



2025
Annual
Report



KARA Family Resource Centre



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Welcome to KARA

2025 was a year that asked much of us—and in return, revealed the depth of KARA’s strength, resilience, and heart.

We began the year with momentum, launching our new brand and investing in the systems, structures, and people that will carry KARA forward. From advancing our service delivery model to strengthening our internal practices through occupational health and safety, wellness initiatives, and leadership development, we remained grounded in our commitment to families and to each other.

As the year unfolded, we navigated significant and unexpected change. The decision to leave our long-standing home and transition into a new space was not an easy one. The months that followed brought complexity—coordinating a full organizational move, adapting to temporary disruptions, and responding to unforeseen challenges in our new environment. And yet, through it all, KARA never stopped showing up. Programs continued. Families were supported. KARA’s Summer BBQ and Kicks for Kids events took place. Community remained at the centre of everything we did.

This year was also a powerful reminder that KARA is so much more than a building. It is people. It is relationships. It is a community that comes together, especially when it matters most.

I am deeply grateful to our exceptional staff team, whose dedication, adaptability, and care carried us through this year. To our volunteers, who gave their time, expertise, and energy so generously. To our Board of Directors, for their steady leadership, guidance, and support. And to our community partners, funders, and supporters—your belief in and commitment to KARA makes this work possible.

Together, we moved through challenge, embraced change, and continued building something meaningful. The future of KARA is strong, and I am honoured to be on this journey with all of you.

Darby Wilkinson
Executive Director





Message from the Chair

2025 was a year of change, resilience, and renewal for KARA. Despite major operational transitions, the organization continued to support children and families across Edmonton with compassion, creativity, and determination.

A major milestone this year was KARA’s relocation from the “Main” site. From a governance perspective, the Board played a key role in ensuring strategic oversight and continuity during this complex transition. We focused on risk management, financial stewardship, and long-term sustainability, while supporting leadership as they coordinated logistics and maintained service delivery. The move also prompted important discussions about where and how KARA can deliver programs, keeping the organization nimble and deeply connected to the community.

Behind the scenes, the Board advanced our Policy Governance model, supported the implementation of the 2024–2027 Strategic Plan, and welcomed new Directors who brought fresh skills and perspectives. We also said farewell to members completing their terms after years of meaningful service.

As I submit my final report as Board Chair, I extend my gratitude to my fellow Board members, Darby, and the entire KARA team for their dedication, and to our funders, donors, partners, and volunteers. Your trust and support made it possible for families to continue finding connection, hope, and support during a demanding year.

Cameron Van De Walle
Board Chair

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair	Cameron Van De Walle
Vice Chair	Jessica Griffin
Treasurer	Katrina Tan
Secretary	Stephanie Brown
Director	Amanda Au
Director	Kara Hartfield
Director	Ester Moshi
Director	Cindy Siu
Director	Luke Skaarup
Director	Dawn Schmitz
Director	Satty Dhillon

VISION

Empowered communities with resilient families.

MISSION

Championing a brighter future for families and communities through supportive programs and services that are rooted in education, connection and acceptance.

VALUES

KARA IS:	Accepting
Compassionate	Resilient
Playful	Committed

KARA Family Resource Centre was proud to earn the Workplace Well-being and Performance Ambassador certification from Wellness Works Canada. This designation recognizes our strong, people-first culture and our ongoing commitment to supporting staff growth and development.

It highlights the many ways we prioritize workplace well-being, psychological health, and overall performance, ensuring that our team has the tools, resources, and support they need to thrive.



At KARA, we understand that when our staff feel valued, supported, and empowered, it directly strengthens our ability to serve families and our wider community.

This certification reflects not only our current achievements but also our dedication to continuous improvement and fostering a positive, healthy workplace culture for years to come.

WELLNESS WORKS CANADA



NEW WEBSITE

In 2025, KARA Family Resource Centre updated our website with a clean, mobile-friendly design, improved accessibility, and interactive features.

The refreshed site makes programs and resources easier to find, keeping families informed and connected while reflecting our commitment to care and community.

Visit www.kara-frc.com to see for yourself!

“Seeing my child be more involved in group activities and talking more made me so happy. The programs really develop new skills, and teaches children to be in group settings.”

-KARA Client



PROGRAMS



2025 was a year of transition, growth, and innovation for KARA's programs. The relocation from our "Main" site to KARA-Too tested our adaptability but highlighted the strength of our service delivery model and the dedication of our staff.

Throughout the move, staff ensured programs continued uninterrupted. They kept services running from KARA Main while gradually expanding into satellite locations, and by the fall were delivering programs fully offsite. Families noticed little disruption to the quality and warmth of our programs, a testament to the professionalism, care, and creativity of the team.

This shift into community-based delivery had lasting benefits. By year's end, KARA was operating in 15 locations, reducing travel barriers for families and creating opportunities for local connections. Schools, community leagues, and local leaders strengthened partnerships, helping KARA embed programs in neighbourhoods where they are needed most.

Several programs stood out in 2025. Play Adventures continued as an important first point of access for families. Kids in the Kitchen taught practical life skills while fostering confidence, problem-solving, and connection. Books and Bites combined literacy and nutrition in ways families could easily integrate at home. GLOW Girl and GLOW Together created safe spaces for youth and parents to discuss online safety, relationships, identity, and community participation, while also encouraging service and care for local spaces.

Staff brought KARA's home-like atmosphere into every new location, creating environments where families felt seen, safe, and connected. The move reinforced that home is not a place, but the relationships, consistency, and care we provide.

Looking ahead to 2026, we are excited to continue expanding programming in neighbourhoods, deepening connections with families, and strengthening the spaces where children and communities can truly thrive.

Stasia Quillian

Program Manager

2800+

INDIVIDUALS
SERVED

1600

PROGRAM
HOURS

2500

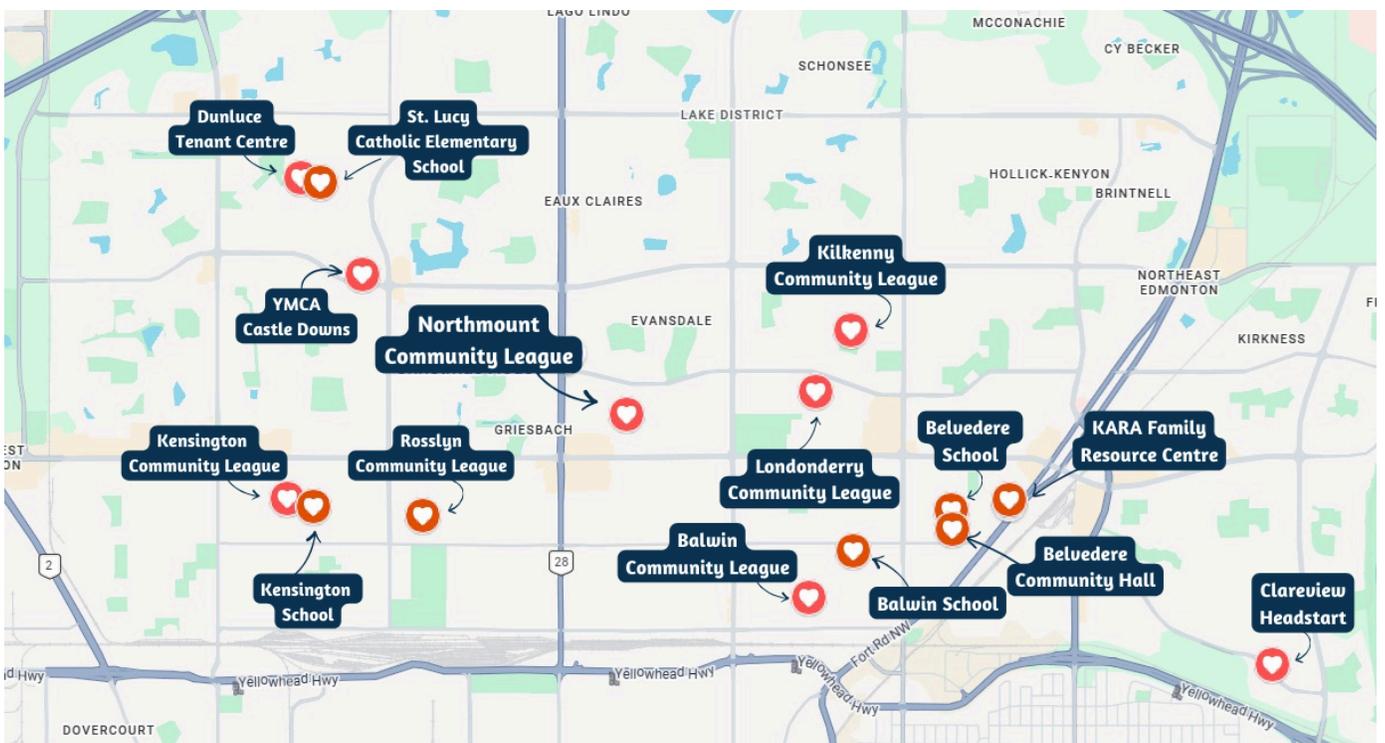
COMMUNITY
REFERRALS

Connecting families with the right supports, building relationships with community organizations to guide and empower them toward their goals.

SERVICE DELIVERY & OUTREACH

KARA's expanded outreach model reflects our 2024–2027 Strategic Plan, which prioritizes a multi-site service delivery approach to improve accessibility and strengthen community partnerships. In August 2025, KARA relocated to a smaller administrative space without on-site programming capacity. In response, we increased our neighbourhood-based program locations to better meet families where they are.

Today, KARA operates in 15 community locations across northeast Edmonton, including schools, libraries, community leagues, recreation centres, and tenant spaces. That is an increase of 10 sites since leaving KARA Main. While this model enhances accessibility, it also requires significant coordination, resource management, and staff support.



"KARA programs are fantastic. They help kids grow through creativity and play while also helping parents connect."

-KARA Client



COMMUNITY



Kickoff to Summer BBQ

Highlights included a free community bbq, face painting, petting zoo, balloon art, carnival games, and agency row!

1100+

COMMUNITY MEMBERS ATTENDED

Kicks for Kids

Our annual Kicks for Kids event empowers children as they go back to school with a new pair of shoes that **THEY PICKED OUT!**

700+

NEW SHOES HANDED OUT



Celebrating Families

From family dinners, Father's Day, Mother's Day, and other holidays, we loved celebrating families in 2025!

\$28,000

WORTH OF FOOD SERVED

More 2025 Highlights!

National Indigenous Peoples Day with FRN Network Hullabaloo at the HUB
Belvedere Family Day Spaghetti Dinner
Lead Community Engagement Sessions
M.E. LaZerte Career Day Presentation
Trunk or Treat
Mother's Day Tea



VOLUNTEERS



Volunteers are the engine of KARA, and vital to everything we do.

From dedicated administrative and program volunteers who show up day after day—supporting operations, welcoming families, and strengthening outcomes for children and caregivers—to those who support events, bingo fundraisers, and serve as COBS Bread drivers, the generosity of our volunteers allows KARA to maintain a strong and responsive presence in the community.

Last year, our incredible group of 170 volunteers contributed a total of 4031 hours in support of our programs and services.

Their contributions are not only measured in hours, but in the care, compassion, and connection they bring into every interaction. They are truly walking, talking expressions of community in action.

In August 2025, more than 70 volunteers from Weidner Property Management traveled to Edmonton from across Western Canada to support KARA's move to our new full-time location. In a single day, these volunteers packed and loaded boxes and completed renovations at KARA-Too. Their collective effort, energy, and commitment made what felt impossible, possible.

Because of our volunteers, KARA can do more, reach further, and continue showing up for families in meaningful and lasting ways.

4031

VOLUNTEER
HOURS

170

VOLUNTEERS

Roles

Board of Directors, Bingo,
Reception, Programs,
Baby-Cuddling,
Yard Clean-Up,
Event Support,
Custodial, Moving
COBS Bread driver.

\$100K+

ESTIMATED
\$ VALUE



FINDING STRENGTH THROUGH SUPPORT: WESSAL'S STORY



Before hearing about KARA Family Resource Centre, Wessal had been taking her toddler to programs at the Edmonton Public Library. She learned about KARA from a family friend while visiting her sister-in-law. "I wanted my son to try different things – new sensory things," she said.

The first program she took her son to was Little Van Gogh, a painting program for 0 - 6 year olds. She was really anxious. "I only knew the library, so I just expected to be always running after my son because he's so active and likes to touch and discover things.

"It was actually the opposite. They're very easygoing."

Wessal praises KARA as a very welcoming, nonjudgemental environment. "The first impression was very, very, very positive. They're very welcoming. I remember meeting Alyssa and Teri – they didn't judge me as a first time mom."

Before, Wessel would constantly be watching her son and follow his steps. Now when she goes to KARA's programs, she just sits and chats with Alyssa and Terri, KARA's Child and Family Engagement Workers. She also talks with other moms while her son runs around freely or plays with other kids.

"I just felt very welcomed, very supported. They would give me advice that my own family wouldn't give me."

Even her son gets excited to go to programs now. "When I tell him, 'we'll see Teri and Alyssa,' he knows who I'm talking about and gets excited to go."

Overall, KARA had a very positive impact on Wessal and her son, especially as a first time mom. "Alyssa and Teri have been there for me – even just for something so small, they're always there. I feel like it's a no judgment zone. I was having difficulties navigating things with my son and I felt like these programs have helped me."

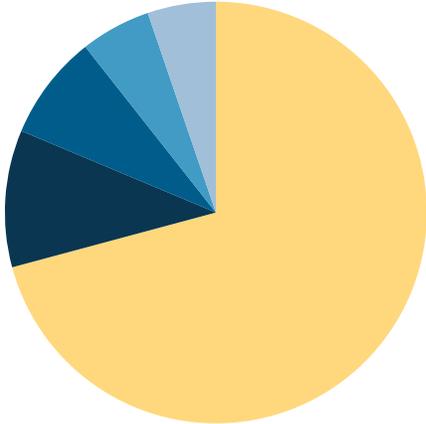
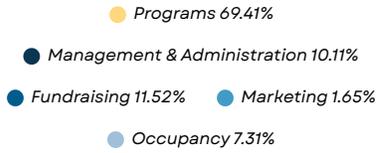


FAMILY
RESOURCE
CENTRE

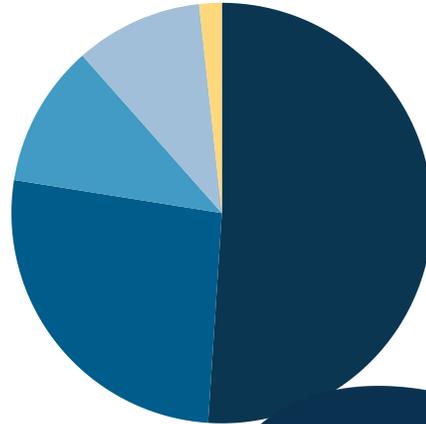
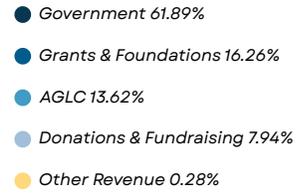
FINANCIAL STATEMENT



EXPENSES



REVENUE



It was an exciting year for KARA Family Resource Centre as we continued to build on the strong momentum of 2024. We were grateful to receive grant funding from the Butler Family Foundation, and the Appleyard Foundation. Their support enabled us to continue delivering free programming to families in our community who need it most.

Throughout the year, KARA expanded its presence in the community by participating in events hosted by the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, the Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations, and various service groups and clubs across the city. These opportunities allowed us to strengthen partnerships, share our mission, and connect with new supporters. During the summer, we proudly hosted our annual Community BBQ alongside several valued partners, including the City of Edmonton, BGC Bigs Edmonton & Area, and the Edmonton Public Library, with generous title sponsorship from ATB Financial.

Our third annual Kicks for Kids event was another tremendous success. With the support of 104.9 Virgin Radio, Royal Pizza, Brownlee LLP, River City Events, and Trinity CRC Church, we distributed more than 700 pairs of shoes to children in our community just in time for the back-to-school season.

KARA was also honoured to be the beneficiary of several third-party fundraisers and successfully launched our first online 50/50 raffle. As we continue to grow and strengthen our impact, we look forward to the opportunities ahead and the potential for an even more successful year in 2026.

Marc Majeau
Fund Development Manager



“We loved how the programs are filled with creativity and movement. My child especially enjoys the hands-on activity and freedom to explore in a fun, supportive environment.”

-KARA Client



WAYS TO SUPPORT



Sponsorships available for our Kick Off to Summer BBQ & Kicks for Kids Campaign. To make a general donation or more information contact Marc at:
marc@kara-frc.ca
780.991.5968

DONATE TODAY!



VOLUNTEER



Looking for a meaningful way to give back. Join the KARA Volunteer Team! For more information contact:
reception@kara-frc.ca
780.478.5396

LEARN MORE!



“KARA programs were a huge asset to us during the teachers strike.”
-KARA Client



THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS & SPONSORS



FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE