

Synergy

2016 Chestermere outputs

2016 Langdon outputs

VOLUNTEERISM



112

volunteers

63



5

key mentors

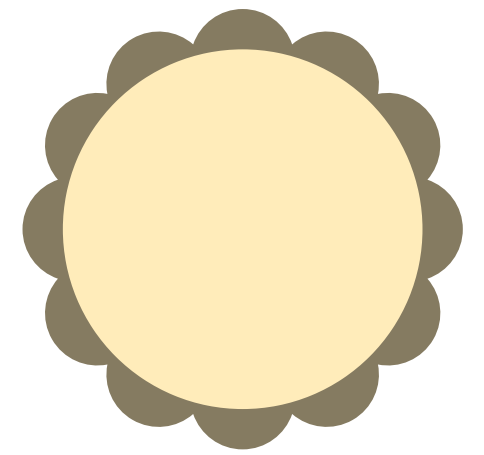
6



2528

volunteer hours

617



39

events volunteer assistance was provided

8

COMMUNITY



12

programs & events

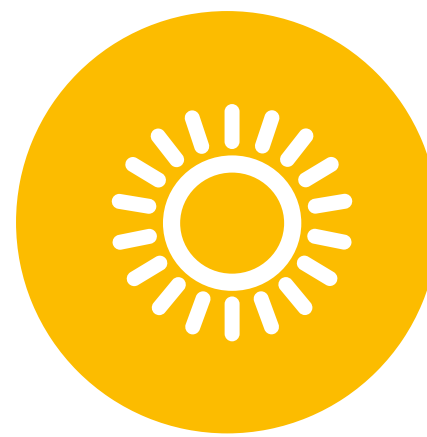
5



47

community partners

21



5

initiatives & projects

1

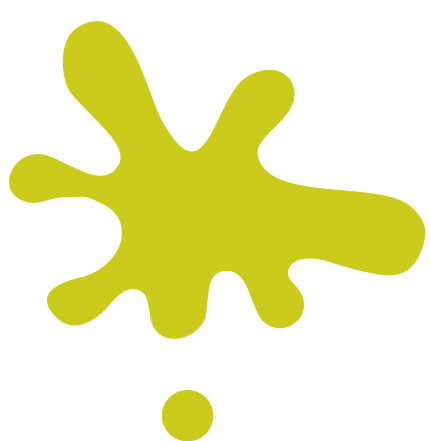


323

participants

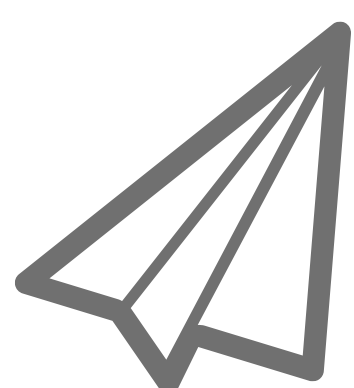
136

YOUTH PROGRAMS



15

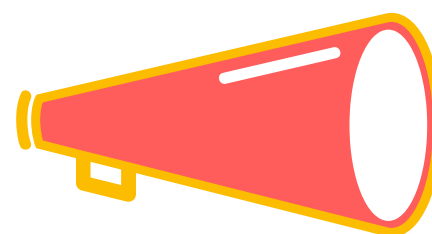
Creative Kids



17

SHOUT youth

13



20

YELL youth

17



11

youth interns

3



MISSION

To cultivate the development of leadership and wellness education in Chestermere, Langdon and South East Rocky View.



VISION

Engaged, Empowered and Healthy Community Leaders



VALUES

Relationship

Holistic Education

Inclusion

Benevolence

Collaboration

Mentorship

Mentorship

Mentorship is a clear theme throughout all Synergy programs. We value a continuum of mentorship wherein each age group provides guidance to those younger than themselves. Often, the education derived through mentorship relationships is reciprocal, with the younger generation supporting their elders. As mentorship is a core value practiced throughout all of our programs, it is common for youth and adult mentors to be involved in more than one program at a time. We encourage Synergy members and volunteers to move fluidly from one program to another as their needs change or they feel drawn to serve in other areas.



SYNERGY'S PRINCIPLES OF PRACTICE

The Synergy team acts as practitioners of social good who are committed to the following accountabilities:

- To seek out our community regularly and thoughtfully to gain an informed understanding of their need for programs, services and supports.
- To honour existing social structures and respectfully learn from those who have gone before us.
- To take great care not to impose our perception of program needs on the groups we serve.
- To be solution and strength-based focused.
- To be wholly inclusive and participatory.
- To apply a horizontal approach to decision making amongst our colleagues, partners and Synergy members.
- To effectively practice collaboration. To communicate in an open, honest, transparent manner.
- To dedicate ourselves to strategic planning, flexible consultation and genuine learning.
- To practice collective responsibility for the quality of community life.
- To advocate for and facilitate a continuum of reciprocal mentorship throughout Synergy and the community at large.





LEADERSHIP & WELLNESS PROGRAMS

Creative Kids - (ages 7-9) Develops and promotes confidence and critical thinking as well as problem solving skills. Creative Kids sessions provide an influential early intervention opportunity to connect with children who have the potential to progress through SYNERGY Leadership Groups. This program has a creative arts basis which helps to promote confidence, as well as, develop critical thinking and problem solving skills. Children build healthy relationships and develop trust and resiliency with community mentors and local facilitators. This program is currently on hold due to funding restrictions.

SHOUT - (ages 10 - 12) SHOUT Boys and SHOUT Girls are structured programs that are designed to nurture self-awareness and promote natural strengths

Girls Circle offers a structured support circle designed to nurture self-awareness, positive relationships, resiliency, critical thinking and authentic voices. With the encouragement of caring adults and teen mentors, the girls explore gender specific themes and topics which are relevant to their lives, such as, friendships, being a girl, trusting ourselves, body image, goals, sexuality, and so on and so forth. Together, taking turns to share their thoughts, feelings and experiences, as well as, to listen to others in an uplifting, respectful, emotionally safe and very special gathering space. The girls express themselves further through creative or focused activities such as role playing, journaling, poetry, drawing, collage, etc.

Boys Council offers a structured program designed to promote boys' natural strengths and increases their options about being male in today's world. Boys are given the opportunity in a safe environment to address masculine definitions and behaviours while learning the social skills to help them Grow Healthy and Grow Strong! With the mentorship of caring adults and teen mentors, boys learn to be engaged and successful in their schools, families, and community and be connected to positive and constructive activities. SHOUT Boys focuses on building self-confidence, strong self-esteem, and respect for others while coping effectively with challenges in their life and having hope for their future.

YELL Youth Council - (ages 13 - 17+) Empowers youth to become conscientious members of their community through leadership education such as volunteerism, social activism and self-determination. With support from adult mentors and positive collaboration with external organizations, youth develop healthy social connections and leadership skills through extensive community engagement.

Youth Internship Program - (ages 15 - 21) Local youth are given a leadership education opportunity through hands on work experience and real life jobs skills, while helping them engage with community organizations in a mentorship relationship. Throughout the program, youth engage in extensive, professional, leadership training which benefits both the individual youth and their capacity to make healthy contributions to the community as a whole. Interns take the lead on important community initiatives such as the Positive Ticketing Program.

Youth Leadership Retreats – Retreats such as the Annual Superhero Retreat provide a platform for youth to youth mentorship and for Youth Interns to practice their leadership skills while facilitating a leadership education focused retreat for pre-teens and younger teens.

Homework Helpers – (Gr. 4-12) Offers help with homework in all academic areas. Students are mentored by older students as well as adult staff and volunteers. The focus is on developing problem solving skills, using an adaptive learning model, and emphasizing fundamentals. Wellness education techniques are used to reduce test anxiety, increase academic self-confidence, and maintain a positive attitude towards education.

One to One Youth Wellness Mentorship - (ages 12 - 21) Wellness Education Mentor (Wellness Support Worker) works one to one with youth in need, connecting them with appropriate professional services and when appropriate, engaging them in community activities and programs. Wellness Education Mentor has the role of being a consistent, healthy, non-parent, adult relationship support within the community.

YELL Coffee Talk - (ages 13 - 17+) A weekly opportunity for youth to meet as a community group to build healthy relationships with peers and mentors. This is informal setting where youth reconnect and discuss the social issues that are important to them. Coffee talk provides a safe haven for youth to be their authentic selves without being judged and to feel accepted as human beings who have value in our community. This is also a chance for youth to learn about what opportunities are available and receive information on how to get involved in community projects and activities.

Youth Wellness Retreats - Intensive bonding experiences for youth, their peers, and community mentors. Retreats focus on building healthy relationships while developing healthy risk taking, interpersonal and intrapersonal competence, and resiliency.

Community Game Night – (All Ages) Monthly Tabletop Game Nights provide youth with opportunities to build healthy relationships with their peers and community members of all ages in a way that encourages mental agility, problem solving, teamwork, sportsmanship, and conflict resolution. It also provides quality face to face interaction, as an alternative to screen time.

Wellness Education Events/Workshops - Wellness focused events (such as World Suicide Prevention Day) and workshops are offered to educate the greater Chestermere Community to create a stronger support network for youth.

PILOT - Youth LGBTQ* Wellness Group - A proposed weekly youth group to allow LGBTQ* youth a safe place to meet and discuss the issues that affect them and to build healthy relationships with mentors and advocates.



How Has Synergy Impacted You?

“Joining Synergy, I originally never expected to get much out of it other than to volunteer a little bit and participate in a few community projects. I had never expected to get so much more out of it, and learn so much. Through countless opportunities Synergy has provided, I've been able to become a leader in my community, learn new skills, not to mention develop my pre-existing skills. When you're at Synergy, you aren't stuck doing one thing. There's something for everyone, from painting to running community water fights. The multitude of programs the committed leaders and community volunteers put on there ensures there's something for everyone! You never know what you'll do there, but you know it's going to be great. Arguably the most important part of Synergy is the people you work with. Whether through my participation in Synergy's internship program or generally volunteering through YELL, I've gotten to meet many amazing people and build priceless connections. These people have been accepting of me despite my flaws, and have shaped me into a caring and unique individual. These people have pushed me to be my best, and helped me make dreams realizations. They helped me realize even teenagers can make a difference, how even alone I can make the world a better place. I can now realize the impacts of my actions, and inspire future and previous generations. I can do whatever my heart desires, knowing I have a team of amazing, inspirational, powerful individuals behind me.”

Youth Intern

A safe haven for meeting good people and building connections. Synergy allows me to have an escape from my life.”

– YELL Coffee Talk Participant



“YELL is a place where we can be ourselves and we have a safe place to say what we want. We can also connect with new people and we won't be judged for being who we want to be and feel we are. The mentors are also amazing to go to when we can't talk to anyone else. I feel safe at YELL and it's a place where I can speak my mind.”

– Synergy Youth Participant

How Synergy has affected me was by giving me a place of belonging and like I could actually change the world for the better, even if it starts with one person. Synergy is like a family that will accept anyone and bring them in letting them know all is okay and that they are important. That's how it made me feel. The staff at Synergy really helps you and supports you through everything you're going through and understand. Synergy has helped me find help to get better from my anxiety and depression and gives me ways to help and always lends an ear to listen. Synergy is such an amazing program to help people become the best people they can and reach their full potential. Even if someone doesn't see their worth Synergy does and helps and that's what they did for me. Synergy has helped me break out of my shell and able to make some friends who will support me even when I was being bullied and they don't judge you at all no matter what. It is a great support system and volunteer group who help youth be leaders in the community and allows them to achieve what they want to in life by giving them options. Synergy changed my life for the better in every way

Yell Youth Council Participant

How Has Synergy Impacted You?

From a Synergy Parent

I don't think that any words will ever pay service to the impact that Synergy, and it's team members, have had on my sons life. When I was referred to Synergy through our school nearly 3 years ago my son was at the height (or so I thought) of self-hatred, bullying, and loneliness. He had never fit in with the athletic kids (or any of the kids for that matter), nor had he ever made any real friends. To be honest I was skeptical that he would even go to the program's being offered. Day one of his time spent with Synergy lit something in him, later I realized it was a sense of belonging and worthiness, which has just gotten stronger during his 3 years with them. During his time with Synergy he has been challenged, given an opportunity to mentor younger children, encouraged, belonged, but most importantly he has been loved. Loved by the team members running the programs, loved by those they serve, and again probably most importantly he has learned to love himself. This program was life saving, and this is not an exaggeration, it truly has saved his life. There are no more screams of wanting to kill himself, bearing his head in a pillow sobbing himself to sleep because he wasn't worthy of existing. The work that this incredible organization does has had a profound impact on my son, on our family and in our community. My heart will always be eternally grateful for everything that they've done and everything they continue to do for our young people. They are incredible people, within an incredible organization that EVERY child should be a part of. With so much love gratitude and eternal respect.

"How has Synergy impacted you?!! Well that is a hard question!

I am not sure it is easily expressed how Synergy has impacted my family. As a parent you work hard to give your child every opportunity but you must also remember they need to experience things on their own in order to mature and develop into their own person. Synergy provides my son with a place where he can be his own person without judgements. He can be either silly or serious and it is ok! The Leaders and older youth provide guidance so my son can make a better decision about things. I can't wait to see how my son blossoms with his continued association and experiences with Synergy!

I also find myself enjoying the positive interaction with the youth of our community! Seeing so many caring young people renews my hope for a better tomorrow! Thank you Synergy for all that you are and do!!

– Synergy Parent



"At first I was undecided and I didn't really know what YELL was and what it did. Over time I got more information about it and liked how much it opened up and matured the girls. It has helped the girls out a lot and was fantastic, fulfilling, enriching, and a great opportunity."

- Synergy Parent

synergy:

noun

The interaction or cooperation of two or more organizations, substances, or other agents to produce a combined effect greater than the sum of their separate parts.

