

# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



#### BOARD CHAIR'S MESSAGE Amanda Hillock



I am filled with immense pride reflecting on the remarkable achievements of our employees over the past year. Our daycare staff have truly gone above and beyond in their dedication to supporting Cold Lake military families. Their tireless efforts ensure our little ones receive exceptional care and attention, which is invaluable to our community. Additionally, the MFRCS team has excelled in organizing Morale Booster events and activities that bring joy and unity to our community. Their commitment extends beyond our immediate surroundings; we have also seen their generosity and compassion in action, such as their support for the fire evacuees from Yellowknife last

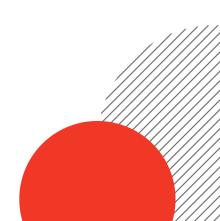
summer. The way our employees strive to make our community a better place to live, while also reaching out to those in need, speaks volumes about their dedication and spirit.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to the Chain of Command for their unwavering support over the past year. A special thank you goes to the Wing Commander and his staff, whose steadfast encouragement and collaboration have been instrumental to our success. Your support has enabled us to achieve our goals and better serve our community, and for that, we are profoundly grateful.

Finally, I want to extend our heartfelt thanks to our funders. Your generous support and belief in the mission of the MFRCS are vital to our ability to serve military families and the broader community. Without your contributions, the MFRCS could not provide the level of support and care that our community has come to rely on. Your commitment makes a profound difference and we are deeply appreciative of your continued partnership.

Thank you all for your dedication and support.

Warm Regards, Amanda Hillock Chair, 4 Wing MFRCS Board of Directors



#### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE Floyd Perros

This past year had several highlights that need to be shared. In 2023–24, the MFRCS served 2,248 individuals and the accumulated attendance was 6,725 visits to the various activities. Our staff continues to do a fabulous job at making the CFB Cold Lake Community a great place to live and work. This includes welcoming folks posted to Cold Lake, providing child care for families, child and youth programs for children, mental health services, morale boosters, and activities for children, adults and families.



We also had the opportunity to care for other families during the evacuation of Yellowknife last August. The MFRCS took the lead and coordinated support primarily for 440

Squadron families who found their way to Cold Lake. With the help of 4 Wing, Wing Accommodations, CFHA, and Support our Troops and other donors, the MFRCS was able to house, feed, and provide for 29 families. These families arrived with whatever they could fit in their vehicles.

The MFRCS was able to help them with food and gas cards to mitigate the effects of the financial burden each family experienced fleeing their homes due to the forest fire. With the help of accommodations and CFHA, most families were given a place to live while the evacuation continued. The Wing supported by providing meals from the All-Ranks Mess throughout the time families were here in Cold Lake.

One group provided freshly picked corn for a corn roast and we were able to show the evacuees Cold Lake hospitality. We also had movie afternoons in the Wing Theatre and activities for children in the Assembly Hall.

In September we had our first Truth and Reconciliation event. The event hosted Susie O'Connor's Red Series Portraits and Indigenous Dancers. Both Indigenous and local leaders spoke at the event.

The Halloween Hootenanny was a huge success with Trunk or Treat in the MFRCS parking lot and a wonderful event of fun and games inside.

#### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE Floyd Perros

In April, we had Chelazon Leroux come and present at the Youth Conference which was a partnership event with the City of Cold Lake FCSS. Chelazon was on Canada's Drag Race and shared what it is like being part of the LGBTQIA+ community. There was also an evening of Drag Entertainment with over 200 people attending the event.

Youth Programming has seen a resurgence in participation. This is true for both the 6-12 year olds and the 13-17 year olds.

In November, the MFRCS had family photos for the CFB Cold Lake Community and 466 people got a Christmas photo to send to family back home. There were even some who had photos with their pets.

Christmas events, including Storytime with Santa, Home for the Holidays Dinner, and Christmas Wreaths, were all appreciated and well attended. It is good to make holiday times special particularly when away from family. The Easter Egg Scavenger Hunt, Mother's Day Flowers, Father's Day event, Halloween, and Christmas events have become great traditions for the MFRCS and the CFB Cold Lake Community. This was the second year for our Fantasy Ball. This was another great success and is becoming an annual event. It is always nice to have something to look forward to. This certainly helps with a person's mental health when there is something coming that you are invited to participate in, connect with others, and have fun.

We have been doing Psychological Workshops on a regular basis for military members on topics of burnout, emotional intelligence, gender-based violence, and mental health in the workplace. These have been appreciated and attendance indicates that these should continue.

Our Welcome Centre continues to connect with new and existing families. We had a Welcome Event and Military Family Appreciation Day in September for new families including a Welcome Race Scavenger Hunt and then lunch and bouncy castles for everyone.

In the summer and fall of 2023, new air handling units were installed on the MFRCS' main building. This will help with keeping the place warm and cool depending on the weather.

Child care has become a growing program for the MFRCS. In January of 2022, the federal and provincial governments began a \$ 10 per day plan for child care. Since then, the costs of child care for parents have continued to be reduced year over year.

#### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE Floyd Perros

In 2021, parent fees per child per month were \$ 800 for the defence team and \$ 950 for civilian families. In 2024, the rates vary from \$ 298 to \$ 381 per child per month. A further subsidy program for families earning less than \$ 180,000 allows families to get another reduction of up to \$ 266 per month per child. The average fee for parents is \$ 200 per child per month. Some parents pay as low as \$ 32 per month.

This has been great for parents but has put stress on the child care system, as many parents have opted to return to work, creating a huge demand for child care spaces. The MFRCS First Flights program went from 60 spaces occupied in December 2021 to 115 spaces occupied by April of 2024. This included an expansion into the MFRCS Annex in the summer of 2022.

Currently, there are over 100 children on the First Flights waiting list and the program will not have the capacity to meet CFB Cold Lake's need for child care.

Fundraising continues to be a necessary part of programming delivery for the MFRCS. Our generous sponsors continue to support a wide variety of programming from nutrition support for child care, tutoring, deployment, Military Appreciation, Truth and Reconciliation, Youth Programming, and morale boosters.

In the summer of 2023, we had a compliance audit done by Military Family Services. We scored 92%. It is good to know that we are delivering programs and services that make a difference in the lives of families in the CFB Cold Lake Community.

Our latest Program Evaluation Survey is complete and the CFB Cold Lake Community scored the MFRCS in the 90+% satisfaction for nearly all programs, with many programs increasing in satisfaction over last year.

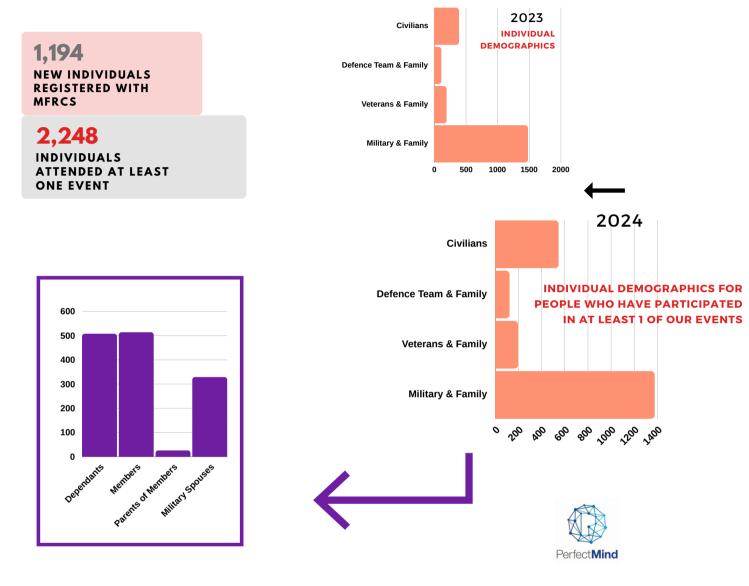
We look forward to 2024-25 and anticipate a great year of activities and services in store for the CFB Cold Lake Community.

Respectfully,

Floyd Perras Executive Director 4 Wing MFRCS

## STATISTICS

### **OVERALL STATS FOR MFRCS 2023/24**



**OVERVIEW** 

Our online booking system continues to make registration more accessible to our community. We open registration at 6:00 PM for our more popular events to give participants a better chance to secure their spot. This includes events such as Mother's Day Flower Baskets, Christmas Wreaths, Story Time with Santa, and Home for the Holidays.

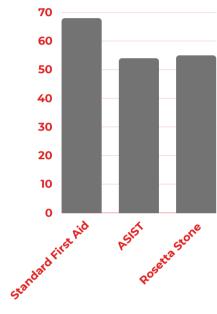
**28%** of the CFB Cold Lake Community participated in events over the last year.

#### **ADULT PROGRAMS**

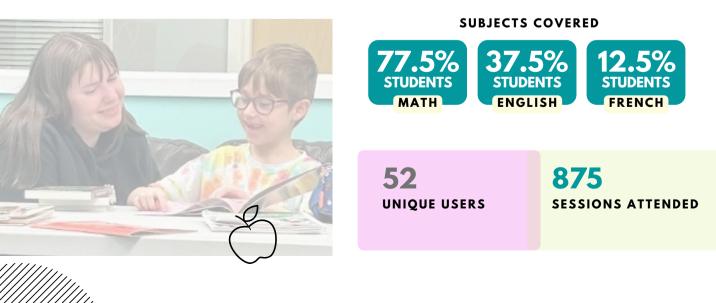
Adult programs promote personal growth, skill development, and social and community connection. These programs are available for adults 18 and older, except for a few that welcome participants 16 and older.



#### Yearly Attendance Per Event 16+



#### **TUTORING PROGRAM**



**# of People Trained** 

#### **YOUTH & CHILDREN**

The Youth Centre serves children and youth aged 6 to 17 and offers a variety of programming and events. It is open Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays.

Robotics Month debuted in November 2023, bringing excitement to the kids at the Youth Centre. They learned about robotics, built their own robots, and competed in a friendly showcase. It was an enriching experience, allowing them to gain hands-on knowledge in a fun and practical environment.

We also collaborated with the local MPs for a thrilling Nerf War. Seven MPs joined 20 kids for a day of tactical training, target practice, and the ultimate Nerf showdown! The event was filled with excitement, smiles, and unforgettable moments for both the kids and the MPs.

Our Tutoring Program saw a significant increase in attendance this year. Many of the children who participated showed remarkable improvements in their academic performance as noted by their teachers, parents, and reflected in their grades.

Teen Night continues to be a popular and successful program throughout the year. Teens enjoyed various outings and events within the community, including visits to The Hard Deck, Major Rager, and the escape room. When not out in the community, the teens gathered at the Youth Centre to hang out, play games, and make new friends.

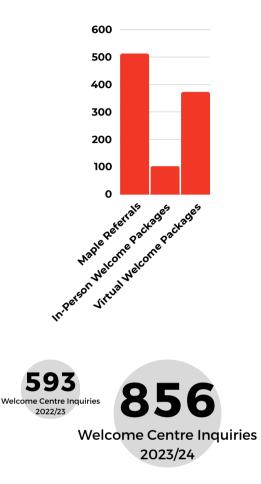
**174** TOTAL YEARLY ATTENDANCE FOR YOUTH (AGES 13-17) **989** TOTAL YEARLY ATTENDANCE FOR KID'S CLUB (AGES 6-9)

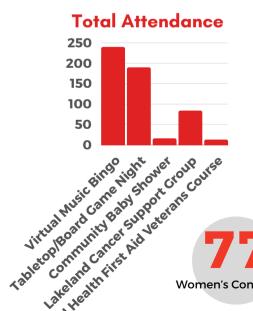
**Babysitting Course** 



16 Total # of Unique Teens Registered (Ages 13-17)

**28** Total # of Unique Children Registered (Ages 6-12)





### WELCOME CENTRE OVERVIEW

The Welcome Centre stays connected with members by providing essential details about programs and services available to them for support during transitions to and from Cold Lake, throughout deployments, and during the medical release process.

This past year, our emails to posted-in members focused on the essential information CFB Cold Lake families needed upon arriving in Cold Lake. The Welcome Centre provided families with children details about child care, before and after school care, summer programs, and instructions on registering for a one-year free subscription to the Maple Virtual Health National Program.

We continue to provide Welcome Packages to posted-in members and their families, who are invited to visit us at the MFRCS to pick them up. Additionally, many families received Virtual Welcome Packages via email.

As a drop-in space, the Welcome Centre creates a comfortable and calming environment for members and families and offers access to computers, printers, DWAN computers, a play area for children, and a variety of brochures and magazines filled with valuable information about the MFRCS and the City of Cold Lake.

The 2023 Welcome Race Event, sponsored by Cenovus Energy, was a resounding success with 55 participants. Immediately following this event was Military Family Appreciation Day with an attendance of 269 participants, sponsored by Top Aces, which brought together Military Members, Veterans, Defence Team members, and their families for a day of fun, food, and activities.





Welcome Centre **Computer Usage** 



### WELCOME CENTRE

- The bi-weekly Virtual Music Bingo has been a big hit this past year, providing military and veteran families with a fun night at home and the chance to win cool prizes.
- Tabletop and Board Game Nights remains a success, with 190 military and veteran community members in attendance this past year.
- We hosted a Community Baby Shower Event for expecting and new moms, offering a fun afternoon of snacks, games, gift bags, and opportunities to connect with others. This event is specifically designed for our military and veteran community.
- Due to the ongoing support from Canadian Natural Resources Limited, we continue to host our Lakeland Cancer Peer Support Group monthly meetings.
- We enjoyed a fantastic day celebrating women in our community at the annual Women's Conference. Highlights included a keynote speaker, a variety of breakout sessions—such as crafts, yoga, Pilates, and cookie decorating—plus light snacks and a delicious catered lunch.

### **DEPLOYMENT SUPPORT**

We actively support deployed families through resource referrals, supplies at the Parcel Wrapping Station, and regular warm line emails.

In February 2024, we honoured the sacrifices of deployed families by inviting them to a catered dinner followed by a magic show sponsored by Canadian Natural Resources Limited. A total of 79 people attended this event. We have sent a total of 51 Morale Packages to CFB Cold Lake CAF members deployed on various operations during the Christmas Holidays and Canada Day as a gesture of our appreciation for their service to our country.

### VETERAN FAMILY PROGRAM (VFP)

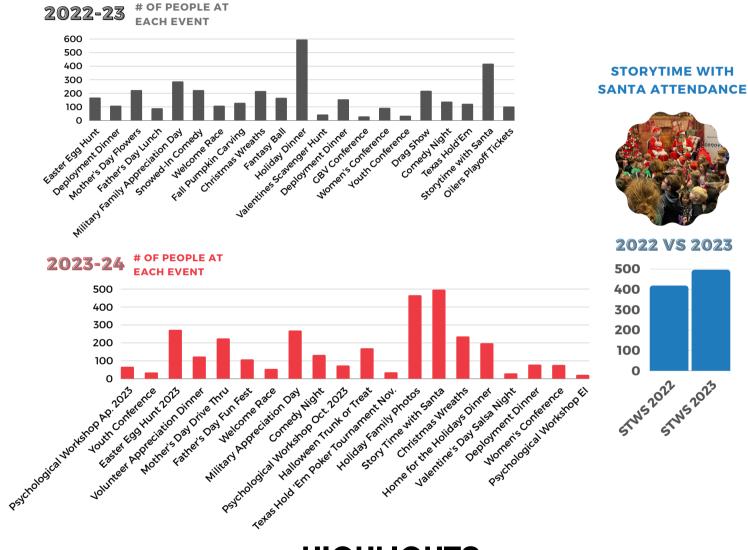
We hosted a Mental Health First Aid Veterans Course which reached Military Members, Veterans, Family Members, Friends & Relatives, and Health Professionals in our community caring or working directly with the Military and Veteran Community.



## SERVICES

### **MORALE BOOSTERS**

Morale Boosters provide the CFB Cold Lake Community with activities to create community, learn about the MFRCS services, and improve morale within the CFB Cold Lake Community. These consist of family events, adult-only events, and family-focused events.



#### HIGHLIGHTS

- We had an exceptional year for Morale Boosters, with 20 events this year.
- Our annual Easter Egg Hunt took place in April, drawing 273 participants. The event was well received, with everyone having fun searching for hidden clues at the Canex, Annex, Youth Centre, and MFRCS building.



## SERVICES

### **MORALE BOOSTERS**

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Our May highlight was the Mother's Day Flower Basket Drive-Thru. Offering three time slots helped reduce lineups, and the event was fully booked with a waiting list of 30 participants.
- In June, we celebrated Father's Day with a delicious lunch and outdoor activities for military and veteran families. Competitive games set up in the parking lot and on the lawn were a big hit, with 108 people attending the event.
- The Halloween Hootenanny had a fantastic turnout, attracting 170 attendees who painted pumpkins, enjoyed caramel apples, and participated in crafts and games. We combined the event with our second annual Trunk or Treat, which saw 8 families participate.
- Our Family Holiday Photos were a hit once again in November. Across two days, we captured photos of CFB Cold Lake members and their families in scheduled time slots, the final two of which were reserved for families with pets. This event had a total of 466 participants.
- Story Time With Santa was a huge success once again with 395 attendances from Military, Veterans, Defence Team members, and their families. An additional 152 people from the community joined the festivities.
- Home For The Holidays saw 198 military and veteran families that were set to remain in Cold Lake over the holidays come to the MFRCS for a delicious traditional Christmas dinner.



#### FIRST FLIGHTS CHILD CARE



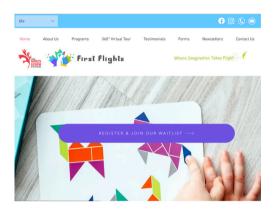
Our Early Learning and Care programs have been very busy this year: our enrolment has been at full capacity for both the MFRCS site and Annex site Early Learning Centres. Between the two full-time Centres, we now have 115 children enrolled with about the same amount on the waiting list. We have had several parent informational and feedback meetings with 10 to 15 parents attending each night. The Alberta and Federal Government \$10 per day child care initiative for children under 6 years old continued to reduce parent fees in 2024. Parents received further reductions between \$178 and \$248 per child per month. Some parents with full subsidy on top of the affordability grants pay as little as \$32 per month.

Out of School care also had a busy year with near capacity enrolment throughout the year. With the fee subsidies from Military Family Support Society, families received up to 40% off their monthly parent fees. We continued to offer a No-School Day full day care program to families who needed that service as well.

After Hours care operated this year on Friday evenings and had many regular family program users. This affordable option of care with our Early Childhood Educators gave parents an opportunity to leave their child(ren) in a safe, fun-filled environment while they had a date night or just a break from the demands of parenting. Through our respite services we supported several families with a deployed member to use this program once a week at no cost to the parent at home alone with the child(ren).

The Early Childhood Educators in our all our programs continue to provide amazing care and learning opportunities for the children. Child care is a challenging career, and we are fortunate to have a great team that makes a huge difference for the children that attend our programs. Our ECE's focus is on providing a holistic, child-led, play-based inclusive learning environment that nurtures the children's disposition to learn, and supports their developmental needs. Children spend a lot of time outside exploring their natural surroundings and community. The food services in our full-time programs sponsored by Cenovus Energy are greatly appreciated by all.

http:// FIRST FLIGHTS WEBSITE TRAFFIC







BENCHMARKS

KEY STATS COMPARISON

Compared to Kids & Teens sites in Canada

Traffic	Your Stats	Better Than
Unique Visitors	160	43%
Avg. Session Duration	5min 58sec	93%
Bounce Rate	55%	30%
<b>Returning Visitors</b>	19%	62%
Organic Search	64%	73%



EMAIL

PHONE

## SERVICES

### VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers assist in many capacities, starting with the essential contribution of our Board of Directors. We kept our volunteers busy with event setup and teardown, taking registration and tickets, helping with crafts and games, serving food and clearing tables, and handing out wreaths and flowers among other activities.



### HIGHLIGHTS

#### In-Person Volunteering

• In February, 35 volunteers went to Rogers Place to sell 50/50 tickets at the Edmonton Oilers CAF Appreciation Game Night in support of our Tutoring Program.



### **MENTAL HEALTH**

Services include short-term individual, family or group counselling, referrals to mental health services for adults and children, access to education and prevention-based programs, short-term individual or group support for families of ill, injured or deceased members, outreach and support to families in the surrounding area, and tailored assistance to families of the fallen.

**18** STRONGEST FAMILIES REFERRALS

159 TOTAL INDIVIDUAL CONTACTS **91** SUPPORTING WELLNESS REFERRALS

### HIGHLIGHTS

The Family Liaison Officer (FLO) accomplished a great deal this year, including the following impactful initiatives and programs:

- Developed a new Postpartum Support Group Program to help mothers in the community.
- Directly connected with 159 unique clients these connections include phone calls, intake appointments, and virtual meetings.
- Referred 18 individuals to Strongest Families Institute.
- Hosted and supervised one community social work diploma student from Portage College.
- Took on the role of Family Violence Advisory Team Co-Chair.
- Organized Youth Mental Health Workshops in local schools including topics such as Mental Health Awareness, Suicide Prevention, Skills for Being There & Stress Management, and Healthy Coping Skills sponsored by Cenovus Energy. This reached a total of 195 students.
- Hosted a Parent Information Night focusing on helping youth address their stress sponsored by Cenovus Energy.
- Presented in Designated Assistance briefings.
- Coordinated mental health training workshops including Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) sponsored by Cenovus Energy, Safe Talk, and Mental Health First Aid.
- Organized 3 psychoeducational workshops which had a total of 163 attendees.



### FACILTIES

We had a busy year with improvements;

• This last year the MFRCS was fortunate to get our HVAC rooftop units replaced. These new units are much better at maintaining heat in the winter and cooling in the summer. Over the past couple of years, we expanded our child care spaces into the MFRCS Annex building, which also received a facility refresh. 4 Wing RP Ops also added another playground area for the infants at the facility. There has also been some additional plugs put in the back area of the main building to accommodate additional freezers and coolers. We want to thank RP Ops for their continued efforts to ensure the MFRCS is operational.





## **PROGRAMMING FEEDBACK**

### SURVEY RESULTS

In April of 2024, a survey went out to our stakeholders and 300 people completed it, compared to last year's 265 participants:

<b>30%</b> Military Spouses	<b>36%</b> Military Members	9% Civilians	7% Defence Team		15% Veterans & Family	
Satisfactio	n		ositive			Negative
Programming Feedback - July 2024 Satisfaction						
How would you rate the N	NFRCS in the following areas	s:	2024	2023	+/-	Responded
Child Care Programming m	eets the needs of my family.		88.9%	93.2%	-4.3%	117
Youth Programming meets r	my family's needs.		87.7%	84.8%	2.9%	106
Regular activities such as Po	aint Night and Craft Night me	et my needs.	92.1%	88.5%	3.6%	202
Workshops i.e. Mental Health	n First Aid, Suicide Prevention,	& Standard First Aid meet my needs.	96.0%	92.7%	3.3%	149
Mental Health/Counselling	Services meet my needs.		88.7%	83.6%	5.0%	106
Special Events such as More	ale Boosters.		96.9%	94.5%	2.3%	254
The MFRCS has good custo	mer service.		96.0%	97.0%	-1.0%	273
Volunteer Opportunities Se	rvices meet my needs.		92.3%	91.7%	0.6%	104
Deployment Services meet	my family's needs.		93.3%	91.0%	2.3%	90
Transition and Welcome Ser	vices meet my needs.		92.4%	88.6%	3.8%	118
Tutoring Program meets my	family's needs.		91.8%	87.5%	4.3%	49
The MFRCS has good custo	mer service.		96.0%	96.7%	-0.7%	273
Communication and promo	tion of programming keeps m	e well informed.	93.5%	87.3%	6.2%	278

95.5%

96.3%

-0.8%

287

#### Satisfaction Strongly Agree

I would recommend the MFRCS to my friends.

	2024	2023	+/-
Special Events and Morale Boosters.	58%	60%	-2%
I would recommend the MFRCS to my friends.	56%	51%	5%
The MFRCS has good customer service.	56%	54%	2%
Communication and promotion of programming keeps me well informed.	47%	40%	7%
Child Care Programming meets the needs of my family.	47%	42%	5%
Regular Activities such as Paint Night and Craft Night meet my needs.	44%	37%	7%
Youth Programming meets my family's needs.	43%	43%	0%
Volunteer Opportunities Services meet my needs.	42%	39%	3%
Mental Health/Counselling Services meet my needs.	40%	33%	7%
Workshops i.e. Mental Health First Aid, Suicide Prevention, & Standard First Aid meet my needs.	39%	35%	4%
Tutoring Program meets my family's needs.	39%	47%	-8%
Transition and Welcome Services meet my needs.	37%	40%	-3%
Deployment Services meet my family's needs.	37%	41%	-4%



## **PROGRAMMING FEEDBACK**

#### RATED BETWEEN 94% - 97%

- Workshops
- Special Events & Morale Boosters
- Customer Service
- Recommending MFRCS

RATED BETWEEN 90% - 93%

- Adult Programming
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Deployment Services
- Welcome Services
- Tutoring Program
- Communication and Promotion

#### **COMMUNITY FEEDBACK**

- **C** The 4Wing MFRCS is an incredible resource! I am so fortunate to have it and am so appreciative of all the programs and services they offer! **99**
- C The First Flights Daycare is amazing, my special thanks to the staff there. My daughter loves it, in turn I love it.
- We took part in a couple paint nights and they have been spectacular and so fun! Also the comedy nights and poker nights are fantastic. The newest addition (our daughter) got to meet and get pictures with Santa at the MFRCS which was amazing. Love that they offered this! 99
- Come of the best experiences that I've had was taken part with the music bingo and the art nights.
- **(?** Enjoyed the Santa and pizza and gift events a lot. Those have been very special times almost traditional now for our family. **99**
- C They always provide courses for me to attend. It's always nice to get new knowledge or refresh our knowledge.
- As a newly posted in family, the welcome services provided fantastic information to the local area, helping highlight employment opportunities for my spouse, and starting our new journey in Cold Lake on a high note!
- **CP** MFRCS helped my oldest with her behaviour and mental health via recommendation to outsourcing, very much appreciated. **99**
- **??** The youth and child programs are amazing. My daughter loves going every week! **99**
- **C** The staff work so hard. The programming is amazing and I feel grateful to have access to our MFRCS. Loved poker night and comedy night, what a blast! **99**
- MFRCS takes great care of my daughter as part of their First Flights Daycare, and community events (pumpkin carving, easter scavenger hunt) were well organized and lots of fun!

### **MARKETING & PROMOTION**

Marketing efforts continue to increase from what was a very busy year. We made it a priority to keep ongoing communication with our CFB Cold Lake Community.

We have continued to increase our advertising efforts such as, posters, email newsletters, digital sign ads, program guide, website content, social graphics, and many other methods.

We also continue to provide Program Guides twice a year to ensure members and their families know everything the 4 Wing MFRCS has to offer.

We are happy to announce that all our marketing materials are now completely bilingual. This includes all public-facing items such as social media posts, posters, program guides, documentation, and mailings.



+349





27 Emails Sent

590 Facebook Posts

### RECOGNIZING OUR SPONSORS



This last year has been a great year for donations. Many foundations, corporations, individuals and businesses gave cash donations. Although not audited, another wonderful aspect of generosity is the Gift-in-Kind donations that support our operations.

#### Sponsors \$200,000 +

Cenovus Energy

#### Sponsors \$25,000 - \$49,999

- Canadian Natural Resources Limited
- Military Families Support Society Subsidy
- Edmonton Oilers Community Foundation/Entertainment Group

#### Sponsors \$10,000 - \$24,999

- MFS Pilot Project Rural Grant for Child Care
- United Way Capital/GCWCC
- Top Aces

#### Sponsors \$5,000 - \$9,999

• Support Our Troops

#### Sponsors \$2,500 - \$4,999

- 4 Wing Chaplains
- Cenovus, Shell, Imperial Employees, Employer Matching

#### Sponsors \$500 - \$2,500

- Northeastern Alberta Commissionaires
- HCol Andrew Abbott
- HCol Mike Bullis
- ATCO Oilers Hockey Clinic
- Together We Stand
- Walmart Cold Lake
- VOREP Funding

#### Total Fundraising Amount = \$438,936 Total Gifts in Kind: \$16,955









4wingmfrcs.perfectmind.com

Cafconnection.ca/Cold-Lake





