

Fast Facts

About Closer to Home (CtH):

- Provides a continuum of programs designed to meet the needs of vulnerable children and families
- Known for demonstrating flexibility and creativity in developing programs that respond to identified needs within the community.
- Services range from early intervention programs to group homes.
- Stakeholder-driven, community based and guided by a commitment to quality assurance, accountability, and measurable outcomes.
- Fully integrated with community, municipal, provincial, and federal support systems.
- By CtH having both formal and informal relationships allow a variety of resources to be accessed that meet unique needs of children and families within their own communities.

Subject of SROI: Teaching Home Program

Program stats:

- 84% of youths were discharged according to their treatment plan
- 62% of youths are discharged to a less intrusive placement (five-year average.)

1 Year SROI ratio: 1 : 0.71

Contact Details:

Diane Jaeger, Executive Director
+1 (403) 543-0550
djaeger@closerhome.com

Karen Olivier, Executive Director
+1 (403) 543-0550
kolivier@closerhome.com

Web site:

www.closerhome.com

“The Teaching Home environment is a positive and caring place to be”

- Program Participant

Program Background:

Teaching Homes are community-based homes that provide individualized support services for youth who require supervision and treatment due to out-of-control behaviours and/or serious parent-child conflicts that require them to be removed from their natural home setting. Closer to Home has three Teaching Homes in the Calgary area. Youths who live at the Teaching Homes are referred by Calgary Child and Family Services.

The support and services provided by the Teaching Homes program are designed to meet each youth's unique needs. Each Teaching Home has live-in teaching parents and support staff who teach the youth the necessary skills to either successfully return home, move to a less intrusive long term placement or live independently. The teaching parents may also recommend that some youth receive more intensive treatment based on their individual needs.

Social Value Created:

Children placed in Teaching Homes develop a treatment plan with the input and advice of their teaching parents. The plan will identify important skills to be developed, such that they will help the youth to improve their relationships with others, including family members.

Improving skills in verbal communication and to manage emotions such as anger and frustration will also improve the youth's experience at school, better prepare them to work and increase their comfort being

involved in the community. Some youth will learn how to live independently if this is a goal of their unique treatment plan.

By learning these skills within the supportive environment of a Teaching Home, skills are practiced and repeated, therefore are more likely to be integrated into daily behaviour.

Theory of Change

If children receive a safe, stable and nurturing environment, as well as individualized treatment and support to meet their individual needs, then they will set goals to improve their future, learn important basic and life skills and apply them across all settings of their life.

Children experiencing serious parent/child conflicts and do not have access to respite or a Teaching Home setting, are likely to run away from their current living situation. They often then become at-risk of homelessness and being exposed to other risks in the community. Many will be forced to engage in

criminal activity in order to feed themselves and meet other daily needs.

The Teaching Homes program provides services and support to an average of 20 children and youth per year, creating an annual social value of **\$1,172,511**.

Teaching Home Clientele:

All youth in the Teaching Homes are referred by Calgary Child and Family Services. The majority of the youth exhibit out-of-control behaviors, have serious parent-child conflicts and report feelings of rejection.

Half of the children brought into the Teaching Homes come from families that are struggling with poverty. The others are referred from a variety of other child welfare placements, including foster care.

Almost all children brought into the program demonstrate inappropriate behaviors toward others. These include being verbally abusive, physically abusive, or having frequent anger

outbursts. Many have poor judgment or have extreme difficulties with peer interactions.

All children in the program demonstrate a variety of negative behaviours such as causing property damage and causing acts of intimidation towards other house members. Many have difficulties complying with reasonable house rules and

engage in behaviors that are difficult for their caregiver to manage. They require extensive management by others in order to remain in the home. Almost 50% of the participants have difficulties with school and require individualized educational plans in order to progress in their studies.

Case Study— Social Value Created: SROI Calculation

The Teaching Homes program benefits the children enrolled in many ways. The SROI calculation below only reflects the social value created by the monetizable changes experienced in the children’s lives. Other important changes such as increased confidence, skills to manage conflict, communications skills, and improved relationships are hard to value with a dollar figure.

The Teaching Homes program admits approximately 20 children per year and operates on an annual budget of \$1,640,035. There are six main monetizable SROI indicators included in the SROI calculation for the Teaching Homes program.

The first four indicators describe the possible outcomes for the children who participate in the program. These outcomes are: 1) discharge to family; 2) discharge to a less intrusive placement; 3) discharge to independent living; and 4) discharge to a placement that requires more intensive treatment. In each case, the difference in daily cost between the Teaching Home program and the alternative

are calculated.

The fifth indicator describes reduced police calls that result from children’s involvement in the Teaching Homes Program. If left to remain in their previous circumstances, Closer to Home can confidently estimate that local police would be required to regularly respond to crisis in the home. In all likelihood, either the children or their families would otherwise call the police for assistance at least once a month if the children were not in the Teaching Homes program.

The sixth indicator represents the social value created by an additional five children per year who use the Teaching Homes as a place of respite for two days every month. These children often have a disability, and receive funding from Financial Supports for Children with Disabilities to stay in the Teaching Home. If it wasn’t for this opportunity for respite for these children, and their parents in particular, the children would require a full-time placement in a Teaching Home. With the respite available, the need for full time

Monetizable SROI Indicators:		\$\$ value per change in Year 1	% of client base experiencing this change.	\$\$ value for entire group (20 children)	Notes There are a total of 20 children within the client base
1	Discharged to family	\$79,935	34%	\$543,558	Avoidance of Home Visitation daily rate of \$219 per day
2	Discharge to Less intrusive placement	\$55,845	25%	\$279,225	Less intrusive placement is \$153 less (per day) than the Home Visitation program
3	Discharge to Independent Living	\$51,830	3%	\$31,098	Independent living is \$142 less (per day) than the Home Visitation program
4	Discharge to more intrusive placement	-\$38,325	26%	-\$199,290	More intrusive placements are \$105 more (per day) than the Home Visitation program (an increased cost to society)
5	Reduced police calls	\$7,500	100%	\$150,000	At least one police call per month is avoided per child. \$625 per call.
6	5 kids who avoid care for 28 days per month.	\$73,584	N/A	\$367,920	Five children per year use the Home Visitation program as respite from their natural home setting, for two days a month. They avoid permanent placement in the Home Visitation program as a result (@ \$219 per day, for 28 days per month).
Social value created annually for 20 children:				\$1,172,511	
Total annual investment in 20 children:				\$1,640,035	
SROI attributed to Foster Care program (in Year 1)				0.71	

placement at an average of 28 days per month, is not required.

Because every child will experience different changes in their life as a result of their participation in the Teaching Homes program, the SROI calculation has attributed a percentage to each monetizable indicator listed (see the third column in **Table 1**), representing the percentage of the

20 children that will experience each specific change.

The monetizable social value created by the Teaching Home program for 20 children, plus an additional five children who use the Teaching Homes as respite is **\$1,172,511**. This represents a social return on investment of **1 : 0.71**.

Conclusion

The safe, stable and nurturing environment provided to children at the Teaching Homes is key to the program's success. This environment, coupled with individualized treatment plans, ensure that children get the support they need to improve their out-of-control behaviour.

The Teaching Homes program also provides the opportunity for youth to learn and practice important basic life skills in a safe and nurturing environment. This will assist them to improve their results at school, be more ready and able to work and to create positive and meaning relationships throughout their lives.

Success Story:

Lucas was an active 12-year-old who had been living with his mother Linda when he was referred to a Closer to Home Teaching Home. Lucas had been diagnosed with ADHD, epilepsy and pervasive developmental delays. As a result, he demonstrated a wide range of out-of-control behaviors such as acting out aggressively towards others, destroying property and being unable to communicate effectively. Given the demands associated with managing Lucas' behavior and the conflict Linda experienced with her son, she felt unable to provide Lucas with the parenting he needed.

At the time of intake to the Teaching Home, Lucas demonstrated extremely aggressive behaviors. During the course of his stay at the Teaching Home, Lucas learned important skills such as how to follow instructions, how to apply "calm-down" techniques to manage emotional outbursts, and how to solve problems. As a result of learning these skills, Lucas's aggressive behaviors decreased in frequency as time went by.

Although Lucas behaviours continued to improve, he was missing his mother and began reporting feelings of rejection. Linda continued to believe that she was not fit to parent Lucas appropriately, and experienced feelings of guilt and overall low self-esteem as a parent.

After Lucas had lived at the Teaching Home for several months, Linda was approached by the Teaching Home staff with a plan for her to reunify with Lucas. Initially, Linda was very hesitant to participate in the plan because she did not think she was a "good" mother and was unsure if she could

provide Lucas with the parental support he needed.

In order to support the re-unification plan Linda was provided with in-home support and additional financial supports through FSCD (Financial Supports for Children with Disabilities). The in-home support worker and Linda worked together to build Linda's parenting skills. This included teaching Linda how to address Lucas's inappropriate behavior through corrective teaching techniques and effective praise. By matching Linda's newly learned parenting skills and Lucas's basic coping skills, the in-home support worker was able to increase Linda's ability to effectively manage Lucas' extreme behaviors.

The in-home support worker also helped Linda learn how to become an effective advocate for her son and his special needs. This increased her ability to access valuable supports and resources for the family. Linda was able to improve her life skills, such as her ability to manage her finances, organize her household and maintain employment. Regular coaching from the in-home support worker ensured both Lucas' and Linda's newly learned skills were maintained.

Once Lucas moved home full-time, a permanent plan for Lucas to participate in respite visits at the Teaching Home was arranged. This respite plan provides Linda with a break from caring for Lucas for two days and nights per month, while keeping the family unit intact long-term. This respite plan, coupled with other community resources, have enabled Linda and Lucas to continue their family's successful reunification.