

“... and all at once, Summer collapsed into Fall”. Oscar Wilde

BOARD NEWS AND INFORMATION

The following individuals comprise Elves’ 2022/2023 elected volunteer Board of Directors:

Heather Fonteyne, President (AP Parent)

Mildred Ncube, Vice-President (ECS Parent)

Peter Jansen, Treasurer (CM)

Raewyn Edwards, Secretary (SP Parent)

Karen Ens, Director (CM)

Joyce Oliver, Director (AP Parent)

Khurram Shahzad, Director (CM)

Natalie Viesel, Director (ECS Parent)

Kristin Ward Diaz, Director (ECS Parent)

Terry Wright, Director (AP Parent)

Stephanie Atkin, Past-President (CM)

Barb Tymchak Olafson, Executive Director

(SP – School Program)

(AP – Adult Program)

(ECS – Early Childhood Services)

(CM – Community Member)

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ACTIVE ELVES’ BOARD COMMITTEES

Advocacy Committee

Stephanie Atkin, Heather Fonteyne,
Barb Tymchak Olafson

Bylaw/Policy Committee

Mildred Ncube, Terry Wright
Barb Tymchak Olafson

Location/Planning Committee

Gene Hochachka, Chris Idenouye, Terry Wright
Barb Tymchak Olafson

Fundraising Committee

Vivienne Barte, Heather Fonteyne, Raewyn Edwards,
Mildred Ncube, Kristin Ward Diaz, Marty Cender, Gail
Idenouye, Anne-Marie Jackson, Chris Maksylewicz,
Jasmine Abu-Msameh, Teresa Vano,
Barb Tymchak Olafson

Parent Advisory Council

Cathy Furtak (Adult Program Parent)
Lynn Gourley (Adult Program Parent)
Bill Gunter (Adult Program Parent)
Roxanna Hilton (Adult Program Parent)
Mildred Ncube (Early Childhood Parent)
Poonum Gillani (Early Childhood Parent)
Barb Tymchak Olafson

BOARD MEETINGS

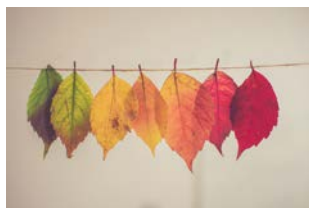
Elves’ Society holds **ten regular Board Meetings each year**, as well as our **Annual General Meeting each November**. Special meetings are held when matters arise requiring immediate attention.

Last Regular Board Meeting: October 24, 2023

Next Regular Board Meeting: November 14, 2023

Please visit Elves’ website at www.elves-society.org to see copies of these reports/legislation:

- Society Audited Financial Statement for the year ending August 31, 2022
- Elves’ School Program 2022 Assurance Framework



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

From Possibility to Ability

We are pleased to welcome Elves' families and friends to the 2023/2024 school year.

ELVES' SCHOOL PROGRAM

Elves' September 30 enrollment numbers stand at 282 children and students registered in our School Program. There are 226 Early Childhood children and 56 school-aged students.

ELVES' ADULT PROGRAM

There are currently 88 clients attending Elves' Adult Program. Since July 2023, we welcomed three new clients. Sadly, we also grieve the passing of Dan Blyschuk.

ELVES' RESPITE PROGRAM

Elves Respite Program serves 30 program participants. The program began 2023/2024 operations on September 09, 2023.

STAFF MEMBERS

We are pleased to introduce our new School Program Principal at Elves this year, **Kiera Meidinger**. Kiera has been with Elves for over seven years, initially in a teaching capacity prior to her position as Special Education Supports and Learning Coach.

We are grateful for all of our returning staff in all of Elves' programs. Their presence enables the success of all program participants.

Elves would also like to extend a warm welcome to our many other new staff members this year.

Sadly, we have had to say goodbye to some staff including: **Marilyn Vendiola** (Adult Program Nurse for over 20 years), **Saly Habashy** (Occupational Therapist since 2019), and recent hire, **Stephanie Kriese** (Social Worker).

We would like to welcome **Brenda Swanson**, who is the new Lead Registered Nurse for Elves' Adult Program and School Program.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Elves will be holding our Annual General Meeting this year on Wednesday, November 22, 2023. This meeting will once again be held in a virtual format.

Membership forms and official meeting notice have been forwarded to all families and Society members.

Elves' Nominating Committee Report will be distributed to Elves' community with a final slate of new candidates including:

- Anna-May Choles, (Community Member Representative)
- Patricia Fleury, (Early Childhood Parent Representative)
- Jessica Troock, (School Program Representative)
- _____

THANK YOU!

Thank you to our numerous friends, families, and staff who are supporting Elves fundraiser 50/50 events during which, funds have been raised in the amounts shown here!

Summer Fun	\$3,255
Thanksgiving	\$ 995





PRINCIPAL

On behalf of all the staff at Elves Special Needs Society, we are pleased to welcome you to the 2023/2024 school year. We hope that you enjoyed the summer months with your families.

My name is Kiera Meidinger and I am the new Principal at Elves. I was a classroom teacher at Elves in a Youth regulation room and was then in the role of Special Education Supports & Learning Coach for six years.

I am looking forward to getting to know those families who are new to us, as well as connecting again with our returning families.

Elves' School Program classroom and resource teams are looking forward to continuing to get to know all of our 282 students.

<u>DATES TO NOTE FOR 2023</u>	
Remembrance Day (no school)	November 10, 2023
PD Day (no school)	December 08, 2023
Winter Recess	December 25-31, 2023

Kiera Meidinger, Principal



ELVES' FAMILY SUPPORT WORKERS

ELVES' SOCIAL WORKERS	
Stefanie Saltys, BSW, RSW Family Support Department 10825 – 142 Street NW Edmonton AB T5N 3Y7 Phone: 780.454.5310, ext 230 Cell Phone: 780.974.2581 Email: elvessw@elves-society.com	Stefanie is an Elves' Family Support Worker who works Tuesday to Friday with Elves' School Program and Saturdays at Elves' FASD Respite Program.
Angela Vardy, BSW, RSW Family Support Department 10419 – 159 Street EDMONTON AB T5N 3Y7 Phone: 780.481.5335 ext 212 Cell Phone: 780.920.2169 Email: sw4@elves-society.com	Angela is an Elves' Family Support Worker who works Monday, Wednesday and Friday throughout the school year at Elves Adult & Youth Centre.

Let me introduce your Family Support Workers!

Are you looking for resources in our community for recreation or supports? Do you want some help to advocate for supports for your family or child with special needs? Do you need help with forms or understanding documents and reports? Do you want information on how to access support after Elves?

Whatever your needs, just give us a call, send a text message, email us or write in your child's communication book that you are looking to speak to your Family Support Worker and one of us will be in touch with you.

Recommended Resource **Help in Tough Times**

This is a government online resource connecting Albertans with supports and services during "Tough Times". At some point in our lives, we all have stressful stretches. We can be impacted by such things as financial pressures, unexpected difficulties, unemployment, or worrying situations such as Addiction and Mental Health.

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/amh/Page16759.aspx>



211 Alberta's Vision

The vision for 211 Alberta is to have a comprehensive Information and Referral system that is accessible to all Albertans.

What this means for individuals or their family members, neighbours, friends, and colleagues who are looking for help, is that 211 is a number they know and trust to provide effective, timely, and appropriate information and referrals to community resources.

Are you on Social Media?

Here are some Facebook support groups that many of our families have recommended:

- Families looking for Respite, IRInc
- Top Quality Private Day Home and Babysitter Listings Edmonton and Area
- Edmonton and Area Babysitters and Dayhomes
- Parents of Children with Special Needs - Edmonton and area
- Support for Canadian parents - ASD-ODD-ADHD
- Edmonton ADHD Mom/Dad's Group
- Edmonton Moms
- Connecting Parents of Autistic Children Alberta
- Raising Kids with a Growth Mindset
- Spirited Child Support- Help for Parents of Spirited and Strong-Willed Children

Learning through Play Ideas

Looking for ways to be silly with your children this Fall?

1. Pretend to make the bed while they are still in it.
2. Tell corny jokes (commonly known as 'dad jokes').
3. Make silly faces.
4. Put on some music and dance in the kitchen (songs like Macarena and the Chicken Dance are particularly good for laughing).
5. Initiate a tickle war.
6. Have a backwards day.

7. Actually play on the playground with them: swing on the swings, climb up the jungle gym, balance on the teeter totter.
8. Roll down a hill.
9. Splash in puddles.
10. Make food in fun shapes or add some food colouring.
11. Eat ice cream for breakfast.
12. Play [Twister](#).
13. Sit down on the floor and play with them.
14. [Make ghost hands](#).
15. Face paint (make sure that you let the kids paint your face too!).
16. Let them style your hair or do your make-up or paint your nails.
17. Build a fort with them out of blankets and then climb inside and have a tea party.
18. Dress up like clowns.
19. [Have a sponge fight](#).
20. Have a [silly string](#) fight.

If you move, change your phone number, wish to ask about registration, or to speak to someone for supports and referrals, please call 780.454.5310, ext. 236, text 780.920.8791, or email Stefanie at sw3@elves-society.com

ELVES' SPEECH DEPARTMENT

BACK TO SCHOOL

Going back to school can be hard! Here are some tips to help your child understand the new routine and to share about their day.

USE VISUALS

- Show your child a **picture of the bus** before it comes in the morning/afternoon
- Show a **picture of Elves** before getting ready for the day
- Use a **calendar with picture of school vs. no school** to help them understand when they are going.



TALK ABOUT THE DAY

Instead of asking “What did you do at school today?”, create LESS pressure:

Try:

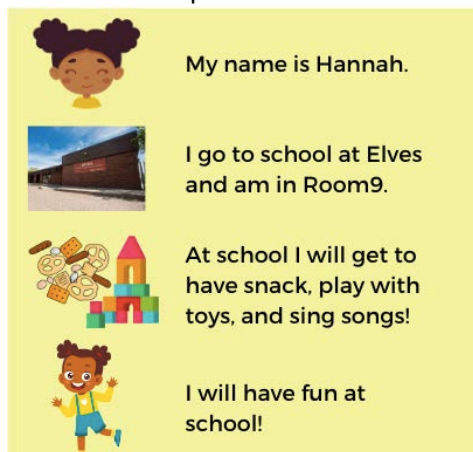
- Checking their communication book and read about their day;
- Ask a specific question (e.g., “Did you play on the playground?”)
- Make comments (e.g., “You played with blocks!” or “you made a beautiful craft!”), etc.
- Model phrases (e.g., “I like school!”, “I had fun today!”, “I was sad today”) etc.

TRY A SOCIAL STORY

What is a Social Story?

- A social story is to help a person understand what to expect during a new activity or routine.
- They help a person know what to do in that situation.
- They can help a child to know what to expect at school.

Here is an example of one:



My name is Hannah.

I go to school at Elves and am in Room9.

At school I will get to have snack, play with toys, and sing songs!

I will have fun at school!

ELVES’ FASD RESPITE PROGRAM

Respite Program 2023/2024

WELCOME!

Welcome to the program to our new and returning program participants! We are so excited to start a new year at Elves’ Respite Program!

We happily announce that we have welcomed back most of our staff with a few new additions. Welcome Lori and Charis and welcome back Marco, Tanya, Viola, Rowella, Guzal, Jewell, Imogen, Micheline, Kayla, Brittany, & Denise.

PROGRAMMING HOURS

It is the responsibility of parents/caregivers to ensure that their child is picked up no later than 3:00 pm. If you are going to be late, please contact Raelee, Elves’ Program Coordinator, as soon as possible at 780.454.5310 or call/text 780.920.5342. In the unfortunate event that your child is not picked up from Elves or from their designated bus stop, all attempts have been made to contact the parent/caregiver, and emergency contacts are exhausted, Children’s Services may be contacted for alternate care.

NECESSARY ITEMS TO BRING TO RESPITE

Please ensure your child has a water bottle, lunch, snacks, a change of clothes, and indoor shoes. Please label all items with their name.

ABSENCES

If your child is going to be absent from the Saturday Respite Program, please call or text Raelee at 780.920.5342 or email to respite@elves-society.com

Important Dates

DATE	EVENT
November 17, 2023	Virtual Family Support Group: Positive Behaviour Supports: Elves’ Resource Team will be presenting from 12:00 - 1:00 pm.



NURSING DEPARTMENT

ELVES' NURSING STAFF

Elves Child Development Centre
Diane McCook (LPN)

Elves Adult & Youth Centre
Rhea Arguelles (LPN – Youth Program)
Leila Dela Cruz (LPN – Youth Program)
Brenda Swanson (RN – Adult Program)
Tina Marsh-Woodcock (LPN – Adult Program)

Greetings to everyone from Elves' Nursing staff!
We wish you all a warm welcome back to school, Elves students, Clients, and Staff and families. We hope your summer was super enjoyable and restful.

WITH FALL WEATHER CREEPING IN THE TEMPERATURES ARE REALLY UNPREDICTABLE

Please remember to send in appropriate clothing, mittens and hats to help keep all of the Elves participants warm while enjoying their outdoor playtime. Please remember to include these items in your child's backpack.

Flu Season also coincides with the arrival of colder temperatures, shorter days and temperature changes. The most important measure for preventing infection is hand washing. Use soap and warm water to eliminate most germs, rub hands together for at least 20 seconds and use friction to remove the germs from the surface of the skin. Wash hands before eating, after going to the bathroom, sneezing or coughing. Proper nutrition, rest and exercise can also help the body resist infection.

Alberta Health Services offers Flu Immunization FREE OF CHARGE

Free to all individuals who live, work, or go to school in Alberta.

Immunization for the flu is also an effective means of preventing influenza infection and illness. These vaccines

are not the same as the mRNA COVID-19 vaccines, but they help reduce the risk of influenza.

Flu Immunizations and Clinics can be found on the Alberta Health Services website: www.albertahealthservices.ca

Health Link Health Advice is available 24/7 at a new phone number (811). A website is also set up at MyHealth.Alberta.ca/811.

Elves Nursing Staff:
Brenda, Diane, Leila, Rhea, & Tina

ADULT PROGRAM NEWS



Elves Adult Program has officially completed harvesting all of the vegetables that clients and staff have planted and grown during the Spring and Summer. We are currently busy brainstorming recipes and ideas about how to make the best use of the apple donations we are receiving (thank you to the Elves' families who always think of us!).

As temperatures drop, our visits to the Serenity Garden tend to become shorter, while we are taking advantage of our indoor spaces such as the activity room, the gym and the Snoezelen Room.

We are embracing the Fall, its colours, and its celebrations. We organized our traditional harvest fest to celebrate Thanksgiving, while the excitement is already growing for Halloween, which is just around the corner. Without spilling the beans, we are already starting to work toward our winter holiday celebrations.



We are expecting a new program participant to join our Program possibly in November, and we were also extremely happy to welcome back David, a client and friend who had been away since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Marilyn, Registered Nurse for Elves' Adult Program, retired at the end of September. We are going to miss her!

Brenda Swanson is our new Registered Nurse and we are very happy to welcome her to Elves' community!

Laura Bellacicco, Adult Program Manager

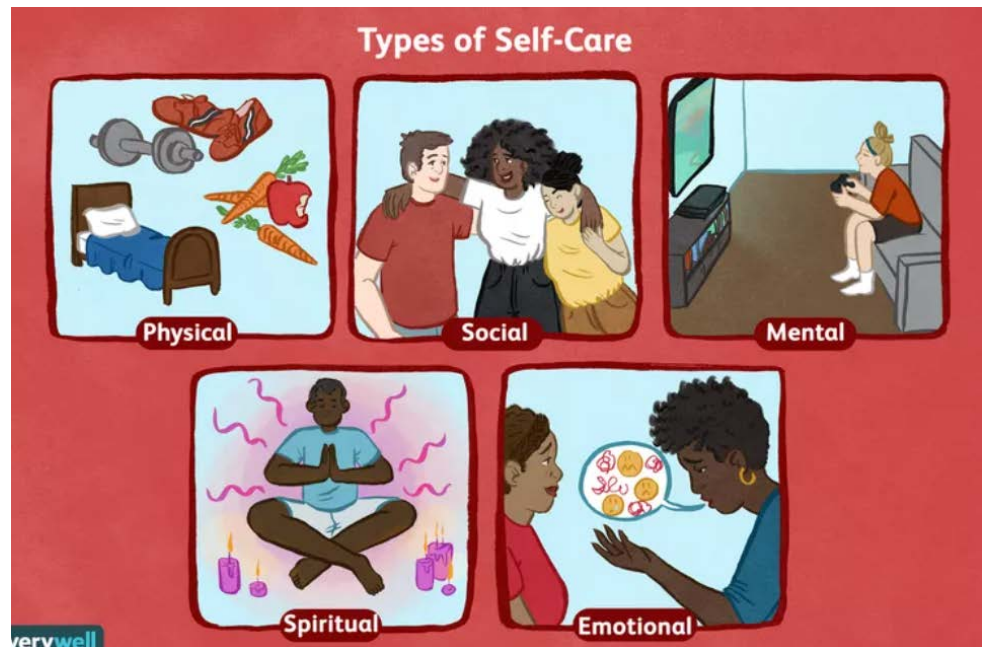
TAKE SOME TIME FOR SELF-CARE

Families, caregivers, and staff are all working together to support Elves' program participants. With the focus being on others, it is sometimes thought that addressing one's own well-being may not be a priority. We are encouraging everyone to ensure that their own self-care is being supported.

Self-care is very personal and will mean something different to each person. Some suggestions to consider when developing a self-care plan will include:

- Understanding your needs
- Identifying stressors
- Determining which self-care strategies will make you feel better
- Plan for setbacks, and forgive yourself if goals are not being met
- Plan and celebrate small successes
- Schedule time **to focus on yourself**

If you wish to learn more from the comfort of your home, there are multiple online resources addressing mindfulness, and strategies to practice self-care such as [mindful](#) and [verywellmind](#) where there are accessible tools that include ideas and podcasts addressing a wide scope of topics.





PROGRAM DIRECTORY

<u>ELVES CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTRE (10825 - 142 Street)</u>	780.454.5310
Kiera Meidinger , Principal (M-F).....	ext. 204
Kayla Wolford , Special Education Supports & Learning Coach (M-F).....	ext. 205
Ashley Lumme-Levesque , PUF Coordinator (in charge of transportation) (M-F).....	ext. 232
Vacancy , Family Support Worker (Tu-S).....	ext. 230
Stefanie Saltys , Family Support Worker (M-F).....	ext. 236
Lonneke de Groot , Speech Language Pathologist (M-F)	ext. 228
Vacancy , Speech Language Pathologist (M-F).....	ext. 228
Vacancy , Occupational Therapist (M-F).....	ext. 210
Wilna Boshoff , Physical Therapist (Thur).....	ext. 210
Holly Thompson , Physical Therapist (Tues).....	ext. 210
Tara Vanstone , OT/PT Assistant (M-F).....	ext. 224
Rachel Grenis , SLP Assistant (Tu/Th).....	ext. 210
Nicole Latus , SLP Assistant (M-F).....	ext. 210
Tasha Arbuckle , SLP Assistant (M-F).....	ext. 210
<u>ELVES FASD RESPITE PROGRAM (10825 - 142 Street)</u>	780.454.5310, ext. 233
Raelee Grier , FASD Respite Program & FOP Coordinator (Tues-Sat).....	780.920.5342
<u>ELVES ADULT & YOUTH CENTRE (10421 - 159 Street)</u>	780.481.5335
Laura Bellacicco , Adult Program Manager (M-F).....	ext. 201
Shauna Williamson , Adult Program Staff Training/Volunteer Coordinator (M-F).....	ext. 239
Connie Daynes , Adult Program Activities Coordinator/Behavioural Consultant.....	ext. 202
Angela Vardy , Family Support Worker for School Program (M/W/F).....	ext. 212
Sarah Peterson , Occupational Therapist, School Program (Tu/W/Th).....	ext. 219
Occupational Therapy Department , Adult Program (M-W).....	ext. 219
Wilna Boshoff , Physical Therapist for School Program (Tu/W/Th).....	ext. 211
Holly Thompson , Physical Therapist for School Program (Tu/W/Th).....	ext. 211
Tiffanie Levesque-McLeod , Physical Therapist for School Program (M/W/Th/F).....	ext. 211
Erin Kaminsky , OT/PT Assistant for School Program (M-F).....	ext. 254
Jillian Ackroyd-Conley , OT/PT Assistant for School Program (M-F).....	ext. 211
Tara McPhedran , Speech Language Pathologist for School Program (M-F).....	ext. 209
<u>Elves Nursing Staff:</u>	
Diane McCook , LPN for ECS Program @ ECDC	780. 454.5310, ext. 206
Brenda Swanson , Lead RN, Adult Program.....	780.481.5335, ext. 208
Rhea Arguelles , School Program LPN @ EAYC.....	780.481.5335, ext. 220
Tina Marsh-Woodcock , Adult Program LPN.....	780.481.5335, ext. 208
Leila Dela Cruz , Youth Program LPN @ EAYC	780.481.5335, ext. 220