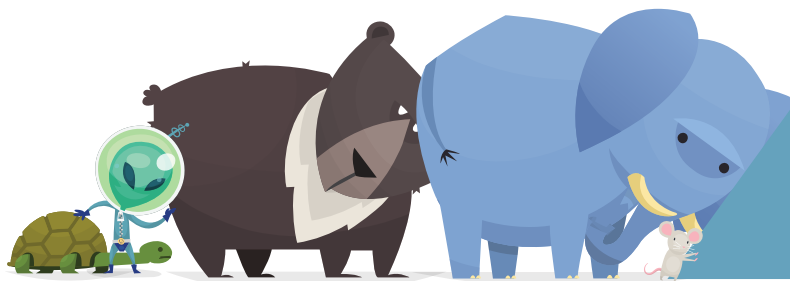
On behalf of the thousands of Alberta children we helped experience the joy of reading in 2016-17, we'd like to say thanks and invite you to join us in the ongoing fight for every child's right to read, learn and grow. Let's do this, together!

*Smiles,
Steacy*

Steacy Collyer
Executive Director

Vicki Reid

Vicki Reid
Board Chair



Our Vision

Planting seeds to help young readers grow

Our goal is to be a catalyst to bring business, education and community groups together to build a thriving community where all children can read with confidence and joy. Everything we do focuses on giving young children more opportunities to become joyful and confident readers.

Our work is helping young children read, learn and grow by:

INCREASING ACCESS: Good readers need good books, so we want to put as many as possible into the hands of children. And we don't just want them to read books, we want them to own books. We gave away nearly 22,000 books this past year through our various school programs and community initiatives.

INCREASING CAPACITY: Every child needs an adult with the will and skill to help them read. We empower parents, caregivers and educators to support and nurture young readers by providing them with literacy resources and programs.

INCREASING ENGAGEMENT: We want to get the message out: reading is fun! Our school and community events are designed to get everyone reading, and enjoying every minute of it. We're also creating more inspiring spaces in the community for children to read and encouraging others to create spaces of their own.

CHANGING VALUES: We are committed to changing how our society values literacy. Let's look at reading not just as a necessary learning skill but also one that enriches our lives and is a treasured part of the human experience.

“Literacy blooms wherever students have access to books they want to read, permission to choose their own and time to get lost in them.”

Nancie Atwell

Educator

Founder, Center for Teaching and Learning

“Members of the Calgary Reads team are so focused and committed on getting the next child hooked on reading. They are relentless in their approach and try it from every single angle. They find as many ways as they can to put books into the hands of children and have someone read with them.”

Phyllis Sawchuk

Volunteer and Interviewee,
Calgary Reads 2017 Brand Review



Our Highlights

Our childhood literacy initiatives blossomed in 2016-17



221

Families who visited the Children's Reading Place in its first two months of operation. We also had visits by 58 children from community groups and schools.

INSPIRING YOUNG READERS AT THE CHILDREN'S READING PLACE

Our new Children's Reading Place opened its doors in June 2017 to great fanfare and an enthusiastic welcome from children, parents, teachers and volunteers. This initiative is about spreading the joy of reading throughout our community. It's based on the simple idea that if you create a comfortable, fun space for children to read, they will. So we did.

We transformed a heritage house in Calgary's Inglewood neighbourhood into a welcoming hub of reading where families, schools and community groups can come to experience the pleasure of curling up with a good book. Children can enjoy some reading time with a caring adult and choose a free book to take home and keep.



Elise gets a reading space of her own

When three-year-old Elise walked into the Children's Reading Place, her face lit up with excitement and wide-eyed wonder. There was so much to see and so many places to explore.

"She connected with the space right away and felt comfortable there, which gave her a great positive association with books and reading," says her mom. "She was so taken with these little spaces and wanted to create that for herself at home."

So Elise's parents transformed her bedroom closet into a reading nook. Now she has a cozy place of her own to crawl into with her favourite books.



128

Schools in seven districts that were members of the Alberta Reads Network in 2016-17.



SCHOOL NETWORK EXPANDS ACROSS ALBERTA

The Alberta Reads Network is now 128 members strong, connecting schools in urban and rural communities across the province. Over the past year, schools in several small communities joined our growing network, which now extends from Nanton to Fort Saskatchewan.

Member schools get access to our reading programs and resources, and this year we're providing them with even more support. A new customized Alberta Reads Network portal offers schools an easy and secure way to access information and content and connect with Calgary Reads literacy coach support.

Our school-based Reading Place initiative will continue to expand this year, increasing community and family engagement with four Reading Place schools and through our Children's Reading Place.

Reading thrives at Cayley School

Students at Cayley School are learning to love reading inside and outside school. The 180-student school is located in the small hamlet of Cayley, Alberta. And since it joined the Alberta Reads Network three years ago, the school has become one of the network's most enthusiastic and committed members.

Students in K-3 get reading support and encouragement through our wee read and Read Up! programs. And the Read2gether program gets the fifth to eighth graders excited about

reading by training them as reading buddies for their younger friends. The school also celebrates reading outside class through special events in the community.

"Since we partnered with Calgary Reads, Cayley School has witnessed continual growth in our reading levels," says the school's principal, Phil Irwin. "Our data from a year-end, division-wide, standardized, diagnostic assessment indicates that our students have made substantial progress in their reading levels."



46%

Of Alberta's young children are developing appropriately in all five measured areas of development, which include language and thinking skills.

Early Child Development Mapping Project, 2014



The Campaign for
**GRADE-LEVEL
READING**

CALGARY JOINS THE PUSH FOR GRADE-LEVEL READING

In 2017, Calgary became the first international community to join the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading (GLR Campaign), a U.S.-based initiative focused on increasing reading proficiency among children in low-income families.

Calgary Reads is one of the driving forces behind the Calgary coalition that includes 14 local organizations. As a GLR Campaign member, our coalition can tap into a network of more than 300 communities sharing research and information on new and better ways to help every child become a successful reader by the end of grade three. That is an important learning milestone and a key predictor of high-school graduation and future success.

In the coming year, we will continue to work through our Community Solutions Action Plan to establish local targets and outcomes, and strengthen the impact of our coalition by bringing in new partners from diverse fields, including public housing.



BIG BOOK SALE DRAWS NEARLY 10,000 SHOPPERS

Our annual CBC Calgary Reads Big Book Sale has been an important part of Calgary's literary landscape for 15 years. Last year's event attracted 9,875 book lovers and gave more than 100,000 donated books new homes.

The book sale is an integral part of our work. It's our major fundraiser, providing financial support for our programs and initiatives throughout the year. It also supports our vision of building a reading community that promotes and celebrates the joy of reading.

\$304,331

The amount of money we raised at the 2017 CBC Calgary Reads Big Book Sale.

This event is a true community effort. We want to thank the many volunteers who donated their time and the thousands of book lovers who saved up books all year to donate to our sale. We also couldn't have done it without the corporate sponsors and donors who supported us and the thousands of shoppers who came out to make the 2017 Big Book Sale another huge success.

One Team

Many hands, hearts and minds working as one



We take a One Team approach to getting things done, and it's the reason our small organization has such an outsized impact on our community. One Team is about pulling different people, organizations, businesses and foundations together to work as one to strengthen childhood literacy. This gives us strength, diversity and an amazing network of caring people who believe all children deserve to experience the benefits that come from reading.

We collaborate with schools, educators and community groups to offer programs, events and resources that nurture a love of reading. We work with community partners like the Calgary Food Bank and other non-profits to provide free books to children and their families. And of course, we couldn't do any of this great work without the support of thousands of individual and group volunteers who share their time and talents with us.

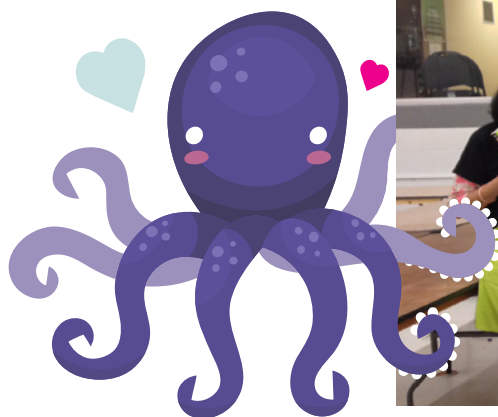
We also play a key role in several collective impact initiatives:

FIRST 2000 DAYS NETWORK: The first 2,000 days in a child's life are a crucial time of rapid brain development. What happens during those early days has a lifelong impact on learning, behaviour and health. Calgary Reads is a member of the First 2000 Days Network, which focuses on linking, aligning and leveraging resources and programs to help all Alberta children learn, grow and thrive by age five.

CAMPAIGN FOR GRADE-LEVEL READING: This campaign builds awareness of how important it is to help children learn to read successfully by grade three. We led a coalition to establish a Calgary chapter, which will focus on making improvements in three key areas: school readiness, summer slide and absenteeism.

NOURISH: We think it's important to nourish a child's mind as well as his or her body. To do that, we're working with Nourish partner agencies, Brown Bagging for Calgary's Kids, NSTEP and Humanity in Practice (h!p). We feed the minds, bodies and spirits of Calgary children by bringing them food, books and fun surprises in the Nourish Van.

Through our many relationships and partnerships, we are igniting a movement to strengthen childhood literacy. We'd like to thank every member of our community for helping us give every child the opportunity to read, learn and grow.



Our Impact

Our numbers add up to more help for young readers

It takes a community to build a reader and our community was bustling in 2016-17.

WE HELPED
3,713
STUDENTS
EXPERIENCE
THE JOY OF
READING.

234

Students who received support through our Read Up! program.

464

Students who attended our Reading Rally events.

3,015

Kindergarten and grade one students who participated in the wee read program.

WE GAVE AWAY
21,757
BOOKS TO
CHILDREN AND
THEIR FAMILIES.

2,135

Books distributed to students in 18 schools through the Good Book Box.

“Reading with confidence and joy is about enriching their lives, opening new worlds for them and helping them get hooked on the feeling you get from reading a great book.”

Susan Long
Principal, Rocky View Schools

1,920

Books distributed to 80 families through the Dolly Parton Imagination Library.

3,944

Books distributed through non-profit partners in the Read with Me program.

928

Books given to children at our seven Reading Rally events.

4,675

Books distributed to community members and agencies through the Second Helpings/Community Access Room.

150

Books distributed at the Children's Reading Place in June. [The total was 500 over the entire summer.]

8,005

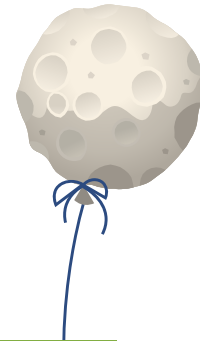
Books given to low-income children through the Calgary Reads Book Bank.



WE HAD SUPPORT FROM
2,670 CORPORATE,
COMMUNITY AND STUDENT
VOLUNTEERS.

151

Corporate and
community
volunteers who
helped at our
Reading Rally events.



26,898

Volunteer hours
delivered through
all our school-based
reading programs.

193

Volunteer tutors who
helped in our Read
Up! program.



948

Volunteers who
received *wee read*
and Read Up!
training.

831

Volunteers who
donated 6,735 hours
to the Big Book Sale.



“Calgary Reads is uniquely positioned to not only offer programs and directly impact children but to also build awareness and create a movement around early literacy.”

Vicki Reid
Board Chair
Calgary Reads

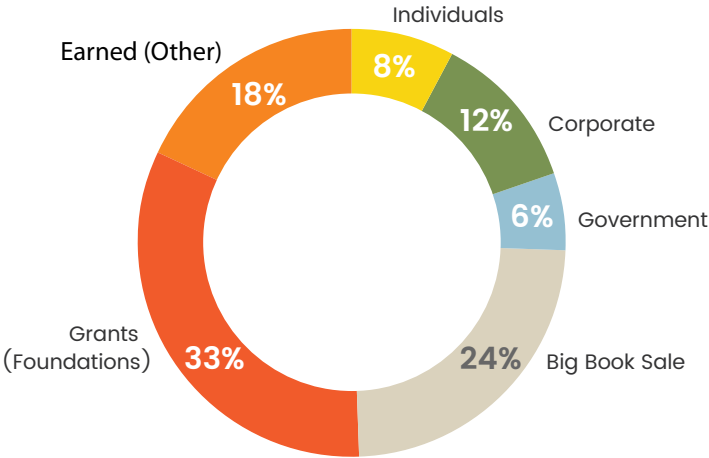
“My kids and I went to the Children’s Reading Place and it exceeded all my expectations. Stunning. Absolutely loved it. The kids spent the afternoon making Reading Places in their closets, which of course means their clothes are now all over their rooms.”

Meghan Delnea
Parent

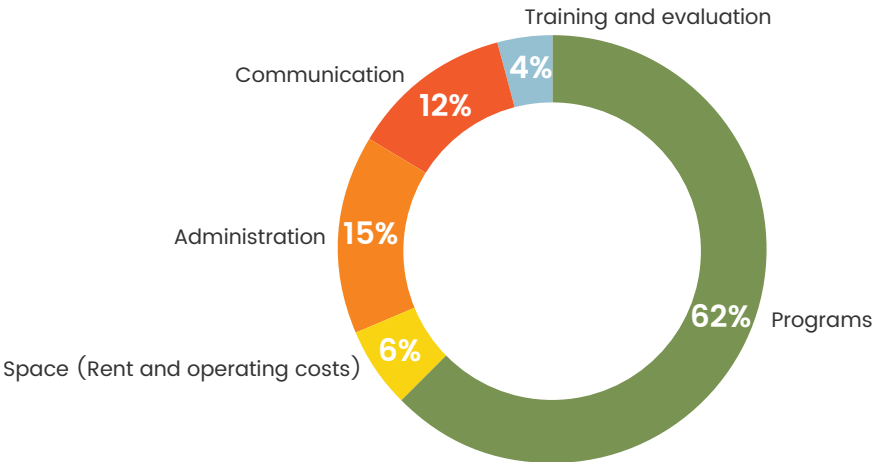
Financial Information

Your gift is an investment in a child's future

Revenues 2017



Expenses 2017



These figures are drawn from our comprehensive audited financial statements available online at calgaryreads.com.

Thank you to our Donors

Through our many relationships and partnerships, we are igniting a movement to strengthen childhood literacy. We'd like to thank every member of our community for helping us give every child the opportunity to read, learn and grow.

Leaders – \$50,000 +

Anonymous Donors
Bears paw Benevolent Foundation
Chevron Canada
HSBC Bank Canada
Prosser Charitable Foundation
The Calgary Foundation
The City of Calgary
United Way of Calgary and Area

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Bears paw Benevolent Foundation
Fortis Alberta
RBC Foundation

Builders – \$10,000 +

Brad and Tanya Zumwalt
Cenovus Energy Inc.
Ptarmigan Charitable Foundation
Rotary international District 5360
Spruce Meadows Leg Up Foundation

Believers – \$5,000 +

Anonymous
Benevity Community Impact Fund
Bordner Ladner Gervais
Burns Memorial Fund
Calgary Fort Calgary Lions Club
Calgary Foundation Linda Putnam Legacy Fund
Divine Flooring (Calgary) Ltd.
John and Elsie Collins Foundation
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Kiwanis Club of Calgary Chinook
Klatt Family Foundation
Marshall Family Foundation
Martha Parker
Mayfair Diagnostics
Meg Energy
Pembina Pipeline Corporation
Rockwood Custom Homes
Scotiabank
Shell Canada
Stantec
The Tom and Marty Evans Foundation

Other Partners and Events

Bow Valley College
Calgary Board of Education
Calgary Catholic School District
Calgary Corporate Challenge
Calgary Food Bank
CBC Calgary
Concordia University of Edmonton
Edmonton Public Schools
Elk Island Public Schools
FCSS (Family and Community Support Services)
First Book Canada
Foothills School Division
Foundations for the Future Charter Academy
Kids Can Press
Livingstone Range School Division
Mahmawi-ataskiwin Alliance
Monkeyshines Children's Books
Mount Royal University
Owl's Nest Books
Pages Books on Kensington
Palliser Regional Schools
Rocky View Schools
Scholastic Canada
Scotiabank Calgary Marathon
Shaw Charity Classic
St Mary's University – Calgary
University of Alberta
University of Calgary

Please note: Due to space limitations, this list reflects supporters who made financial donations of \$1,000 or more.



“By supporting the high-impact work Calgary Reads does, we believe we can champion programs that help give children the skills they need to stay in school, graduate and go on to have better lives.”

Leanne Courchesne

Cenovus Group Lead,
Community Affairs



Thanks for another great year
of spreading the joy of reading
to Alberta children.

Interested in helping us? We'd love
to hear from you. Contact us.

105, 105 – 12TH AVENUE SE
CALGARY, AB T2G 1A1

403-777-8254
INFO@CALGARYREADS.COM

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