



2024



Between Friends
connect • grow • belong

Annual Impact Report

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Board of Directors

Naminder Sandhu	Chair
Cory Vance	Past Chair
Sean Bower	Vice Chair
Taso Arvanitis	Treasurer/Secretary
Gerry David	Director
Bradley Fox	Director
Crispin Arthur	Director
Peter Drag	Director
Amber Dunleavy	Director
Ian Hendy	Director
Rupi Bergamin	Director
Alexandra McLeod	Director
Kimberley Presser	CEO



A Message From The CEO & Board of Directors

As we look back on 2024, we are filled with pride and excitement for the future of Between Friends. **This year marked a significant milestone with the expansion of our flagship program, Camp Bonaventure, to Red Deer -** bringing inclusive, recreational opportunities to even more children and youth with disabilities across Alberta.

We're also thrilled to share that participation in our programs has returned to pre-pandemic levels. **This is a powerful testament to the strength of our community and the trust our members continue to place in us.** From Adventurers getaways to our popular day camps, and our evening and weekend programs, every offering remains rooted in our mission: fostering lasting friendships and a sense of belonging for people of all abilities.

Our team of staff feels stronger than ever - bringing a renewed energy and expertise that is leading to greater outcomes across the organization. One standout example: the year's Year End Campaign raised over 3 times as much as budgeted (**over \$100,000!**). Wins like this are a reflection of the passion and commitment driving our work every day.

None of this would be possible without the incredible support of our members, families, donors, staff, volunteers, and community partners. Your belief in inclusion fuels everything we do. As we look to the future, we're energized to keep growing, innovating, and championing a world where everyone belongs.

On behalf of our Board of Directors and the entire Between Friends team - **thank you for being part of this journey.** I truly believe that the best is yet to come!



**Kimberley Presser &
Naminder Sandhu**

Vision

An inclusive community where people with disabilities reach their individual potential and are recognized as valued citizens.

Mission

Between Friends provides quality social, recreation and development opportunities so that people with disabilities can connect, grow and belong.

Key Messages

connect. Between Friends provides unique opportunities for individuals with disabilities to have social interaction with peers who may or may not have a disability.

grow. Between Friends members develop self-confidence, accomplishment and a sense of responsibility.

belong. Our focus is on shared interests over individual differences. These shared interactions and experiences often become the foundation of understanding and lasting friendships.

About Us

Between Friends is a charitable organization that provides quality social, recreation and development opportunities so that people with disabilities can connect, grow, and belong. Children, youth and adults with disabilities seek social and recreational activities that are fundamental to enriching self-esteem, quality of life, as well as mental and physical health. These programs become pivotal in the lives of our participants as they decrease the degree of isolation they may face. Activities are customized to all ability levels to maximize enjoyment and help participants challenge and grow their individual potential.



Who We Are

562 Calgary Members



350 Youth

212 Adults

50 Family Memberships

513 Individual Memberships

6 Family Memberships

21 Individual Memberships

27 Red Deer Members



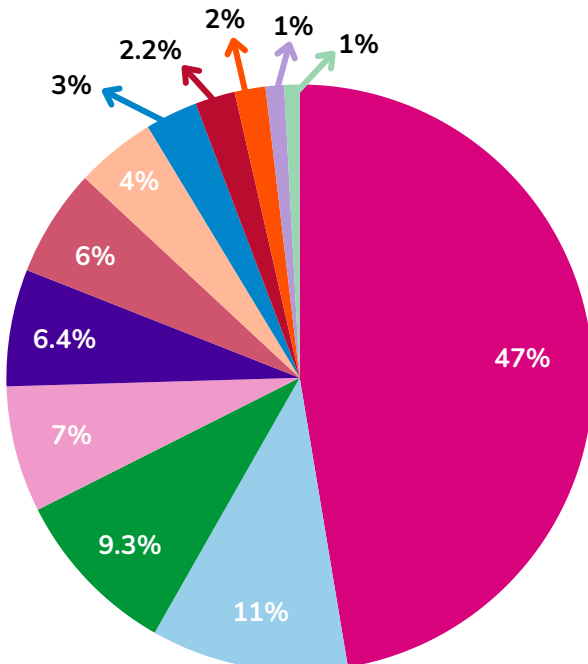
24 Youth

3 Adults

116 Program Volunteers

8930 Volunteer Hours - \$133,950 Saved

Member Breakdown



Autism Spectrum Disorder

Other

Developmental Disability

ADHD/ADD

Down Syndrome

Cerebral Palsy

Global Developmental Delay

Intellectual Disability

FASD/FAE

Brain Injury

No Disability

Epilepsy

Between Friends is an organization that supports many individuals with one or more disabilities. In 2024, 47% of our members listed Autism Spectrum Disorder as their primary disability.

Family Spotlight: The AbuFarhas



This year, **we are proud to feature Jana AbuFarha and her parents, Manaf and Maysoon**, members of the Between Friends community since 2005.

When the AbuFarha family moved to Canada in September 2001, they faced many challenges as newcomers - made even more complex by Jana's needs. Manaf learned about Between Friends through the Calgary Adapted Hub. From the very beginning, the family found more than just a program - **they found a community**. Even after deadlines had passed, Between Friends welcomed Jana into summer camp and offered financial support to ease their transition.

Between Friends programs have given Jana opportunities to **build friendships, develop life skills, and stay active** - all while bringing her joy. Jana expressed her appreciation for the experiences she gain through the use of Rapid Prompting Method (RPM).

For her parents, knowing Jana is safe, engaged, and happy gives them peace of mind and allows them much-needed moments to rest and recharge.

Reflecting on their journey, the AbuFarhas encourage any new family: don't miss the opportunity.

The experiences and friendships made at Between Friends can be life-changing - for participants and their families alike.



Donor Spotlight:

The Prosser Foundation

Since 2011, the Prosser Charitable Foundation has been a steadfast supporter of Between Friends, helping to make inclusive opportunities possible for individuals with disabilities. We recently sat down with a representative from the foundation to talk about what inspires their continued support - and the impact they see in our programs.

“Years ago, people with Autism were treated very differently,” they shared. **“Barriers have been broken down, and continue to be broken down.”** Between Friends supports a diverse population and enables these kids to live their best lives, to the best of their own abilities.”

The foundation emphasized the importance of recognizing the wide range of individuals who benefit from Camp Bonaventure. “Camp provides these kids a safe, compassionate space to challenge themselves. It’s important for families to see how capable they are.”

But what stands out most?

“The fun. So much fun was being had by the kids there,” they said with a smile.

They also noted how camp provides respite for families and creates a sense of belonging. “Parents finding a sense of community in others going through similar situations is so important.”

When asked what drives their philanthropy, they replied simply, “We have enough. **If you have, you give. If you know, you teach.**”

To them, philanthropy is about kindness—whether it’s money, time, or even just a smile.



Personnel Spotlight:

Kate Sorge

In 2018, after years of her sister attending Camp Bonaventure, Kate Sorge became a member of the Camp Bonaventure team as a Junior Volunteer. She volunteered until Covid hit in 2020, when Camp had to take a break. **Kate had always known she was going to come back to Between Friends** in some capacity and in 2024, she found her way back to Camp! She knew coming back would give her great experience as she works to become a teacher, while coming back to a place she loves.

Kate came back as a Relief Counsellor, ready to jump into whatever group needed her. She spent a lot of time with the Chipmunks crew in her first couple weeks, jumping into a Senior Counsellor role quickly.

Early in the summer, Kate was given the opportunity to fall into the Chipmunks Senior Counsellor role for the rest of the summer, and it was an easy choice. Kate loved the entirety of her team, both the campers and personnel.

“It was so great having a team you could rely on,”

Kate told us about her team dynamic. The whole crew was comprised of people whose abilities complimented each other well, and you could always feel the mutual respect within the group. She continued to gush about her team, saying “They made my job easier, I would do anything for them.”

Kate found a strong rhythm with the Chipmunks group that made for a very successful summer.

We are so excited to see the journey that Kate continues on with Between Friends and beyond.



2024 Financial Statements

The Calgary Between Friends Club Statement of Financial Position as of December 31, 2024. Audited by Czechowsky, Graham & Hanevelt Chartered Professional Accountants. Full financial statements available online at www.betweenfriends.ab.ca

Extracts from Audited Financial Statements

Statement of Financial Position

Assets	General Fund	Property & Equipment	Endowment Fund	2024	2023
Current	\$1,162,845			\$1,162,845	\$1,394,263
Endowment Fund			\$1,817,935	\$1,817,935	\$1,688,237
Property & Equipment		\$75,664		\$75,664	\$113,589
Restricted Cash		\$21,100		\$21,100	\$2,307
Total Assets	\$1,162,845	\$96,764	\$1,817,935	\$3,077,544	\$3,198,396
Liabilities				2024	2023
Current	\$47,310			\$47,310	\$44,860
Deferred Contributions Related to Operations	\$471,915			\$471,915	\$706,406
Deferred Contributions Related to Casino	\$74,055			\$74,055	\$54,566
Deferred Contributions Related to Property & Equipment		\$68,414		\$68,414	\$93,929
Total Liabilities	\$593,280	\$68,414		\$661,694	\$899,761
Net Assets (includes Endowment Fund)	\$569,565	\$28,350	\$1,817,935	\$2,415,850	\$2,298,635
TOTAL	\$1,162,845	\$96,764	\$1,817,935	\$3,077,544	\$3,198,396

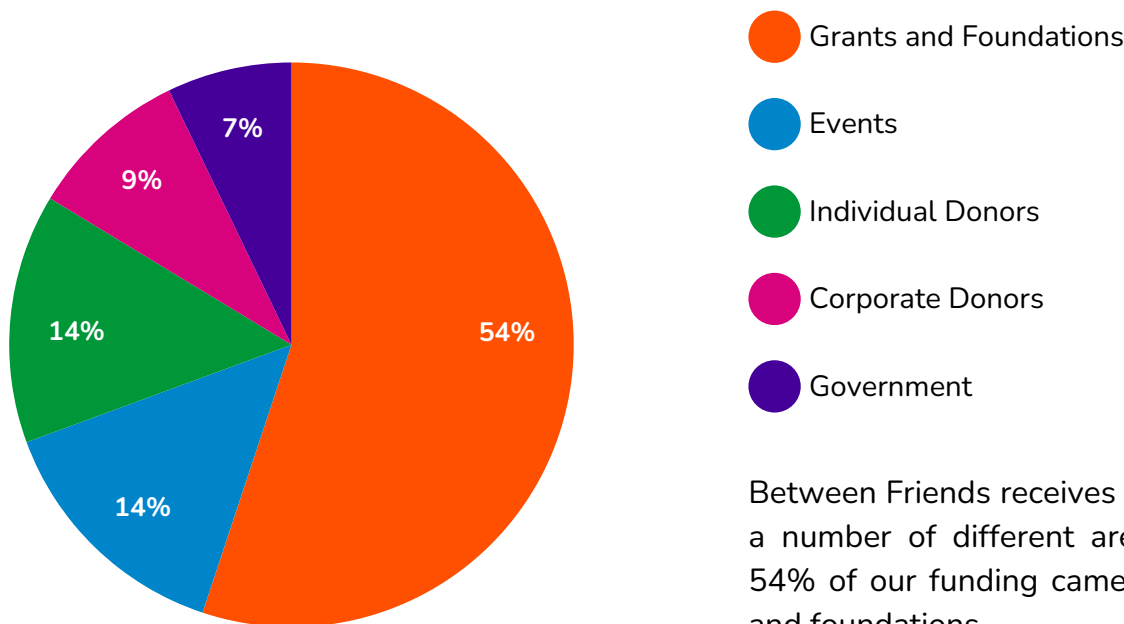
Statement of Operations

Revenue	General Fund	Property & Equipment	Endowment Fund	2024	2023
Fundraising	\$1,501,919			\$1,501,919	\$1,050,031
Programs	\$647,366	\$46,615		\$693,981	\$634,925
Government Grants	\$87,494			\$87,494	\$153,581
Investment Income (Interest & Endowment Fund)	\$32,504			\$32,504	\$32,664
Total	\$2,269,283	\$46,615		\$2,315,898	\$1,871,201
Expenses				2024	2023
Direct Costs	\$2,119,490			\$2,119,490	\$1,686,031
Operating Expenses	\$234,205	\$59,098		\$293,303	\$257,247
Total	\$2,353,695	\$59,098		\$2,412,793	\$1,943,278
Excess (Deficiency) of Revenue Over Expenses	-\$84,412	-\$12,483		-\$96,895	-\$39,340
Other Income (Unrealized Gain or Long Term Investments)			\$214,110	\$214,110	\$77,630
Excess of Revenue Over Expenses	-\$84,412	-\$12,483	\$214,110	\$117,215	\$38,290

2024 by the Numbers



Our Funding



Between Friends receives funding from a number of different areas. In 2024 54% of our funding came from grants and foundations.

Our Donors

We want to extend a huge thank you to our incredibly generous donors who have supported us throughout 2024.

Due to your support, we have been able to continue offering the programs and services our members have come to know and love. We are incredibly fortunate to have a group of loyal supporters.



Lily Street Foundation



The Ken King Courts



This year, Between Friends was part of the grand opening of the Ken King Courts at Sandy Beach, a space that brings together **recreation, community, and inclusivity** in a fun and meaningful way.

Pickleball is more than just a growing sport for Between Friends - it's a perfect match for our mission. Its adaptable rules and accessible design create a space where people of all abilities can connect, grow, and have fun, whether in a fast-paced match or a gentle rally.

The Ken King Courts enhance our recreational programming, offering a space where our members and community can **come together, break barriers, and build lasting friendships**.

This achievement wouldn't have been possible without the strong partnerships with the Parks Foundation Calgary, the City of Calgary, the Flames Foundation, and the Calgary Foundation.



Camp Bonaventure, Red Deer

In 2024, Between Friends marked a significant milestone in our 40+ year history with the launch of Camp Bonaventure in Red Deer. This expansion was driven by the growing need for inclusive, high-quality social and recreational opportunities for individuals with disabilities in Central Alberta. By bringing the same energy and spirit of belonging that defines our Calgary locations, we were able to extend our mission of inclusion to an underserved community.

Thanks to the strong support from the local community, campers were able to explore **new activities, build confidence, and form lasting friendships**. The success of the pilot program not only confirmed the demand for these services but also allowed us to introduce W.E.S.O.A.R and host special events.

This expansion is a proud and exciting new chapter in our history. As we continue to grow, we eagerly anticipate how Red Deer will evolve, expanding opportunities for people with disabilities to access local programming that fosters connection, growth, and a true sense of belonging.

Calgary's Top 20 Business Leaders: Kimberley Presser

In 2024, Kimberley Presser, CEO of Between Friends, was named one of **Calgary's Top 20 Business Leaders** - a well-deserved recognition of her visionary leadership and commitment to inclusion.

Kimberley's journey with Between Friends began in 2006 as a Camp Counsellor, and over the years, she's grown alongside the organization from a shy, behind-the-scenes girl, to a confident and inspiring leader who **champions inclusivity and empowers others to make a difference.**

As CEO, Kimberley has expertly led Between Friends through an extraordinary period of growth, significantly elevating our brand recognition. She spearheaded the successful expansion of Camp Bonaventure to Red Deer, grew our full-time staff to 14, and co-launched Inclusive Recreation Day in Alberta.

Kimberley is a passionate advocate for the disability community, serving on the Planet Youth working committee, and has secured essential funding to ensure our programs continue to thrive. Her exceptional leadership, paired with her dedicated team, has been crucial in securing the resources necessary to expand our reach and make a lasting impact in the community.

At Between Friends, we are incredibly proud to recognize Kimberley's **outstanding leadership and dedication to creating an inclusive community.**



Central Alberta's Top 40 Under 40: Steven Wheeler

In 2024, our Program Supervisor, Red Deer, Steven Wheeler received the **Top 40 Under 40 award in Central Alberta**. This award recognizes young leaders making a positive impact in their communities, and Steven has certainly done that. Since joining the Between Friends team in January 2024, Steven has been the driving force behind the successful launch of Camp Bonaventure in Red Deer.

Steven's **passion for creating inclusive experiences** for people with disabilities shines through in his work at Between Friends. His innovative approach to programming and ability to connect with participants have left a lasting impact on those we serve.

His dedication to **building meaningful partnerships** has been crucial in helping Between Friends break into the Red Deer community. By connecting with local initiatives that promote inclusion and accessibility, Steven has laid the groundwork for our expansion. These partnerships are not just alliances - they are key to establishing a strong presence in a new community, ensuring our members in Red Deer have access to the resources and support they need to thrive.

Steven truly embodies the core values of Between Friends. His dedication ensure that everyone, regardless of ability, has the opportunity to **participate, thrive, and connect** within our community.



Programmatic Safety

In 2024, Between Friends placed a strong focus on **enhancing programmatic safety**. Several initiatives were launched to strengthen safety practices and improve participant support.

A key development was the creation of a **Caregiver & Aide Guide**. This guide will help caregivers, participants, and support aides navigate Between Friends as a participant with a 1:1 ratio. Between Friends also revised its **Medication Administration Form**, making it more user-friendly and easier to understand for both staff and families.

To support frontline staff, a new **Program Leader Manual** was introduced, providing quick-reference materials related to safety procedures and best practices. Additionally, Between Friends began the important process of revising staff-to-participant ratios at Camp Bonaventure, with the goal of **increasing individualized support** starting in 2025.



Corporate Connections



In 2024, our incredible corporate partners helped raise **\$126,000** in support of Between Friends' programs. We welcomed **45 corporate groups** to Camp Bonaventure, contributing over **720 hours of hands-on volunteer time**.

Highlights from the year include:

- Hosting **8 community BBQs**, where corporate volunteers served hot dogs and snacks to over 800 campers.
- **32 groups supported our Camp Garden** and enhanced the space by building and painting both new and existing structures.
- **5 corporate teams volunteered directly alongside our campers**, helping create unforgettable camp experiences.

We are deeply grateful for the time, energy, and generosity of our corporate partners—your support helps us build inclusive, joyful spaces for everyone.

Hi everyone - Kit Here!

I just wanted to say a huge thank you to everyone who helped make 2024 such a fun and incredible year. We got to do so many exciting new things - like expanding to Red Deer!

I can't wait to see what the future holds for Between Friends, and am excited to continue building an inclusive community where everyone belongs!



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Between Friends
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