



PARKLAND C.L.A.S.S. 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



INTRODUCTION

Parkland Community Living and Supports Society is a registered non-profit organization that provides services for children and adults with developmental disabilities. We are located in Central Alberta and have partners in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, and we collaborate on international initiatives promoting the rights of individuals with developmental disabilities. Our Board members take pride in the organization's six-decade legacy. The Board is dedicated to advocating for and improving the lives of the individuals the organization serves while advancing the developmental disability sector.

Our Board brings together a diverse group of local citizens and business members who are passionate advocates for the sector and those that Parkland serves.

Don Oszli: Board President
Jerry Van Someren: Treasurer
Herb Franklin: Director
Cal Dallas: Director

Terence Balgobin: Vice President
Vesna Higham: Secretary
Pat Schropfer: Director

Parkland C.L.A.S.S. focuses on enhancing the quality of life for individuals with developmental disabilities who choose us to serve them. We strive to empower the people we serve, measuring success by the goals they set and achieve as they pursue their lives.

OUR HISTORY



Humble beginnings

The Red Deer Association for Retarded Children originated on 29th April 1959 when a group of twenty-five interested individuals met in the Elks Hall under the chairmanship of Mrs. M Roberts to discuss the education of their children. They wanted to explore alternatives to institutionalization. It was at this meeting that the groundwork for the Association was laid.

This original group was assisted in their organization by two parent groups; the Alberta Association for the Mentally Retarded and the Canadian Association for the Mentally Retarded.

On 21st May 1963 the group became registered in the Societies Act, B.SA1955, Chapter 315.



Parkland School

The Association's first school opened in January 1960 in the basement of the Parkland Church of Christ, with Mrs. Stratton as combination teacher/bus driver. By 1961 nine pupils attended school. As plans were being processed for building a new school and as enrollment became larger the students moved to Crossroads School where there were 17 pupils in September 1962. Parkland School was completed in November 1963 with the official opening on 28th February 1964.

Parkland School provided education for up to fifty students. Providing education in areas of Physical Education, Music, Art, Home Economics, as well as community awareness, life skills and pre-vocational training. Annual events included the Christmas Concert, the year-end party and graduation.



Red Deer Association for the Mentally Retarded

On 5th June 1968 a motion was passed to change the name to Red Deer Association for the Mentally Retarded. Through the years the Association met monthly with the exception of the summer months. The group continually worked toward providing alternatives and better services for children with developmental disabilities in Red Deer and District. Members kept abreast with current research in the area, and regularly attended workshops and seminars related to their objectives. Liaison was maintained between Local, Provincial and National Associations working together for the rights and welfare of individuals requiring support.

First Residence

Many of the students and potential students for the school program were from outlying rural areas. There was a need for residential accommodation for these students during the school week. The Parkland Residence opened on 1st September 1973 allowing rural students to attend school by staying at the residence on weekdays. It was originally designed as a twelve-bed residence, providing a homelike atmosphere as well as training in daily living, self-help and community awareness. In 1979 the number of beds was reduced to ten to accommodate more efficient and productive training for the children.

Dean and Betty Paul were live-in managers at the residence from 1978 – 1980. In 1988 the Pauls' son Harry went on to live in one of the residences of the Association.



Family Supports

In 1980 a need was identified for a family support service. An adult/child program worker position was established to support services to the ten Parkland Residence families as well as ten community families. Services included assessment, planning, program development and follow-up support.



Red Deer Association for the Mentally Handicapped

In 1982 the Association's name was changed to Red Deer Association for the Mentally Handicapped, representing the progress in objectives and philosophies that the Association stood for.

Second Residence

In the late summer of 1986 Mountview residence opened to provide training in the independence development area with the emphasis on the individual to try to make their own decisions wherever possible. Each resident was responsible for paying their own rent, sharing in the purchase of groceries and maintaining a day placement in a workplace or training centre.

Each individual was encouraged to develop independence in personal routines, lifestyles and in learning the various amenities that the community has to offer.

RELAX Crew 1991

The RELAX Crew Social Club is an individual directed social, leisure and recreational organization which gives members increased opportunities to develop and expand friendships with other individuals who have common interests.



Residential Expansion

In the mid-1980s, society's changing attitudes from institutional to community based supports led to a period of rapid growth at Parkland. In 1992 the Association's residential program expanded in a \$1.2 million project that saw the construction of eight new homes in Red Deer and one in Lacombe.

Wheelchair Accessible Residence

In March 1992 the first group home with wheelchair accessibility in Red Deer was opened, Dunham residence. This was a two-story five-bed multi-purpose children's residence equipped with an elevator. Three students at Parkland School stayed in the house on weekdays and the remaining beds were used for emergency admissions.

Parkland Community Living and Supports Society

In February 1993 the Association changed its name to Parkland Community Living and Supports Society (Parkland CLASS), a name which more accurately represented the true nature of services offered.

Today Parkland CLASS offers comprehensive services, supporting individuals from newborn to end-of- life and palliative care. We regularly transition individuals from children to adults to senior living, providing a seamless continuum of services. Our programs include Proprietorship (foster care), Residential Group Homes, Parkland School, Independent Lifestyles, Family Supports, Community Day Programs and Relax Crew Social Club.

Parkland currently owns and provides purpose-built accessible homes, Children's Supported Home Placements, Independent Living Support Homes and Proprietorships, allowing individuals to enjoy an appropriate home regardless of mobility or service needs.

We recognize that the success of services depends on an accurate understanding of the individual needs and expectations of the person being served, their guardian and the funder. Staffing models are predicated on the needs of each individual and are determined through a structured intake process that includes all stakeholders. Parkland's service team is comprised of a diverse team of qualified professionals, ensuring we can address the overall needs of the individuals we serve. In addition, we have access to numerous professional resources within the broader community. All individuals served receive the full support and case management of the service management team with comprehensive professional oversight and access to evidence- based approaches that strengthen the capacity of caregivers to support safety and permanency.

Our policies and practices around human resource management, particularly our dedication and expertise in staff training and professional development, continue to be a fundamental commitment and ensure that we have staff with the necessary skills to provide appropriate support to those we serve.

Our Mission

Parkland Community Living and Supports Society exists to improve the quality of life of children and adults with developmental disabilities through individual choice, dignity and rights.

Our Values

In support of Parkland Community Living and Supports Society's Mission Statement, the following values serve as a philosophical reference to guide the Board of Directors and all staff in the development and delivery of Community supports and services:

- Citizenship is based on the principles of individual value and worth, individual rights and freedoms, and equality, which recognizes individuals' physical, mental, social and spiritual needs.
- Choice, which empowers individuals to make real choices about real options in life, including where they live and what they will do.
- Support, which implies that every individual, regardless of their disability, is entitled to receive those technical, personal and financial supports which are necessary to live as independently as possible within the Community; and
- Equality of Opportunity, which ensures that individuals with developmental disabilities have, wherever possible, equal access to those aspects of life which are often taken for granted, including employment, their own homes, social interaction and friendship, and access to generic Community services.

Message from the Board President

The Board takes great pride in the Agency and its staffing team's accomplishments and continued dedication to the Individuals we serve. Change is inevitable, and as has been our practice in the past, we will make every effort to innovate and adapt, developing solutions to the challenges that we are facing. We continue to provide and advocate for sustainable, quality services to those Individuals who choose Parkland as their Service Provider as they pursue their lives in the Community.

The Board of Directors recognizes and appreciates the significant contributions that frontline staff, supervisors, and the Service Management Team make to the organization. Without the goodwill and collaboration of the entire team, we would be unable to continue developing and delivering the programs and services that the organization has become known for. It is a Board priority to continue advocating for those we serve, the Disability Sector and our valued employees.

Message from the CEO

As an organization, we are proud of the success of those we serve and our hard-working staff team, who make what we do possible. This year's accomplishments include:

Getting the money provided by our PDD contract into the hands of our valued and deserving employees. As an employer, we are acutely aware of the importance of wages for our staff.

We were pleased to host several activities in recognition of the Provincial Disability Service Workers Appreciation Week. It was great to see our staff, their families, and those we serve attend our pancake breakfast, BBQ, Carnival Cinema day and be recognized in the local media.

Parkland completed our Canadian Accreditation Council (CAC) accreditation review in May with a 100% compliance rate. We were awarded a maximum 4-year accreditation and an enhanced designation of "Complex Needs" in addition to our existing designations of "Mental Health", "Specialized Services" and "Cultural and Indigenous Service providers".

In June, we received notification from Alberta Education that The Parkland School team had met the requirements identified in the Action Plan for Parkland School: this is the culmination of a significant update and program review in concert with the changes in Alberta Education requirements and is a testament to the school's commitment to providing the best educational experience possible for the children who choose Parkland School.

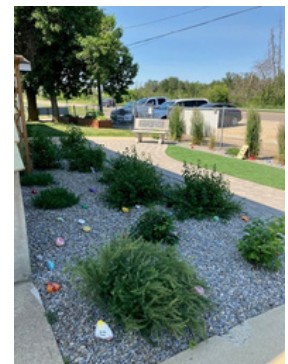
We have been working on a new system to manage and project the maintenance needs and costs of our homes, office, relax crew and school. Developing an online maintenance program has been a significant undertaking and will streamline planning and forecasting in the future.

HIGHLIGHTS

This year, we were pleased to host several activities in recognition of the second year of the Provincial Disability Service Workers Appreciation Week. It was great to see our staff and families and those we represent attend our pancake breakfast, BBQ, and carnival cinema day and see them recognized in the local media.



In July, the Memorial Gardens Ceremony took place with past family members of loved ones in attendance. The event was beautiful and allowed people to place rocks in memory of loved ones in the garden. The gardens will forever be a place where people can come and remember those individuals and employees that touched our lives. Please take a moment the next time you are at the main office to wander the gardens and remember those that came before us.



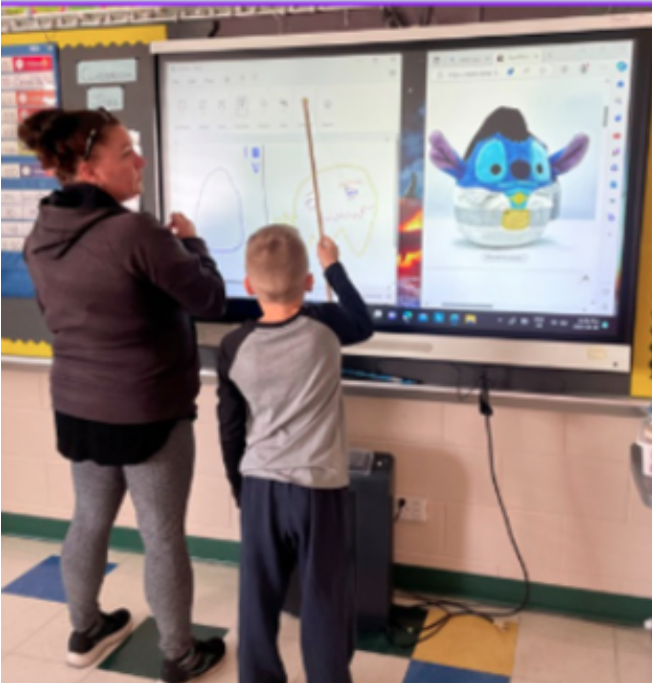
Throughout the year our Multi Cultural Committee has hosted multiple events for our Individuals to enjoy.

- International Dance Day
- National Pizza Day
- Summer Solstice/National Indigenous Peoples Day
- Cow Appreciation Day
- Parade Day
- Bacon and Eggs Bannock Day
- National Sponge Cake Day
- National Chocolate Day
- National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

Troy's Annual Fun Run was another great event this past year. The event celebrated its 14th year and was a successful day that saw many people come out to enjoy some exercise and friendship.

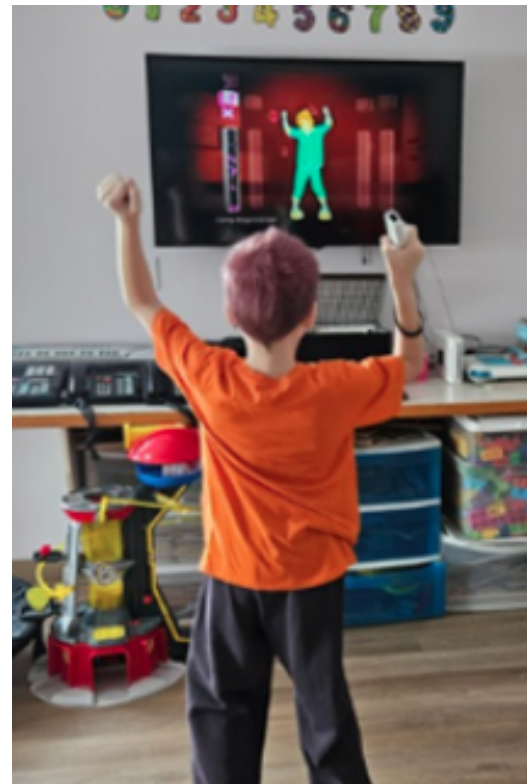


PARKLAND SCHOOL



Parkland School is in total compliance with all Alberta Education's regulations and standards.

School programs are designed to meet all students' educational needs, following the Alberta Education Programs of Study/New Curriculum. All school classes promote academic, non-academic, personal, and physical development, by providing curricular education, life skills training and physical support to students with multiple disabilities. Outside consultants address physical/occupational therapy, communication, hearing, vision, mobility, behaviour modification, sensory stimulation and medical needs. Students also have access to technological devices to advance their communication, education and leisure pursuits. Every student has an Individualized Program Plan to provide goals relating to their personalized life skill needs.



CHILDREN'S SERVICES

FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM

The Family Support Program provides in-home assistance for families to cope with and manage their child's unique needs. The program provides families with support staff, in-home parental relief, childcare, behaviour supports, and community involvement activities.

TRIPLE P - POSITIVE PARENTING

Parkland CLASS has a certified Triple P Educator who engages with parents to train simple and practical strategies to help them build strong, healthy relationships, so they can confidently manage their children's challenges. Stepping Stones is for children 0-12 years and provides parents with skill development and early intervention strategies. The educator guides the parent in focusing on the positive skill development that can benefit their special needs child. The educator meets one to one with the parent over a course of ten sessions for one to two hours per sessions. These sessions can be delivered in a family home, designated physical space or via zoom.

SUPPORTED HOME PLACEMENT PROGRAM

The Supported Home Placement Program (SHP) allows children with disabilities to live in the home of an individual caregiver or family. The program provides accommodation combined with the family support and nurturing that is provided by a caregiver. Children can grow and experience success in a safe and healthy environment that is conducive to their skill development, personal empowerment and full participation in their home, family, and community.





ADULT RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM

The Adult Residential Program provides housing and accommodation, combined with 24-hour personal support staff. The resulting service supports individualized homes and inclusion within the community. Single-family homes are most often established with three individuals sharing the cost of accommodation, groceries, utilities and staffing. The individual's needs are met while independence, personal empowerment, and participation within their home environment are maximized. In 2024, the program supported 95 adults with various needs.

TRAINING

Parkland CLASS is recognized as a leader in the area of frontline staff training and development. The agency delivers a wide array of formal in-house training programs that lead employees to certification in:

- First Aid-CPR
- Suicide Prevention
- Abuse Recognition and Reporting; Self Harm
- Quality Improvement and Outcomes
- Professional Assault Crisis Training
- Medications Administration
- Indigenous Awareness
- FASD
- Positive Behavior Supports
- Sensory Integration
- Visual Strategies
- Autism
- Meaningful supports
- Foundations (18-month program on skill development in the disability services field)
- Ergonomics
- WHMIS
- Harassment Training and Violence Prevention
- Mental Health First Aid



INDEPENDENCE AND COMMUNITY INCLUSION

INDIVIDUAL LIFE STYLES (ILS) PROGRAM

The Individual Life Style Program (ILS) Provides support to individuals who may need up to a 24-hour supervision, but choose to live on their own or with a roommate. Individual needs are met while maximizing independence, empowerment, and participation in the community.

ADULT PROPRIETORSHIP PROGRAM

The Adult Proprietorship Program allows adults with disabilities to live in the home of an individual caregiver or family. This service provides accommodation, friendship, and support from a caregiver in a family oriented or roommate environment.

RELAX CREW SOCIAL CLUB

The RELAX Crew Social Club is a member-directed social, leisure and recreational organization which gives members increased opportunities to develop and expand friendships with other individuals who have common interests. This outcome is achieved as members participate in a wide variety of activities and experiences. Parkland CLASS provides program coordination to assist members in the planning and operation of the RELAX Crew. The Agency also provides additional financial support to subsidize the cost of activities, transportation and a clubhouse/drop-in centre for RELAX Crew members' regular meetings. In 2024, 276 adults were served; 109 individuals were from Parkland CLASS, 126 were affiliated with various Central Alberta service providers, and 41 had no affiliation.

COMMUNITY BRIDGING PROGRAM

Provides staff support to individuals who desire facilitated out of home community activities based on their individual desires, choices, likes, interests, skills and abilities. The program provides a structured alternative to employment, if desired, or it supplements the individual's lifestyle. Personal supports are provided so that the individual's needs are met and participation within the community is maximized, and full inclusion is promoted.

SPECIALIZED SUPPORTS

BEHAVIOURAL SUPPORT SERVICES

The program provides support to children, youth and adults who experience behavior challenges, their families, and frontline staff. Behavioural Supports are provided through the completion of formalized assessments, staff training, family support, and the development of positive behavioural support strategies. The primary program objective is to increase and enhance the quality of life of the individual while increasing opportunities for success.

The program accesses external resources to build capacity for elevated risk-taking behaviours that are increasingly common among youth. Support strategies and resources are provided to families within the program as needed.

Risk Assessments for all individuals who have been identified as Complex Needs by PDD have been completed with input from stakeholders. Staff training on specific individuals' behaviour plans was completed with measurable outcomes in behaviour and Incident Report tracking.



HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROGRAM

Health and Wellness Program provides specialized on-site support to individuals requiring nursing intervention and support within the Adult Programs. The goal is to allow medically fragile individuals the ability to continue to live in their homes and achieve an optimal balance in terms of health management, illness prevention and community inclusion as opposed to needing a medical-focused model.

The Clinical Coordinator has received additional training in NTG Affiliate Provincial Trainer Workshop (National Task Group on Intellectual Disabilities and Dementia Practices); Continuing Education for the Developmental Disabilities Nurses Associate; PalliPro – Palliative Care Interprofessional Education; and CLPNA-Continuing Education in Parental Nutrition, Ear Syringing, Cognitive Impairment, and Restricted Activities.

CULTURALLY DIRECTED SERVICES

Parkland CLASS has developed a reputation among its colleagues and funders for having strong cultural diversity in its work with Indigenous communities, families, and individuals. We have done this by embracing cultural differences and traditions, and building strong relationships with local elders, families, and band leaders. This is evidenced throughout the agency's Alberta, Arctic, and International programs, services and activities.

Parkland's commitment to cultural diversity is supported through the following:

- A formal policy framework that supports the cultural uniqueness of all individuals and supports the cultural and religious choices they make;
- Ongoing community networking, fostering linkages and relationships with Elders and groups willing to share stories, traditions and cultural knowledge with individuals in service;
- A commitment to plan and undertake culturally relevant activities, fishing, traditional crafts, and enjoying cultural foods;
- A strong preference to hire Indigenous employees both in our northern and southern based services;
- Mandatory training requirement for hundreds of non-Indigenous employees to achieve certification in an 'Indigenous Awareness' program;
- Our designation in June 2024 and re-accreditation as an 'Indigenous or Cultural Service Provider' through the Canadian Accreditation Council; and the development of our cultural curriculum which focuses cultural activities across four key domains: language of individuals; traditional foods and cooking; appropriate in-home activities; and connection to community cultural activities

The delivery of Culturally Directed Services is entrenched within the agency's policies and practices. Parkland CLASS has a broad policy foundation supporting individual / guardian rights, family involvement, and cultural diversity, all of which are considered core values and viewed as essential elements in the development and delivery of quality human services.



WITH THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS

We thank all our funders, the many individuals, businesses, and organizations for supporting Parklands' programs and services this past year.

- Ministry of Seniors, Community and Social Services
- Government of NWT
- Government of NU
- Kasohkowew Child Wellness Society
- Asikiw MostosO'Pikinawasiwin Society
- Government of Alberta
- Alberta Seniors
- Red Cross
- City of Red Deer
- Raymond Reed Enterprises Ltd
- Van de Ruit Family
- Jejina Family
- Thereasa 'Corky' Larsen-Jonasson and Lynn Joansson
- Parkland Nurseries and Garden Centre
- Carnival Cinemas
- Our amazing front line staffing teams, our incredible Administration team and volunteer Board
- And most importantly the wonderful individuals that we serve

THANK YOU