



Community Resource Centre

Planting Seeds 2030



Responsive, Relational and Resilient

Community Resource Centre Planting Seeds 2030

Responsive, Relational and Resilient Five-Year Strategic Plan 2025-2030

As the needs of rural people evolve, introducing new challenges, we will be responsive, relational and resilient as we work towards vibrant and sustainable rural communities alongside our allies and supporters. Together we will innovate, build stability, and collaborate so rural people have the connections, opportunities, and services we need to thrive throughout our lives.

Forward

For the last several years we have seen changes in community needs as the COVID-19 pandemic and economic shifts have increased pressures on individuals and families. Rising numbers of community members have accessed support for basic needs, demands for community programs have increased, and people of all ages are looking to improve their mental health and wellbeing.

The Community Resource Centre (CRC) Strategic Plan 2025-2030 reaffirms our vision and mission and outlines 3 key priorities to guide us over the next five years.

We are gaining momentum as a holistic, deeply rooted, and innovative organization ready to bring new energy to ensuring the strength of our people, systems and communities.

We are excited to unveil three strategic priorities that will guide our work from 2025-2030:



Be Responsive - Embrace Curiosity and Flexibility

To seek out and center on the needs of people, communities, and environments.

Be Relational - Build Understanding, Compassion, and Accountability

To be in healthy reciprocal relationships with people, communities, and systems.

Be Resilient - Adapt to Internal and External Changes

To invest in a strong ecosystem able to adapt, recover, and thrive in the face of adversity and change.

Factual Context for our Work

People in rural communities are more likely to experience poverty and social isolation.

Poverty and isolation contribute to poor health outcomes. Using the Material and Social Deprivation Index, the Renfrew County and District Health Unit identified rural communities served by the Community Resource Centre as being among those experiencing the most material deprivation, and several of these communities were also classified as experiencing the most social deprivation. (Renfrew County and District Health Unit, 2018.)

Food insecurity is on the rise.

Ontario food banks reported a 40% increase in visits to food banks in March 2023 compared to March 2022, and a 100.6% increase compared to March 2019. (Food Banks Canada, 2023)



Communities are increasingly impacted by mental health and addiction.

19% of Renfrew County residents identify as having mental health or addiction challenges. (County of Renfrew, 2024)

1 in 5 children and youth in Ontario has a mental health challenge. (Canadian Mental Health Association, 2020)

In 2023 there was a 103% increase in opioid-related deaths in Renfrew County. (Renfrew County and District Health Unit, 2024)

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a reality in Renfrew County.

In March 2023, the County of Renfrew passed a resolution declaring intimate partner violence and violence against women an epidemic following the 86 jury recommendations resulting from the inquest into the murders of Carol Culleton, Anastasia Kuzyk and Nathalie Warmerdam (June 2022).

While violence affects people of all genders, ages, religions, cultures, ethnicities, geographic locations, and socio-economic backgrounds, populations more at risk of GBV include women, young women and girls, Indigenous Peoples, 2SLGBTQ+ and gender-diverse people, women living in Northern, rural, and remote communities, and women living with disabilities.

Women in Canada are more likely than men to experience intimate partner violence (IPV). Self-reported data collected in 2018 shows that 44% of women reported experiencing some form of IPV in their lifetime (since the age of 15). (Statistics Canada, 2018)



Our Planning Process

In March 2024, the CRC Strategic Planning Advisory Committee met to initiate the planning process to review our guiding statements, determine our long-term directions and identify strategic priorities to guide us over the next 3-5 years.

Trestle Consulting led the analysis process in collaboration with Logical Outcomes and Ottawa Valley Creative Arts, providing input and leadership in the areas of data analysis and community arts-based evaluation methods. This process included:

- online surveys of stakeholders, including the Board of Directors, CRC staff, program participants, and partner agencies
- interviews with individuals and key stakeholders
- a facilitated arts-based strategic planning session
- a review of documents

In May 2024, the CRC Board of Directors and Senior Staff participated in a strategic planning session facilitated by Ottawa Valley Creative Arts to:

1. affirm the CRC vision and mission statements
2. develop strategic priorities to guide the organization over the next 3-5 years

The draft strategic plan was created in August 2024 and approved on September 23, 2024.

Planting Seeds Together

The Community Resource Centre has blossomed since our founding, expanding our services, reach, and impact. As we look ahead, our guiding statements refreshed in 2016 continue to speak to our current work and our collaborative, asset-based approach.

Land Acknowledgement

As people of diverse ancestry and histories, we at the Community Resource Centre acknowledge the land where we live, work, and gather is unceded traditional Anishinaabe territory.

Together we strive to learn and share the teachings and culture of the Algonquin people, continuing to work towards truth and reconciliation.

We are grateful for all that the land provides us, and embrace our collective responsibilities to care for the Water and all of Mother Earth.



Vision

We are working toward a future in which everyone has access to the connections, opportunities, supports and services they need to live full lives in vibrant, sustainable rural communities.



Mission

We offer innovative holistic programs to support children, youth, adults, seniors, and families to learn new skills, build on their strengths, access supports and services, and work together to nurture positive individual and community growth.

The following values are at the heart of our approach:

- **Inclusion**
 - We believe everyone matters; we work to make space where everyone belongs.
- **Self-Determination**
 - We support choice, advocate on behalf of and with community members with lived experience of vulnerability, and help people access services.
- **Safer/Braver Spaces**
 - We create respectful spaces for people to show up as their authentic selves, share their diverse lived experience, and learn from each other.
- **Transparency**
 - We work towards openness, communication, and accountability.

Successes

Reflecting on our previous Strategic Priorities (identified 2015, renewed 2019), CRC achieved progress in each area:

Access and Inclusion

Progress included increased programming flexibility in response to the pandemic, establishing an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Staff Development Day for staff inclusivity training and wellness, increased programming, supports, and services.

Food Security

Progress included improving our local food system by adding 2 greenhouses and 2 community garden plots, providing fresh produce to the Food Bank, and increasing emergency food support services during the pandemic and in the recovery years.

Telling Our Story

Progress included building a client management and evaluation system, identifying cross-program outcomes and evidence-based evaluation tools, and increasing public awareness of CRC programs and services.

These areas continue to be fundamental to the work of all CRC programs. In addition, we continue to collaborate with community partners, advocating to address common barriers such as affordable housing and community transportation.

CRC excels in meeting community needs, offering inclusive and accessible services, and maintaining a flexible, community-responsive approach. Strong leadership and dedicated staff are the most critical assets of the organization. With this strategic plan we hope to build on these successes, ensuring that we are prepared for future challenges.



Advancing Strategic Priorities

The following strategic priorities will help to guide us as we move to advance our mission and vision.



1. **Be Responsive:** Embrace Curiosity and Flexibility

The Community Resource Centre is highly agile, fearlessly addressing arising needs and incorporating innovation into our programs and services. We believe that positive change is possible when we work together as a community. This adaptability is guided by an awareness that each growing season is a little different and needs an ever-curious gardener to cultivate a strong harvest. We commit to seeking out and centering on the needs of vulnerable people, communities, and environments.

- 1.1 Ensure Programming Relevance
- 1.2 Reduce Participation Barriers
- 1.3 Raise Social Impact
- 1.4 Seek Participant and Community Knowledge
- 1.5 Advance Research Capacity

2. **Be Relational:** Build Understanding, Compassion, and Accountability

Our CRC staff is our most powerful asset, the driving force behind innovation, and the compassionate heart of our organization. Supporting the health and wellbeing of staff includes fostering healthy staff relationships, ensuring transparent and equitable systems, building positive, inclusive culture, and creating opportunities for a diverse workforce. We understand that everyone has unique skills, qualities and life experiences to offer, and we are all learners growing together. We expand our capacity by supporting people and communities to build assets and skills, starting with the early learning that happens in our daycares and family groups. We commit to fostering healthy reciprocal relationships with people, communities, and systems.

- 2.1 Invest in People
- 2.2 Strengthen Knowledge Exchange and Mutual Support
- 2.3 Pursue Equity
- 2.4 Increase Diversity
- 2.5 Deepen Inclusion
- 2.6 Illuminate Social Impact

Advancing Strategic Priorities (cont'd)

3. **Be Resilient:** Adapt to Internal and External Changes

We benefit from deeply rooted funder relationships based on a strong history of providing streamlined programs for rural and isolated communities for over 35 years. Our organization has grown dramatically over the past decade, taking leadership as a driving force in the rural childcare sector. Looking ahead, we need to ensure our legacy and pass on what we have learned to future generations. Ensuring a healthy balance of revenue to sustain momentum and meet future needs is essential to position the CRC as a resilient partner for donors, funders, communities, and supporters. We commit to investing in a strong ecosystem able to adapt, recover, and thrive in the face of adversity and change.

3.1 Increase Sources of Unrestricted Funds

3.2 Enrich Donor Strategy

3.3 Document Agency and Program Best Practices

3.4 Invest in Leadership Development and Mentoring

3.5 Strengthen a Collaborative Safety Net

