



all
in **for**
youth

Year **6**

**EVALUATION
REPORT (2021-22)**

Prepared by All in For Youth & The Community-University
Partnership for the Study of Children, Youth, and Families

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executive SUMMARY

What is All in For Youth (AIFY) and Why is it Important? Education matters. Graduating high school has the potential to help students exit poverty, a cycle which may have afflicted their families for generations. Yet, without having basic needs met (e.g., food, housing, clothing), students are unlikely to thrive and succeed academically. AIFY is an initiative that recognizes this and removes barriers by supporting students and families with school-based, wraparound supports that meet their needs, including:

- Nutrition support
- Child and family mental health therapy
- Child mentoring
- Child success coaching
- Out-of-school-time programming
- In-home family support services

These supports and services set students up for success so they can achieve their full potential. Additionally, research shows that early support measures save our core systems (e.g., education, health, criminal justice, and other social systems) significant costs in the long-term by reducing spending such as wage subsidizing or other supplemental income supports, health care costs, and criminal justice costs (Maier et al., 2017; Yu et al., 2020; this is discussed more [Sustaining the AIFY Initiative](#)).

WHAT DOES THE LITERATURE SAY ABOUT WRAPAROUND SUPPORTS?

“Wraparound” refers to a collaborative, team-based approach to service navigation and delivery (Burns & Goldman, 1999). It represents coordinated efforts that bring together children and their families, schools, social service agencies, and community partners to develop and implement tailored support plans (Burns & Goldman, 1999).

Wraparound is better equipped to offer more accessible prevention and intervention support to children and families. When school and agency partners work together collaboratively, they are able to positively impact students and families beyond what either entity could do alone (Burns & Goldman, 1999). Additionally, when supports are provided in schools, it is easier for children and families to access and benefit from them (Maier et al., 2017; Yu et al., 2020).

The AIFY initiative was officially established in 2016 as a five-year demonstration program implemented in five of the most socially complex and vulnerable schools in Edmonton, Alberta. A collaborative partnership of 10 community organizations leads the implementation and operations of AIFY:

ALL IN FOR YOUTH PARTNERS

Boys and Girls Clubs Big Brother Big Sisters of Edmonton and Area (BGCBigS)	Edmonton Community Foundation (ECF)
City of Edmonton, Family and Community Support Services Program	The Family Centre (TFC)
e4c	The Mental Health Foundation
Edmonton Catholic School Division (ECSD)	REACH Edmonton
Edmonton Public Schools (EPSB)	United Way of the Alberta Capital Region

What is the Impact of AIFY? For the past five years, AIFY has consistently demonstrated positive impacts on the lives of students’ and their families (for more details, visit [Year 3](#), [Year 4](#), and [Year 5](#) evaluation reports). This report presents Year 6 evaluation findings for the AIFY Initiative (representing the 2021-2022 school year). Year 6 is different from previous years because it is the first post-demonstration year for five of the schools. Three new schools also joined the initiative in Year 6 (see [AIFY School Communities](#)).

Various sources of qualitative, quantitative, and secondary data are used to capture the context and impacts of Year 6 of the AIFY initiative. Due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has affected three school years since the start of this pandemic in March 2020, this evaluation was intentionally focused on the mental health of AIFY school communities, especially the mental health of students and families. The focus of mental health of students and families will be reflected in how impacts are framed and presented in the report. Along with the focus on the mental health, this evaluation will also examine the impacts of the initiative more broadly according to the following outcome areas as identified in the **AIFY Theory of Change/Logic Model**: Quality Teaching and Learning, Family Support, In- and Out-of-School Support, and Systems Change (see [Impacts and Opportunities](#)).

How will AIFY Move into the Future? The AIFY partners are always working towards the future and exploring how the AIFY model can continue to be responsive and evolve to meet the needs of students and families. Goals and plans for the future are discussed in [Looking Forward](#).

Year 6 EVALUATION CONTEXT

The Year 6 Evaluation focused on the mental health of AIFY school communities, especially students and families. More and more, we are recognizing the long-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health of school communities (i.e., students, parents/caregivers, teachers, volunteers, as well as school staff and administrators). As such, taking a closer look at mental health was pivotal in understanding how the pandemic has impacted the needs of students and families, who are part of some of the most socially complex school communities in Edmonton.

Since the focus of this year's evaluation is on the mental health of students, families, and school communities, it is important to define mental health:

WHAT IS "MENTAL HEALTH"?

*"Mental health is more than the absence of a mental health condition or illness: it is a **positive sense of well-being**, or the **capacity to enjoy life** and **deal with the challenges we face**.*

*Mental health impacts **each and every one of us**. We all have mental health, just as we all have physical health. People living with a mental health issue or condition can experience positive mental health, and an individual may experience poor mental health without a mental health condition. **Mental health is not fixed**. It is influenced by a **range of factors**, including our life experiences, workplace or other environments, and the social and economic conditions that shape our lives (or the social determinants of mental health)."*

***Action can be taken to promote positive mental health** for individuals and communities at the individual, community and system level. At the individual and community level, mental health promotion strategies focus on enhancing individuals' empowerment and participation and can target a range of environments or settings, such as the workplace, home, school or community. These strategies primarily seek to strengthen factors that protect positive mental health, lessen risk factors for poor mental health and/or address the social determinants of health."*

(Canadian Mental Health Association, 2023).

WHAT DOES THE LITERATURE SAY ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC?

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted **everyone in school communities**, including children, youth, families, school personnel, and agency staff.

Children and youth often struggled with social isolation, family stress, and heightened risk of abuse or neglect during the pandemic (Bignardi et al., 2020; Calvano et al., 2021; Cost et al., 2020). As a result, increased symptoms of depression, anxiety, and mental disorders have been reported (Cost et al., 2020; MHCC, 2021). Furthermore, as students returned to schools, many children experienced gaps in learning and/or social development, making the experience of school more difficult (Engzell et al., 2021; Whitley et al., 2022). Learning losses were often greater for students who experience socioeconomic disadvantage, as well as those with existing learning difficulties or language barriers (Engzell et al., 2021; Whitley et al., 2022).

Parents and caregivers navigated multiple challenges during the pandemic, such as financial adversity and instability, health anxiety, reduced social support, and disruption in routines, while at the same time, attending to their children's wellbeing (MHCC, 2021). Many parents became concerned for their child's emotions, stress level, or behaviours (MHCC, 2021). Additionally, reports revealed worsened mental health symptoms among parents (Gassman-Pines et al., 2020; MHCC, 2021; Thomson et al., 2021). When parents and caregivers struggle with their mental health and daily functioning, it becomes more difficult to be responsive to the needs of their child (MHCC, 2021). Furthermore, children may model unhealthy coping behaviours or take on this toxic stress (MHCC, 2021). As restrictions loosened, many families struggled to re-establish in-person routines and navigate continued economic instability.

School and agency staff experienced high levels of stress as they navigated the changing pandemic landscape, while also working to address an unprecedented level of need that is continuing to occur among students and families (food and financial insecurity, as well as social-emotional and learning needs; Robinson et al., 2022). This heavy load and high level of stress contributes to staff burnout and turnover (Robinson et al., 2022).

DATA SOURCES FOR THE YEAR 6 EVALUATION

To capture details on student and families' mental health while still learning about the diverse impacts of AIFY supports more broadly, various quantitative and qualitative sources of data were collected and analyzed for this year's evaluation.

In Year 6, stakeholders who participated in the evaluation activities (i.e., students, parents or caregivers, school staff, and agency staff) were able to choose whether they wanted to do it in person, online, or via the telephone. This flexibility made the process more efficient and responsive to schools and families' needs. We also provided the option to complete interviews in different languages in order to make the process accessible for families who are English language learners. In Year 6, we conducted one interview in Spanish with the support of an interpreter.

Additionally, for the first time in the evaluation process, school administrators and staff had the opportunity to co-facilitate focus groups with staff and students. This approach was taken in agreement with AIFY partners as an effort to build research and evaluation capacity across AIFY schools.

The following data sources informed the Year 6 Evaluation findings in this report:

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS

51

Students in Focus Groups (from 7 AIFY schools)

11

*Alumni Students in Interviews (from 4 AIFY schools)

**Students were graduating junior high or high school as of June 2022*

30

Parents/Caregivers in Interviews (from 8 AIFY schools)

53

School Staff and Admin in Focus Groups (from 7 AIFY schools)

38

Agency Staff in Focus groups (from 7 AIFY schools)

40

Agency Staff and School Admin in
**Huddle Debriefs (from 7 AIFY schools)

***Huddles are weekly or biweekly meetings between school and agency staff to discuss AIFY students and families. During huddles, staff talk about the issues they're observing among students and strategize wraparound supports that can best help them.*

FAMILY SURVEY

23

Parents/Caregivers participated in an online Family Survey about the impacts of AIFY supports (from 7 schools).

SECONDARY DATA FROM AGENCY PARTNERS

AIFY Service Delivery Data (e.g., Data on the number of students accessing targeted AIFY supports and information about service adaptations due to the pandemic)

EXISTING RESEARCH LITERATURE

Peer-reviewed literature and gray literature gathered to support Year 6 evaluation questions (e.g., research literature about the impacts of COVID-19 on the mental health of children, youth, and families)

SECONDARY DATA FROM SCHOOL PARTNERS

AIFY School Data (e.g., Data on student attendance and mobility, demographics, and AIFY service use for each AIFY school)

DOCUMENTS FOR REVIEW

Notes from AIFY meetings held during the 2021-2022 school year



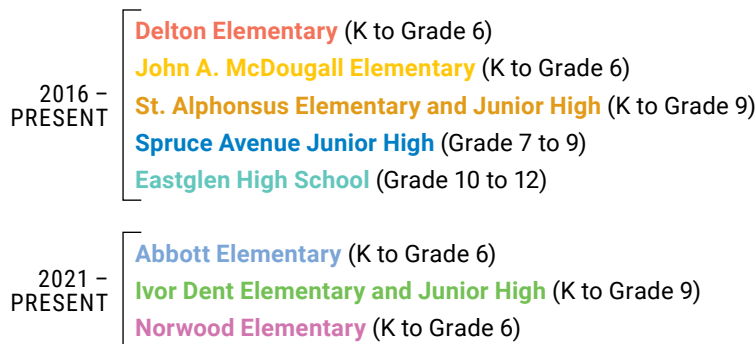
The AIFY
SCHOOL
COMMUNITIES

The AIFY SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

Wraparound supports are a more effective way to support the complex and layered needs of students and families. In this section of the report, we will provide more detail on the school communities that are a part of AIFY, and how AIFY supports can help to reduce barriers to success in the lives of students and families.

AIFY SCHOOLS AND THE STRUCTURE OF SUPPORTS IN EACH SCHOOL

In total, there are currently 8 AIFY schools.



The AIFY model was implemented in 5 of these schools when the initiative started in 2016 and more recently, in the 2021/2022 school year, 3 more schools became part of the AIFY initiative (in Year 6). There are also some differences in the capacity of AIFY agency staff teams in each of these schools. For example, not all AIFY agency staff teams working in each of the schools are full time. The following visual illustrates how AIFY agency staff teams look in each school and their capacity during Year 6.

◐ Part-time ◑ Full-time

<p>Abbott Elementary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◐ Mental Health Therapist ◐ Mentoring Facilitator ◐ Nutrition Support Worker ◐ Roots and Wings Worker 	<p>Delton Elementary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◑ Mental Health Therapist ◐ Mentoring Facilitator ◐ Nutrition Support Worker x3 ◑ OST Coordinator ◑ Roots and Wings Worker ◑ Success Coach 	<p>Ivor Dent Elementary and Junior High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◐ Mental Health Therapist ◐ Mentoring Facilitator ◐ Nutrition Support Worker ◐ Roots and Wings Worker ◑ Success Coach 	<p>John A. McDougall Elementary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◑ Mental Health Therapist ◐ Mentoring Facilitator ◐ Nutrition Support Worker x2 ◑ OST Coordinator ◑ Roots and Wings Worker ◑ Success Coach
<p>Norwood Elementary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◐ Mental Health Therapist ◐ Mentoring Facilitator ◐ Nutrition Support Worker x2 ◐ Roots and Wings Worker 	<p>St. Alphonsus Elementary and Junior High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◐ Mental Health Therapist ◐ Mentoring Facilitator ◐ Nutrition Support Worker x2 ◑ OST Coordinator ◐ Roots and Wings Worker ◑ Success Coach 	<p>Spruce Avenue Junior High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◑ Mental Health Therapist ◑ Mentoring Facilitator ◐ Nutrition Support Worker x2 ◑ OST Coordinator ◑ Roots and Wings Worker ◑ Success Coach 	<p>Eastglen High School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◑ Mental Health Therapist ◑ OST Coordinator ◐ Roots and Wings Worker ◑ Success Coach

Note: Elementary = Kindergarten to Grade 6, Junior High = Grade 7 to 9, High School = Grade 10 to 12

During the Year 6 school year (2021-22), schools continued to open up to in-person programming as pandemic restrictions shifted. In response, schools with OST programming hired additional part time staff during the year as the demand increased for programming and events were moved to in person. OST staff quickly adapted to school changes, and often also took on the role of supporting additional duties in the school where needed (e.g., supervising lunches and recess). For schools that did not have OST programming, students were able to attend after school programs at a BGCBig's club nearby.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE AIFY SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

In Year 6, approximately **2,839 students and their families** were part of these eight AIFY school communities (i.e., all students and their families, not just students and families who access targeted AIFY supports). This is **727 more students than Year 5**, due to 3 additional schools becoming part of the AIFY initiative in Year 6.

YEAR 6 STUDENT ENROLMENT

The following visual shows how big the different AIFY school communities were for Year 6, based on their September enrolment counts.



Overall, Eastglen is the largest AIFY school community, based on student enrolment, with Ivor Dent, St. Alphonsus, Delton, and John A. McDougall having larger school communities as well. With larger school communities, more supports and resources are often required to meet the needs of students and families.

- John A. McDougall and Eastglen saw their student enrolment increase in Year 6 (with 22 and 56 more students, respectively, compared to Year 5 enrolment counts).
- Delton, St. Alphonsus, and Spruce Avenue had lower student enrolment in Year 6 (with 2, 46, and 46 fewer students, respectively, compared to Year 5 enrolment counts)

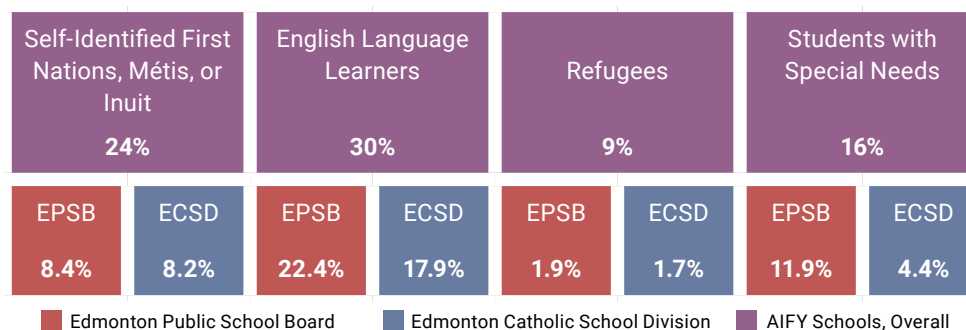
YEAR 6 SUB-POPULATION ENROLMENT

Among the students enrolled in AIFY school communities, many are English language learners (ELL), refugees, students with special needs, and self-identified First Nations, Métis, or Inuit students (there will also be some overlap in students who identify with more than one of these specific populations).

It is important to acknowledge the diversity of students and families that make up AIFY school communities, because this connects to the varied experiences and needs of students. Some children and youth may experience different barriers to learning than their peers. For example, families who are newcomers or refugees often face the challenge of learning a new language and navigating a new system, without an established support network. Children with disabilities may face a greater risk of struggling with schoolwork without inclusive supports or resources. Experiences of discrimination, racism, and/or intergenerational trauma also affect our health, wellbeing, and ability to learn. Adverse living conditions and unmet social determinants of health (i.e., income, family employment, food security, belonging) can impact children’s ability to learn and future health. Therefore, added supports and resources are required to make the school community an inclusive environment that sets all students up for success.

The following visual illustrates enrollment of specific student populations in Edmonton Public School and Edmonton Catholic School divisions.

YEAR 6 SUB-POPULATION ENROLMENT – SCHOOL DIVISION OVERALL PICTURE



UNDERSTANDING DATA TERMS

A proportion is defined as a part, share, or number considered in comparative relation to a whole. In this report, we will report on proportions of things with percentage values (%). This allows us to more easily and meaningfully share important data points, in a way that is easier to interpret.

Compared to division averages, AIFY schools tend to have higher proportions of these specific student populations. The following visual breaks down student populations in each of the AIFY school communities and provides the difference in proportions (if any) between the school and their division (i.e., Edmonton Public Schools or Edmonton Catholic Schools).

YEAR 6 SUB-POPULATION ENROLMENT – INDIVIDUAL AIFY SCHOOL AND DIVISION COMPARISON

	Abbott	Delton	Eastglen	Ivor Dent	John A. McDougall	Norwood	St. Alphonsus	Spruce Avenue
English Language Learners	30.7%	11.9%	22.0%	41.5%	42.0%	31.4%	30.6%	30.9%
17.9% ECSD	+8.3%	-10.5%	-0.4%	+19.1%	+19.6%	+9.0%	+12.7%	+8.5%
22.4% EPSB								
Refugees	9.2%	1.1%	8.7%	18.5%	14.2%	1.1%	9.9%	9.9%
1.7% ECSD	+7.3%	-0.8%	+6.8%	+16.6%	+12.3%	-0.8%	+8.2%	+8.0%
1.9% EPSB								
Special Needs	22.9%	20.9%	20.3%	15.6%	9.1%	11.9%	12.0%	18.2%
4.4% ECSD	+11.0%	+9.0%	+8.4%	+3.7%	-2.8%	•	+7.6%	+6.3%
11.9% EPSB								
Self-Identified First Nation, Métis, or Inuit	25.5%	32.0%	22.2%	17.3%	17.5%	22.2%	16.8%	42.0%
8.2% ECSD	+17.1%	+23.6%	+13.8%	+8.9%	+9.1%	+13.8%	+8.6%	+33.6%
8.4% EPSB								

■ Edmonton Public School Board
 ■ Edmonton Catholic School Division

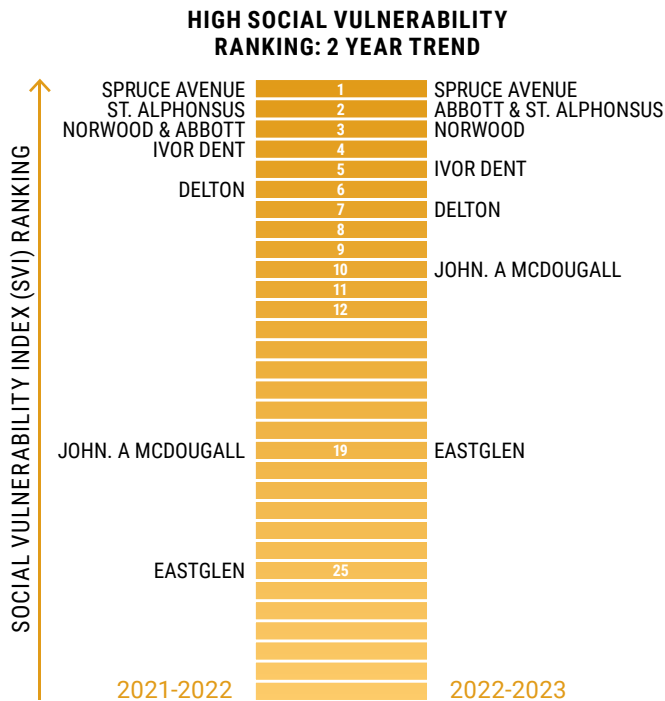
Looking at the percentage differences in **red text**, almost all of the AIFY schools have higher proportions of students who are English language learners, refugees, have special needs, and who self-identify as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit.

- John A. McDougall and Ivor Dent have almost double the proportion of students who are English language learners in their school communities, compared to the Edmonton Public Schools Board overall.
- Ivor Dent has a larger proportion of refugee students, compared to the other AIFY schools and the Edmonton Public Schools Board overall.
- Almost 25% of Abbott and Delton school communities represent students with special needs.
- All of the AIFY schools have higher proportions of self-identified First Nations, Métis, or Inuit students, compared to their school divisions, with Spruce Avenue having over 40% of their students self-identifying as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit.

This deep dive into AIFY schools' demographic data, and how these data differ in comparison to division rates, illustrates the diversity, complexity, and uniqueness of the AIFY school communities. AIFY supports and resources are critical to remove learning barriers for students and families, so all students are set up for success.

SOCIAL VULNERABILITY FOR AIFY SCHOOLS

Each year in the Edmonton Public and Catholic school divisions, all the schools in each division are ranked to identify the most vulnerable schools. These rankings, called High Social Vulnerability (HSV) rankings, are done to help divisions allocate additional funds and resources to schools that are more socially vulnerable. These rankings are based on the postal code of the students registered in the school. Year after year, almost all the AIFY schools end up ranking in the top 10 most socially vulnerable schools in their respective divisions. Also, Eastglen, while appearing to have the lowest ranking among all AIFY schools, is typically ranked as the high school with the most social vulnerability in its division. These HSV rankings are also a key metric the AIFY initiative used to identify and select schools to be part of the AIFY initiative.



ADDITIONAL SCHOOL ATTRIBUTES

There are a few key attributes we also want to highlight for the AIFY Schools. These are trends in school attendance, in-person vs. online learning, and school mobility rates. These attributes for the AIFY schools continue to demonstrate the unique and complex characteristics of these school communities and help us better understand the needs of students and families in these school communities.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE



Across the Edmonton Public School Board, the average attendance rate is 87.7% for the 2021-2022 school year (Year 6).

In Year 6, **4 of the AIFY schools had attendance rates above 80% for the school year** (including Delton, Ivor Dent, John A. McDougall, and St. Alphonsus). The remaining AIFY schools had attendance rates above 75% (with a range of 75.5% to 79.4%).

It is important to note that attendance rates are impacted by isolation requirements, and that sometimes students may not have been able to attend school due to COVID-19 measures.

ONLINE SCHOOLING



Across the Edmonton Public School Board 4.6% of students were online learners for Year 6.

Compared to the school division, **most of the AIFY schools had lower proportions of students who were online learners**, with the exception of Eastglen and Norwood which had higher proportions of online learners for Year 6. There were also mandatory transitions to online learning randomly throughout the school year due to pandemic health restrictions.

STUDENT MOBILITY



Across the Edmonton Public School Board, there was a mobility rate of 13.3% in Year 6. This rate is based on how many students transfer in and out of a school in a year. The lower the rate, the better, since this means school communities are more stable.

All of the AIFY schools have mobility rates that are higher than their division average (with a range of 16.4% to 53.6%), with Spruce Avenue having the highest mobility rate (53.6%)

Compared to division rates, AIFY schools show similar rates of attendance, as well as similar proportions of students attending in-person vs online. Although, attendance rates are still below the goal of 90% attendance which is critical for school success. Additionally, mobility rates for AIFY schools are higher than the division average. When students experience mobility, by transferring in or out of school, this adds the challenge of adapting to a new environment and potentially falling behind in school. School communities can experience high rates of mobility for many reasons. Families often have to make difficult transitions for employment, housing, or health reasons, as well as due to changes in family structure, such as divorce or the passing of a family member. The pandemic, with heightened economic instability and health risks, also contributed to high mobility rates in school communities. AIFY supports and resources are critical to help students and families navigate complex transitions.

NEEDS OF THE SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

AIFY has helped schools become places where families and students know they can get any support they may need, no matter what it is, at any given time during the school year. These school-based wraparound supports give schools a chance to uncover and address the many different needs of students and their families.

The visual on this page was made to show you the breadth and complexity of real needs of students and families in AIFY schools during Year 6. Needs that were met by AIFY schools through their wraparound and collaborative approach to service delivery.

The needs of students and families will not always be school specific (e.g., academic support, literacy support, etc.). Students and families will come to school with many different unmet needs and schools, with wraparound supports, can be the best positioned to meet these needs in effective and efficient ways.

“They help you with any services you might need, like bus passes if you need them. If you need help getting clothes or let’s say furniture for your house or like mental health if your kids need something or if you need something in your family...anything family wise...you can think of, they help us get in touch with anything like that... if you need it...they help you.” (Caregiver)¹

The COVID-19 pandemic has also resulted in more needs and different needs among the students and families in the AIFY schools. Coming back to in-person learning has been hard for some and students need help re-engaging with school, adjusting to the new (and old) routine of physically going to school and feeling motivated.

“Well, the transition was a little tough. We had a few the first few months, he kind of tried to leave the school, walk out of the school and stuff. And that was kind of scary.” (Caregiver)

The pandemic also produced new needs for students and families that were not as critical pre-pandemic, when devices and technology were seen as luxuries and not basic needs.

“It was hard for me because my mom and my two sisters were all trying to do it online at the exact same time. And we only have so many devices. So like we had to rotate from sharing the computers to going on the phones which are really small you can’t do a lot of work when you’re on a phone. So that was probably hard cause you aren’t just getting as much help as when you are in person.” (Student Alumni)

Many AIFY students also struggled with their mental health, socialization, and emerging from feelings of isolation they experienced during their online schooling during the pandemic.

“...One of my children decided to stay online because she had some disabilities. So her social anxiety has completely stopped her from even really leaving the house...She wants to get out there, but at the same time, she’s like, I don’t want to die.” (Caregiver)

“With COVID, because we were all isolated for so long, a lot of people have gotten social anxiety to the point where they...don’t want to be around anyone and don’t want to talk to anyone. That could play a factor in it, I guess. Just not wanting to be at school.” (Student Alumni)

¹Quotes included in this report may have minor grammar edits to help make them easier to read. Any edits made did not change the meaning of the quotes.

SUPPORTING NEEDS

HOW CAN AIFY HELP YOU?



- Food Support
- Literacy Support
- Social Isolation
- Housing Support
- Employment Support
- Social Skill Building
- Financial Support
- Clothing/Toiletries
- Confidence Building
- Mental Health Support
- Resume Writing
- School Transitions
- Extracurricular Activities
- Emotion Regulation
- Family Relationships
- Homework Support
- Grief Support
- Family Violence
- Custody Support
- Addiction
- Domestic Violence
- Transportation Support
- Health/Medical Care
- Critical Incident
- Self-injury
- School Attendance
- Advocate
- Learning Support
- Mentoring
- School Applications
- Scholarship Applications
- Success Coaching
- Filling Out Forms
- Newcomer Support
- Childcare
- School Supplies
- Prom Dresses
- Parent Support
- Graduation Support

The pandemic is still ongoing and has only added layers of complexity onto the needs of students and families in the AIFY school communities. Fortunately, the AIFY wraparound model of support is built to be responsive to the unique, individual needs of students and their families. The AIFY model and partners will continue to respond and evolve as needed to ensure students and their families can have their needs met. A global pandemic may have changed the needs of students and families, but it did not stop the ability of AIFY to wrap around students and families and give them the support they needed during this time.

HOW STUDENTS AND FAMILIES FEEL ABOUT THEIR SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

For a variety of reasons, schools are not always perceived as welcoming and supportive places for students and their families. Schools and school staff work hard to welcome students and families and support all students in experiencing success. However, meeting all needs of students and families can be complex and outside the scope, funding, and mandate of education. This strain on schools and school systems, at times can lead to some students and families feeling unsupported by schools. Consistent with evidence from the research, having wraparound supports based in the school communities helps these schools better support their students and families.

Through interviews with caregivers and students, we heard how they feel supported through their AIFY schools, with wraparound models of support.

“...I have six kids, and they’ve all been in the school system. And I’ll tell you, I have never experienced anything like this before. [This AIFY school] is a cut above all the rest of the schools.” (Caregiver)

Families members from AIFY school communities shared how they felt about their school communities on a survey sent out to families (completed by 21 family members across the AIFY schools).

Students and families continue to tell us how much they like their school communities and how their school community has become a critical source of support, or even like a home.

"I'll tell them it's a great place to be. All teachers are nice, kind hearted. There are...after school programs out there. We have a therapy and a success coach that you can trust and talk to if anything's going on. And yeah, just make them feel welcome." (Student Alumni)

"...You would be welcomed...when I was a new student here, I was really nervous about it. Since it looks like a big building. But it's actually really easy to get to know people and also...people are very welcoming here. And feel like you've been here for a long time." (Student Alumni)

"A couple of years ago, I didn't feel good about myself. Nobody... really included me...At the other schools...I felt like someone who just stood out from the crowd. But when I moved back to [the AIFY school]...It felt nice to be back. And I felt like I was part of something again and people listen to me..." (Student Alumni)

"...I think the people that are behind this program, and having it based in schools, need to understand that for the families who use it, it is an invaluable resource. And I think... it makes a really, really big difference to a lot of families in how they're able to get their kids through the school year or... get themselves through the difficult times they're going through or...just all of those things." (Caregiver)

SEE THE SCHOOL AS A SOURCE OF SUPPORT WHEN THEY NEED HELP.

76%

FELT THEIR CHILDREN WERE ABLE TO ACCESS THE SUPPORTS THEY NEED.

81%

SEE THE SCHOOL AS A SOURCE OF SUPPORT WHEN THEIR CHILD NEEDS HELP.

86%

FELT THE PEOPLE WHO WORK IN THE SCHOOL TAKE THE TIME TO GET TO KNOW THEM.

90%

FELT STAFF WHO WORK IN THE SCHOOL ARE RESPECTFUL.

95%

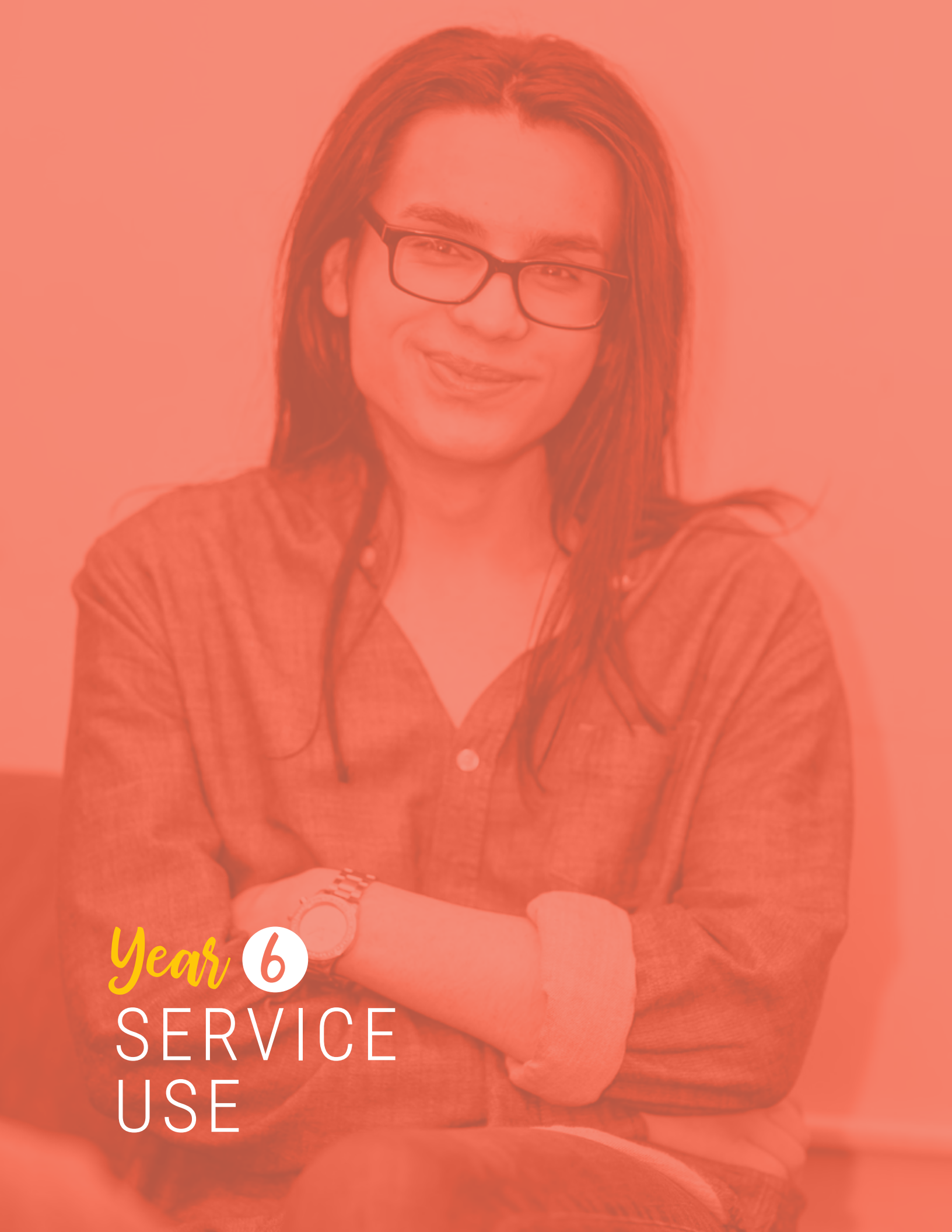
FELT STAFF WHO WORK IN THE SCHOOL CARE ABOUT THE WELLBEING OF THE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN THE SCHOOL.

95%

FELT TEACHERS AND AIFY STAFF CARE ABOUT THEIR CHILDREN.

100%

Completed by 21 family members across the AIFY schools.



Year 6
SERVICE
USE

Year 6 SERVICE USE

In Year 6, schools and agency partners continued to collaborate to provide AIFY services across the eight schools. AIFY partners had to continue being innovative and flexible this year, to ensure students and families could still get support, while also respecting health restrictions or guidelines implemented in schools, to protect students and families during the ongoing pandemic. Some AIFY programming and service delivery started out virtually or remained virtual for the whole year. However, there was a concerted effort to shift any services or programming back to in-person when possible.

“...This year, our team has done so many more home visits to try to reach out to families. It’s now taking the approach of going to their home... Our team is you know, going to families’ homes to kind of connect with families and to get the kids back to school or to find out ways in which the team can support and so that is a huge change from, I believe, way more home visits than in the past because of families not coming into the school.” (Agency Staff)



This visual provides a snapshot of the magnitude and breadth of support students and families received from AIFY during Year 6.

SUCCESS COACHING

75 formal clients

593 individual students supported through short-term engagements

2,195 short term engagements, overall

29 groups facilitated

406 group participants supported

- ✓ Coached students through school transitions and graduation
- ✓ Built relationships with higher risk students who became disconnected from school
- ✓ Supported students in the development of classroom management plans
- ✓ Role modelled techniques like PACE (playfulness, acceptance, curiosity, empathy)

NUTRITION SUPPORT

1,684 students registered in school nutrition programs

226,324 meals served

161,133 snacks served

- ✓ Students received access to nutritious foods
- ✓ Nutrition Support Workers built relationships with students and delivered nutrition education

ROOTS & WINGS FAMILY SUPPORT

85 formal clients

249 individual students/family members supported through short-term engagements

959 short term engagements, overall

- ✓ Built relationships and a support network for families
- ✓ Planned community family events (e.g., Family games night)
- ✓ Conducted home visits to support families
- ✓ Connected families to other supports and programming
- ✓ Helped to distribute food hampers to families

OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME

879 unique students participated in OST programs

1,794 hours of OST support, provided in-person and virtually

OST was attended by 10,893 times by students during the school year

68 students participated in summer camps in July

OST was open for 135 days during the year, across 5 schools

- ✓ Classroom collaborations
- ✓ Lunch and recess programming
- ✓ School bus program to BGCBigs clubs
- ✓ Gift cards to families in need
- ✓ Partnered with Toy Mountain on holiday gift packages for families
- ✓ Supported the applications and awarding of 4 \$50,000 scholarships to graduating students
- ✓ Culture Club and My Identity programs
- ✓ Science and Nature Clubs and STEM workshops
- ✓ ArtStart Program and Kid Tech Nation (coding, pixel art, modelling)
- ✓ Raise the Grade program (supporting high school transition)
- ✓ Take it Easy program (on mental wellbeing) and Go Girls (mental wellbeing for girls)

MENTAL HEALTH THERAPY

256 students or family formal clients

903 short term engagements, overall

214 group participants supported

- ✓ Coached and supported students through challenges
- ✓ Supported students with healthy coping skills and classroom management plans
- ✓ 63% of clients in the green zone after working with a therapist (having made reliable change towards healthy functioning)

MENTORING

202 students participated in mentoring programs

- ✓ Tutoring in reading, math, and science
- ✓ Mentoring with a socio-emotional focus
- ✓ High school teen mentors
- ✓ BGCBigs community mentors
- ✓ Corporate mentors (University of Alberta Law Student Group, Intact Insurance, Enbridge/Epcor, Government of Alberta Education)

Based on this visual, it should be very clear that AIFY agency staff and partners are truly wrapping around students and families in AIFY schools. Not only are AIFY agency staff and partners delivering services, offering their time and capacity to support school activities, but they are also leveraging connections and other resources to get students and families the support they need.

Service Use Snapshot

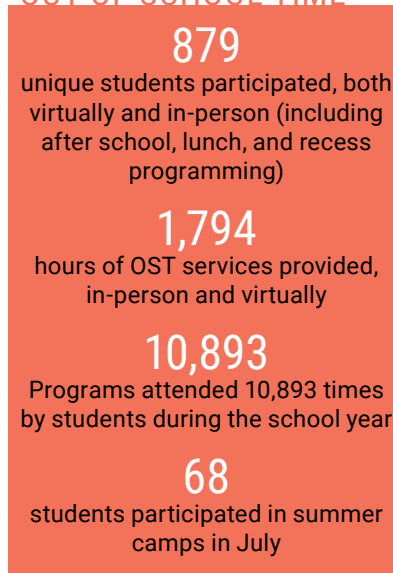
Here is a more focused snapshot of how the different AIFY services were used by students and families across AIFY schools.

"...I work with kids with very low self-esteem, low confidence. They just think very lowly of themselves. And so it's trying to build up that confidence and trying to get them to succeed."
(Agency Staff)

SUCCESS COACHING



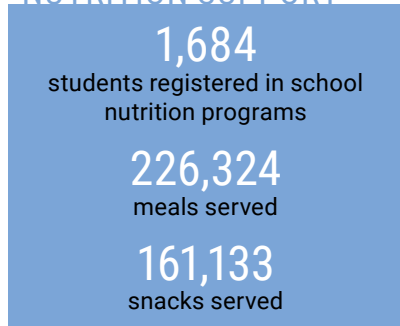
OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME



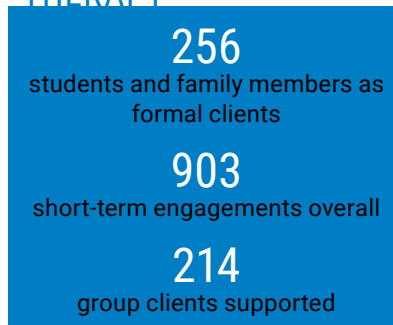
"And another thing I just wanted to mention about the OST space too is, this year, there's been a big shift...a lot of the programs continue in a similar vein, but discussing gender identity and also mental health concern has been...happening more this year..." (Agency Staff)

"Also, food security, uh, is big issue for families still. And just increasing poverty."
(Agency Staff)

NUTRITION SUPPORT



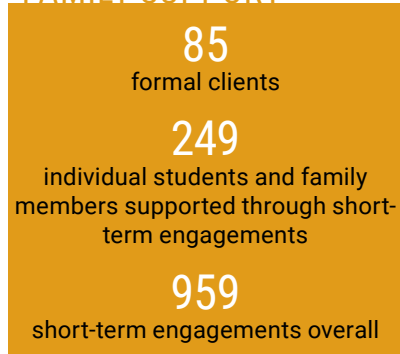
MENTAL HEALTH THERAPY



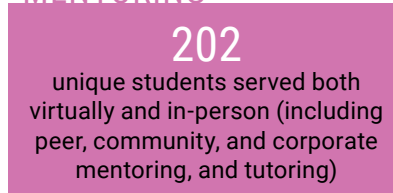
"...I know parents to have been struggling with just how to support their kids mental health struggles whilst battling their own, kind of trying to manage both at the same time and feeling a little bit lost as to how to do it." (Agency Staff)

"...[F]amilies know, they can call and be like, I don't have food, I don't have bus tickets. I don't-my kid needs this, my family needs this. And the school like works together to find ways to help support that family in a way that's sustainable, and not just like a one time thing."
(Agency Staff)

ROOTS AND WINGS FAMILY SUPPORT



MENTORING



"I was the biggest skeptic about virtual mentoring, but [with] our grade ones and eights...there are no more doubts in my mind...I couldn't believe how successful that was."
(School Administrator)

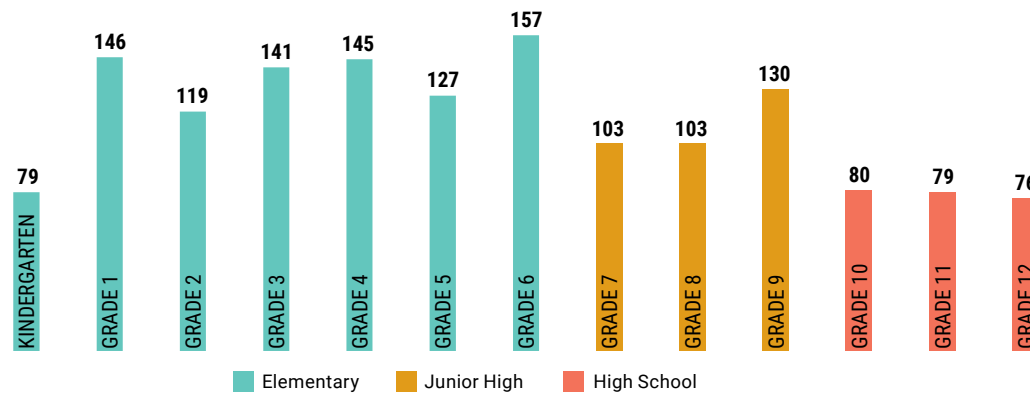


REACH OF SERVICES FOR YEAR 6

1,435 students and their families accessed one or more targeted AIFY supports². This represents almost 60% of students enrolled in the 8 AIFY schools.

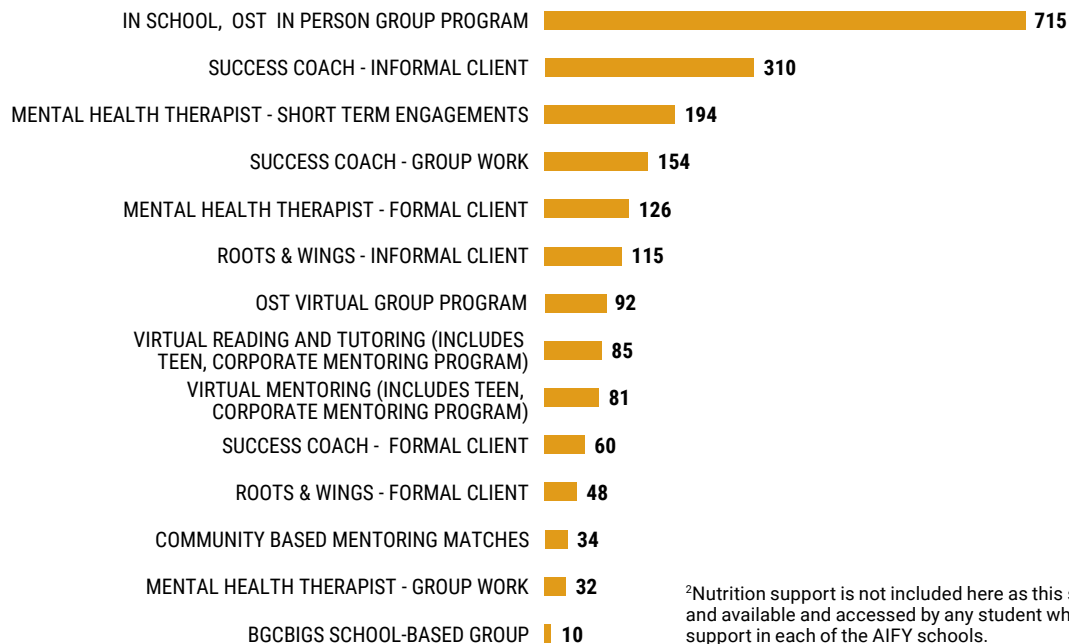
Students from kindergarten to grade 12 are using the different AIFY supports, with the most students in grades 1 to 6 accessing supports. Looking at the following visual, there is also a noticeable spike in grade 6 and 9 students who accessed the AIFY supports in Year 6. This is unsurprising since school transitions are something AIFY makes a concerted effort to support, and schools were probably supporting students navigate the transition to a new school for the following year (i.e., transitioning from elementary school to junior high or from junior high to high school).

AIFY SERVICE USE – SCHOOL GRADE COMPARISON



AIFY wraps around students and families, to offer many different supports and services to meet their needs. Here is a breakdown of how many students across the 8 AIFY schools accessed targeted AIFY supports and service during Year 6².

AIFY SERVICE USE – SERVICE TYPE COMPARISON

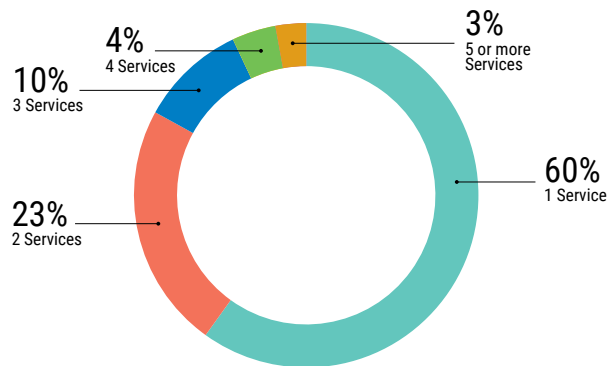


²Nutrition support is not included here as this support is universal and available and accessed by any student who would like this support in each of the AIFY schools.

Hundreds of students across the 8 schools are accessing many of the different AIFY supports. OST was the targeted support accessed by the most students. This particular service can support more children since it is not a 1:1 support, which means more children can use this support in school communities. We can also see that many students across the schools are getting support from Success Coaches and Mental health therapists through informal connections or short-term engagements.

Consistent with previous years, many students accessed more than one targeted AIFY service at their school. In fact, 40% of students are accessing multiple AIFY services to meet their needs. Across the 8 AIFY schools, 55 students accessed 5 or more targeted services in Year 6.

AIFY SERVICE USE – MULTIPLE SERVICE USE



This shows us the importance of providing multiple, coordinated services to support the varied needs of students and families. Families may be experiencing challenges, for which one service type is not sufficient to address their co-occurring needs and remove critical barriers. AIFY is giving students and their families the ability to access as many supports as needed, in a coordinated way. Supporting students and families with multiple services in school communities in this way can be a great equalizer. One agency staff member described this nicely in a focus group:

“Another way our program is sometimes described by [the] admin team is they refer to it as an equalizer. So it’s just a way for us to sort of support kids and get them to the same starting point that most other kids are already at. Whether it’s because they don’t have the nutrition at home, or because they’re going through mental health crises, or whatever it is. I think primarily what we do is we’ve just tried to get our clients to the same position that other people are already at. So that it’s kind of more fair for them to like, continue in their educational career, or whatever it is.”

(Agency Staff)





A young man with short dark hair, wearing a light-colored hoodie, is smiling and looking towards the camera. He has his hand near his head. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent teal color. The text is positioned in the lower-left area of the image.

AIFY IMPACTS &
OPPORTUNITIES
FOR THE *future*

AIFY IMPACTS & OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE *future*

The Year 6 Evaluation focused on the mental health of AIFY school communities. The evaluation also gathered information on the impacts of the AIFY initiative more broadly, based on the outcome areas identified by the AIFY Theory of Change and Logic Model.

AIFY partners developed the logic model to map out expectations for outcomes and impacts of the AIFY Initiative over the short-term (1–2 years), mid-term (3–5 years), and long-term (6–10 years; see [Appendix A](#) for the complete logic model). The following key outcomes and impacts are expected in these specific areas:

QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING	<i>School staff are able to focus on and be supported in their teaching and learning objectives with students and families</i>	
FAMILY SUPPORT	<i>Families have access to supports in schools that contribute to their overall wellbeing and are able to build skills to maintain healthy family functioning over time.</i>	
IN- & OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUPPORT	<i>Students have access to supports in school that contribute to their overall wellbeing and help them build skills to achieve school success. Additionally, students and families have access to out-of-school supports (e.g., after school programming, summer programming, community programs) that contribute to their overall wellbeing and help them to build skills to achieve success in life.</i>	
SYSTEMS CHANGE	<i>The collaborative efforts of the partnership contribute to changes in current operating systems (e.g., schools, government sectors, social service industries) that allow the complex needs of students and families in school communities to be more effectively and efficiently met.</i>	

In this section of the report, we will demonstrate how the AIFY initiative is having an impact, based on expectations identified in the program logic model. Since the AIFY model has been operating in some schools for longer (five AIFY schools have implemented the AIFY model for six years) and others only implemented the model more recently (three new schools who implemented the model in 2021-2022), there are different expectations for the types of impacts and outcomes we expect to see for Year 6. For AIFY schools who have had the model for 6 years, we will focus on how they are meeting long-term expected outcomes. For schools who only started implementing the model in Year 6, we will focus on how they are meeting short-term expected outcomes. Year 6 impacts will be illustrated through various sources of qualitative, quantitative, and secondary data.

QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING

School staff are able to focus on and be supported in their teaching and learning objectives with students and families



The 2021/22 school year was demanding for school staff. School staff reported high needs among students, including gaps in learning and social-emotional development, attendance concerns, and economic insecurity. Coordination with AIFY agency staff was invaluable when addressing the complex needs of students.

“...[T]he trauma of the pandemic is huge. I’m noticing that with a lot of my families. I have some very complex kids and families in my class.” (School Staff)

With AIFY supports, schools were able to more **effectively** and **efficiently** connect students and families with needed services. School staff were able to coordinate with agency partners to address students’ unmet needs based on what they are observing in classrooms.

“[A]s a classroom teacher, you know, I have 23 kids all with their own varying degrees of high needs. And it’s nice that there is a group of other adults who want to invest in the well-being of the kids who I can say, ‘hey, I need your help, because I can’t get to this kid right now.’ And they can take them and give them the support that they need at that moment.” (School Staff)

School staff had **positive perceptions** of AIFY supports. With these supports in place, school staff said they did not feel as burdened by stress and were better able to focus on their work as educators. The support of agency staff, to address students’ immediate unmet needs, meant school staff were able to spend less time on crisis management and have more capacity to focus on teaching their students.

“...The AIFY team really helps me to focus on high level instruction for my students, because my mind, my time, is occupied, always with something else, whether it be a situation that happened or just a student that’s not themselves.” (School Staff)

School staff predominantly described **positive** and **collaborative** relationships with agency partners, where they felt they could approach agency partners and receive support in many different types of situations.

“I mean, the team is so, so valuable, and having them so accessible, makes my job so much easier, and takes a load off of me. Like I feel like every week I’m dealing with some type of crisis in my classroom and to, you know, be able to just pop over to the therapist and get her advice on a situation is incredibly helpful.” (School Staff)

For some schools, these collaborative relationships were more recently established and progress in school and agency partner coordination was observed. Based on discussions in focus groups, specific practices were identified that foster a culture of collaboration in schools (these will be discussed in more detail in [Systems Change](#)).

“...It’s been much more cohesive, and we have much better conversations, and we’re getting better wraparound supports for our kiddos. So it’s just gonna grow from here.” (School Administrator)

The use of **trauma-informed and resilience practices** in schools is a key component of the AIFY model that helps foster student and family wellbeing. School staff frequently described using these practices in classrooms and some schools participated in professional development about trauma and resilience during the year.

“...We’ve been impacted as teachers, our vocabulary, the way we work with kids, has greatly changed, because we have that trauma informed viewpoint and that practice happening in our classrooms.” (School Administrator)

Some schools also expressed an interest in having more opportunities for school-wide training in trauma-informed and resilience practices, to ensure a high level of responsiveness to students' needs. Schools will continue to receive opportunities for professional development in Year 7, with psychologist and resilience expert Dr. Michael Ungar.

Overall, school staff explained that Year 6 was challenging due to the high needs of students, and AIFY supports were essential to address these needs. To continue to support school staff, some schools expressed a need for additional AIFY agency staff. In response to these identified needs, adjustments were made in staffing capacity for Year 7 (2022/23); this is addressed in [Moving Forward: Sustaining the AIFY Initiative](#).

WHAT ARE THE TRAUMA-INFORMED AND RESILIENCE PRACTICES?

Children and families can experience significant and prolonged adversity or **trauma** in their lives. This can affect children's brain development and make it more difficult to learn and regulate at school (Government of Alberta, 2023).

Resilience is "our capacity, individually and in groups, to navigate our way to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain our wellbeing, and our capacity individually and in groups to negotiate for these resources to be provided in meaningful ways" (Ungar, 2011).

Trauma-informed practice "...creates a shared understanding and common language about how to create welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe schools" (Government of Alberta, 2023). It provides staff with "strategies that show empathy, and help to create a safe environment, where students can learn healthy ways to handle emotions and relate to others" (Government of Alberta, 2023).

Resilience practices focus on how to recognize and foster an individual's strengths and capacity to cope (Ungar, 2011). Together, these practices create a safe and supportive environment for students and families.

QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING | OUTCOMES

Short-Term Outcomes (3 New Schools)

- ✓ Shifts in mindsets about student/family wellbeing
- ✓ Positive perceptions of AIFY supports
- ✓ Positive relationships between schools and agency stakeholders*
- ✓ Schools can more effectively/efficiently connect students and/or families to supports
- ✓ School staff participate in regular PD to support their knowledge about student/family wellbeing**

Long-Term Outcomes (5 Demonstration Schools)

- ✓ Increased rates of school staff satisfaction in AIFY schools
- ✓ Decreased teacher stress in AIFY schools
- ✓ All school staff are trauma-informed**

*Collaborative and positive relationships are continuing to be established in some schools, with progress observed in school and agency staff coordination.

**Some schools expressed an interest in continued opportunities for school-wide training in trauma and resilience to support student resilience and family wellbeing.

FAMILY SUPPORT

Families have access to supports in schools that contribute to their overall wellbeing and are able to build skills to maintain healthy family functioning over time.



The 2021/22 year saw many families struggling due greater economic insecurity, mental health issues, and family challenges. AIFY staff and supports meant that schools were able to meet families' complex needs more **efficiently and effectively** by creating a hub of support for families in each of the AIFY schools. This improved families' access to services by reducing barriers that families often face when navigating supports and services external to schools (e.g., transportation barriers, limited resource availability, knowledge barriers).

"...Families know, they can call and be like, 'I don't have food...my kid needs this, my family needs this.' And the school works together to find ways to help support that family in a way that's sustainable, and not just like a one time thing." (Agency Partner)

Additionally, for the schools that had AIFY supports for six years now, there was a shift described in how supports were offered, with a move from a more **reactive to preventative approach**. A preventative approach can help reduce the burden on other public systems (e.g., health care, social supports, criminal justice) by addressing student and family challenges before issues further escalate.

"...We are creating environments that are able to be responsive and proactive in supporting collective supports and sustainable supports for our families, and kiddos." (School Administrator)

Parents and caregivers frequently said that they would have faced **greater economic uncertainty or food insecurity** without AIFY supports, such as the snack program, food hamper program, or Roots and Wings worker referrals to food banks or other support organizations.

"...Because of this support, I was able to get this job where I am right now. And like clothing and whatever I...especially in the wintertime, I got support for my clothes, my child's school stuff, books, stationery, and school snacks at the same time, like every Friday... So they're always there to provide" (Caregiver)

Fostering a sense of community in schools was particularly challenging during the pandemic. Many families became disconnected during the pandemic due to things like social isolation, health concerns, and other challenges. As a result, schools worked hard to **engage families**. Agency staff conducted telephone check-ins and home visits regularly and schools held family events (e.g., Family Bingo Night, Family Movie Night). Also, many schools introduced initiatives and collaborations that were focused on cultural inclusivity, to create safe and welcoming spaces for students and families to celebrate and share their cultures (e.g., cultural celebration days, Culture Club for students).

"...Our team is you know, going to families' homes to kind of connect with families and to get the kids back to school or to find out ways in which the team can support and so that is a huge change from, I believe, way more home visits than in the past because of families not coming into the school." (Agency Partner)

"Like they're [AIFY staff...] constantly communicating and coming up with ideas that are getting the whole school community involved. Like they're incorporating the students' culture, putting on cultural days, and celebrating those types of things and offering online bingo nights for the family." (School Staff)

Parents/caregivers had **positive perceptions** of AIFY supports. Parents/caregivers predominantly described caring positive relationships with agency and school staff and feeling connected to their AIFY school community. For some caregivers, the support they received helped change their hesitation or negative perceptions about school institutions, based on previous negative experiences with other school stakeholders and institutions.

“[The Roots and Wings worker] was always trying to call me and ask me [...], ‘Are you okay? Do you need something?’ Like, I feel so good and secure that out there a person was so caring and supportive and is a good team, they are helping.” (Caregiver)

“What they do isn’t always easily quantified like actual numbers or in data, but just the [AIFY] supports that they provide to our students and the way they make this building more safe and more accessible to everyone is really, really important.” (School Staff)

On the other hand, some parents/caregivers expressed an interest in more consistent communication from the school and/or agency staff to maintain connectivity. Due to COVID-19 protocols, parents/caregivers were typically not able to enter schools, which heightened the importance of communication from the school to keep parents informed about school activities and AIFY supports, as well as engaged in the school community.

FAMILY SUPPORT | OUTCOMES

Short-Term Outcomes (3 New Schools)

- ✓ Shifts in mindsets about school supports
- ✓ Improved access to supports
- ✓ Positive relationships built with caring adults in the school
- ✓ Increased family engagement in schools*

Long-Term Outcomes (5 Demonstration Schools)

- ✓ AIFY schools effectively/efficiently meeting families’ complex needs (e.g., mental health needs, nutrition needs, etc.)
- ✓ Reduced “burden” on public services/systems (e.g., health care, social support, education, criminal justice)
- ✓ Families are lifted out of poverty/achieve economic stability**

*Schools are rebuilding family engagement in schools impacted by the pandemic, with progress observed.

**AIFY reduces barriers in students and families’ lives (e.g., hunger, poverty, and mental health crises), which helps students to succeed in school and graduate. While long-term poverty and economic stability outcomes were not directly measured in Year 6, research shows that school supports are associated with economic stability later in life and reduced socio-economic costs due to increased graduation, post-secondary training (Belfield & Levin, 2007).

IN- & OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUPPORT

Students have access to supports in school that contribute to their overall wellbeing and help them build skills to achieve school success. Additionally, students and families have access to out-of-school supports (e.g., after school programming, summer programming, community programs) that contribute to their overall wellbeing and help them to build skills to achieve success in life.



AIFY in-school supports, and services that extend to the home, are critical for promoting students and families' overall wellbeing and help them achieve success in life. This section describes the impacts of these supports, organized by [Student and Families' Mental health](#), [Nutrition and Related Supports](#), and [Out-of-School Programming](#).

STUDENT AND FAMILIES' MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health was discussed in-depth across interviews and focus groups with stakeholders. For example, when students struggled with their basic needs not being met (e.g. food insecurity), this would trigger stress, anxiety, and other mental health issues. There were some notable differences in the prevalence of specific mental health concerns among younger or older students.

Elementary/Junior High students mostly struggled with emotional regulation and socialization skills. During the pandemic, younger students had less opportunities to develop peer relationships and practice social skills. School staff found that students' social development was below expectations for their grade level.

High School students struggled with anxiety about keeping up with school work and re-establishing social relationships. During the pandemic, many students' home situations got worse and students faced more complex issues impacting their wellbeing. This included increased concerns around addiction, escalated use of hard drugs within families and supporting youth dealing with suicidal ideation.

Mental health services provided through AIFY (i.e., mental health therapy, success coaching, and Roots and Wings Family services), were critical for addressing the mental health needs of students and families. In particular, these services improved mental health **service access** for many families facing resource constraints.

"...It's really nice to know that someone is there for you, because like, maybe you can't get a therapist or maybe your family can't afford it. And you really need someone to talk to you, but you don't feel comfortable talking to your friends because it's too personal." (Student Alumni)

Families and students' had **positive perceptions** of mental health services. These supports helped children and their families navigate things like grief/loss, difficult transitions, immigration, mental health, and family challenges. When people worked with mental health support staff, improvements in mood, behaviours, and social relationships were noted by caregivers.

"He doesn't have outbursts. He doesn't. In the past, he actually used to talk about suicide. That is not brought up anymore." (Caregiver)

Students described mental health staff as **caring adults** that they could confide in and trust and who helped them with their problems (e.g., emotional regulation, interpersonal relationships, healthy behaviours, difficult transitions, anxiety, depression, or suicidality).

"It's been good because with [Mental Health Therapist] you can tell her anything and then she'll give you really good advice." (Student Alumni)

"...I feel like if I was [Success Coach] wasn't here... I'd be so overwhelmed because there's so much so many things going on." (Student Alumni)

“I felt safe to cry and liked that I could say anything I felt and would not get in trouble or be judged”
(Student)

School and agency staff observed positive emotional, social, and behavioural **improvements** when students received mental health services. School staff said that when students received mental health services they were better able to **focus and engage in the classroom** and had better behaviors and emotional regulation. Furthermore, these services increased school attendance, as students were more likely to come to school on days they had an appointment for mental health support.

“...When they come back to class, it’s like, we’re ready to go, we’re ready to learn, even though like you, your [mental health] session was like, half an hour, and you’re out of the classroom for that time. When you come back, you’re like, ready... all that stuff has been resolved for you, at least, you know, they know where they’re going, like moving forward with their emotions, so that they’re like, hey, I can jump back into where I just left off and catch up again.” (School Staff)

The positive impacts of mental health services can be demonstrated by The Family Centre’s record of student progress.

<p>Mental Health Therapists used a tracking and reporting system “My Outcomes” to monitor client outcomes (based on wellbeing, interpersonal relationships, and overall functioning):</p> <p>Over the year, 63% of clients were in the green zone after working with the therapist, indicating that they made a reliable change towards healthy functioning.</p>	
<p>Success Coaches surveyed student clients pre- and post-service use:</p>	
<p>“I make positive decisions for myself” 85% of students responded “often/always” after services, compared to 25% before.</p>	<p>“I feel like I belong” 75% of students responded “often/always” after services, compared to 25% before.</p>
<p>“I have hope for the future” 85% of students responded “often/always” after services, compared to 34% before.</p>	<p>“I know how to reach my goals” 79% of students responded “often/always” after services, compared to 20% before.</p>
<p>Roots and Wings workers surveyed parent/caregiver clients pre- and post-service use:</p>	
<p>“I make positive decisions for myself” 93% of caregivers responded “often/always” after services, compared to 21% before.</p>	<p>“I feel like I belong” 77% of caregivers responded “often/always” after services, compared to 13% before.</p>
<p>“I have hope for the future” 87% of caregivers responded “often/always” after services, compared to 20% before.</p>	<p>“I know how to reach my goals” 29% of caregivers responded “often/always” after services, compared to 20% before.</p>

To continue to support the mental health needs of students and families, some schools expressed an interest in additional mental health staff, particularly two of the newer AIFY schools that were not able to receive Success Coaches in Year 6. In response to these needs, both schools received access to a Success Coach in Year 7 (the next 2022-23 school year). Notably, due to funding limitations for new agency staff positions, other AIFY schools with full-time Success Coaches agreed to share their Success Coach part-time with these two new schools, so that all AIFY schools were able to have the support of a Success Coach for their students. This illustrates the supportive care and collaboration of AIFY schools that extends beyond any single school community, to support students and families throughout Edmonton.

NUTRITION AND RELATED SUPPORTS

During the 2021/22 year, school and agency staff observed high levels of food insecurity and economic instability among families. Families were struggling to adequately meet their food, housing, and clothing needs. AIFY in-school nutrition supports (e.g., snacks and meals) provided all AIFY students with access to the food security supports they required to fully participate in their school day. It also provided them with access to nutritious food (e.g. fresh fruits and vegetables) that they would otherwise be unable to access.

“...Without the support from e4c, a lot of our kiddos could not have had food in their belly, and their brains aren’t gonna work. [...] One of the benefits to having one of those supports from e4c is great food and snacks to our kiddos, and everyone has access to them. And it’s always nutritious and good, kids like them, and they’ll come back for seconds. And it helps, you know, get their bellies and their brains working.” (Agency Partner)

“I think this program saved so many families, and people from being hungry, families from struggling, these places really make them show how important you know the support is for them.” (Caregiver)

School and agency staff observed **improvements** in student behaviours and school engagement when children and youth received access to nutrition supports. Additionally, snacks and meals were a big reason children attended school.

“Healthy food is important to me because it keeps my body healthy and strong. I like healthy foods that are served at school because they are always simple and yummy.” (Student)

“...[Food supports] gives you health and when your feeling really dizzy it actually helps you feel better” (Student)

“It is free and it helps my parents have less work” (Student)

“...The most immediate impact that we have through our partnerships is actually food stability. [...] That is an immediate equalizer where children can access and families can access knowing that my kid will have food and can have food immediately. And that’s a huge game changer for our families to know that they have food safety, as well as the emotional safety and the ability to feel physically safe here at school. So when I think of impacts, that would be a huge impact.” (School Administrator)

Families and students’ had **positive perceptions** of school nutrition services. In particular, nutrition supports that extended to the home (e.g., food hampers), were described as essential for their families’ food security. Many caregivers expressed concern that their circumstances would worsen if they had not received these supports. Furthermore, offering nutrition supports helped schools to build positive relationships with students and families.

“You know, we’ve had a couple of emergencies regarding food insecurity. You know, so after the Roots and Wings worker helped us get to the food bank, we are a bit more secure in food. And that’s good for our family and seeing with the clothing, the secondhand clothing resources, it’s been really good for the kids because they grow fast. And so it’s really helped us during our financial, uh, stressful financial time.” [Caregiver]

“[The Roots and Wings worker] has been phenomenal with helping with getting food on the table. So connecting and going on drives to the food bank when needed. Accessing food hampers through the school [...]. And it has been very important to have his support in that sense. Because food insecurity seems to be a really big issue for the family...” (Caregiver)

“Well, they have a person there who helps us to go to resources [Roots and Wings Worker]. And this helped with clothing and food. Like going to the food bank. And the person that works there he’s really helpful.” (Caregiver)

Beyond nutrition supports, Roots and Wings Family workers frequently helped families secure **other critical supports**, such as housing or clothing. Roots and Wings workers often played a key role in helping families navigate external support systems so they could access sustainable supports, after their family moved from the school.

“We also really connect our families to things outside of the school. So like, how to access food, how to access like all these other things. So once they’re no longer in this community or no longer connected to the school that they know how to do these things. And then like the food security stuff, the clothing, all those kinds of things...” (Agency Partner)

“...My family support workers, they’ve helped with the food bank, they’ve helped with clothing, they’ve even helped with housing.” (School Staff)

AN EXCITING INITIATIVE AT SPRUCE AVENUE

An exciting initiative was started by Spruce Avenue to meet families’ clothing needs. In the basement of their school, Spruce Avenue set up a “clothing boutique” with donated clothing, shoes, and hygiene products. Students can book time slots to “shop” and pick out needed items.

“Over the winter, they helped me find some boots for my son because most of the programs in the city, thanks to COVID were actually shut down [...] So that was definitely beneficial because I did not want him to go to school in the winter wearing sneakers that were on their way out” [Caregiver]



Following the success of the initial boutique, Spruce Avenue set up a special boutique with nice dresses, suits, shoes, and jewelry for graduating students to shop in, so that all students could wear festive outfits to the Grade 9 farewell.

“...You walk in and grab a bag. And then the kids can go around and pick whatever they want and shop freely. Staff are there to support them, but we love that they are able to choose for themselves, have a shopping experience, and just do their thing. Having choice allows them to express who they are.” [Agency Partner]



OUT OF SCHOOL PROGRAMMING

The pandemic contributed to gaps in the academic learning or social-development of many students. In Year 6, demand for tutoring to help address these learning gaps was very high. There was also a lot of demand for recreational opportunities where students could grow and practice their socialization skills. AIFY mentoring and OST programming helped meet these specific student needs.

“We’re noticing a gap or a lapse in communication skills, social emotional growth, and the ability to feel connected to another person.” (Agency Partner)

“A lot of these kids just need those connections and people to feel connected to, to play with—bottom line, sometimes kids just need someone to pay attention to them.” (School Staff)

In Year 6, **peer mentoring programs** were offered virtually and in-person. These programs focused on reading, tutoring, or socio-emotional development. Mentoring with an academic focus provided students with the opportunity to receive **learning support** and helped improve students’ knowledge and confidence in the classroom.

“...Just with the pandemic, and students having gaps in learning, I know that the teachers and the students really felt that having the opportunity to have mentors really supported them in kind of supporting their gaps in their learning, giving them that confidence, of course, which then flows over into the classroom.” (Agency Staff)

Mentoring focused on socio-emotional development, gave students a space to experience **safe and positive relationships**, and develop their socialization skills. Students connected with their mentors in meaningful ways, often describing them as a safe and caring person.

“It makes me feel safe and a safe person to talk to, is really nice.” (Student)

“If my students have to pick the thing that they find the most impactful, I definitely think they would pick their mentors.”

(School Staff)

OST programming focused on arts and culture, mental and physical wellness, leadership, and academics was offered virtually and in-person. OST provided students with the opportunity to take part in fun and engaging activities while also interacting with peers and agency staff in meaningful ways.

“You can do art, you can make food, you can just hang out at the park. You can exercise. You can go to the gym and play.” (Student Alumni)

Families and students shared **positive perceptions** of OST supports. Caregivers shared that these supports allowed students to practice social skills and gain confidence.

“OST helped me with reconnecting with friends.” (Student)

“They go to the Boys and Girls Club Monday, Tuesday, Wednesdays after school. And it has helped them become comfortable with making new friends because with COVID for the last two years, they were very limited in having that interaction and it’s helped my children bloom...” (Caregiver)



Reading with a student mentor.



Students go skating in OST program.

The positive impacts of OST programming can be demonstrated by a success story provided by BGCBigs:

Sally has been an AIFY student for many years who has experienced trauma and loss. When speaking with staff, Sally would often avoid eye contact and barely mutter a response. She was extremely quiet and withdrawn and did not seem to connect with others. This year, the OST Coordinator convinced Sally to try the OST Art Club program since she loves art. Sally did not have a working computer at the time but the agency was able to provide Sally with a new Chromebook to keep. Sally started the OST program and, at the same time, she was matched with a mentor in the community-based Big Sisters program. Sally began to open up in her social interactions. She signed up for more OST clubs and made a wider circle of friends. Her connection to a larger social circle, the club, and strong supportive relationships have been a big step in Sally finding a sense of self and social confidence. Now, Sally seems like an entirely different and more confident student.*

*Name has been changed.

Another success in year 6 was supporting the successful application and awarding of four \$50,000 Scholarships to AIFY graduating high school students.

Due to resource and capacity constraints, the three new AIFY schools were not able to offer OST programming to students. However, two of these schools are in communities where there was a BGCBigs Club within walking distance of the school or there was a walking school bus program where the club staff picked up the students from schools and walked them to the club.

IN AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL | OUTCOMES

Short-Term Outcomes (3 New Schools)

- ✓ Positive perceptions of supports by students and families
- ✓ Improved access to supports
- ✓ Improved student behaviours
- ✓ Increased student engagement in schools
- ✓ Positive relationships built with caring adults in the school
- ✓ Positive relationships built between students/families and caring adults in out-of-school supports
- ✓ Improved access to out-of-school supports (e.g., after school programming, summer programming, community programs)*

Long-Term Outcomes (5 Demonstration Schools)

- ✓ Reduced “burden” on public services/systems (e.g., health care, social supports, education, criminal justice)
- ✓ Universal access to out-of-school supports for students and families in Edmonton*
- ✓ Students complete post-secondary school or post-graduate training (e.g., in the trades)**
- ✓ Students secure gainful employment**
- ✓ Students achieve economic stability and contribute to the economy**
- ✓ Communities surrounding schools in Edmonton are safer**
- ✓ Students and families are active community members**

*OST programming was not available in the three new AIFY schools; however, two of these schools are within walking distance to a BGCBigs club or there was a school bus program to travel there.

**While some long-term measures of economic outcomes were not directly measured in Year 6, research shows that school supports are associated with economic stability later in life and reduced socio-economic costs due to increased graduation, post-secondary training, and employment (Belfield & Levin, 2007).

SYSTEMS CHANGE

The collaborative efforts of the partnership contribute to changes in current operating systems (e.g., schools, government sectors, social service industries) that allow the complex needs of students and families in school communities to be more effectively and efficiently met.



Systems change (i.e., efforts of the AIFY partnership to contribute to changes in the funded school model and other operating systems that impact the wellbeing of students and their families) was discussed across focus groups with school staff and agency partners. It became clear that the AIFY model and collaborative partnership is a critical enhancement to the traditionally funded school model, which does not have funding to integrate agency supports and services within the school community. The process of leveraging shared resources and collaborative problem solving, allows schools and agencies to produce better outcomes for children and families than they could achieve through solitary efforts.

“...The ability, we have to support the kids too is so much better being part of AIFY programming [...] we can have this collaboration, we’re welcomed into the school, we have information that the school is willing to share with us to better support our kids...” (Agency Partner)

“...That is the strength of AIFY, we are able to interrupt the cycle of poverty, the cycle of trauma, and the cycle of violence [...], we can now start to build the strategies and skills for kiddos to start to thrive.” (School Administrator)

AIFY partners predominantly described positive and collaborative relationships with each other, working closely together to coordinate supports for students and families. Many schools shared that they had established effective information-sharing practices, further improving their ability to lead efficient and coordinated responses to student and families’ needs.

“We’re not in silos, right? I think that’s the other thing, too, to be able to say that. You know, one of the things that happens in the huddle is so [Mental Health Therapist] is working with a family. And through her conversations with parents or kids, we see it there’s a, you know, oh, okay, you’re struggling, but you don’t have food at home. So then, okay, I can support you with that, we’ve got somebody here.” (School Administrator)

For some schools, collaborative information-sharing processes are still being established, with progress observed in school and agency partner coordination. There are also specific practices identified by schools that foster a culture of collaboration in schools.

FOSTERING A CULTURE OF COLLABORATION IN SCHOOLS

AIFY school and agency staff care deeply about students’ wellbeing. They bring different perspectives to the delivery of AIFY supports (from inside and outside the classroom), and together create a more holistic view of students’ realities and needs. The success of AIFY – as an initiative that offers wraparound supports to students and families – depends on collaboration between agency and school staff, as both stakeholders greatly contribute to the discussion about the type of support(s) that will best meet the needs of students and families.

We heard that the culture of collaboration between agency and school staff in AIFY schools has strengthened over time, with some schools now having well established processes that help students to thrive in school. These collaborative processes mean that, with the support of agency staff in addressing students’ immediate unmet needs, school staff are able to focus on student learning. For AIFY stakeholders, there were two key factors that helped establish the culture of collaboration in schools.

First, professional development training and work with Dr. Michael Unger on trauma-informed practice and resilience, has helped agency and school staff to better collaborate on student needs. School and agency staff said that this training helped them to better understand child and family trauma and resilience, to approach students and families from a strength-based perspective, and to use trauma-informed practices while supporting them. When all staff in the schools received this training, they now had a shared language and understanding that made collaboration more natural and easier to achieve.

“The shift with Dr. Unger was so incredible, because it went from, you know, this sort of come to us [agency partners] for the answers to an empowerment model. ...We want you to tell us, ‘hey, where are their strengths?’ And then we, we also came up with all these ideas...that the teachers can, can, like, just pick from. So instead of being like, you know, ‘oh, we’re gonna solve it.’ It’s like, ‘how does the teacher get involved?’ ...So it’s like they’re empowered to help, they’re part of the conversation, and it’s not about ‘hey, how do you help us?’ It’s like, ‘how do we help each other?’” (Agency Partner)

“I think it’s very much about being solution focused, rather than having a conversation about, you know, all the concerns. It’s more about what can we do to help this child? What can we do to support this family? It’s very much strength-based and solution focused. And I think, when we engage the [school] staff in thinking about what things can you do in your classroom, for example, to provide structure for a child, I think the staff felt a different kind of ownership about the work, when they saw themselves in the work.” (School Administrator)

The second factor relates to school administrators (i.e., School Principal and Assistant Principal), and their role in creating and supporting the optimal environment for collaboration in AIFY schools. AIFY school administrators are able to set the stage for a culture of collaboration, that is most responsive to the needs of students, through facilitating opportunities for communication and feedback. In fact, some administrators have implemented processes that enable teachers to directly refer students to different agency staff, based on supports they believe to be the most needed by students. When school administrators actively empower their staff and do not feel responsible to act as “gatekeepers” in the referral process, they can help optimize the delivery of AIFY support while enhancing trust and relationships between agency and school staff. Gatekeeping is not always a bad thing, but in the context of the AIFY model, it has been shown that gatekeeping can result in student and families having to wait longer to be connected to supports. School administrators still remain part of the support conversations and coordination, but acknowledge that the most important thing is for the student to receive the support as soon as possible.

“I feel very trusted and empowered by the admin here. And I think everyone on the team does, to do our work. And be a part of the school community in a way that’s like, you know, we’re part of it. We’re not just like ‘Oh, you’re over here. We’re over here.’ It’s like we’re all together.”
(Agency Partner)

“I know what’s happening because I do need to know what’s happening for our kids. So it’s just looking for those opportunities to make sure that, you know, someone pops in and fills me in so that I’m still aware. But I think the important part is that teachers know that they’re going to go where the support is, and not have to come through myself or the Assistant Principal before that can happen. I just don’t see how that would be effective. I just feel we have that culture where staff are always talking to each other. Teachers are always talking to our AIFY team beyond the huddle times.” (School Administrator)

Additionally, school administrators spoke of other strategies that encourage collaboration, including encouraging informal hallway conversations and check-ins between agency and school staff, as well as inviting school staff to AIFY team meetings (i.e., huddles) to discuss concerns about specific students and families.

“...[W]e had a structure where teachers... had an opportunity in their day when we met as a huddle to join us in the staff room where we met together... and it was a very collaborative conversation where the teachers would share their concerns about students and then the AIFY team would have that conversation about ways in which the AIFY team could support the student.” (School Administrator)

All of these creative strategies facilitate a culture of collaboration in schools, where AIFY students and families receive the most suitable and timely wraparound supports possible.

STATUS OF THE AIFY INITIATIVE IN YEAR 6

AIFY partners are constantly working on strategies to support program sustainability and expansion. In Year 6, AIFY was implemented in 3 new schools, increasing the number to 8 AIFY schools in Edmonton. This milestone was recognized as the first step towards greater program expansion, with the long-term goal to implement the wraparound model of support across school boards in Alberta. To achieve this goal, securing sustainable funding continues to be an important area of discussion. Although funding is not guaranteed, AIFY partners continue to work to demonstrate the effectiveness of the AIFY initiative and advocate for funding and policy support from the provincial government. This is discussed in greater detail in [Moving Forward: Sustaining the AIFY Initiative](#).

SYSTEMS CHANGE | OUTCOMES

Short-Term Outcomes (3 New Schools)

- ✓ Shifts in school cultures
- ✓ AIFY partnership identifies new ways to solve problems
- ✓ AIFY partners have positive relationships with one another
- ✓ Information sharing practices established between school and agency stakeholders*

Long-Term Outcomes (5 Demonstration Schools)

- ✓ AIFY collaborative partnership and initiative has produced better outcomes/impacts for stakeholders than solitary efforts
- ✓ AIFY connected to and collaborates with other initiatives that focus on student and family wellbeing
- ✓ AIFY initiative is implemented across provincial school boards**
- ✓ AIFY initiative sustained by government policies**
- ✓ AIFY initiative sustained by government funding**
- ✓ Policies established to support information sharing among schools and support agencies in Alberta**

*Information-sharing processes are continuing to be established in some new schools, with progress made

**AIFY partners continue to demonstrate the effectiveness of the AIFY Initiative and to advocate for wraparound to be implemented more broadly across the province, with government funding and policies to support the operation of wraparound programs.



LOOKING
forward

LOOKING *forward*

In 2016, the AIFY Initiative was introduced as a five-year demonstration program with the goal to establish the AIFY model of wraparound supports as an evidence-based initiative to support students and families. We have achieved this, now in Year 6 of the program and having expanded into 8 schools. Over the last six years, AIFY has consistently demonstrated its impact on the lives of students and families as a collaborative model of support.

“I would say we’re equivalent to the Avengers. But in all seriousness, I would just say like, we’re a team of people who can support you with whatever you need to be happy and healthy as a human. ...If that’s attendings out of school time clubs, if that’s meeting with the mentor, if that’s meeting... for mental health stuff... to create goals, or even... for that food hamper support, whatever it is, like, it’s just a beautiful wraparound service to make sure that they can be successful throughout school and complete school. Because at the end of it, right, that’s the idea is we want them to be able to complete high school so they can, you know, do their future careers. And that’s what we’re all about, right? We’re helping them get past those hurdles to get to where they want to be in life. And it all starts as good support.” (AIFY Partner)

SUSTAINING THE AIFY INITIATIVE

Sustaining and scaling up the AIFY Initiative continues to be an important area of work. The AIFY model of support costs over \$3 million a year. These costs are covered by AIFY funding partners (i.e., Foundations, donors, the City of Edmonton, United Way), as well as school divisions and agency partners who deliver AIFY services. However, funding for the AIFY model of wraparound supports is still not embedded into provincial policies. Therefore, AIFY partners continue to work hard to secure annual funding for the AIFY Initiative and work towards its expansion into other struggling school communities.

The investment for the AIFY Initiative is substantial; however, research literature consistently demonstrates that early student supports result in a return on investment that ultimately saves future government spending (Belfield & Levin, 2007; Brooks Bowden et al., 2020; Maier et al., 2017). Individuals who do not graduate high school are more likely to experience insecure employment, poor health, and involvement in the criminal justice system, leading to greater costs for welfare supports, healthcare, and the judicial system (Belfield & Levin, 2007). Alternatively, completing high school is associated with post-secondary education or training, employment, and contributing back to communities by purchasing goods, paying taxes, and social participation (Belfield & Levin, 2007). A recent study found a conservative estimate of a **\$3 return on investment** for every \$1 invested in comprehensive school support models (Brooks Bowden et al., 2020).

The impacts of the AIFY Initiative are well-documented. AIFY partners mobilize this knowledge to funding partners and the greater community and take hold of opportunities to nudge larger policy systems to understand how wraparound models like AIFY can support students to fulfill their full potential. Furthermore, AIFY partners are constantly finding other creative ways to raise funds. During the summer of 2022, AIFY partnered with Edmonton psychologist Landon Hildebrand on a 100km run to raise money for the AIFY Initiative. AIFY also ran a spring ad campaign on local and social media. Additionally, AIFY partners submitted several grants in order to expand the range of AIFY services.

YEAR 6 STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Evaluation and learning are key values of AIFY. The annual evaluation process offers insights into the strengths and effectiveness of the program, as well as opportunities to learn and inform future directions of AIFY. In Year 6, we learned about many strategies used to help students and families achieve their full potential, as well as recommendations. As learnings emerge throughout the year, AIFY partners are constantly assessing them and making adaptations accordingly. The following visual is a summary of these key learnings for Year 6:

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT:

Many families became disconnected during the COVID-19 pandemic; therefore, schools used different strategies to re-engage families:



1. **Formal events/activities.** Many schools hosted events and activities either online or in-person to foster a sense of community (e.g., Family Bingo Night, Movie Night).
2. **Informal channels of engagement.** Some schools used informal strategies to engage parents and caregivers. For example, one school set up a coffee stand at school drop-off to give caregivers the opportunity to chat with school administrators and agency partners. Additionally, one agency partner dropped off welcome letters to new families introducing themselves and their supportive role in the school.
3. **Activities that celebrate cultural inclusivity.** Many schools held events or collaborations for students and families of different backgrounds to feel safe and included in the community. For example, one school introduced a Culture Club for students to learn and celebrate their cultures. Another school provided the opportunity for students to participate in *smudging ceremonies.

*Smudging is a tradition to many Indigenous peoples that involves becoming grounded and mindful through the practice of burning traditional medicines.

FOSTERING A CULTURE OF PARTNERSHIP COLLABORATION:

Schools shared strategies used to foster a culture of collaboration within the AIFY partnership:



1. **School-Wide Trauma-Informed and Resilience Practices Training.** Professional development training on trauma-informed and resilience practices helped agency and school staff to better collaborate on student needs. To account for changes in staffing and different professional backgrounds, this training produces the best effects when it is available on an ongoing basis for all staff in school buildings.
2. **Communication Channels.** Schools used formal and informal channels to foster collaboration, such as informal hallway conversations and check-ins. For example, agency staff said that spending time in the hallways during lunches and recesses helped them to establish connections with both students and teachers. Additionally, one school invited school staff to formal AIFY team meetings, which allowed school and agency staff to collaborate on planning tailored supports for specific students.
3. **Removing Barriers to Referral Processes.** Some schools had direct student referral processes that led to efficient and effective responses to students' needs. School administrators explained that referral processes work better when school staff are able to approach agency partners directly to coordinate supports, as opposed to going through administration to place a request for agency supports. This direct process allows for a more timely response to students' needs, as well as builds trust and collaboration between agency and school staff.

FUTURE RESOURCES AND FUNDING:



1. **AIFY Staffing Capacity and Stability.** Schools were able to do their best work when they had a stable AIFY team with sufficient capacity to meet student needs. When AIFY staff remained at a school over the long-term, they were able to develop secure connections with students and establish collaborative relationships with school personnel. Additionally, when AIFY teams had a greater number of staff and capacity, they were better able to keep up with the demands for support and there was less staffing burnout and turnover.

We look forward to Year 7 of the AIFY initiative as the program model continues to evolve and grow to serve students and families in Edmonton. AIFY stakeholders (i.e., teachers, agency staff, school administrators, agency supervisors, division leaders, and operations and funding partners) demonstrate an incredible commitment and dedication year after year to helping students and families reach their full potential.



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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: [AIFY Theory of Change and Logic Model](#)

APPENDIX B: [AIFY Abbott Poster for Year 6](#)

APPENDIX C: [AIFY Delton Poster for Year 6](#)

APPENDIX D: [AIFY Ivor Dent Poster for Year 6](#)

APPENDIX E: [AIFY John A. McDougall Poster for Year 6](#)

APPENDIX F: [AIFY Norwood Poster for Year 6](#)

APPENDIX G: [AIFY St. Alphonsus Poster for Year 6](#)

APPENDIX H: [AIFY Spruce Avenue Poster for Year 6](#)

APPENDIX I: [AIFY Eastglen Poster for Year 6](#)

Theory of Change: Children and families in vulnerable school communities have complex needs. Education alone cannot meet these needs. Giving children and families access to wraparound school-based supports will help children and families thrive. In turn, children will achieve success in both school and life.

Inputs

Activities

Outputs

Participants

Partners

- Capacity
- Time
- Staff
- Resources
- Funding
- Expertise
- Shared Vision

Research Base

Evaluation

Model Development and Planning

- AIFY model of support
- AIFY partnership
- # of partners involved
- # of schools involved
- # of partner hours/partner time used

Operational Partners
Steering Partners

Model Implementation

- # of AIFY supports
- # of AIFY programs/groups
- # of students accessing each support
- # of families accessing each support
- # of families connected to external supports
- # of agency staff involved
- # of agency leaders involved
- Stakeholder collaboration

Students
Families
Agency Staff
School Staff
Agency Leaders
School Admin
Operations Partners

Capacity Building

- # of stakeholder training opportunities
- Attendance rates of training opportunities
- # of professional development opportunities (e.g., classroom presentations, presentations to school staff)
- # of adopted practices (e.g., # of cool down stations in each demo school)

Agency Staff
School Staff
Agency Leaders
School Admin
Operations Partners

Collaboration

- # of huddle meetings
- # of co-management meetings
- # of circle of support meetings
- # of agency leader meetings
- # of operations meetings
- # of steering meetings
- # of school staff involved
- # of community partners involved
- Information sharing practices

Students
Families
Agency Staff
School Staff
Agency Leaders
School Admin
Operations Partners
Steering Partners
Community Partners

Relationship Building

- # of events to connect stakeholders
- # of school activities agency staff participate in (e.g., coaching, recess supervision)

Research/Evaluation

- Evaluation plan
- Evaluation reporting
- # of stakeholders participating in the evaluation
- Stakeholders have access to research resources

Administration

- Marketing/promotional materials created
- Funder reporting needs managed
- Scheduling managed
- Budgeting managed
- Dissemination of initiative outcomes/impacts

Operational Partners
Steering Partners

Sharing Expertise

- # of classroom presentations
- # of channels stakeholders working in schools use to share expertise (e.g., school newsletter contributions)
- # of leadership meetings with principals
- # of volunteers trained/contributing to AIFY programming
- # of partner accreditations relevant to AIFY programming
- Established processes for onboarding new staff
- Developed resource sharing platforms for AIFY stakeholders to access

School Admin
Agency Leaders
Agency Staff
Operations Partners
Steering Partners

Initiative Sustainability and Advancement

- # of grant/funding application submitted
- # of successful grant/funding applications
- # of funding commitments
- # of meetings with potential funders
- # of fundraising campaigns
- # of presentations to funders and policy-makers
- # of connections to other initiatives/partners
- Guidelines for model implementation
- Community of practice established
- Government commitment to sustainability and advancement
- Inform systems
- Inform policy

Operational Partners
Steering Partners



Outcomes**Short-Term****Mid-Term****Long-Term****Quality Teaching and Learning**

School staff are able to focus on and be supported in their teaching and learning objectives with students and families.

Family Support

Families have access to supports in schools that contribute to their overall wellbeing and are able to build skills to maintain healthy family functioning over time.

In-School

Students have access to supports in school that contribute to their overall wellbeing and help them build skills to achieve school success.

Out-of-School

Students and families have access to out-of-school supports (e.g., after school programming, summer programming, community programs) that contribute to their overall wellbeing and help them to build skills to achieve success in life.

Systems Change

The collaborative efforts of the partnership contribute to changes in current operating systems (e.g., schools, government sectors, social service industries) that allow the complex needs of students and families in school communities to be more effectively and efficiently met.

- Shifts in mindsets about student and family wellbeing
- Positive perceptions of AIFY supports
- Positive relationships between schools and agency stakeholders
- Schools can more effectively/efficiently connect students and/or families to supports
- School staff participate in regular PD to support their knowledge about student and family wellbeing

- Shifts in mindsets about school supports
- Improved access to supports
- Positive perceptions of supports
- Increased family engagement in schools
- Positive relationships built with caring adults in the school

- Positive perceptions of supports
- Improved access to supports
- Improved student behaviours
- Increased student engagement in schools
- Positive relationships built with caring adults in the school

- Positive perceptions of supports by students and families
- Improved access to out-of-school supports (e.g., after school programming, summer programming, community programs)
- Positive relationships built between students/families and caring adults in out-of-school supports

- Shifts in school cultures
- AIFY partnership identifies new ways to solve problems
- AIFY partners have positive relationships with one another
- Information sharing practices established between school and agency stakeholders

- AIFY supports help school staff teach students more effectively/efficiently
- School staff feel more supported in schools
- School staff are able to focus on teaching and learning in schools
- Positive relationships between schools and agencies maintained
- School staff in each AIFY Demo school use trauma-informed practices

- Decreased family addictions
- Decreased family violence
- Decreased feelings of isolation among parents/caregivers
- Improved parental capacity (Increased self-esteem, confidence, improved parenting skills/abilities)
- Improvements to family mental health
- Improved physical health of families
- Increased stability in families
- Improved family relationships
- Increased food security
- Positive relationships are maintained between family members and caring adults in the school

- Improved rates of high school completion
- Improved attendance rates
- Improved school readiness of children
- Decreased drop-out rates
- Improved rate of successful school transitions
- Improved student resiliency
- Improved student reading ability
- Improved student mental health
- Decreased student truancy
- Decreased risky behaviours
- Positive relationships maintained between students and caring adults in the school
- Student needs are met (e.g., basic needs, transportation, nutrition, cultural)

- Positive relationships maintained with caring adults out-of-school (e.g., adult mentors)
- Positive relationships with community partners maintained
- Students and families are more involved in communities
- Increased student volunteerism
- More external community partners involved in AIFY work
- Student and family out-of-school needs are met (e.g., child care, extracurricular programming)

- AIFY partner relationships maintained
- AIFY supports are sustained in demo schools
- Effective/efficient information sharing practices between schools and agencies maintained
- More schools implement the AIFY model of support
- Long-term funding supports the implementation and sustainability of the AIFY Initiative (e.g., municipal funding, provincial funding, federal funding)

- All school staff in EPSB and ECSD are trauma-informed
- Increased rates of school staff satisfaction in AIFY schools
- Decreased teacher stress in AIFY schools

- AIFY schools effectively/efficiently meeting families' complex needs (e.g., mental health needs, nutrition needs, etc.)
- Families are lifted out of poverty/achieve economic stability
- Reduced "burden" on public services/systems (e.g., health care, social supports, education, criminal justice)

- Students complete post-secondary school or post-graduate training (e.g., in the trades)
- Students secure gainful employment
- Students achieve economic stability and contribute to the economy
- Reduced "burden" on public services/systems (e.g., health care, social supports, education, criminal justice)

- Universal access to Out-of-school supports for students and families in Edmonton
- Communities surrounding schools in Edmonton are safer
- Students and families are active community members

- AIFY collaborative partnership and initiative has produced better outcomes/impacts for stakeholders than solitary efforts
- AIFY initiative is implemented across provincial school boards
- AIFY initiative sustained by government policies
- AIFY initiative sustained by government funding
- Policies established to support information sharing among schools and support agencies in Alberta
- AIFY connected to and collaborates with other initiatives that focus on student and family wellbeing

1 – 2 years

3 – 5 years

6 – 10 years

All in For Youth (AIFY) is a collaborative initiative which provides wraparound supports for students and families to support student wellbeing and academic achievement.

These services are available at your school:

✓ Universal Nutrition Supports



Nutrition Support

Snacks and meals with nutritious foods to fuel the school day.

81% of students were enrolled in the **nutrition program** over the past school year (2021/22) at Abbott.

✓ Targeted Supports



Mentoring

Mentoring to support academic learning and socio-emotional development.



Mental Health Therapy

Supportive child and family mental health therapy



Success Coaching

Coaching to support children's success in school and wellbeing



Roots & Wings Family Support

In-home supports for families to support overall family wellbeing

58% of students and families used a **targeted AIFY service** over the past school year (2021/22) at Abbott.

43% of students and families used **2 or more targeted AIFY services** over the past year at Abbott.

The AIFY model of support is offered in **8 schools** across Edmonton, with **3 new schools** added during the 2021/22 school year.

4,434 students and families accessed a targeted AIFY service **across AIFY schools**, over the past 5 school years.

Students and families continue to tell us that AIFY makes their school communities a better place. Last year, we asked a group of parents and caregivers how they felt about AIFY supports...

95%

Confident that there are teachers and AIFY service providers that could help support their family or child if needed.

86%

Agree that when their child needs help, they see the school is a source of support for them.

Thank you to the our partners

All in For Youth (AIFY) is a collaborative initiative which provides wraparound supports for students and families to support student wellbeing and academic achievement.

These services are available at your school:

✓ Universal Nutrition Supports



Nutrition Support

Snacks and meals with nutritious foods to fuel the school day.

100% of students were enrolled in the **nutrition program** over the past school year (2021/22) at Delton.

✓ Targeted Supports



Mentoring

Mentoring to support academic learning and socio-emotional development.



Out of School Time Programming

Programs for arts and culture, student wellness, leadership, and academics.



Success Coaching

Coaching to support children's success in school and wellbeing



Mental Health Therapy

Supportive child and family mental health therapy

78% of students and families used a **targeted AIFY service** over the past year at Delton.

Roots & Wings Family Support



In-home supports for families to support overall family wellbeing

48% of students and families used **2 or more targeted AIFY services** over the past year at Delton

724 students and families used a targeted AIFY service **over the past 5 school years** (since 2017) at Delton.

The AIFY model of support is offered in 8 schools across Edmonton, with 3 new schools added during the 2021/22 school year.

4,434 students and families accessed a targeted AIFY service **across AIFY schools**, over the past 5 school years.

Students and families continue to tell us that AIFY makes their school communities a better place. Last year, we asked a group of parents and caregivers how they felt about AIFY supports...

95%

Confident that there are teachers and AIFY service providers that could help support their family or child if needed.

86%

Agree that when their child needs help, they see the school is a source of support for them.

Thank you to the our partners

All in For Youth (AIFY) is a collaborative initiative which provides wraparound supports for students and families to support student wellbeing and academic achievement.

These services are available at your school:

✓ **Universal Nutrition Supports**



Nutrition Support

Snacks and meals with nutritious foods to fuel the school day.

77% of students were enrolled in the **nutrition program** over the past year (2021/22) at Ivor Dent.

✓ **Targeted Supports**



Mentoring

Mentoring to support academic learning and socio-emotional development.



Out of School Time Programming

Nearby BGCBig's out of school club with activities and programming



Success Coaching

Coaching to support children's success in school and wellbeing



Mental Health Therapy

Supportive child and family mental health therapy

35% of students and families used a **targeted AIFY service** over the past year at Ivor Dent.

Roots & Wings Family Support



In-home supports for families to support overall family wellbeing

29% of students and families used **2 or more targeted AIFY services** over the past year at Ivor Dent.

The AIFY model of support is offered in **8 schools** across Edmonton, with **3 new schools** added during the 2021/22 school year.

4,434 students and families accessed a targeted AIFY service across AIFY schools, over the past 5 school years.

Students and families continue to tell us that AIFY makes their school communities a better place. Last year, we asked a group of parents and caregivers how they felt about AIFY supports...

95%

Confident that there are teachers and AIFY service providers that could help support their family or child if needed.

86%

Agree that when their child needs help, they see the school is a source of support for them.

Thank you to the our partners

All in For Youth (AIFY) is a collaborative initiative which provides wraparound supports for students and families to support student wellbeing and academic achievement.

These services are available at your school:

✓ Universal Nutrition Supports



Nutrition Support

Snacks and meals with nutritious foods to fuel the school day.

82% of students were enrolled in the **nutrition program** over the past school year (2021/22) at JAM.

✓ Targeted Supports



Mentoring

Mentoring to support academic learning and socio-emotional development.



Out of School Time Programming

Programs for arts and culture, student wellness, leadership, and academics.



Success Coaching

Coaching to support children's success in school and wellbeing



Mental Health Therapy

Supportive child and family mental health therapy

96% of students and families used a **targeted AIFY service** over the past year at JAM.

Roots & Wings Family Support



In-home supports for families to support overall family wellbeing

56% of students and families used **2 or more targeted AIFY services** over the past year at JAM

735 students and families used a targeted AIFY service **over the past 5 school years** (since 2017) at JAM.

The AIFY model of support is offered in **8 schools** across Edmonton, with **3 new schools** added during the 2021/22 school year.

4,434 students and families accessed a targeted AIFY service **across AIFY schools**, over the past 5 school years.

Students and families continue to tell us that AIFY makes their school communities a better place. Last year, we asked a group of parents and caregivers how they felt about AIFY supports...

95%

Confident that there are teachers and AIFY service providers that could help support their family or child if needed.

86%

Agree that when their child needs help, they see the school is a source of support for them.

Thank you to the our partners

All in For Youth (AIFY) is a collaborative initiative which provides wraparound supports for students and families to support student wellbeing and academic achievement.

These services are available at your school:

✓ Universal Nutrition Supports



Nutrition Support

Snacks and meals with nutritious foods to fuel the school day.

100% of students were enrolled in the **nutrition program** over the past year (2021/22) at Norwood.

✓ Targeted Supports



Mentoring

Mentoring to support academic learning and socio-emotional development.



Out of School Time Programming

Nearby BGCBig's out of school club with activities and programming



Success Coaching

Coaching to support children's success in school and wellbeing



Mental Health Therapy

Supportive child and family mental health therapy

34% of students and families used a **targeted AIFY service** over the past year at Norwood.

Roots & Wings Family Support



In-home supports for families to support overall family wellbeing

24% of students and families used **2 or more targeted AIFY services** over the past year at Norwood.

The AIFY model of support is offered in **8 schools** across Edmonton, with **3 new schools** added during the 2021/22 school year.

4,434 students and families accessed a targeted AIFY service **across AIFY schools**, over the past 5 school years.

Students and families continue to tell us that AIFY makes their school communities a better place. Last year, we asked a group of parents and caregivers how they felt about AIFY supports...

95%

Confident that there are teachers and AIFY service providers that could help support their family or child if needed.

86%

Agree that when their child needs help, they see the school is a source of support for them.

Thank you to the our partners



St. Alphonsus is an All in For Youth School



All in For Youth (AIFY) is a collaborative initiative which provides wraparound supports for students and families to support student wellbeing and academic achievement.

These services are available at your school:

✓ Universal Nutrition Supports



Nutrition Support

Snacks and meals with nutritious foods to fuel the school day.

41% of students were enrolled in the **nutrition program** over the past school year (2021/22) at St. Al.

✓ Targeted Supports



Mentoring

Mentoring to support academic learning and socio-emotional development.



Out of School Time Programming

Programs for arts and culture, student wellness, leadership, and academics.



Success Coaching

Coaching to support children's success in school and wellbeing



Mental Health Therapy

Supportive child and family mental health therapy

42% of students and families used a **targeted AIFY service** over the past year at St. Al.

Roots & Wings Family Support



In-home supports for families to support overall family wellbeing

37% of students and families used **2 or more targeted AIFY services** over the past year at St. Al.

765 students and families used a targeted AIFY service **over the past 5 school years** (since 2017) at St. Al.

The AIFY model of support is offered in 8 schools across Edmonton, with 3 new schools added during the 2021/22 school year.

4,434 students and families accessed a targeted AIFY service **across AIFY schools**, over the past 5 school years.

Students and families continue to tell us that AIFY makes their school communities a better place. Last year, we asked a group of parents and caregivers how they felt about AIFY supports...

95%

Confident that there are teachers and AIFY service providers that could help support their family or child if needed

86%

Agree that when their child needs help, they see the school is a source of support for them

Thank you to the our partners



All in For Youth (AIFY) is a collaborative initiative which provides wraparound supports for students and families to support student wellbeing and academic achievement.

These services are available at your school:

✓ Universal Nutrition Supports



Nutrition Support

Snacks and meals with nutritious foods to fuel the school day.

65% of students were enrolled in the **nutrition program** over the past year (2021/22) at Spruce Ave.

✓ Targeted Supports



Mentoring

Mentoring to support academic learning and socio-emotional development.



Out of School Time Programming

Programs for arts and culture, student wellness, leadership, and academics.



Success Coaching

Coaching to support children's success in school and wellbeing



Mental Health Therapy

Supportive child and family mental health therapy

91% of students and families used a **targeted AIFY service** over the past year at Spruce Ave.

Roots & Wings Family Support



In-home supports for families to support overall family wellbeing

64% of students and families used **2 or more targeted AIFY services** over the past year at Spruce Ave.

701 students and families used a targeted AIFY service **over the past 5 school years** (since 2017) at Spruce Ave.

The AIFY model of support is offered in **8 schools** across Edmonton, with **3 new schools** added during the 2021/22 school year.

4,434 students and families accessed a targeted AIFY service **across AIFY schools**, over the past 5 school years.

Students and families continue to tell us that AIFY makes their school communities a better place. Last year, we asked a group of parents and caregivers how they felt about AIFY supports...

95%

Confident that there are teachers and AIFY service providers that could help support their family or child if needed.

86%

Agree that when their child needs help, they see the school is a source of support for them.

Thank you to the our partners

All in For Youth (AIFY) is a collaborative initiative which provides wraparound supports for students and families to support student wellbeing and academic achievement.

These services are available at your school:

✓ Universal Nutrition Supports

Nutrition Support
Snacks and meals with nutritious foods to fuel the school day.

12% of students were enrolled in the **nutrition program** over the past school year (2021/22) at Eastglen.

✓ Targeted Supports

Mentoring
Mentoring to support academic learning and socio-emotional development.

Out of School Time Programming
Programs for arts and culture, student wellness, leadership, and academics.

Success Coaching
Coaching to support children's success in school and wellbeing

Mental Health Therapy
Supportive child and family mental health therapy

29% of students and families used a **targeted AIFY service** at over the past year at Eastglen.

Roots & Wings Family Support
In-home supports for families to support overall family wellbeing

20% of students and families used **2 or more targeted AIFY services** over the past year at Eastglen

1,217 students and families used a targeted AIFY service **over the past 5 school years** (since 2017) at Eastglen.

The AIFY model of support is offered in **8 schools** across Edmonton, with **3 new schools** added during the 2021/22 school year.

4,434 students and families accessed a targeted AIFY service **across AIFY schools**, over the past 5 school years.

Students and families continue to tell us that AIFY makes their school communities a better place. Last year, we asked a group of parents and caregivers how they felt about AIFY supports...

95%
Confident that there are teachers and AIFY service providers that could help support their family or child if needed.

86%
Agree that when their child needs help, they see the school is a source of support for them.

Thank you to the our partners