



# Helping Hands

Summer 2015 Newsletter



## A Client's Journey: From craters to crevices

A divorce started a downward spiral for this unfortunate family. All bank accounts were emptied, leaving the mom and 2 children with no money. This was the initial reason for seeking help from the St. Albert Food Bank.

Their first visit included receiving a food hamper to meet their immediate nutritional needs, but also a meeting with Fay, the social worker at the Community Village. This initial consultation and dialogue involved making arrangements with the mom for an appointment at S.A.I.F. (Stop Abuse in Families).

Due to health challenges, ex-spouse abuse, stress and anxiety, the mom then lost her job. With 2 children and no income, she reached out for continued help from the St. Albert Community Village. These are the support and referrals that were needed in this case:

- Referral to Alberta Works / Income Support
- Paperwork and application support for AISH (Assured Income for Severely Handicapped), after extensive surgery was needed for health problems
- Referral to Mental Health for assessments
- Referral to Primary Care Network for counseling
- Invited to attend the Community Village Gentle Movement program for stress reduction
- Referred to Legal Aid - after 1 year in the legal system, the divorce was finalized and they were left with NOTHING.
- Referred to Salvation Army for Clothing
- Referred to St. Vincent de Paul for household items
- Referred to the Volunteer Centre for free Tax filing
- After a 1 year wait, the AISH application was denied. An appeal was initiated and required in-depth medical involvement, many forms and examination reports. The stress was overwhelming and the health was yet again compromised.
- The bills were piling up and financial support from the community was lobbied
- Ways of bringing in more income were explored, such as renting a room and referral was made to Landlord Tenant

**DID YOU  
KNOW?**

Top 3 reasons for St. Albert residents to seek help and support from the St. Albert Community Village and Food Bank

- 1- Job Loss or Decrease in Work Hours
- 2- Mental Health Issues
- 3- Family Breakdown

- Their home was broken into, causing more hardship. They were directed to RCMP and Victim Services for help.
- A Christmas Hamper was provided by the Food Bank and toys from the Salvation Army
- They were invited to attend the St. Albert Community Village Christmas Banquet
- They were invited to attend Nurturing Opportunities for Wellness (NOW) program at the Community Village
- The AISH application was finally accepted after 2 years
- The increase in income helped stabilize the housing and outstanding bills
- A malicious phone call resulted in the AISH income being cut off
- The St. Albert Village Coordinator arranged to sit in on an appeal meeting with AISH workers, resulting in AISH being reinstated
- A family member passed away, resulting in another wave of health and financial hardship
- The Community Village referred them to the Financial Literacy program

Gradually, the mom's health status improved and a part-time job was secured. Their visits to the Community Village and Food Bank decreased.

They were asked to share their journey and experience with mental illness with a group of nursing students from Grant McEwan doing a project for the St Albert Community Village, which they graciously agreed to.

Their visits to the Village have now become social visits filled with gratitude and appreciation for all the support they received and filling us in on the positive changes they are making and how their decisions are improving their life with good friends, a better handle on finances, stable health, confidence, a feeling of belonging and hope for the future. When asked if they needed a Christmas hamper they replied with a smile: "not this year ... we know that there are others who need the help more than we do". - *True Story*

Can you imagine going through such hardship? Navigating the system of community programs and services on your own in extremely stressful situations? How do you know what services are "out there" and how do you access them? Where do you start, in the hope of getting your life back?

We are the St. Albert Community Village and Food Bank and we will help you in times of need!

To learn more about our many program and services or how you could help, please visit our websites at

[www.stalbertcv.com](http://www.stalbertcv.com) or [www.stalbertfb.com](http://www.stalbertfb.com)



Yes, I would like to lend a Helping Hand with my contribution to the St. Albert Community Village and Food Bank.  
Our 2015 Fundraising Goal is \$209 200.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to contribute the sum of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Goal  
\$209,200



\$79,037  
Raised

Charitable # 119162147 - A Charitable Tax Receipt will be generated for all donations of \$10 or more.

*Thank You for your ongoing support!*