



# FCSSAA NEWS

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[www.fcssaa.org](http://www.fcssaa.org)

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## Happy New Year!

We are starting off the new year by celebrating the winners of the 2019 awards announced at the annual conference in November. There is amazing work being done around the province with impactful outcomes being achieved.

Congratulations to the 2019 award winners! Awards were presented by Vicki Van Vliet Vaitkunas, FCSSAA President. Thanks to Hamish Kerfoot for the photos.

### Programs less than Population of 20,000

**Camp Sunshine, Town of St. Paul FCSS** - Camp Sunshine is a bereavement Day Camp for children who have experienced the death of a significant person in their lives and is held for four very busy days each summer. It is a fun and safe place for children ages 7-12 to explore their grief and get tools to help them cope in their daily lives. Thanks to the generous support of the community, Camp Sunshine has been offered free of charge to children in the area.

Feedback from children and parents has been extremely positive. Parents shared that their children have brought the strategies learned at the camp into the home setting which also gives the entire family ideas for tending to their grief.



Lynn Smid and Vicki Van Vliet Vaitkunas

**Sylvan Lake FCSS** - The regional approach that Sylvan Lake nurtures is key to the regional programs improving. This model ensures that regional sharing is done with no competition, ego, or selfish intent - it is offered in a humble way, to spread positivity, person to person, and to build hope between FCSS members.

Through their mentoring, leadership, collaboration and facilitation, the regional programs are stronger. This regional model most definitely fulfills the larger mandate, beyond the borders of Sylvan Lake and into each of the communities they touch.



Kelly Smith, Krista Carlson, Alissa McDonald, Cllr. Teresa Rilling and Vicki Van Vliet Vaitkunas

### Programs Serving Population of 20,000-85,000

**Family & Community Resource Centre's Community Days Program, Chestermere FCSS** - For the past two years, Community Days has helped strengthen the social well-being of families involved in the program, and enhances the social fabric of the Chestermere community.

Community Days is a dynamic initiative hosted by FCRC to support local families to be more connected. Families have the chance to spend quality time together without the worries of financial barriers to enhance the development of positive relations.

This program exemplifies creating affordable and accessible programming as part of the service delivery strategy, to ensure social inclusion for all members of the community.



Olimphyza Elizondo, Paulette Tippe, Danielle Fermin, and Ruby Brar and Vicki Van Vliet Vaitkunas

**Community Opioid Response, City of Grande Prairie FCSS** - Over the last two years FCSS collectively engaged with the Community Opioid Task Force and community stakeholders to develop and implement key outcomes. Some of the achievements of the Task Force have been:

- Development and distribution of a needle disposal guide for Grande Prairie
- Creating a Grande Prairie specific video series about the opioid crisis to use for education around stigma
- Drafting a Community Opioid Response document to guide community collaboration on the opioid response
- Creating a Grande Prairie focused resource website [www.everyoneisimpacted.com](http://www.everyoneisimpacted.com)



Jasmin Marshall, Cllr. Dylan Bresse, Angela Sutherland and Vicki Van Vliet Vaitkunas

**Programs Serving more than Population of 85,000 Opioids Don't Discriminate, Strathcona County FCS** - This is a one of a kind, interactive exhibit that profiles

local opioid use statistics and invites participants to walk through three different narratives based on real-life experiences: David, Max, and Natasha.

These stories, based on true experiences of those affected by opioid use, address the pervasive stigmas and judgements about people who use drugs, while strengthening empathy and understanding about substance abuse. You can learn more here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qN3ChIAJqVc>



Bree Claude, Mayor Rod Frank and Vicki Van Vliet Vaitkunas

**Outstanding Individual Achievement FCSS Staff Lisa Topilko, Vegreville & District FCSS** - Lisa began working with Vegreville and District FCSS in 2004, having already had significant experience as an Elementary School Teacher. This experience working with parents, students, staff and the community provided her with an assortment of skills and tools that have been evident throughout the outstanding service she has provided.

The support of excellence has been a driving force for Lisa including the expansion of Volunteer Vegreville, supporting people with respect and compassion, and consistently coming up with creative solutions.



Lisa Topilko and Vicki Van Vliet Vaitkunas

**Premier's Award**

**Vicki Van Vliet Vaitkunas** - Vicki was selected by Edmonton City Council to be a member of the Community Services Advisory Board in 2007, where she served as an active member until her term expired in 2014. While on CSAB she was appointed to the FCSS Committee in 2012, and remains on the committee to this day.

In 2012 Vicki became the City of Edmonton representative for the Edmonton Evergreen Region, and as a result, joined the FCSSAA Board, where she has served as both Vice President and President.

Vicki has volunteered extensively and has made significant contributions to the FCSS community and beyond.



Vicki Van Vliet Vaitkunas and Deputy Minister Shannon Marchand

Thank you to all the award winners for your commitment support individuals and families across Alberta in creative and meaningful ways.

The call for 2020 award nominations will be sent out late spring. Start thinking about programs and people from your area that are doing great work to nominate.



**We are Moving**

As of April 1, 2020 the FCSSAA office will be in the new Edmonton Public Library downtown. We will send details about the address change closer to our move.

For questions or other information please feel free to contact us:

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There are more photos from the 2019 conference on our social media channels. Follow us on:

