

2026/ SUCCESS STORY

The Today Centre

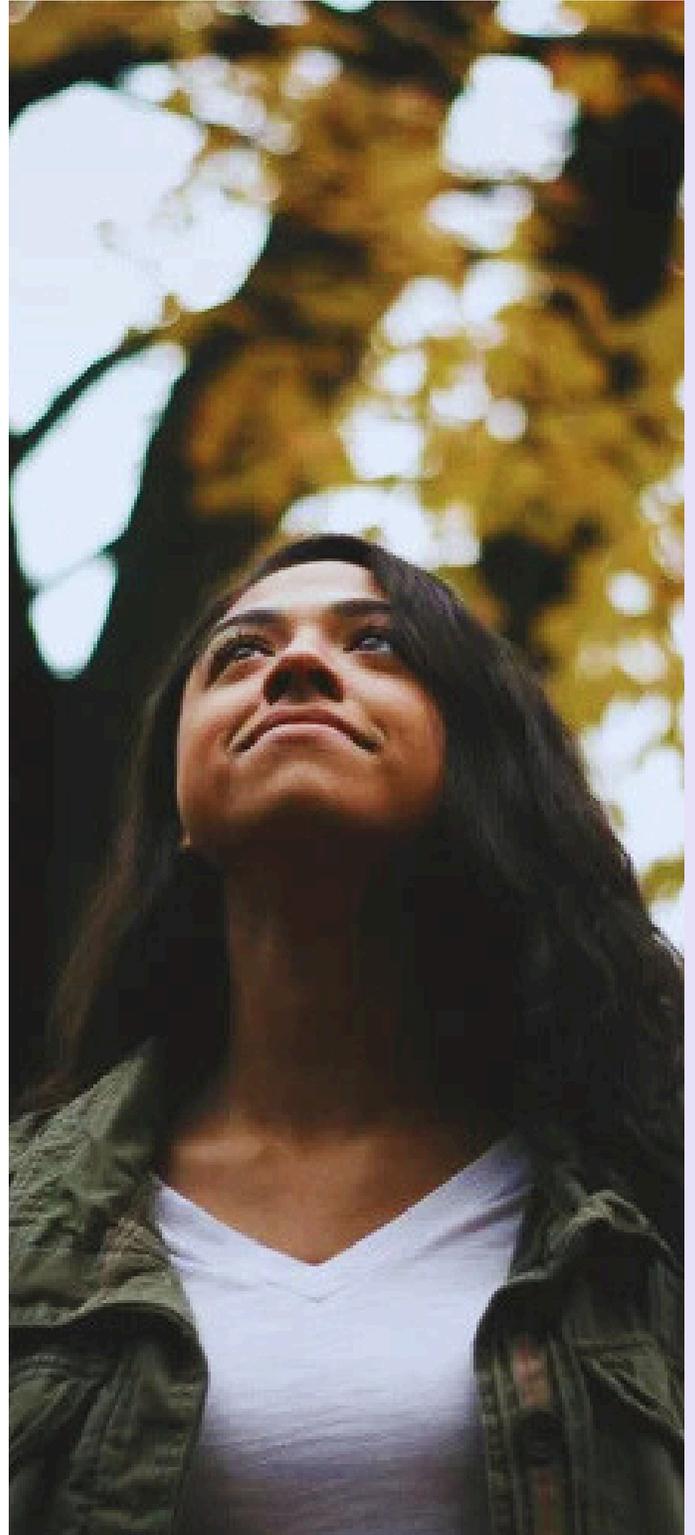
About The Today Centre

The Today Centre is a community-centered charity dedicated to providing immediate, inclusive, and integrated support to adults impacted by family violence.

Uses CanadaHelps for

- Custom Donation Forms
- Ticketed Events, and more.

See how the charity has seen a 24% increase in donation form revenue in the past fiscal year, an 11% increase in monthly revenue via charity profile in the last 2 fiscal years, and other fundraising growth.





“We ensure individuals are heard, supported, and connected to what they need most in moments of crisis and transition.”

— Cindy Furlong, Executive Director, The Today Centre

ABOUT THE TODAY CENTRE

The Today Family Violence Help Centre, also known as The Today Centre, is a community-centered charity dedicated to providing immediate, inclusive, and integrated support to adults impacted by family violence. They also provide education for businesses, nonprofit organizations, community groups and youth.

As a first point of contact for people experiencing abuse – regardless of gender, sexual orientation, culture, ethnicity, or religion – The Today Centre helps individuals move toward safety and healing. *“We ensure individuals are heard, supported, and connected to what they need most in moments of crisis and transition,”* shared Executive Director Cindy Furlong.

Our Family Violence Specialists create personalized safety plans, provide education on the impacts of family violence, conduct risk assessments, and connect clients to essential supports, all at no cost. In collaboration with over 300 community agencies and programs, The Today Centre offers a coordinated network that strengthens the community’s response to family violence.

RELATIONSHIP WITH CANADAHELPS

CanadaHelps supports The Today Centre’s online donations and event-based fundraising, providing a centralized, reliable platform that simplifies giving for donors and administration for staff.

The charity uses CanadaHelps for:

- custom donation forms (CDF)
- ticketed events
- monthly donor management
- automated tax receipts
- donor tracking, and more.

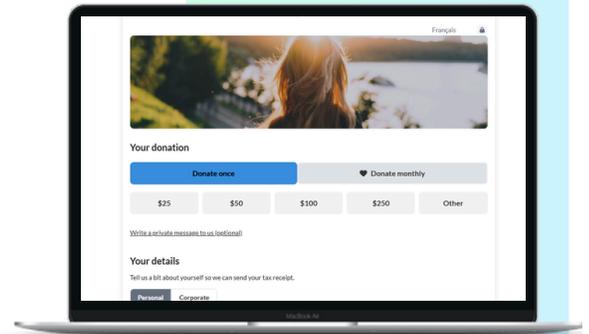
“CanadaHelps has made it much easier for people to support us – whether they’re donating online or registering for an event,” shared Linda Kelly, Community Engagement Specialist at The Today Centre. **The organization has seen a 24% increase in CDF revenue in the past fiscal year and 11% increase in monthly revenue via charity profile in the last 2 fiscal years.**

Digital Fundraising with CanadaHelps

CanadaHelps has enabled The Today Centre to expand and streamline its digital fundraising efforts.

CORE ONLINE DONATIONS

The Today Centre uses its CanadaHelps charity profile as a trusted destination for online giving. Custom Donation Forms (CDFs) are used for general fundraising and campaign-specific appeals, providing donors with a simple, familiar way to contribute.



TICKETED EVENTS & ONLINE REGISTRATION

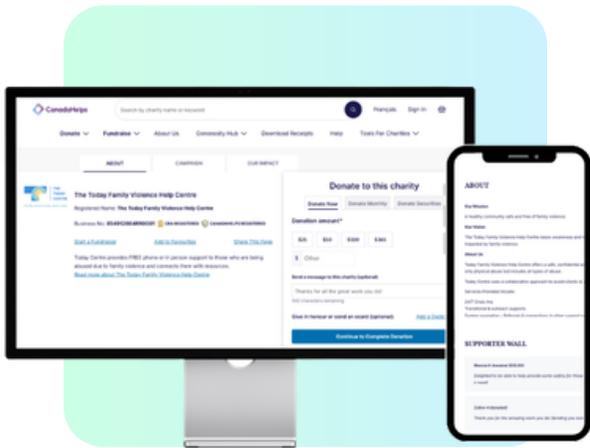
For ticketed fundraising events, CanadaHelps helps The Today Centre manage registrations and payments in one place. Beyond simple ticket sales, the charity uses CanadaHelps' event management functionality as a donor acquisition tool. ***"We use it as a ticketing tool for our signature event, and one of the great things about that is it gets people into our donor database at the same time," Linda explained.*** This has reduced manual work and made it easier for supporters to participate, particularly those who prefer online transactions.

Beyond the event itself, the organization measures success in unexpected ways. Linda recalled their evolution from a breakfast event held in 2022: *"Our first event was a breakfast, and then when we hosted it again the next year, I didn't recognize 75% of the names. That's a success."* This growth in new supporters demonstrates effective brand recognition and community reach.

The cost efficiency also matters for a budget-conscious organization. *"When you compare it to fees associated with other platforms, the money you're saving with CanadaHelps matters, even if it's a difference of a few percentages. I call that a win, too,"* Linda noted.

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— Linda



CHARITY PROFILE

With over 5+ million donors using CanadaHelps to find and support causes, The Today Centre recognizes the value of maintaining a comprehensive charity profile on the platform. The profile serves as a discovery tool for potential supporters who may not be part of Edmonton's local community but want to support family violence prevention work.

MONTHLY GIVING & DONOR SUPPORT

The organization also benefits from recurring donations through monthly giving via CanadaHelps, helping to create more predictable funding. Automated tax receipting and thank-you emails ensure donors receive timely acknowledgment without adding administrative burden for staff.



MONTHLY DONOR MANAGEMENT

Access to donor reports through CanadaHelps supports tracking, reconciliation, and follow-up, helping the team stay organized and focused on their mission rather than paperwork. *“The reporting and receipting side is a huge help – it saves us time and gives donors what they need right away,”* shared Linda.

The platform has enabled the organization to centralize donor information, track giving patterns, and maintain consistent communication despite limited administrative resources. The ability to efficiently manage donor data is particularly important given The Today Centre's growth trajectory. *“It helps to have CanadaHelps there to guide us on how to keep that growth going, but more importantly, keep that data and information stored safely,”* Linda noted.

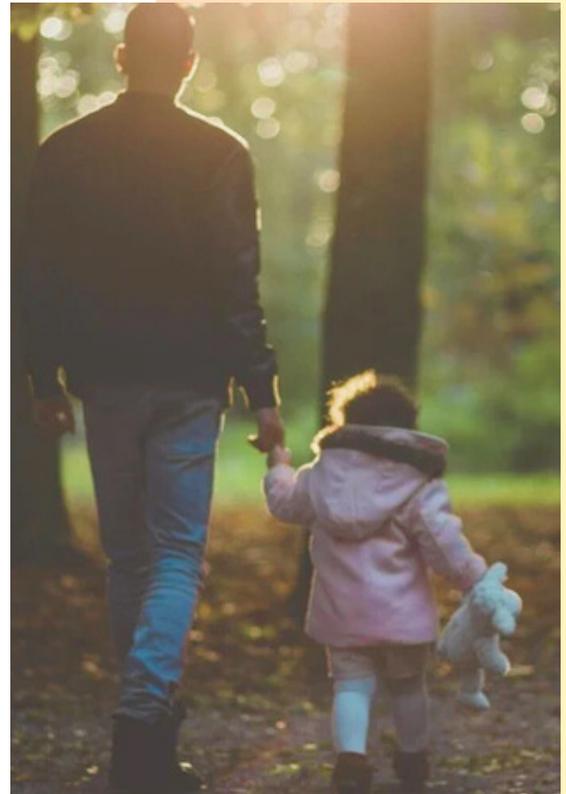
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Results from Using CanadaHelps

Using CanadaHelps has delivered both operational and fundraising benefits for The Today Centre.

- ~24% Increase in custom donation forms revenue in the past fiscal year
- 2 Events held with CanadaHelps in the past 2 years
- ~11% Increase in monthly revenue via Charity Profile in the last 2 fiscal years



GROWTH IN DONATIONS

Leveraging CanadaHelps Custom Donation Forms, Charity Profile, and Events tools across major events, annual campaigns, and monthly giving programs has supported increased fundraising.

INCREASED ACCESS TO GIVING

Supporters can donate or register for events easily online, reducing friction and encouraging participation. CanadaHelps has made it easier for supporters to give when and how they choose. Donors who may not attend events in person can still contribute meaningfully, which has helped broaden the Centre's donor base and reduce reliance on cash or cheque-based donations. This seamless experience also encourages repeat giving.

SIMPLIFIED EVENT MANAGEMENT

The combination of CanadaHelps' ticketing functionality and donor database capabilities has transformed how The Today Centre builds relationships with supporters. The influx of new supporters, captured through the integrated event ticketing system, represents expanded community awareness and engagement.

IMPROVED DONOR TRUST

For The Today Centre, CanadaHelps provides credibility that helps donors feel confident in their giving. ***"Joining CanadaHelps, knowing that you already are on this Canadian platform, and then having it link right directly back to us was really important,"*** Linda shared. ***"This partnership boosts credibility for both of our organizations. Whether donors visit our website or find us on CanadaHelps, the connection helps build transparency and trust."***



Photo: The Today Centre staff members (Cindy Furlong, Don Brookwell - Family Violence Education Specialist, and Elizabeth Colbourne - Team Lead of the Family Violence Specialists and Members of the Legislative Assembly for the Alberta Government (Brooks Arcand-Paul and Marie Renaud)

Why The Today Centre Recommends CanadaHelps

The Today Centre recommends CanadaHelps because it offers a dependable, easy-to-use platform that supports both donors and staff. The organization values having a single system that handles donations, events, receipting, and reporting without requiring extensive technical expertise. CanadaHelps has become a trusted partner that supports the Centre's fundraising goals while keeping the donor experience simple and professional.

This trust factor is particularly crucial for an organization with limited staffing. With just 11 employees managing client services, education programs, and advancement activities, the CanadaHelps platform badge serves as a signal to donors that their contributions are being processed securely through an established, reputable system. The organization also values a partner that can support its growth trajectory.

“Growth is dependent on capacity. You can grow, but you need to have the human resources and the time and infrastructure to be able to do that. It needs to happen at the same time. CanadaHelps serves as part of that infrastructure, scaling alongside The Today Centre's expanding impact.”

— Linda

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Impact on the Community

➤ **Immediate, Accessible Client Services:** One of The Today Centre's most distinctive features is its commitment to immediate access. *"We don't have a wait list. That immediate response when people are asking for help is important,"* Linda emphasized. The organization serves any adult experiencing family violence, viewing it as a human rights issue. This inclusive approach ensures that everyone – regardless of gender, background, or circumstance – can find a safe space for validation and support.

➤ **Programs That Remove Barriers to Safety:** The Today Centre has developed responsive programs that address practical obstacles preventing people from reaching safety. For instance, Lives on the Line provides emergency cell phones, Safe at Last offers financial support to those with limited resources, while Safety in Motion distributes gas cards, bus tickets, and taxi fare just so people can get to safety or to resources. Cindy recalls an interaction where one client said, *"I can't leave my relationship because my great-grandmother's dining room table will be firewood if I leave". So, we asked, 'If that's the only reason you're staying, what can we do to get that table out of there so you can leave?'"* These practical supports acknowledge that safety often depends on solving immediate logistical challenges.



"We don't have a wait list. That immediate response when people are asking for help is important."

– Linda

➤ **Collaborative Service Delivery:** The Today Centre maintains partnerships with organizations providing housing support, mental health counselling, and student legal services that meet virtually with clients. This collaborative model evolved from the organization's founding principle of ending siloed services, and this commitment to coordinated, trauma-informed support remains central.

- **Education and Support Services:** Current educational programs include family violence workshops for service providers, healthy relationship education for youth in schools and community groups, advanced and foundational safety planning courses, and more.

"We wanted to get into education because working directly with clients who are experiencing family violence is very much intervention or tertiary prevention. We wanted to do our part in actually preventing family violence," Cindy shared.



- **Redefining Success Around Client Autonomy:**

The Today Centre measures success by whether people have gained knowledge, tools, and support to live more safely according to their own choices. *"For a client or a person to even pick up the phone, to dial the number, to get to that next step of talking to our receptionist – those are three pretty significant things that are happening right there,"* Cindy noted. *"We don't even define it as 'X number of people have left relationships' because that's not our goal. We work with where a client is at."*

- **Creating Ripple Effects of Awareness:** The Today Centre's impact extends beyond direct service recipients to families, colleagues, and communities who gain awareness through events and education. Linda shared a powerful instance from a breakfast event where a businessman listened to survivor Deena Kordt (pictured here) share her story of family violence. *"He told us, 'That's my brother.' He saw his brother in everything Deena was saying about her abusive partner. He had never really thought about it before, and it now clicked for him to understand the whole picture and how all of this has impacted the family."*

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– Cindy

For more information about The Today Centre, visit www.thetodaycentre.ca



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Looking Ahead: Sustainable Growth and Expanded Reach

Achieving Operational Sustainability

The organization's Shaping Tomorrow Fund supports the long-term sustainability of The Today Centre with the primary goal of reaching a point where foundational operational costs are consistently covered, allowing all additional funds to flow directly into client services and program expansion.

Workplace Education Expansion

The Today Centre has developed a comprehensive workplace education curriculum around *Family Violence Impacts at Work* and is striving to expand acceptance among Edmonton businesses and corporations. This expansion would extend The Today Centre's prevention education to a largely untapped audience while diversifying revenue streams and deepening corporate partnerships

Leveraging Technology for Greater Impact

The organization plans to deepen its use of CanadaHelps' capabilities, exploring additional features and participating in pilot programs. As their understanding of donor data, campaign tools, and relationship management features grows, The Today Centre is looking to better engage supporters strategically and efficiently despite limited staffing.

A Call to Action is a Call to Illuminate Hope

The Today Centre's annual signature fundraiser, the Illuminating Hope Garden Cocktail Party, highlights the healing and empowerment that can emerge after experiences of family violence, while honouring survivor resilience and strengthening community support. If you or someone you know would like to become a sponsor of this inspiring and uplifting event, contact The Today Centre.

Continuing to Plant Seeds of Change

Both Cindy and Linda expressed commitment to the long view – recognizing that preventing family violence requires generational change. *"While we may never achieve perfection or eliminate the issue entirely, imagine the impact if future generations could grow up in a completely different world than what we're living in right now?"* Linda shared. This vision drives The Today Centre's continued investment in youth education, community awareness, and building a culture where family violence is recognized, addressed, and ultimately reduced through collective action.

Meet the Team

CINDY FURLONG

Executive Director The Today Centre

Cindy Furlong is the Executive Director of The Today Centre and a Registered Social Worker with over 35 years of experience supporting vulnerable populations. Her leadership is grounded in a deep, unwavering commitment to social justice.



LINDA KELLY

Community Engagement Specialist The Today Centre

Linda Kelly is a Community Engagement Specialist at The Today Centre, with a strong background in fund development and community relations. Linda's commitment to serving others fuels her passion for creating positive change.

