

Circle of Care is CASA Mental Health's quarterly publication for child, youth and family mental health in Alberta.

Needed Mental Health Care for Calgary and Wood Buffalo Youth Closer to Reality with CASA House Sod-Turnings

On Thursday, May 21 and Friday, May 22, CASA Mental Health, in partnership with the Government of Alberta, celebrated the sod-turnings of two new CASA House facilities.

[CASA House Calgary](#) and [CASA House Fort McMurray](#) are slated to open in 2027.

"Some of the successes that we see for kids at CASA House are kids who might be so anxious that they can't even go to school for months, or years," says Tanya Kendall, Director, Clinical, CASA House and Day Programs. "After spending time in our program they are able to get back to school, have repaired relationships with their friends and peers, as well as their families."

CASA House is a voluntary, live-in program for youth in Grades 7 to 12 who have significant mental health challenges, and have not responded to previous therapy.



CASA Mental Health and Government of Alberta officials celebrate the start of construction on CASA House Calgary on May 21, 2026. Photo credit: Government of Alberta



CASA Mental Health and Government of Alberta officials celebrate the start of construction on CASA House Fort McMurray on May 22, 2026. Photo credit: Nicholas Vardy

Youth stay at CASA House for an average of four months, and receive education and treatment from a team of school and mental health professionals.

CASA's Adolescent Day Program (ADP) will be co-located at each new CASA House build. ADP is a unique semester-based program, designed for youth with significant mental health challenges. Youth attend ADP daily as they would school, and receive group, family and individual therapy, and social and life skills training while continuing their education.

[Read More: Calgary](#)

[Read More: Fort McMurray](#)

\$1 Million Bouchier Investment Strengthens Access to Youth Mental Health Care in Northern Alberta

The future CASA House in Fort McMurray continues to gain momentum, with Bouchier's commitment of \$1 million over the next five years to help expand access to youth and family mental health services across northern Alberta.

For families in Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo, accessing intensive youth mental health care often means travelling nearly five hours each way to Edmonton and facing wait times of eight to 18 months.

"We see the pressures families in our region are facing firsthand, and the gaps that exist in accessing care – especially for Indigenous and rural communities," says Nicole Bourque-Bouchier, CEO and Co-Owner of Bouchier.

"Supporting CASA House is our way of helping close that gap and ensure young people have the support they need to heal and thrive, right here at home. Our youth carry the stories of our past and the promise of our future, and they must be our priority."



Bouchier and CASA Mental Health leadership at a cheque presentation on Tuesday, April 21, 2026. Photo credit: Moccasin Media

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\$1.5 Million Canadian Natural Gift to Help Bring Mental Health Care Closer to Home in Northern Alberta

CASA House in Fort McMurray is one step closer to its fundraising goal, thanks to Canadian Natural's commitment of \$1.5 million over the next five years. This investment will help bring specialized, trauma-informed mental health treatment to more youth and families living in northern Alberta.

"CASA plays a critical role in helping youth heal and thrive," says Bill Clapperton, Vice President Stakeholder and Government Affairs, Canadian Natural.

"We're proud to support their important work through our funding of the Canadian Natural Resources Youth Wing, which helps ensure young patients can continue to receive treatment and education in a welcoming environment."



Canadian Natural and CASA Mental Health staff at a cheque presentation on Wednesday, May 6, 2026.

[Read More](#)

Leave a Lasting Legacy

Making a gift through your will is an easy way to support a cause that is important to you. With a legacy gift, you can shape the future of mental health in Alberta. Your will makes a difference. [Learn more.](#)

[Get Help](#)

[Give Help](#)



Bonnie Blakley accepts her Alumni Changemaker Award on May 1, 2026 at

CASA CEO Bonnie Blakley Receives Changemaker Award

On May 1, CASA Mental Health CEO Bonnie Blakley received an Alumni Changemaker Award in the Community category from Royal Roads University, where she completed her Master of Arts in Leadership degree in 2015.

The ceremony profiled Blakley's significant contributions to the 'missing middle' of mental health care since joining CASA in 2021.

[Read More](#)

Under Bonnie's leadership, CASA significantly surpassed its original goal to double the number of children and family members supported each year. In 2024-25, CASA nearly tripled the number of children and family members served, to more than 11,000.

"We wanted to reach more kids where they live, play and go to school, ensuring they had timely mental health services and are empowered to thrive," says Blakley.

Volunteer Profile: Victoria Furman always brings her 'A-game'

Victoria Furman is a champion among CASA Mental Health's network of volunteers.

She has been a volunteer with CASA for more than two years, starting her journey in February 2024. Victoria can be found volunteering at almost every CASA signature and community engagement event, including the CASA Golf Classic Edmonton, CASA Gala and McNally High School bikeathon.

Through these events Victoria has worked closely with Candace Fehr, Philanthropy Officer, Community Fundraising, who says Victoria will always bring her "A-game."



CASA Mental Health volunteer Victoria Furman pictured with CEO Bonnie Blakley at the 2026 CASA Gala.

[Read More](#)

Spring Campaign Update

Our spring fundraising campaign was powered by the heart of this community, and we're so grateful for everyone who contributed – whether you donated, shared the message or simply cheered us on. Your support helped raise over **\$10,900** and fuels real change for the children, youth and families we serve. We couldn't do this work without you.



Youth and Family Advisory Council Member Profile: Melissa

"My involvement with CASA's Youth and Family Advisory Council (YFAC) began in 2020, at a point in my life when lived experience was a daily reality. Over time, that involvement grew and I've served as co-chair since 2023 – an honour and a responsibility I take seriously.

"Within YFAC, I bring a family-centred lens to program and system-level conversations, informed by years of navigating gaps, barriers and moments of genuine support. I am particularly passionate about elevating sibling lived experience, addressing caregiver burnout and identifying where families fall through the cracks when caring for children with complex needs."



Rendering of Melissa, Youth and Family Advisory Council Member and Family Co-Chair.

[Learn More or Get Involved](#)

Supporting CASA Youth Through Scholarships

Thanks to the generous support of our donors, CASA Mental Health offers scholarships to current and former CASA patients aged 25 and under who are pursuing education, training or employment. Our scholarship donors are motivated to directly impact the lives of CASA youth and alumni, and support them in reaching their goals for a bright future.

Scholarships are made possible thanks to the:

- Emily Taylor Scholarship
- Adam Meyer Scholarship
- Devon Craig Memorial Fund
- Nick Lees Scholarship

CASA's 2026 scholarship application deadline is July 15. [Learn more!](#)

CASA in the News

How to Cut Back on Screen Time

Screen time is likely on the brain for a lot of families as we head into summer vacation.

Asad Qandhari, mental health therapist at CASA Mental Health, joined Global News Edmonton to give science-backed strategies for limiting screen time.



[Watch the Segment Here](#)

Navigating Options for Your Child's Mental Health Care

When a child is struggling with their mental health, families often hear terms like psychiatry, psychology and therapy. But what does each one mean, and who does what? Understanding the difference can help parents feel more confident and equipped when beginning their child's mental health journey. CASA Medical Director **Dr. Andrea Yu** and Registered Psychologist **Naomi Lee** joined Global to break down the roles and to clear up some common myths along the way.



[Watch the Segment Here](#)

Navigating Holidays as a Blended Family

If your family is blended, then you may be familiar with the extra layer of emotion, expectations and logistics it can take to plan family gatherings, especially on holidays. **Michael Neeland**, program supervisor, offered some tips to help guide families through what to pay special attention to so our kids make the best memories and thrive at these types of events.



[Watch the Segment Here](#)

Share Your Thoughts on the Circle of Care

Your anonymous feedback on the way we communicate will help CASA Mental Health expand its circle of care around the province to provide much-needed mental health service to as many families as possible.

[Share Your Feedback](#)

CASA in the Community

[Upcoming Events and Fundraisers](#)

[Gratitude for You!](#)

Register to participate or simply drop by and say hi!

- July 23: Taste of Edmonton
- July 24: [50/50 Raffle at the NASCAR Canada NAPA 300 Series](#)
- Aug. 16: [Servus Edmonton Marathon](#)
- Aug. 22-23: KidsFringe
- Aug. 27: 124 Street Market
- Sept. 4: [Charity Glow Golf Tournament](#)
- Sept. 20: 124 Street Market
- Sept. 26: [Climbing for Change](#)

Thanks to everyone who participated in these community fundraisers and helped **raise over \$60,000** for kids and families at CASA Mental Health:

- Hypothermic Half-Marathon #2
- McNally High School Bikeathon
- Servus Calgary Marathon
- River Valley Boutique
- Outrun the Stigma
- St. Albert Potters Guild Spring Sale
- Elmwood Parents Financial Association
- Go Concierge Insurance Service Fundraiser

Learn more about hosting your own fundraiser for CASA Mental Health on our [website](#).



Toys aren't trained for this. **CASA Mental Health can help.**

Most of us had one - the teddy bear, the sock monkey, the favourite toy that gave us comfort. For kids with mental health issues, these toys are even more important. They offer a safe space for children and youth to express themselves, a listening ear to talk to and sometimes just plain comfort during scary times and feelings. Our team members even use toys in many of their therapies.

But those toys can only do so much. Mental illness requires treatment. The teams of experts at CASA Mental Health are trained to provide medical and therapeutic care for families. That means care and oversight from a psychiatrist, blended with the right mix of group and individual therapy, day programs and classroom or live-in care provided by a team of other mental health professionals.

Get help or give help today: casamentalhealth.org/toys

Get help, give help. Visit our website at casamentalhealth.org

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