

'Like' us on Facebook

CASUAL LABOUR PUTS COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO WORK

Employment Services provides an integrated approach to assisting participants who are entering or re-entering the workforce. Services provided include assessments, referrals, life management workshops, employment counseling, safety courses, resume development, supported job searches and a casual labour department.

In 2010 Employment Services connected employers with unemployed community members to create 11,000 job placements, 480 resumes and over 2000 counseling sessions.

We currently work with approximately 500 local employers; however we continue to seek new partnerships with Edmonton-based businesses to help improve the health and well-being of our participants, through short-term employment opportunities.



Paul Carmichael receives work gloves as he signs up for a Casual Labour placement

We specialize in unskilled labour and can help with odd jobs, moving, landscaping, household cleaning and other seasonal jobs. The starting wage is \$11 per hour, which gets paid directly to the worker at the end of the day. Employers benefit by not having to pay any additional service fees to Bissell for this placement service.

Call the Employment Services dispatch today to book a worker(s) at 780.424.4385.



A Bingo ball system determines job placements

BACK-TO-SCHOOL SAVINGS AT OUR THRIFT SHOPPE

In August we began distributing a 15% Off Student Discount Card to Edmonton colleges and universities. From now until the end of October, students can bring their student ID cards in and receive 15% off all regular priced items.

We can help you furnish your place, buy school supplies, get a new wardrobe and accessories, and help add to your favorite jewelry, art or book collection.

Visit our store and see our latest donations of new and gently loved items, and don't forget to bring your unwanted items to donate.

8818 118 Ave
780.471.6644



EDMONTON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION LEGACY PARTNERSHIP

Bissell Centre has made the decision to embark on a new endowment development program through the Edmonton Community Foundation. This program is designed to better prepare our families, our community and our agency for the future.

Bequests and other planned gifts are so important to the future of Bissell Centre that we have established an honorary group called "Prospero's Circle." This group is designed to recognize and continue to honor those who have made provisions for a future gift through a bequest, life insurance, annuity, or trust agreement.

Now we have the great pleasure of inviting our many friends and supporters to become Founding Members of this group. Many donors have already made provisions for a future gift to Bissell Centre and are eligible for membership; the agency's Founding Members Campaign will be held open a short while longer, so that others may be included.

When we think of the word "philanthropist", most of us envision those relative few, very wealthy people who direct their fortunes to the charities of their choice; however, each of us can truly be a philanthropist in our own way. Most of us will be able to make our largest and most transformative gift upon our passing. Please consider how you would like to be remembered and the legacy you would like to leave.

If you have already arranged for a future gift, we would like to know about it. If not, we invite you to consider a bequest or other future gift provision.

For more information, call Joshua Marshall at 780.423.2285 Ext. 123 or attend a Wills Week seminar near you from October 1st to 7th. For more information on Wills Week seminars, visit www.ecfoundation.org or call 780.426.0015.

**Prospero: v. derived from the Latin word prospereare, meaning to bring success, prosperity, happiness*

Neither the author nor this organization is engaged in rendering legal or tax advice. For advice in specific cases, the services of a lawyer or other professional advisor should be obtained.



Edmonton
Community
Foundation

Currently 561 people receive their mail at Bissell Centre

WARM WORDS, WARM BODIES

What "warms" you? A cup of coffee, snuggling up in a blanket, a hug from a friend, or a sweet note from a loved one? We all have things in our lives - tangible and emotional - that make us feel safe, comfortable, warm. We invite you to share the warmth in your life with those in need by providing Warm Words, Warm Bodies.

Warm Words

Many of the people who use our services rarely hear words of encouragement, hope and well wishes from loved ones. We invite you to make a gift of supportive, hopeful words to our community members. Words that encourage, uplift, and show someone who is climbing enormous obstacles...that it is worth the climb.

Take a moment to jot down some 'warm words' for those individuals who have no family, or those who are experiencing health problems that prevent them from working.

Submit your Warm Words to Amanda at aalmeida@bissellcentre.org and our volunteers will compile your words into colourful displays and post them throughout our common areas.

Warm Bodies

People who come to Bissell Centre for clothing rarely get new items for themselves. Everything is used, passed down, discarded from another closet. At Christmas, we aim to provide the adults who access services at Bissell with a brand new hoodie, as we've done the last three years. Something that is their very own - fresh, clean, new. Will you help us ensure each woman and man receive a hoodie?

You may purchase hoodies (all sizes, dark colours) and have them delivered to Bissell Centre East at 10527 - 96 Street. We also accept financial contributions targeted toward the purchase of hoodies. You send a cheque to Bissell Centre or make a donation online at www.bissellcentre.org, and we will purchase hoodies with your generous contribution.

For questions about hoodies and other clothing donations, please contact Barb at 780.423.2285 ext. 159 or bnickel@bissellcentre.org.



Bissell News

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Bissell Centre

10527-96 Street
Edmonton, AB
T5H 2H6
P. 780.423.2285
F. 780.429.7908

Thrift Shoppe & Sorting Centre

8818-118 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5B 0T4
P. 780.471.6644

Store Hours

Mon-Sat 9am-6pm
Sun 10am-4pm

Drop-Off Hours

Mon-Sat until 4pm
Sun until 3:30pm

www.bissellcentre.org

Subscriptions

To help us save money and trees, please subscribe to our e-newsletter, by going to our website.

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WE ELIMINATE POVERTY IN OUR COMMUNITY

BRIDGE PROJECT EXTENDS HOURS AND SERVICES

Bissell Centre has undergone research to examine how to improve the current programs offered at our Robert Tegler Friendship Room (the Drop-In). The research found that there were gaps in the hours that inner city organizations were open and offering services. The Bridge Project "bridges" the gap in hours between when we close and other drop-ins or shelters are open in Edmonton. The goal of this project is to provide a safe place for all to gather during more hours of the week. Bissell Centre did not want to be open for the sake of being open, but wants to provide more meaningful activities to help people in poverty overcome their circumstances.

Not only do activities address boredom, they give a sense of purpose, a feeling of empowerment, achievement, and improved self-confidence. Running daily activity sessions, like crafts, art, financial literacy, and group sessions builds the necessary trusting relationships that are sometimes required before people in poverty are willing to open up about their circumstance and needs. The extra hours and additional activities that the Bridge Project provides are created to reduce barriers and create greater success in existing programs like employment, housing, and addiction recovery.

In order to successfully initiate these changes and extension of programs extra funding was required. Thanks to the generous support of the Stollery family, through the Stollery Charitable Foundation; the Edmonton Community Foundation, through several of their supporters; and the Robert Tegler Trust, Bissell Centre is excited to have undertaken the Bridge Project with the goal to see those living in poverty, or on the cusp of poverty, improve their lives. It is their support and vision that will see more Bissell Centre community members 'move from poverty to prosperity.'

"The Stollery Charitable Foundation is impressed with the important work that Bissell Centre undertakes to improve our community," says Scott Graham, Executive Director, Stollery Charitable Foundation. "Bissell has a long history of providing effective solutions concerning issues that emerge for those who need help getting back on track. We know that Bissell has the expertise and experience to make good use of our donation - they've proven themselves in the past and they continue to be that go-to agency where you can really see a difference."

New hours: Monday to Friday, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturdays, noon to 5 p.m.

Previous hours: Monday to Friday, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.



POVERTY TO
PROSPERITY

WE NEED
TO RAISE
\$1.4M

GIVE HOPE

H2H has
assisted 101
adults and 11
children

We have
helped 78+
victims of
crime

EVERY
PERSON IS
WELCOME

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

By Mark Holmgren, Interim CEO



I began my role as Interim CEO on July 20th and I feel blessed to have been chosen to be a part of building Bissell Centre's future.

Bissell's Board of Directors (BOD) asked me to take this position to do the following:

- Work with staff and stakeholders to move forward on our new mission, vision, and long-term outcomes. Included in this is to review, and where needed, make adjustments to how we organize ourselves to do our work.

- Assist the BOD in its review

of its governance model with an eye on developing not only a stellar governance model but also to ensure a strong partnership between the BOD and the CEO.

- Strengthen Bissell Centre's financial condition and its resource development efforts in order to ensure strong stewardship and the capacity to help people and our community.

- Assist the BOD in its search for a long-term, permanent CEO.

I have to tell you how pleased I am with the management and staff here at Bissell. Not only do they deliver excellent services each and every day, but they have welcomed me and are working with me to move Bissell Centre forward into the future.

I can report that we are making great progress on translating our new mission and vision into actionable work. All of our staff has been involved in a survey and a workshop about our strategic direction and more staff sessions are planned. It is my intention to produce and publish a new strategy for Bissell Centre by Christmas, if not before.

The Board is engaged in its review of its governance model and making good progress in moving towards a generative governance model that ensures the Board governs well, is strategically orientated, and fostering healthy and productive relationships with management.

I am working with an excellent lead team – Hendriatta Wong, our COO, and Peggy Hodge, our CPO – to build on Bissell's long history of providing strong financial stewardship. To that end we are reviewing and enhancing financial management, budgeting and reporting. Our goal is to set the standard for non-profit financial management and become what others refer to as best practice.

As well, I am working closely with Bissell Centre's resource development and marketing staff to ensure that we are nurturing meaningful relationships with our individual and

corporate donors and providing them with the information and recognition they deserve. We are also in the midst of exploring opportunities to expand our services to Edmonton's homeless population so that we can do more to help them find and sustain safe and affordable housing. Other work in this area includes investigating social enterprise opportunities, integrating social media into our relationship building work, and working to strengthen our relationship with the United Church and other faith communities.

I ask all of you to think about us – the people we serve, our staff and volunteers, and the organizations we partner with. We need your support in order to help others overcome poverty and the many struggles people must address in order to live healthy, productive lives.

I welcome any contact from any of you – whether to share an idea, find out more about what we do, or to inquire about having me or someone else from Bissell come out to talk to your church, group, or organization!

WE NEED YOUR DONATIONS

I'm sure you get a lot of requests for donations. My first ask of you is to do what you can for the organizations that need your support. I do hope Bissell Centre is among those you care about and wish to help.

Each year we are faced with the challenge to fundraise approximately 30% of our budget. This year that amounts to \$1.4 million, much of which comes from individuals like you.

Like you, we are facing increased costs for gasoline, utilities, supplies and food. Unfortunately many of our funders are not able to provide increased funding to address these costs. Helping us pay for these expenses may not seem like profound ways to support Bissell, but they are critical expenses we must cover to keep our doors open.

We are not fully funded for the food we provide our clients each day (about 500 meals a week), the clothes and household items we give to people who need them (close to 5,000 people per year), or for the child care services we provide that help parents look for work or take needed training.

Our insurance costs have increased dramatically and in general the cost of doing business is escalating. Donors like you help address those costs no one else will fully fund.

Please include us in your charitable giving plans and share what you are able to with us. Every gift counts – large or small!

Thank you.

Mark Holmgren, Interim CEO

RECOGNITION FOR A SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM: HOMELESS TO HOMES

Bissell Centre's manager of the Homeless to Homes (H2H) program, Matt Ashdown, recently attended the National Alliance to End Homelessness Conference in Washington DC. Matt was chosen to attend because of his program's high success rate in keeping people housed. At this conference Matt built a network with Housing First team leaders, researchers and consultants from across the continent, as well as Australia, which he hopes will continue to strengthen his program.

Matt spent much of his time in Washington learning about Evidence-Based Practices (EBP), which are strategies used by a Housing First team that are proven to break the barriers, that a homeless person may have, to maintaining housing. It is through removing these barriers that our H2H program strives to end homelessness, which is a step towards fulfilling our vision to end poverty in our community.



Housing First originated in New York in the early 1990s and is based on the belief that housing is a right for all and that homeless serving agencies, like Bissell Centre, should provide housing prior to any other services. Once housing is achieved, the now formerly homeless individual will receive "wrap-around" supports that address other issues that act as barriers to housing stability.

In 1999, US congress directed the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to spend 30% of its budget on Housing First initiatives. From 2005 to 2007, HUD reported a 30% decrease in chronic homelessness, which they largely attributed to the Housing First initiative. Closer to home Streets to Homes started in Toronto in 2005, and has assisted over 3000 individuals to-date gain and maintain stable housing with an 80% success rate. This program offers 24/7 Housing First services within Toronto's urban core, and daytime and evening services city wide. Streets to Homes website reports, "There is clear evidence that those living in permanent housing panhandle

less frequently than when they are homeless, have better health and improved quality of life, and use fewer costly emergency services such as hospital emergency rooms and jails."

In Edmonton, Bissell Centre's is one of eight organizations in the community that provides Housing First services, funded by Homeward Trust, in response to both the provincial and municipal plans to end homelessness. The model used at Bissell Centre is named Intensive Case Management (ICM). ICM prioritizes those that are both chronically homeless and face a number of challenges that act as barriers to housing (participants that have fifteen or more barriers to housing are not eligible for the program). Barriers can include social relationships and networks, involvement in high risk or exploitive situations, mental health issues, and addictions. ICM provides participants in the H2H program with a minimum of one year support after being housed to ensure that they have resources in their lives and new communities that prevent them from becoming homeless again.

H2H started in March 2010, and has assisted 101 adults and 11 children to find housing. Of these 101 adults, 13 have become successful graduates, meaning that they have maintained housing and are no longer receiving intensive support from Bissell. H2H is meeting targets with an 86% success rate, and in June 2011, 88% of participants reported a higher quality of life. In a survey we did in April 2011, over 90% of Landlords surveyed reported a high level of satisfaction with the program.

The H2H team is composed of a diverse, yet synergistic, group of multi-disciplined professionals that share a number of common values. Each week the team engages in conversations about practices that reduce poverty and engages in weekly self study of Evidence-Based Practices. This team is committed to ending homeless, building diverse, inclusive, communities, and without fail, improving lives!

Vision

- We eliminate poverty in our community.

Mission

- Working with others, we empower people to move from poverty to prosperity.

Long Term Outcomes

- People are able to meet their basic daily needs and participate in community.
- People have sustainable livelihoods.
- People feel hope for the future and make plans for a prosperous life.
- People are fully engaged in life because of improved physical and mental health.
- The community is educated and engaged in creating a prosperous future for all.

INNER CITY VICTIM SERVICES PROVES SUCCESSFUL IN FIRST 5 MONTHS



Rob Sipes, Inner City Victim Services worker in his office at Bissell Centre

Bissell has a new, one of a kind, pilot project funded by the Victims of Crime Fund in partnership with Government of Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security. The Inner City Victim Services Program is collaboration between Bissell Centre and Boyle Street Community Services to provide street level access to programs and services to victims of crime. The program offers a safe gateway for marginalized people, including those with no fixed address, to acquire information and receive support to ultimately access and successfully navigate the Criminal Justice System. Inner City Victim Services addresses the gap between mainstream services and community members which have often been underserved, thereby reducing their isolation.

The program, beginning on April 1st, 2011, has assisted 78 community members with a variety of supports including applications for financial benefits of Victims of Crime, completion of victim impact statements, applying for restitution from the accused, court support, applying for emergency protection orders and restraining orders, emotional support and assistance in seeking help from

the authorities. Currently 37 community members have applied and 12 have been awarded financial benefits from the Victims of Crime fund.

THE PROGRAM AT WORK

An aboriginal male was walking home in the inner city when he was mugged by two youth, resulting in physical injuries and loss of his rent money for the month. He reported the incident to Bissell Centre the next morning still covered in blood from the night before. He asked for assistance and was referred to Bissell Centre's Inner City Victim Services program.

Here he was provided a safe place to vent and recover from the anguish of being victimized. First, we took him to the police station to report the crime; he was nervous about going to the police because of past experiences but with the support of Rob Sipes, our Victim Services worker, it all went well. Next, Rob provided transportation to the hospital to get him medical attention, and also assisted him with a letter to his landlord that included a financial plan to pay the rent over the next three months - as he couldn't pay his rent on time because of the robbery. He was very grateful for the assistance provided. He stated he was impressed with the way the police officer treated him, saying "he treated me like a real person". He has since re-established his links with his worker at Bissell Centre and is coping very well. In June he received notification that his Financial Benefits for Victims of Crime (FBVC) application was approved and he is planning on attending financial literacy training at HUB Edmonton.

WISH LIST

- Adult socks & undergarments (new)
- Water/wind-proof hats & gloves
- Kids toques & mitts
- Coats & sweaters
- Towels, blankets, & sleeping bags
- Snowsuits & boots for children
- Personal hygiene items (new)
- Coffee, sugar, powdered cream
- Baby formula, lotions, shampoos, and baby wipes, diapers & pull-ups
- Frozen, canned & luncheon meat
- Fresh, frozen or canned fruit & vegetables