

# connections



## FACT SHEET

### 2015

### *Helping parents be the best they can be*

Connections had a record 82% success rate for families who successfully proved their ability to parent and had their Child Welfare intervention files closed. These families are made up of parents who love their children, but they need a bit of support to learn parenting skills and manage their households.

### **Keeping families together leads to better outcomes — for the children, for parents and for our communities.**

In 2015, Connections made steady progress, continuing, as always, to put families first in everything we did, but we also had successes as an agency. We completed our tri-annual accreditation “*Creating Excellence Together*” with its significantly improved standards and rigour.

We enhanced our group programs, adding: parenting teens, toddler outdoor play, Dads’ workshop and drop-in budgeting clinics. Families and the team attended an outdoor family camp and a special Sunalta Community partnership led to an anniversary party picnic.

### **Why we do what we do:**

*Parents with cognitive challenges:*

- 1. Love and care for children like any parents do.**
- 2. Want their children to grow and be happy.**
- 3. Often have skills and are exceptionally resourceful.**
- 4. Want to have choices and a say in the support they receive, and how that support is provided — like any of us would.**

**Connections helps children grow up in stable, nurturing homes with the parents who love them.**

Parents that Connections support have cognitive challenges (developmental disability, brain injury, FASD, etc.) Research shows that these parents can be successful, with a bit of help that matches their learning style. With Connections’ **25th anniversary in 2015**, we celebrated how far we’ve come. We are sharing our successes and our information and expertise through our **Sunday Family Dinner** fund-raising event and by participating in research. In 2015, we were part of important research through the Eugenics/Newgenics project. In 2016, an international research project features Connections as the community partner, determining community support needs.



**Connections is a registered charity**

**BN # 890700347RR0001**

*How you can help...*

- 1. Come to our October 16th, Sunday FAMILY DINNER.**
- 2. Donate Walmart or Superstore gift cards, Transit passes or cash — all extra support for our families.**
- 3. Sponsor our Groups Program** (Christmas party, play groups, potlucks, healthy relationships counselling group, and more.)

**CONTACT:**

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*“The way you help heal the world is you start with your own family.”*

*Mother Teresa*

### What makes Connections' support different

Connections has an In-Home team of specialists in disability, parenting and, most important, in putting the family first. A team of 12 visits families in their home, once or twice per week. It's amazing what this team accomplishes!

Everything they do starts by focusing on the parents' strengths. From there, the family and In-Home team member work together to determine the goals and find and get the resources needed to help the family manage and meet the children's needs.

### Support for the whole family...

Connections adds to In-Home support with a wide array of family activities and workshops, plus counselling. Why is Connections different? Our In-Home team responds to the parent and the family where they are and with what they need that will work for them. Most important, we don't have defined timelines: families stay involved with Connections for as long as they need and want us involved.

We chose Sunday Family Dinner as our key fundraiser to celebrate the simple, but powerful, family dinner. Click on these short videos and hear Calgaryans say what family dinner means to them: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0u8Zm05WimQ>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0u8Zm05WimQ>

For 2015 Financial Statements, info about parenting with a disability, and programs and services, see our website.

### We celebrated in 2015!

- ◆ 101 families (342 individuals) supported in 2015, up 173% from 37 families in 2010
- ◆ 82 active families at year-end
- ◆ 32 families were able to have child intervention files closed (90% success)
- ◆ 12 families on our waiting list at Dec.31,
- ◆ 24 families without a funding source were supported to be successful
- ◆ Connections 2015 budget was \$745K. (About \$7,375 per family per year, which compares to \$29,000 per family when children are put into foster care.
- ◆ 81% of budget is salaries; 85% of salaries are front-line team members
- ◆ First annual Sunday Family Dinner raised fun and funds, in down-home, family style

### How we support our families:

- ◆ **An incredible In-Home team: our families are supported by talented, passionate and compassionate people.**
- ◆ AB Government (PDD and CFS) refers families and covers a portion of the cost of their services



Connections Counselling and Consulting Foundation

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