



# **CASA Mental Health For Kids Across Alberta**

**How your support will change  
the future for children and families**

# Alberta kids need mental health care more than ever.

Every hour of every day, families in small towns and big cities across Alberta are struggling to learn about and get the right mental health support for their kids.

*Perhaps you notice that your 15-year-old isn't as confident as he once was.*

*Your daughter seems afraid to go to school and one day, just simply won't get out of bed.*

*You had a death in the family, and your kid is struggling with their sadness.*

*Maybe they stop eating; maybe they can't stop crying.*

*Or maybe you can't tell exactly what is wrong, but you know it in your gut something isn't right.*



**Too often there are no clear choices on where and when to seek out care between a family's coping strategies at home or in their community, and the care of a hospital.**

About 20 per cent of Canadian youth are affected by a mental illness or disorder. **That's one out of every five kids.** But where do they go, and where do their parents or guardians look for support? CASA Mental Health helps fill in the gap in services, in between the home and hospital.

## What is CASA Mental Health?

CASA Mental Health is an established non-profit organization with nearly 40 years of delivering mental health services to Albertans aged three to 18 and their families.



When it comes to recognizing and treating mental health issues, childhood is a critical time: most people living with a mental illness see their symptoms begin before age 18.

## A medical team that kids and families trust

CASA Mental Health's teams of mental health professionals are trauma experts, committed to delivering services in collaboration with community partners. This includes assessment and treatment for more than 11,000 children, youth and their family members each year, from community outreach settings to intensive treatment programs. In 2024-25, CASA served patients from 121 communities across Alberta – the most in its history.

Programs and services delivered at CASA's Edmonton and Calgary locations offer several unique and effective programs tailored to a child's age and diagnosis. CASA's trauma-informed model is recognized and respected across Alberta, within a complex and evolving health system. **Because of its successful outcomes, CASA Mental Health is now expanding its services across the province.**

**CASA also has the only preschool day program that provides mental health care free of charge for preschool kids (pre-kindergarten and kindergarten), aged four and five, in Edmonton. These children are experiencing severe challenges managing or regulating their emotions and behaviour.**

### CASA's programs are:

- Holistic: addressing all aspects of well-being, including mental, emotional, physical, spiritual and social needs, rather than focusing solely on symptoms or one area of health.
- Culturally safe: respectful and inclusive while acknowledging and valuing cultural identity, beliefs and practices.
- Coordinated to meet unique needs through mental health therapists, psychiatrists, psychologists, nurses, social workers, addictions counsellors, occupational therapists and other health professionals working together to ensure seamless and accessible support.

CASA also offers programs that support parents and caregivers, to help them understand and better navigate their child's mental health challenges.

## Our programs include:

### Core

Core is the first stop for most families who come to CASA in Edmonton. The program serves children ages three to 17 and provides general mental health treatment.

From Core, the therapist can move families up or down into more appropriate levels of service if needed.

**In the 2024-25 fiscal year,  
Core provided services to  
2,427 individuals.**



### CASA Classrooms

Often, the struggles kids suffer from are first expressed and seen at school, not at home. But educators do not have the resources to handle full classrooms and children struggling with their mental health at the same time.

The CASA Classrooms program began thanks to a generous donor who saw the need for this type of mental health program for children and youth in a specialized classroom setting, and CASA's ability to deliver the program and go to the communities where the kids already are.

Today, this life-changing program is funded by the Government of Alberta and is rapidly expanding across the province.

**As of September 2025, 25 CASA Classrooms are operating across Alberta, with three more opening in February 2026. As of May 2025, the program had admitted 383 students. There are also two Indigenous school-based programs.**

**By 2026-27, CASA Mental Health Classrooms will be open in up to 60 schools and serve up to 139 communities across the province.**

## CASA House and the Adolescent Day Program

CASA House is a voluntary, live-in program for teens in grades seven to 12 who need support with significant mental health challenges including addictions, complex learning needs, family problems or social issues.

The CASA Adolescent Day Program offers mental health treatment and academic support for adolescents who need more intensive mental health care, including assessment, diagnosis, therapy, or medication review, but can safely live at home with their families.

CASA is in the planning stages of co-locating CASA House and the Adolescent Day Program together for a seamless continuum of care.

Co-located programs are planned in Calgary, Fort McMurray, Edmonton and Medicine Hat.

**Number of teens who receive support through our existing CASA House: 81 per year.**

**With your support, CASA can open a new CASA House in each of three new communities, providing intensive supports and making a difference for up to 324 more teens each year.**

## Trauma Program

The CASA Trauma program provides intensive, community-based mental health services for children and teens aged five to 17 who have experienced complex developmental trauma and need intensive, specialized support beyond basic mental health care.

In addition to offering the Trauma program in Edmonton, CASA Mental Health launched its Trauma program in Calgary in August 2025.

**When the Calgary Trauma program is fully operational, it will serve 300 kids per year in Calgary.**

### **Patient age range across all programs at CASA Mental Health in 2024-25**

<b>Ages 0-4</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>Ages 5-12</b>	<b>46%</b>
<b>Ages 13-17</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>Ages 18-24</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Ages 25+</b>	<b>2%</b>

CASA Mental Health will serve patients that turn 18 while receiving care. In these circumstances, CASA remains committed to assisting these patients as they transition to adult services.

## Between home and hospital there is CASA Mental Health

With your support, we can further expand  
our life-changing programs across Alberta



### CASA House

- Four locations: Calgary and Fort McMurray (2027), Medicine Hat and Edmonton relocation and enhancements (2029).
- Targeted fundraising goal of \$19.5 million for construction and \$3 million for programming and improvements (\$22.5 million for each location).



### Trauma Program

- Edmonton
- Calgary (2025)



### Core

- Edmonton



### CASA Classrooms

- Operational around the province. Current locations include:
  - Coaldale
  - Cold Lake
  - Calgary (2)
  - Daysland
  - Edmonton (4)
  - Fort McMurray
  - Fort Saskatchewan
  - Grande Prairie
  - High Level (Feb. 2026)
  - Lacombe
  - Medicine Hat
  - Redcliff (Feb. 2026)
  - Red Deer (3)
  - Rocky Mountain House
  - Sherwood Park
  - Slave Lake
  - Stony Plain
  - Strathmore
  - Sturgeon County (2)
  - Taber
  - Wetaskiwin



### Indigenous Services

- Alexander First Nation
- Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation
- Enoch Cree Nation
- Paul First Nation



### CASA Community Programs



# The opportunity

The Government of Alberta has committed an exceptional \$75 million to fund the “bricks and mortar” for the CASA House expansion to four locations across the province. Government has also made an unprecedented commitment to provide operating funding for CASA Houses once built. CASA has been asked to match the capital funding and support expansion of programs in those areas where services are expanding.

**We know we can do it with supporters like you who care about our kids and the future of our province.**

**Together, we can:**

- Extend wrap-around services across the province, including families within rural communities, to ensure both the child and their family are fully supported.
- Build integrated CASA House and day program facilities in Fort McMurray, Edmonton, Calgary and Medicine Hat over the next four years, offering both live-in and day treatment programs in the communities where teens need help.

CASA has nearly tripled the number of kids, youth and families served from 4,000 to more than 11,000 in just the past four years. As we learn and understand more about the importance of mental health as a key factor in a person’s life journey, more families are reaching out to CASA for our life-changing services.

**Your support helps ensure that CASA services can be available to more kids and families, and in more communities across Alberta than ever before.**





## Provincial Campaign Goal: \$90 Million

**With your support, CASA Mental Health will raise \$90 million between 2025 and 2029. Your generosity will ensure CASA Mental Health is there for kids and families that need us. You can help our multi-disciplinary teams continue to reach more than 11,000 kids, from three to 18 years old, across Alberta free of charge each year.**

## Provincial Campaign Priorities

### **CASA Houses: \$75 Million**

Your support helps more teens who need intensive mental health treatment by bringing CASA House facilities into Fort McMurray, Calgary and Medicine Hat and relocating an enhanced CASA House in the Edmonton region. You can help us serve up to 324 more youth each year who won't have to travel so far from home to get the timely mental health care they need.

### **CASA Community Programs: \$15 Million**

Your donation will provide CASA programming for families who are helping their child manage their mental health. Family support is crucial for a child's mental health as it provides emotional security, builds resilience and helps children develop coping skills, while fostering a sense of trust and belonging.

# Provincial Campaign Priority: **CASA Houses \$75 Million**

**Four locations: Fort McMurray, Calgary, Medicine Hat and Edmonton**

## **When minutes count, you can't wait a year.**

As the only program of its kind in Alberta, the existing Edmonton-area CASA House is in high demand. But with just 19 beds, our waitlist can be anywhere from eight to 18 months – a significant amount of time for any person, let alone a teen in crisis.

## **When kids are at CASA House, they are safe.**

Once admitted, treatment includes individual, group and family therapy, social and life skills training, and on-site schooling in small classroom settings. The key to the program's success is involving caregivers in their child's treatment, requiring them to be on site at least once a week to participate in therapy and learning sessions with their teen.

Our current location means that families from Fort McMurray spend many hours driving back and forth to Sherwood Park, creating additional family pressures as they work to help their teen.

**Building three more CASA House facilities in the province will bring our impact closer to home for the communities of Fort McMurray, Calgary and Medicine Hat. Your support will also help us relocate and provide enhanced services in a new Edmonton-area CASA House. These facilities are an essential bridge that teens and parents need between home, school and hospital care.**





**But we need **YOUR** help to see this project through, with a funding goal of \$18.75 million per location for capital construction.**

- This amount goes toward construction of about 40,000 square feet in each CASA House, including classrooms, safety enhancements, dining and commercial kitchen spaces for occupants and guests, a gymnasium and multi-use spaces.

Families desperately waiting will get help sooner at a new CASA House. Thanks to you, the care, comfort and support teens need will be waiting for them when they arrive.

“

They literally changed the course of my life and have done so for thousands of children and families across Alberta.

- Sienna, former CASA patient

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# Provincial Campaign Priority: **CASA Community Programs \$15 Million**

**Caregivers are always “on call” when it comes to caring for their child’s mental health.**

Beyond the doctors’ appointments and the therapy sessions, families need the right tools and education to help their child day to day.

Involvement of caregivers and parents is paramount to CASA’s success in helping kids manage and overcome their mental health challenges. While government provides the funding for the individual patient, **we rely on donors like you** to offer programs that support families, creating a circle of care around their child and increasing long-term success in the home and in life.

Having the support that CASA gave our family was instrumental in our son’s recovery.

**- Heather, CASA parent**

**Bringing CASA’s programs into more communities across the province will allow us to reach even more kids and lessen the challenges for families by ensuring care is closer to home. Two programs that urgently need your help are:**

- The Family Smart program, which connects families who are navigating their child’s mental health challenges. This network of peer support workers listens, provides advice and helps families navigate the mental health system to support their child. This program is entirely funded by donors like you, is free for families and has no waitlist.
- The Trauma and Attachment Group (TAG), which helps to repair the bonds between child and primary caregiver that may lead to mental health challenges. TAG is a structured, year-long support group for children and teens and their caregivers.



**In supporting CASA families, you will be creating a ripple effect where caregivers, siblings, grandparents and communities have the tools they need to care for their loved one as well as monitor their own mental health.**

As CASA Mental Health continues to find new ways to help kids and those in their circle of care, we can often find ourselves ahead of the funding curve, meaning we don't always receive government funding for these innovative approaches. Your support helps bring these programs to more kids, youth and families who need them, and enables us to validate the positive impact of these programs so we can secure long-term, stable funding.

“ Our family is coming out of program completely different. We as parents no longer felt alone and greatly benefited from the lessons taught. Our daughter was safe and properly diagnosed and treated.

**- CASA parent**



## Alberta's Future depends on our kids

Youth ages 12 to 24 are among the most underserved population when it comes to mental health and addictions in Alberta.

No one is the same coming out of the pandemic, including children and youth. Factor in the challenges of intergenerational trauma, systemic racism, financial insecurity in the home, living in a remote community, peer pressure from social media and the stresses of growing up, and you can begin to see how a kid might need more help than in previous generations.

Though it seems to be an insurmountable challenge, in Alberta, **we are fortunate**. No other province in Canada has an organization like CASA Mental Health helping kids and families navigate the complex mental health challenges that are beyond the care delivered by a family doctor, but not yet life-threatening. CASA has also proven that we can tackle the waiting lists for mental health services faster, getting to kids quicker and at a lower cost than hospitalization.

**Together, we can help improve the future of mental health for Alberta's kids through CASA Mental Health.**

Once all newly-planned CASA services are operational across Alberta, about 2,000 more children will receive services per year, including 450 more kids in Calgary alone.



It was the end of a long shift in the ER when the pediatrician turned to me and said, 'Dena, do something about children's mental health and you will change the world.' That's why I joined CASA and what we are on a mission to do.

- Dena Pedersen,  
Director, Clinical (Outpatient Clinics)



## The time is now

Because we've been working with children and families since 1989, we have seen many changes in mental health and wellness as worldwide awareness has increased. We now know we all need to care for our mental health. Diagnosis has become more accurate, and the ability to succeed in life despite mental illness is the norm, not the exception.

Over the next few years, CASA is expanding mental health programs across Alberta – bringing services closer to kids and families who need them more than ever.

This expansion effort will include significant collaboration with government, communities and community partners.

**We invite you to join us on our transformational journey inspired by our vision of a community where all children, youth and their families are provided with timely mental health care and empowered to thrive.**

### Your generous support of this campaign will:

- Expand CASA's reach to underserviced and underrepresented communities by providing culturally safe care closer to home;
- Enable more collaboration with partners and service providers, offering much-needed mental health programming for children, youth and families in schools and community; and
- Support kids and their families as they navigate the child's mental health journey, laying the foundation for success in life.

**For an increasing number of children and families, accessing mental health support is a complicated, sometimes confusing process.**

*But with your support, it won't be.*

Donors know how to lead the way. It was donor support of the CASA Classrooms pilot project that has led to funding by the Government of Alberta to expand and adapt the program across the province by 2026-27. Your donation will help families beyond the classroom, providing support to kids where they live and spend their time.

Help us give CASA to every kid – and family – that needs us, and let's make sure our children and youth can succeed.

[casamentalhealth.org](http://casamentalhealth.org)



**[casamentalhealth.org](http://casamentalhealth.org)**

CASA Mental Health is dedicated to creating equitable access to care for all children and families, recognizing the unique challenges faced by underserved communities, including Indigenous communities and other racialized groups, rural populations, 2SLGBTQIA+ youth, and those experiencing systemic barriers.

CASA Mental Health respectfully acknowledges Alberta is located on Treaty 4, 6, 7 and 8 Territory lands - a traditional gathering place for diverse Indigenous peoples whose histories, languages and cultures continue to influence our vibrant community.

**Have questions?**

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