



# RURAL RED DEER RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PROGRAM

## Annual Report

April 1, 2022- March 31, 2023

**Vision:** Rural Red Deer communities value, support and utilize restorative justice processes as a first response to non-violent harms.

## 2022-23 Highlights

The Rural Red Deer Restorative Justice (RRDRJ) program has just completed its second full year of service delivery and there have been many notable accomplishments to highlight.

Perhaps the most significant accomplishment was the expansion of services including the number and complexity of the cases referred as well as the originating source of referrals. Not only did the program double the number of cases addressed from our first year, but we also received referrals from additional general duty officers from the Blackfalds RCMP, the Lacombe Municipal Police detachment and two local schools. The program is currently working with the Crown Prosecutors office to extend the opportunity for restorative justice options for post-charge diversion cases and we anticipate that this will further impact the number and complexity of cases addressed in the future.

Community engagement and increasing community awareness about the opportunities and benefits of restorative justice is another area that the team needs to be commended on. Ninety percent of the Restorative Justice (RJ) case conferences had community members and/or community support programs in attendance. Twenty-four presentations and information sharing events resulted in over 500 students and community members learning about restorative justice and the RRDRJ program. Enhancements to the program website resulted in over 2000 views and 400 downloads of educational, referral and sponsorship information.

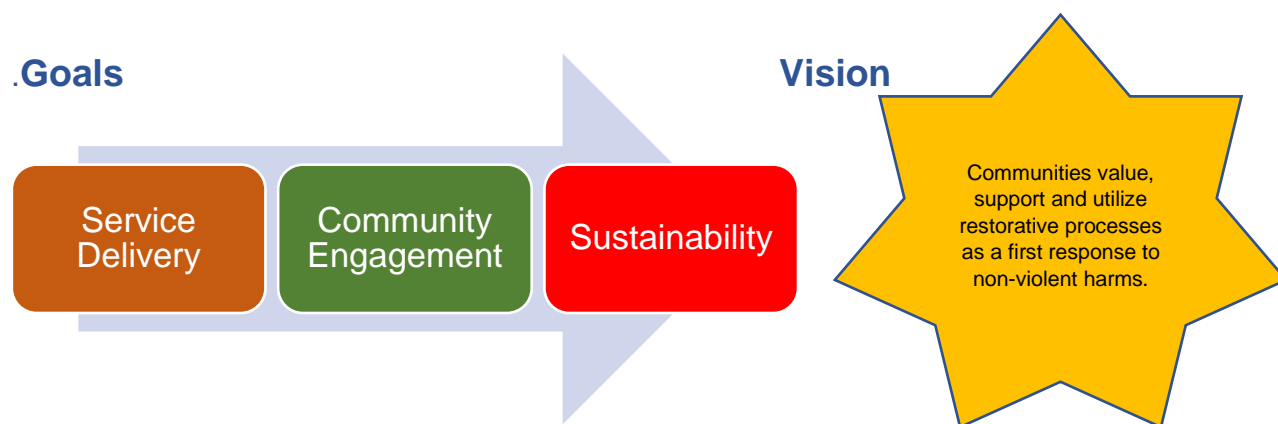
Successful fund-raising efforts and grant proposals resulted in the continuation of sponsorship from Vesta energy as well as the addition of Blindman Valley Propane and the award of the Solicitor General of Alberta- Alberta Community Restorative Justice (ACRJ) grant. Having adequate funds to support program delivery enabled the hiring of two small part time positions including a Coordinator and Educator. It also enabled us to begin to compensate case facilitators with a small case per-diem rate.

Significant effort has gone into the development and refinement of a RRDRJ specific facilitator orientation and training program that includes a combination of on-line, virtual and in-person learning. Two facilitator orientation sessions and three full day extra training sessions were held in the past year. In addition, facilitators and other volunteers were supported to participate in the Alberta Restorative Justice Association (ARJA) and International Institute of Restorative Practices (IIRP) conferences.

Our Board of Directors has also been evolving and changing. We recognized the needs of varying skill sets to best support the program's achievement of its vision. To address this need, new members are being recruited and board development activities are being put into place.

New partnerships are being forged with the community colleges, additional schools, police detachments, rural municipalities and counties, and support agencies. We are seeing an increase in the desire to not just learn more about restorative justice but to have the service available beyond our current geographical base. The newly forming partnerships are opening opportunities for expanding community awareness, support and even research.

One step at a time, and with considered attention to the strategic plan and our established goals, we are getting closer to achieving the vision where **“communities value, support and utilize Restorative Justice processes as a first response to non-violent harms”**.



On behalf of the RRDRJ Board of Directors I offer our sincere appreciation and thanks to the many volunteers who contribute their time, passion, dedication, and belief in restorative justice. It is estimated that more than 4000 volunteer hours were contributed this year. This program could not succeed or be in existence without you.

Special thanks and recognition is extended to our financial sponsors: Alberta Justice and Solicitor General, Vesta Energy and Blindman Valley Propane as well as to our primary partner in service delivery- the Blackfalds RCMP.

#### Board of Directors:

Jean Bota- Chair	Dean Hart -Treasurer	Debbie Leitch- Secretary
William Young	Dana Kreil	Lonny Kennett
Jackie Fry	Carrie Dennett	Agnes Struik
Jeffery Hewitt		



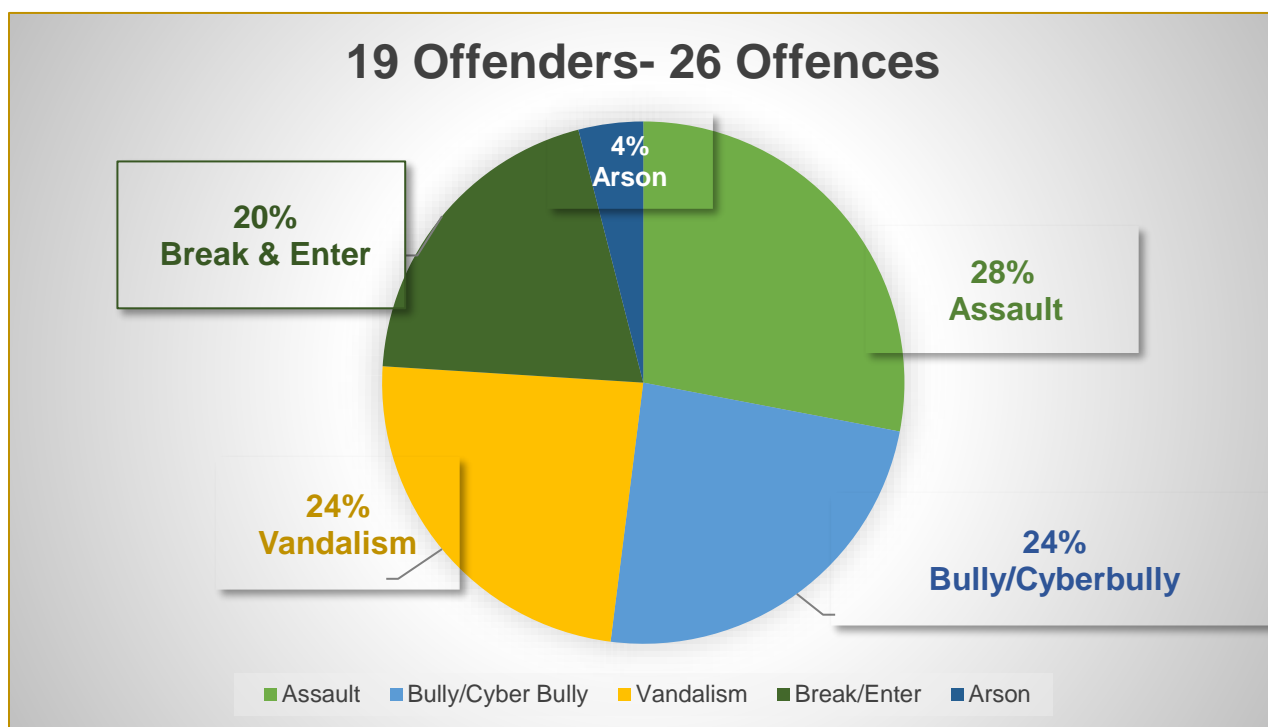
## Goal #1 Service Delivery

The following diagrams depict a summary of program activity related to service delivery from April 1, 2022- March 31, 2023

**10** Referrals - **19** Offenders/ Cases- **26** Offences

**50%** Referrals had multiple offenders

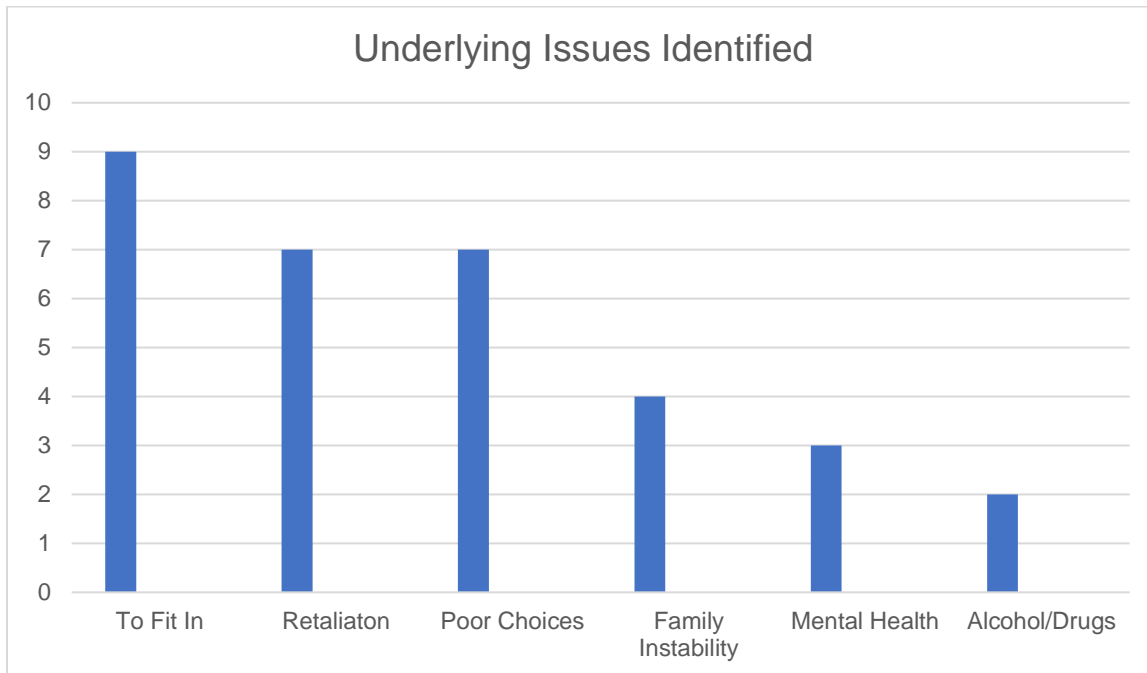
### Breakdown of Cases by Offence Type:



### Source of Referrals:

<p><b>80%</b></p> <p><b>Police Initiated</b></p>	<p><b>2</b> Detachments</p> <p><b>4</b> Communities</p>	<p><b>20%</b></p> <p><b>School Initiated</b></p>	<p><b>2</b> Schools</p> <p><b>1</b> Community</p>
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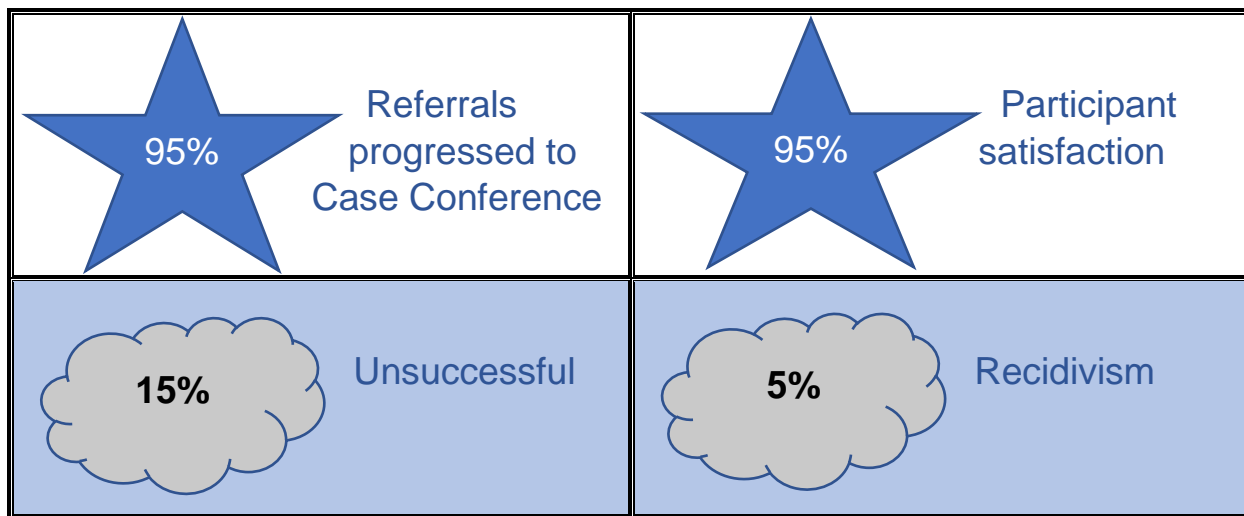
### Underlying Issues Identified:



### Reparative Actions undertaken by offenders:



## Outcomes



One case was withdrawn by the victim following interviews as the offender received mental health counselling and medical care. Three offenders did not complete all actions agreed to in their reparative contract and their files were returned to the police for processing. One offender has since been involved in repeat criminal activity.

## Evaluation

### School Pilot Project

Two schools in Blackfalds participated in a pilot project that enabled direct referral to the program from the principal of the school. The evaluation of the pilot project provided information enabling a clear understanding of factors that support success in the school setting. This has set the stage for future development of a model of service that would support schools in their implementation of restorative processes as an upstream approach to reducing youth involvement in criminal activity.

### New Process for Participant Evaluation

Acquiring feedback that is an accurate reflection of case participants experience is often difficult at the end of a case conference or session because of the emotional journey that each participant has just experienced. To address this issue, an e-evaluation tool was developed and sent to all participants two days following the conference. Examples of feedback provided are included on the next page.

## Evaluation Responses – Comments from Case Participants

*“What was good about the RRDRJ Process?”*



In addition, here is what the youth involved in our RJ program said they would tell others who might have the opportunity to participate in the RJ process...



## Goal #2- Community Awareness and Engagement

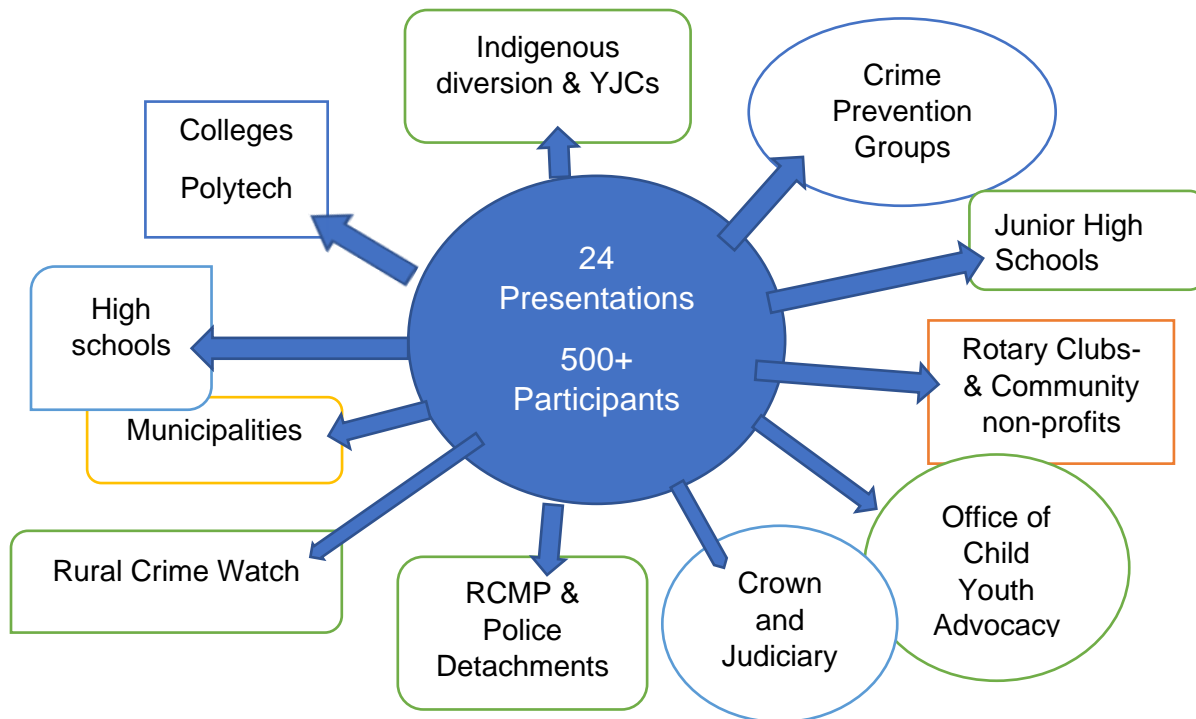
This year, a concentrated effort has been made to increase community awareness not just about the Rural Red Deer Restorative Justice Program but also about the benefits of a restorative justice approach generally. A multi-pronged approach that included education sessions to community organizations and programs, teachers and students, a school-based pilot project to bring RJ services directly to two partnering schools, an enhanced and interactive website and program branding have greatly supported both community awareness and engagement.

Evaluations of sessions provided have been extremely positive and the request for additional sessions is expanding from word-of-mouth and website requests. The successes being demonstrated in the still early days of the program are paving the way for other communities and programs to move in this direction.

The following diagrams provide some of the highlights of these activities and the successes achieved.



**Increasing Community Awareness through education:**



Education to grade 9 and 10 students was a targeted focus for increasing awareness.

**350**  
Students from 3 communities and 4 schools participated in education sessions on restorative justice.

- HUNTING HILLS HIGH SCHOOL
- LACOMBE COMPOSITE HIGH SCHOOL
- IRON RIDGE JUNIOR CAMPUS
- LACOMBE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

In addition, the Central Alberta Catholic School Division hosted restorative processes as a component of teacher's professional development day in February with the goal of implementing restorative processes as an approach to developing a culture of respect in the classroom.

### ***Increasing community awareness through social media.***

Significant effort was put into re-vamping the RRDRJ website so that all stakeholders could easily find and access information. [www.rrdrestorativejustice.ca](http://www.rrdrestorativejustice.ca)



## Goal #3 Sustainability

### 2022/23 Sustainability Activities

#### Governance



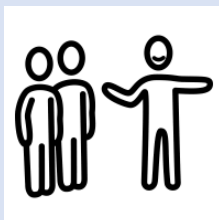
- Board development activities/retreat
- Identification of gaps in board member skill mix
- Recruitment to fill needed board member skills
- Board official elections
- Monitoring and oversight of goals, strategies, outcomes
- Advocacy and building partnership activities

- Program Coordinator hired in June.
- Program Educator hired in September
- Development and implementation of standards, policies, procedures, and processes
- Development and refinement of RRDRJ Facilitator orientation, training and mentoring processes using web-based, virtual and in-person venues.
- Development and optimization of information access through website and social media

#### Structure



#### Facilitators



- 2 orientation sessions, (April and December)
- 4 new facilitators to maintain roster of 10
- 2 facilitators assigned/case + educator mentoring
- 3 skills development training sessions
- Monthly in-services
- Case per-diem rates initiated.
- 2 registrations in ARJA conference
- 4 registrations in IIRP conference

- Acquired new sponsorship 2022- Blindman Valley Propane
- Renewed sponsorship for 2023-Vesta Energy
- Successful ACRJ grant
- Hosted 50/50 draws at October Bull Dogs Hockey
- Sale of RCMP Challenge coins
- Submission of grant proposals- ACRJA and Crime prevention grant
- Donation from Clearwater County Crime Watch

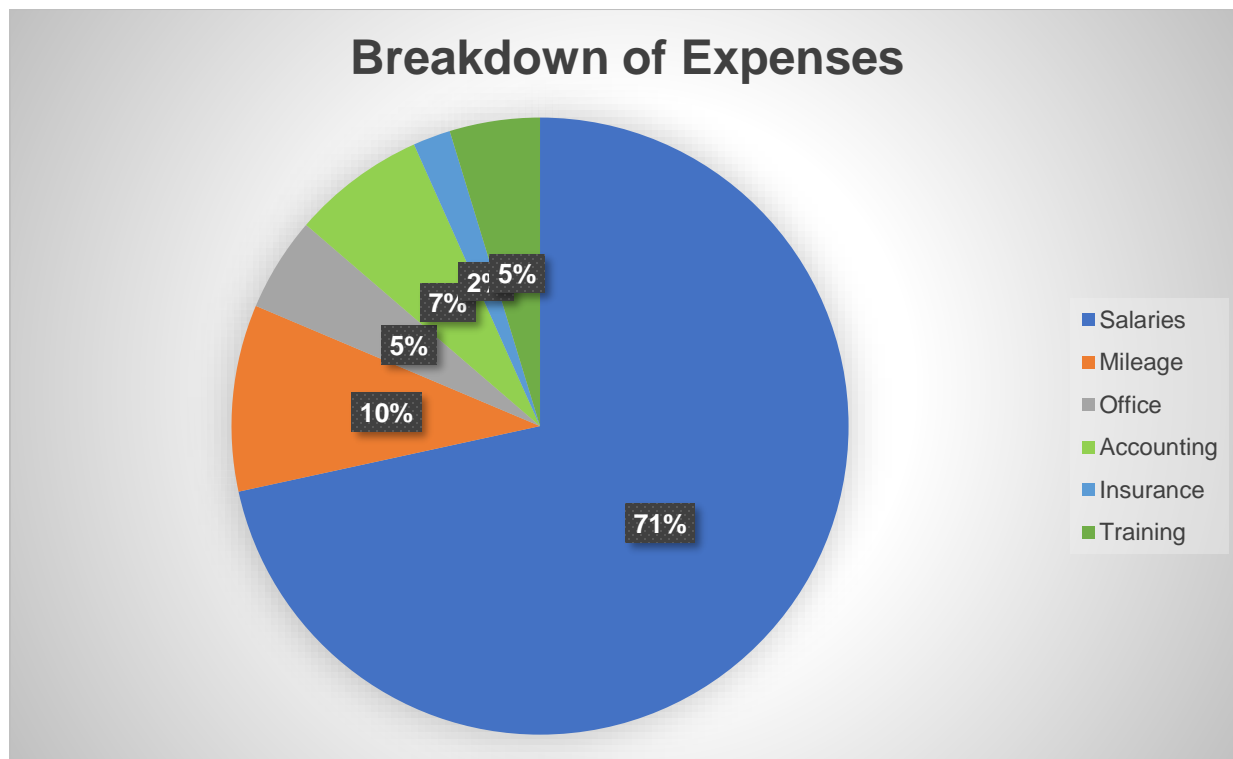
#### Funding



### Expenses (April 1, 2022-March 17 2023)

#### EXPENSES

5600	Accounting		\$2,606.72
5620	Dues and Subscriptions		\$ 520.00
5690	Bank Charges		\$ 31.93
5700	Office Expenses		\$ 879.78
5710	Insurance		\$ 733.36
5725	Promotions		\$ 275.78
5800	Travel (Mileage Reimbursements)		\$ 3,641.03
5820	Facilitator Per Diem Expense	\$ 3,735.00	
5830	Payroll Expenses - Wages	\$21,759.80	
5835	Payroll- Taxes (CPP/EI)	\$ 1,165.67	
	<b>Total Salaries</b>		\$26,660.47
5840	Training Materials	\$939.04	
5850	Training Expense	\$822.58	
	<b>Total Training</b>		\$ 1761.62
	<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>\$38,110.69</b>



Salary includes Program Coordinator, Educator, Facilitator case per-diem rates and Benefits paid.

## Future Directions- Expansion and Prevention

- A. Anticipate referrals with increasing complexity from the crown prosecutor and other referring agencies.
- B. Expand partnership with additional police detachments to bring RJ services to other rural communities that surround Red Deer.
- C. Support schools in the use of restorative processes as a proactive approach to preventing youth getting involved in criminal activity.

## Thank you!

### Volunteers

Over 4000 volunteer hours have contributed to the successes outlined in this report and we can't thank you enough!

**40** Volunteers      **4000** Hours

### RCMP Partnership

The program would not be in existence without our partnership with the Blackfalds RCMP and the strong leadership of Sgt. Dan Martin and Constable Jeffery Hewitt.

### Financial sponsors

Our sincere thanks and gratitude goes to the following 2022 financial sponsors: Alberta Solicitor General's Community Restorative Justice Grant, Blindman Valley Propane, and Vesta Energy as well as our many community partners who provide in-kind resources to support service delivery.



## Community Partners

The tremendous community support for this program at both the County and Municipal levels has played a significant role in the success of the program to date.

Blackfalds RCMP Detachment	Town of Blackfalds
Red Deer County	Blackfalds Abby Centre
Lacombe County	Iron Ridge Junior Campus
Red Deer and Lacombe County Crime Watch	Saint Gregory the Great Junior High
Medicine River Rural Crime Watch	Lacombe Police Services
Alberta Rural Crime Watch	Lacombe Junior High School
Central Alberta Fraud Prevention	Lacombe Composite High School
Village of Alix	Mary C Moore Library

## Our Service Delivery Team

### Program Coordinator - Debbie Leitch

**Relevant Education:** Bachelor of Nursing UNB (1979) Masters of Nursing UofA(1995) Certificate in Bioethics (2001), IIRP Certificate of Restorative Justice Facilitator training- (2021). **Relevant experience:** Extensive experience in health care leadership, program development and implementation, education, conflict resolution, and quality improvement/evaluation. Highlights of employment history include: Provincial Executive Director for Strategic Clinical Network with AHS (5 years), Program Director for DTHR (10 years) Manager, Professional Practice/Quality Assurance- DTHR (5 years) Acute Care Nursing Manager RDRHC (5 years) Tenured Nursing Instructor/Pediatric Program Coordinator - Mount Royal University (4 years)

### Program Educator and Facilitator- Agnes Struik

**Relevant Education:** Master of Arts in education and psychology, Vermont College, Montpelier, Vermont, USA, 1992 Master's Thesis: The Student-Teacher Relationship, Introduction to Peacemaking Circles Ontario Society of Psychotherapists (2006), Advanced Peacemaking Circles, Conrad Grebel University (2017) IIRP Certificate of Restorative Justice Facilitator training. **Relevant Experience:** Agnes has worked as a teacher, principal, and a psychotherapist for the last 25 years. She has extensive training and experience in restorative practices, circles and RJ training including conducting peacemaking circles with former child soldiers in Liberia. She is the Chair of the Conflict Transformation Committee at Burman University.

## **Program Co-lead- Constable Jeffery Hewitt- Blackfalds RCMP Detachment**

RCMP Officer. Certificate of Restorative Justice Facilitator Training.

Jeff is a 13-year member with the RCMP who at a young age wanted to work with youth and is currently the School Resource Officer with the Blackfalds RCMP detachment. He offers and responds to issues that arise in both the school and the community with presentations and strategies to help youth deal with safety issues, bullying, social media, drugs, alcohol and other topic that arises. He is committed to helping youth and the restorative justice program truly benefits from his positive community policing approach.

### **RJ Case Facilitators:**

#### **1. Jordyn Mansell- Facilitator, Social Media Coordinator**

Bachelor's degree in psychology, IIRP Certificate of Restorative Justice Facilitator training. Jordyn has worked with youth in an inpatient court mandated addiction program for over 5 years. Jordyn maintains and manages our social media communications including Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts.

#### **2. John McLevin- Facilitator and community resource coordinator/Victim services**

Forest Technology Diploma, Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, RRDRJ Certificate of Restorative Justice Facilitator training. John is also a volunteer for Central Alberta Victim Services. He has extensive employment history in industry liaison and management roles.

#### **3. Bernice French- Facilitator/Victim Services**

RRDRJ Certificate of Restorative Justice Facilitator training. Bernice has been employed by Victims Services in central Alberta for a little over 10 years, first as a volunteer advocate then as Case and Court Support. Prior to Victims Services she worked in the Oilfield for NAL Resources and Phillips Petroleum for 22 years.

#### **4. Jean Bota- Facilitator, Director**

B.A. Major in Sociology and Minor in Psychology, RRDRJ Certificate of Restorative Justice Facilitator training. Jean has been a Red Deer County Councillor division 2 ( 8 years). She currently chairs Alberta Community Crime Prevention Association, is a director on the Police Advisory. Committee and a member of the Rural Crime Watch Association. She has had banking career for 33 years.

#### **5. Ruth Hansen-Facilitator**

RN, Post basic certificate in Mental Health Nursing, BScN, Certification Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing through Canadian Nurses Association, RRDRJ Certificate of Restorative Justice Facilitator training. Employment with

Red Deer Regional Hospital 1975 to David Thompson Health Region 2018, officially retired 2020. The last 30 plus years on the psychiatric unit. She also is a volunteer with Central Alberta Victim Services

**6. Janene Anderson-Facilitator**

RRDRJ Certificate of Restorative Justice Facilitator Training Manager/Supervisor/Recreation and Director of Emergency Management for village of Alix. In addition to RJ training she completed Introduction to the Practice of Restorative Justice in Criminal Matters and Collaboration and Capacity-Building in Restorative Justice and Victim Services courses.

**7. Jackie Vander Heide-Born -Facilitator**

Rehabilitation Services Diploma, RRDRJ Certificate of Restorative Justice Facilitator training. Jackie worked as a Special Needs Aide in kindergarten and junior/senior high schools. She also worked as a Family Support Worker for WJS, contracting to Child and Family Services of Alberta.

**8. Barry Brouwer-Facilitator**

SAIT- Technical Diploma, RRDRJ Certificate of Restorative Justice Facilitator training. Barry has extensive leadership and management experience and was in a leadership position with Nova Chemicals for 22 years.

**9. Kaitlyn Lemens- Facilitator**

Diploma in Justice Studies (RDP), Environmental Sciences Studies (Lethbridge University) RRDRJ Certificate of Restorative Justice Facilitator training, Volunteer with Red Deer Crime Prevention, as well as developing Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Audits for Red Deer Central Middle School. "I believe that the restorative processes offer an environment to help not only reconcile one's actions, but to receive closure and healing that the traditional justice system fails to provide".

**RRDRJ Board of Directors**

1. Jean Bota - Chair
2. Dean Hart- Treasurer
3. Debbie Leitch- Secretary
4. Cnst. Jeffery Hewitt- RCMP- Blackfalds Detachment
5. Agnes Struik- Program Educator
6. Carrie Dennett – Professor at Red Deer Polytech
7. Dana Kreil- Appointed Lacombe County Councilor
8. Jackie Fry- Public Defence Lawyer
9. Lonny Kennett- Appointed Red Deer County Councilor
10. William Young- MD



## The Community Advisory Council

- Debbie Leitch- Program Coordinator
- Constable Jeff Hewitt -RCMP (SRO) Program Co-lead (Director)
- Sargent Dan Martin- Blackfalds RCMP
- Jean Bota- Facilitator/ (Director- Chair)
- Dean Hart (Director- Treasurer)
- Agnes Struik- RJ Facilitator/Educator- Director
- Dr. William Young (Director)
- Dana Kreil- Lacombe County Councilor (Director)
- Lonny Kennett- Red Deer County Councilor (Director)
- Jackie Fry- Director
- Carrie Dennett- Director
- Jordyn Mansell-Addictions and Mental Health
- Rose McQuay – Principal Saint Gregory the Great Catholic School- Blackfalds
- Nicole Rawlinson – Principal of Iron Ridge Junior Campus- Blackfalds
- Valerie Yaremchuk – Principal Lacombe Composite High
- Brenda Neufeld- Business owner- Gasoline Alley
- Les Waite- Youth Headquarters- Red Deer
- Tammy Rogers - Urban Aboriginal Voices
- Bailee Wigmore (Citizen of Blackfalds- young adult)
- Ken Wigmore- Lacombe County- Citizen
- Brenda Dennis- Blackfalds Town Council
- Rebecca Stendie- Blackfalds Town Council
- Julie Nason- FASD Association
- Derek Turner- FASD/ RJ Coordinator
- Louise Rellis- ANAM rural youth association
- Tera Leslie- McMan Family Resource Centre
- Bernice French- RJ Facilitator/Victim Services
- Jordyn Mansell- RJ Facilitator/Social Media Lead
- Victoria Andasol Purdie- Past Facilitator
- John McLevin- RJ Facilitator/Victim services
- Ruth Hansen- RJ Facilitator
- Barry Brouwer- RJ Facilitator
- Janene Andersen- RJ Facilitator
- Jackie Vander Heide Born - RJ Facilitator
- Kaitlyn Lemens- RJ Facilitator