



STRENGTH IN PEOPLE

Integrity | Passion | Accountability | Quality | Teamwork

2022-2023 Annual Report

wjs Canada
strength in people



**Spirit of
Our Youth**



Others are recognizing the passion, team work, integrity, accountability and quality that WJS and SOY have focused their work on for the past few years.

► Caroline Bonesky

This past year found us working our way through the ongoing impacts of COVID 19 and the subsequent re opening of communities as the global pandemic slowed down. COVID has forever changed our lives. We think about our work differently, we think about our families and what is important differently and we think about how we were able to respond and support in unimaginable ways for the past three years. I continue to be grateful for the members of the WJS and SOY teams who worked tirelessly through it all to ensure that the individuals who look to us for support, were supported in the best possible way through all the changing circumstances.

This past year was one where we underwent three different reviews by external bodies. Our children and youth programs underwent their CARF accreditation in July, Spirit of our Youth was reviewed by CAC in November, and we underwent our reassessment for our BCorp designation in December. We were also randomly



selected for an audit by BCorp which required significantly more time and effort to produce all required documentation. What is significant about these external reviews, is others are recognizing the passion, team work, integrity, accountability and quality that WJS and SOY have focused their work on for the past few years. Surveyors commented that values were alive, team work was apparent and that the individuals we support and stakeholders felt truly valued and included in all aspects of the work.

This is a testament to all the staff on our teams and I want to recognize the heavy lifting that has been done

by our team leaders and program managers and directors over the past few years to embrace and integrate our client delivery services model. It is a cornerstone of how we support both the individuals we serve and our team members.

This past year we supported 1,500 families and children across British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario. We continue to see an increase in the complexity of the challenges that our children, youth and families experience and we have responded by increasing the size of our clinical support team.

We have stayed true to our Truth and Reconciliation journey and have witnessed the impact that this has had in how our supports are integrating more cultural teachings and ceremonies and the impact that is having on the lives of our employees and the individuals we support.

We are excited to be given the opportunity to take over management of Mountainside Support Services in November 2022. The team in Port Alberni provides individualized care to many children and youth, and we look forward to working with them to obtain accreditation in 2024.

I want to share my heartfelt gratitude to all our employees, our Board of Directors and our stakeholders for working to make WJS a great place to strengthen individuals and communities.



Our National Management Team continues to be an inspirational source of visionary leadership.

► **Tim Beachy**

This year has been a year of change: re-bounding from the Covid crisis, experiencing the increasing impacts of labour shortages across the whole workforce, inflationary costs, generational change within the company and the impending retirements of important company leaders. I am happy to say that WJS has shown itself to be a very resilient, adaptable, and nimble company.

It is a continuing privilege to thank and honour our staff who focus every single day on the needs of communities and clients. Many staff persons, who worked so hard in difficult circumstances, have had to recover some of the energies spent so valiantly during the pandemic. We are grateful for the rebounding energy, personal values and our staff commitment to those we serve and support.

Our senior management group leads with extraordinary strength and vision. CEO Caroline Bonesky has shown her grit and commitment during this time of change. We are so grateful for her commitment as a leader and mentor to so many of our staff.



Our National Management Team continues to be an inspirational source of visionary leadership. We are proud and happy to have such a powerful group of senior Leaders. They express the purpose and values that make WJS a unique and valued service organization. They embody our company brand “Strength in People”. Thank you, Debbie Olinyk, Chief of Human Resources; Monty Chew, Chief of Finances; and Carol Siziba, Chief of Client Services.

The WJS Board of Directors particularly acknowledge our longer term, committed staff persons, who have shown such dedication and commitment through years of service. Their focus on quality care and excellence distinguishes our organization from others. Our senior regional and program staff and leaders have been constant and visionary during this time of change.

Succession Planning became a company priority this year, as we

face the retirements of our CEO, Caroline Bonesky and our CFO, Monty Chew. We are very pleased that our Controller, Rob Dykes has been appointed as incoming CFO. At year-end we were focusing in on a strong candidate for the CEO position.

I want to thank WJS Directors for their commitment to our values and thoughtful planning and policy making. Thanks to: Helen Ambali (Secretary), Adam Borgida (Vice Chair), Monty Chew, Aaron Hachkowski, Alex Hayer, Lisa LaForge (Treasurer), Donna Phillips and Gail Stepanik-Keber. These individuals bring extraordinary leadership and governance.

THE TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION WORKING GROUP

This past year, the Truth and Reconciliation Working Group supported employees on their own journeys through the development of the TRC resource page on the Hub.

This on-line resources provides access to numerous links in areas from legal governance to recipes to cultural teachings to books. These resources come in the form of videos, documents and links to online resources.



As part of building awareness of our own journeys, TRWG members undertook to post a reflection on their journey to the HUB every day in September culminating on the 30th— the first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, a day that coincides with Orange Shirt Day.



In early 2023 the TRWG launched a reading club, offering access to books to staff groups to share and the opportunity to come together in person or over a Teams meeting to discuss in their spare time.



The focus on organizational change has engaged the HR team to review ways to further increase our accessibility to indigenous candidates and looked at possible barriers to their successful recruitment and retention with a view to overcoming them.



A commitment to community engagement has resulted in a framework being developed to support the variety of reasons why staff may want to engage with local indigenous communities from an individual persons served focus to organizational relationship.



The working group membership has increased to 30 staff. WJS may need to consider capping participation in this initiative, clearly indicating the interest and commitment staff are willing to take in support of Truth and Reconciliation.

WJS IS A CERTIFIED B-CORP

In 2019, WJS became a certified B Corp creating the opportunity for us to be part of a global movement of using business for good.

WJS Canada is currently in the verification stage for B Corp. During this stage, B Corp interviews our staff and verifies all the documentation we have submitted to demonstrate compliance.

WJS was last assessed in 2019 for B Corp and achieved a score of 84.6. We are now on track for a score of 110.4. The assessment includes the areas of governance, workers, community, environment, and customers. There are approximately 5 points left to verify in the assessment.



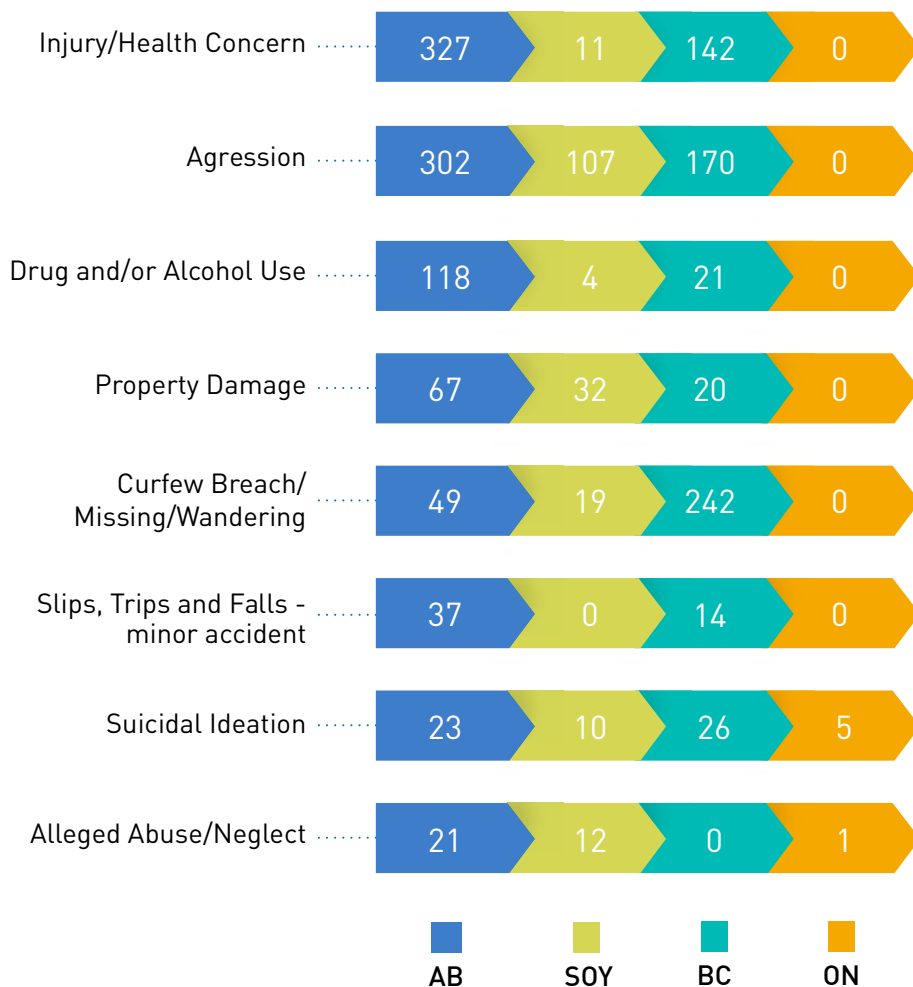
As part of preparing for our next B Corp, we will be able to set organizational goals on practices that seem like a good fit for WJS Canada. Our next assessment in three years' time with B Corp will also have introduced completely new standards.

Some examples of what we're doing to support B Corp

- **Staff Education:** Presentations were delivered throughout the year on the B Corp movement, goals and objectives to various groups including the WJS Board of Directors selects subcommittees, NLT and many staff teams across the organization.
- **B Corp initiatives:** In June we invited staff to participate in Bike to Work Week – an opportunity to reduce individual carbon footprint and improve personal health.
- **Organizational Change:** Updated supplier code of ethics to align with B Corp principles by prioritizing local suppliers where possible.
- **B Corp initiatives:** A staff team incorporated repurposing used clothing as a B Corp Environmental initiative to eliminate the use of disposable clothes while cleaning.
- **Organizational Change:** The B Corp logo has incorporated into most brand communication where appropriate including the monthly newsletter – making the B Corp wordmark visible across the organization
- **Staff Education:** invitation for staff to share their ideas of reducing environmental impact in their day-to-day lives.
- **Organizational Change:** Changing purchasing policies to incorporate screening vendors for poor business practice and values that do not align with WJS Canada/B Corp.

OVERVIEW OF RISK AND CRITICAL INCIDENTS

As an organization we monitor our incidents quarterly to identify trends and develop strategies to improve services to the people we serve.



Between provinces, there are radically different numbers in several of the categories and this is largely due to the differences in the population of persons served in each province.

For instance, Alberta serves a significant population of person with disabilities who live in resilient homes. As a result, many are aging and we see a larger number of injuries or health concerns.

In BC, we see a larger number regarding curfew breaches/missing/wandering. In BC, we serve children in resilient homes and most of the incidents are attributable to that group of persons served.

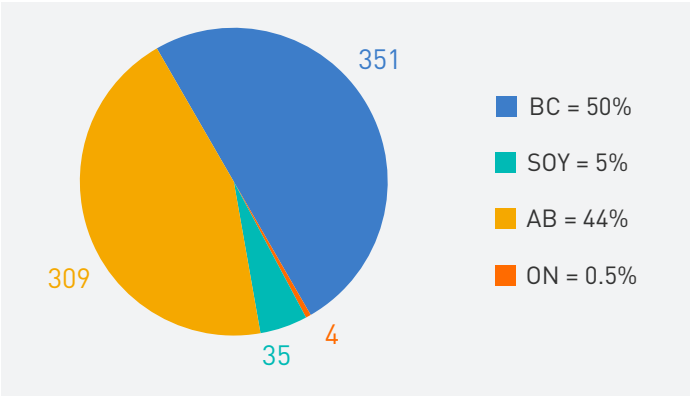
Overall, as an organization we serve persons who have more complex needs and as a result our second highest category is relating to aggression, this is an aggregate number that does not break out the specifics of the "aggression". (i.e., verbal, physical).

OUR PEOPLE

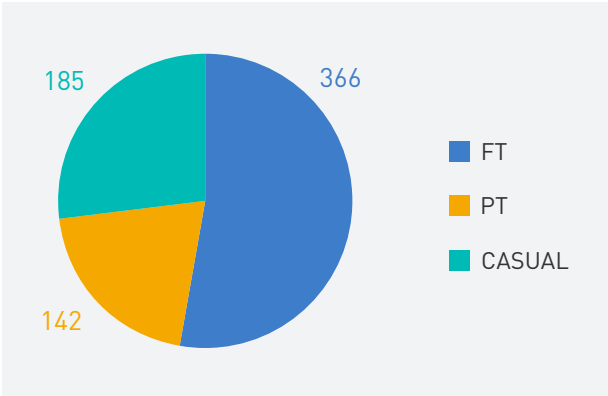
WJS currently has more than twenty thousand applicant candidate profiles in our systems (100% increase) from which to mine for talent.

264 position vacancies were posted in year 2022/23. 2,175 applications received/screened by Human Resources, with 330 candidates placed.

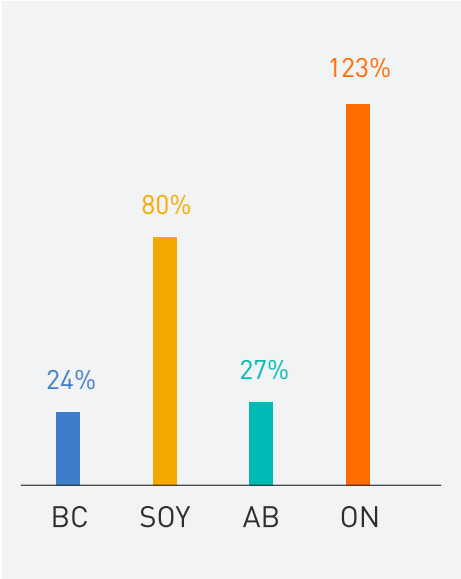
National Distribution of Employees 2022/23



National Status of Employment 2022/23



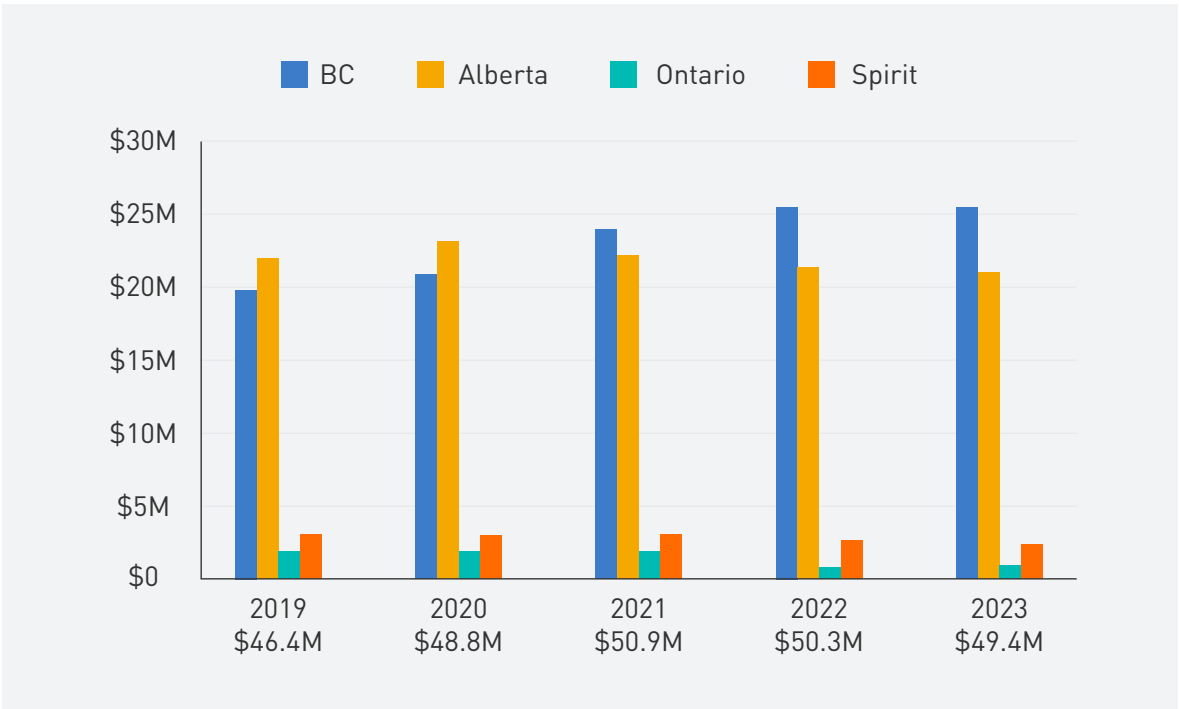
Employee Turnover Rates



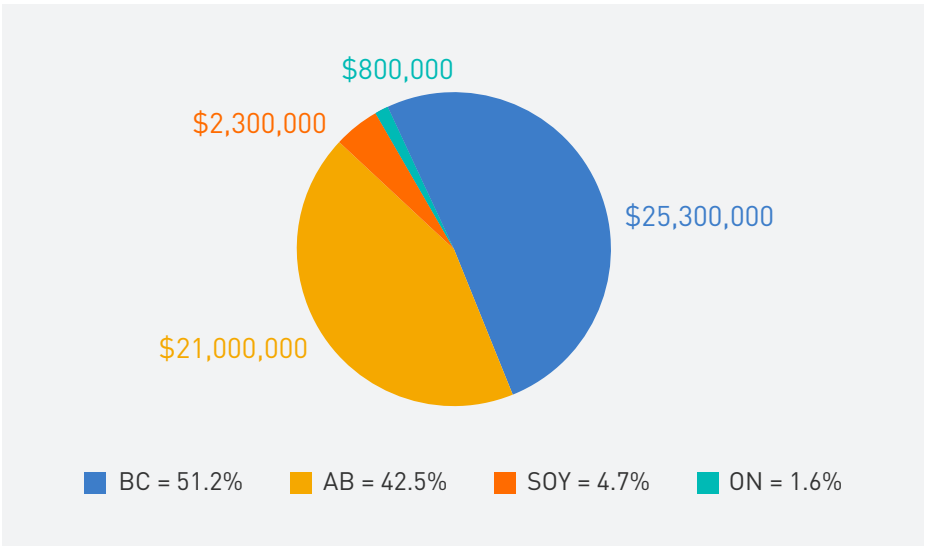
REVENUE & FINANCE

Over the last 5 years, WJS revenue has risen from \$46,000,000 to \$50,000,000.

5 Year Revenue Trend



Revenue Distribution, 2022/23

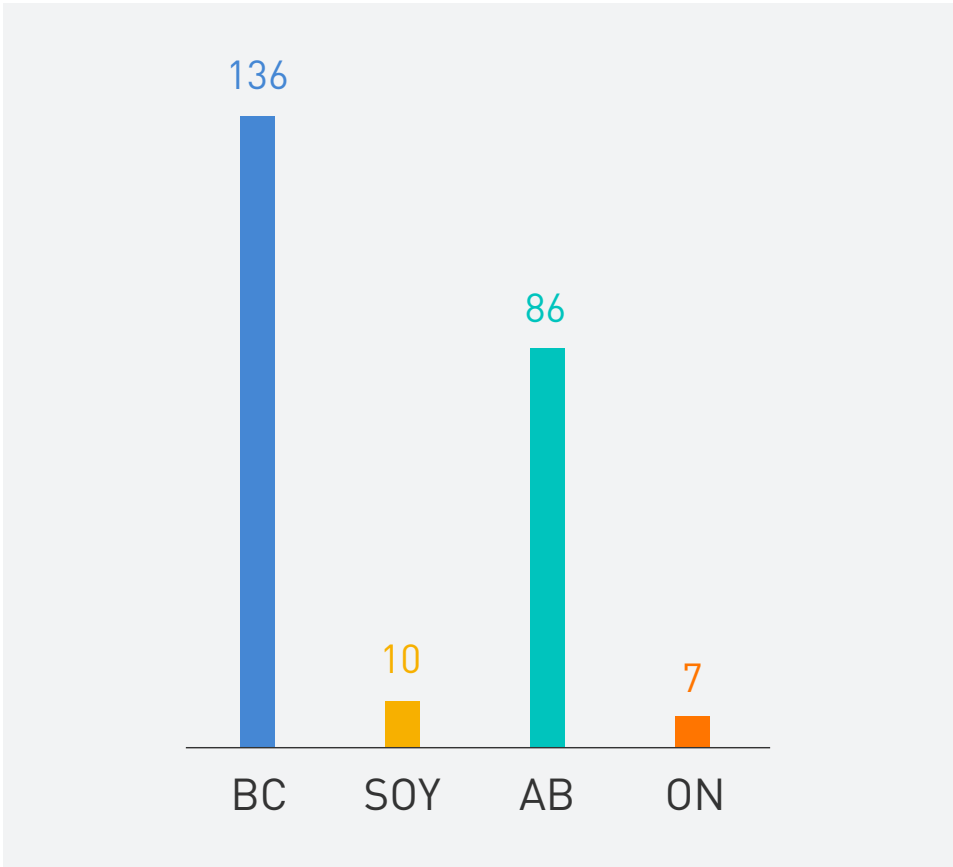


PROGRAM OVERVIEW

This graph represents the unique programs offered in each province.

The mix of service types is very different in each province. Spirit focuses on resilient homes based on a staffing model. In BC, both our home share and our individual children in care resilient homes are offered through individual contractors and their respite workers, bringing the total number to be quite high with over 80 individuals supported in Home share arrangements. In Alberta, the Family Resilience, Strong Families and supports to individuals with Diverse Abilities make up the mix of services.

Total Number of Programs Across Canada



A Snapshot of Our Year

WJS and Spirit of our Youth services are supported by caring and passionate people who want to work with people. This past year has seen the labour market challenges impact our ability to recruit and in some cases, retain great people. In Ontario, we saw the extreme impact of these challenges with over 100% turnover in positions and over 90 days to fill positions. Our teams continue to promote our companies as great places to work where management cares about the employees, but the demographics continue to create pressure on all employers.

WJS and SOY management remains aware and focused on a variety of strategies to mitigate this risk. These include developing relationships with colleges and other post secondary institutions. This past year saw a significant increase in the number of practicum students placed in our various sites. We piloted our Manager in Training program, which helps employees build their capacity as

With the reduction of the impact of COVID 19, we had opportunities to bring staff together for learning and celebrations.

managers or prepare to become managers. We increased the capacity of our training teams to provide more accessible training opportunities to all our employees. We grew our BC staffing office complement to help ensure that casual staff were recruited and given ample employment to stay engaged rather than choosing to work for a different employer and we



commenced work to start our Alberta staffing office.

With the reduction of the impact of COVID 19, we had opportunities to bring staff together for learning and celebrations with a conference featuring Joe Roberts as the key note speaker, Milestones celebrations in both Edmonton and Vancouver and training sessions with Vikki Reynolds.

Our strategic plan initiatives continue to focus on providing excellent support to individuals referred to our companies. This past year, we focused on refreshing our existing client information management system, Penelope, to integrate and reflect all components of the model from intake, to assessment through to supervision components. Staff teams from across the companies worked to define areas of common data tracking and identify where unique needs would have to be incorporated. Critical incident reporting was standardized across three provinces and more automation has decreased the administrative burden to report on these incidents.

An enhancement of our Clinical supports with the creation of the role of Clinical Director of Services, an integration with our Intensive Behavioural Support Services and our clinical enhancement specialists has created a robust team to support our individuals across all

spectrums of support. We have also seen a measurable impact on the effectiveness of these supports through a significant decrease in the number of reported critical incidents with our individuals served.

This is the only component of our internal initiative to improve both the quality of our data as well as our ability to use data to make better decisions. We now have an improved financial reporting system as well as a data bridge between our HRIS and finance systems which allow for more automation resulting in less human data inputting errors.

Our resilient homes in BC continue to see a high level of change. Between building new relationships with Indigenous communities to support their children, closures of programs and successful re integration of children with their families, nothing stays the same from one month to the next. Our team is incredibly resilient in responding to the ever changing needs of both our contractors and the children and youth we support, resulting in our contractors often seeking us out to create solutions to unique problems.

We have seen a high level of engagement with Community Living BC in the Prince George area as we have become known as a team that can provide trauma informed

All of this work has been done within the context of our **Truth and Reconciliation journey**, one which actively engages employees from across the companies.

care to people actively engaged in street lifestyle. A harm reduction approach is a relatively new response in working with this population and there is interest in integrating more fully clinical supports into a flexible response model to help individuals more fully access recovery options.

In Alberta, the complexity of the issues and the risks associated with supporting individuals with diverse abilities in their homes has required us to re evaluate safety for both the persons served and our staff. This has led to a decision to offer less 24 hour support and more supports on an independent living model. This gives flexibility to be available to persons served when they want to engage with us while reducing the potential risk of staff providing support in unsafe environments.

Our Strong Families programs have continued to reach out to the Métis settlements and in building relationships are beginning to see an increase in referrals. As this is a new service offering, it has been hard to differentiate our staff from Child Protection staff, which for many reasons, families avoid. We have seen significant turnover in these teams as well as the labour market in smaller rural centers is challenging to find qualified staff. Our Family Resilient Network programs have seen a strong

uptake as communities have emerged from the impacts of COVID. Many of our programs have waitlists and communities are asking that more workers be hired to provide support to those families and youth voluntarily seeking supports.

Spirit of our Youth went through significant changes this year. As the needs of the children and youth continue to grow in complexity, many steps were taken to hire and recruit more qualified staff, staffing models were revised and new service structures offered. However as we

We have developed new relationships and strengthened existing ones as we work to strengthen people on our team.

adapted to one set of referral needs, others would emerge, resulting in changing services once again to respond to the needs of very young children, which is very different from adolescents. The Spirit management team has been resilient and ever creative in engaging with teams to find solutions to ever changing emerging issues.

In November 2022, we took over the management of Mountainside Support Services in Port Alberni. Our energies have been spent getting to know the team, putting in a new management structure, revising scheduling, implementing benefits and beginning preparation for accreditation which will happen in June 2024. We have developed new relationships and strengthened existing ones as we work to strengthen people on our team and those we support in Port Alberni.

All of this work has been done within the context of our Truth and Reconciliation journey, one which actively engages employees from across the companies to assess where there are opportunities for us to encourage individuals learning, service revision and company thought on where we might have inbuilt biases. This year has also brought opportunities to plan for succession as 2023 will bring the retirement of two senior leaders in the organization.

This has been a year with much success, none of which would have been possible without the dedication of our employees and our Board of Directors.