

CLINICAL TEAM

Program Handbook





OUR VISION

A community where everyone can flourish

OUR PURPOSE

We support growth across generations

OUR VALUES

Courage

We willingly embrace growth and don't see it as optional.

Learning

We choose to grow through uncertainty, even when status quo feels easier.

Empathy

We relentlessly care about the growth of others, and won't let anyone go unsupported.

Impact

We go beyond what seems doable and prove that growth is possible.



All Are Welcome Here

We are committed to creating a welcoming, safe and inclusive environment for everyone. Our programs celebrate diversity while creating space for all voices, stories and experiences to be heard and valued. We are committed to ongoing learning and meaningful action toward Truth and Reconciliation, while advancing anti-oppressive practices within Trellis and throughout the communities we serve.

Land Acknowledgment

Our commitment to reconciliation starts by acknowledging that Trellis Society is honoured to serve in the traditional territory of the Blackfoot Confederacy, home to the Siksika, the North and South Piikani, and the Kainai Nations. We also acknowledge the Tsuut'ina, Īyārǰhé Nakoda (the Chiniki, Bearspaw and Goodstoney Nations), and the Otipemisiwak Métis Government of the Métis Nation (Districts 4, 5 and 6).

Finally, we acknowledge all nations, genders and spirits who live, work and play in Treaty 7 territory. We are all Treaty People and being here comes with the responsibility to care for this land out of respect for each other and hope for the future generations to come.



Clinical Team

Program Overview

We know that hardship, loss, conflict and trauma are unavoidable in life, and we are here to help during those difficult times. Our goal is to equip and empower you to have the supports, inner strength and coping strategies you need to heal and overcome challenges in life when they arise.

Our therapists work with children, youth and families across their life span starting as young as age four. We offer high quality, accessible counselling that uses a whole person, relationship-centered approach.

Our services are available to participants within Trellis programs as well as members of the community who are not currently accessing Trellis services. For community member clients, we offer a sliding fee scale to ensure that finances are not a barrier for you to receive the help you need.

We honour that healing takes many forms across cultures. As part of our commitment to Truth and Reconciliation, we are working to decolonize our therapeutic approach. One example of this is incorporating Indigenous healing practices, such as smudge and other ceremonies, when requested. We also work to connect clients with other cultural practices and community supports that may aid in healing beyond the traditional Western therapy model.

LOCATION & CONTACT INFORMATION:

Our therapists meet you where you are at – whether it is virtual, over the phone or at a convenient community location. Trellis has several programming sites located in all quadrants of the city where our therapists can meet you to make therapy accessible to everyone. Depending on where you live or work, we will coordinate a meeting space that best meets your needs.

CURRENT NEIGHBOURHOODS WHERE TRELLIS OFFERS PROGRAMMING:

*Beddington
Beltline
Bowness
Crescent Heights
Falconridge
Fairmont
Midnapore
Penbrooke
Pineridge
Renfrew
Strathmore
Vista Heights*

If you live outside of one of these communities, we will do our best to find another location that works for you. If you are a participant in one of our Trellis programs, our therapists will come to see you at your program whether you are at one of our Housing Programs, School-Based Programs, Afterschool Clubs, Emergency Shelter or other program.

To get in touch with the program manager or director about any concerns or feedback, please phone:

403-219-3477

Find us online at:
www.growwithtrellis.ca

About Counselling

Counselling is a chance to learn more about yourself and what you've been through while also learning new skills.

It's normal to feel unsure or even hesitant about starting therapy. Many people wonder if it will really help, worry that it might be uncomfortable, or feel like their struggles aren't "serious enough" to seek support. Counseling doesn't have to mean sitting in a room talking about your past—it can also be about gaining tools, practicing new ways of coping, and having someone walk alongside you as you figure things out.

Sometimes, counselling involves learning more about a particular condition (e.g., depression, anxiety, eating disorders) that you may be struggling with so that you can build the skills you need to cope and move forward. Other times, it simply offers a safe space to talk openly, reflect, and make sense of what's happening in your life.

Some of the benefits of counseling include:

- ❑ Improving your communication skills and relationships with others
- ❑ Building your self-esteem and acceptance of yourself
- ❑ Changing unhelpful or self-defeating thoughts and behaviours
- ❑ Expressing and managing emotions in healthier ways, including anger
- ❑ Reducing symptoms of depression, anxiety, or other mental health challenges
- ❑ Learning strategies to help manage stress
- ❑ Strengthening your decision-making and conflict resolution skills
- ❑ Developing a greater sense of purpose and direction in your life

No matter what counselling looks like for you, our goal is to create an environment of safety for you and your recovery. To do this, we embrace trauma-informed, anti-oppressive, culturally appropriate, and person-centered approaches.

We work from a "best fit" model which means we will match you with a therapist who is the best fit to meet your unique needs, wants, language, and cultural considerations wherever possible.

Therapy Approaches

Your motivation to change and your participation in counselling are the biggest keys to your success. Sometimes therapy can be hard and bring up difficult emotions and memories. These are part of the process, and we are here to support you along every step of the your healing journey. Our therapists use a variety of evidence-based approaches that we tailor to meet your unique needs.

Some of these approaches may include:

- ❑ Accelerated Resolution Therapy (ART)
- ❑ Narrative Therapy
- ❑ Solution-Focused Therapy
- ❑ Grief and Loss Therapy
- ❑ Indigenous and Traditional Healing Practices
- ❑ Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
- ❑ Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)
- ❑ Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR)
- ❑ Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)
- ❑ Addictions Therapy Relapse Prevention Therapy
- ❑ Play Therapy
- ❑ Family Counseling
- ❑ Trauma-Focused Therapy
- ❑ Art Therapy

If you are a participant in one of our Trellis programs, our therapists may also support you through case consults, advocacy, referrals, and interpretation of assessments. We also work directly with your Trellis program staff to support them with training, debriefing sessions and reflective practice so that they can support you to the best of their abilities.

Meet Our Team

Mental Health Therapists

Our therapists are here to support you, whether you are a young person, an adult, or part of a family looking for help. We will work with you to set goals that matter to you. The pace and length of therapy will be shaped around your needs and what feels most helpful for you.

Counselling Students

You may also have the option to work with a counselling student. These students are completing their master's degrees and are practicing their skills under the guidance of experienced therapists. This gives you the chance to benefit from fresh perspectives and extra support while still receiving safe and professional care.

Clinic Administrator

Our clinic administrator is here to make things easier for you. They will help you complete intake forms, find appointment times that work, set up your client profile, handle any billing if it applies, and guide you through the paperwork and consent needed to get started.

Director of Clinical Practice

Provides strategic direction and clinical supervision to the team and makes sure our services align to our organizational priorities.

What to Expect

Counselling is often like an educational experience. You learn more about yourself, while also learning new skills. Sometimes, counseling involves learning more about a particular condition (e.g., depression, anxiety, eating disorders) that you may be struggling with so that you can build the necessary coping skills.

Some of our questions may include:

- Why you are seeking therapy
- Your age
- Your financial situation
- Your availability for therapy sessions

- Your past therapy/ counselling experiences
- If you have any current or past involvement with Legal and/or Children's Services
- If there are custody considerations for minors

These questions help us to direct you to the right therapist. If there is no immediate availability for services you need, you will be placed on a waitlist.

Client Records

We keep brief case notes for each of our sessions. These notes help us to determine movement towards therapy goals, noteworthy events in your life and how you are progressing. To access your client file and case notes you need to submit a written request to the Director of Clinical Services. Your request will be responded to in 10 business days.

Mature Minor Act

Clients under the age of 16 are required to have parental consent to participate in therapeutic services. If this is not possible, a client may qualify to access services if they meet the criteria of the ACSW (Alberta College of Social Workers) Mature Minor Act. Therapists will assess whether a client meets this criteria.

What You Can Expect From Us

You can expect our team to:

- Be open, honest and empathetic
- Attempt to accommodate your needs as best as possible (session times and location, types of therapy used)
- Be on time for sessions and responsive to your needs
- Be clear communicators
- Abide by ethical standards
- Keep your information confidential, unless there is imminent or suspected harm to a child, a medical emergency or adult or we are served a court subpoena
- Ask for feedback from you - this helps us meet your needs and learn and grow as clinicians
- Be constantly expanding their expertise, knowledge and skills

We Want You to Feel Comfortable

We want you to feel at ease during your sessions. You're welcome to use any of the tools we provide, including:

- Different seating options
- Fidgets, games, toys and sand
- Sensory items such as sounds, textures and scents
- Blankets and pillows
- Snacks and beverages
- Movement supports (yoga mats, wiggle mats, and more)

Use whatever feels helpful, and let your therapist know if there's something else that would make your sessions go more smoothly.

If therapy is not effective for growth or goals have been reached, we will move towards closure. We will then talk about other options with you.

What We Expect From You

- ☐ To give us honest feedback about what is working and what is not working during our sessions
- ☐ To work as hard as you can on your healing journey
- ☐ To be honest
- ☐ Be on time for sessions
- ☐ To communicate cancellations as soon as possible

Cancellation Policy

Please provide at least 24 hours' notice if you need to cancel your appointment. If you cancel an appointment less than 24 hours before your session starts, you will be billed for the session where applicable, unless there are extenuating circumstances (sudden and severe illness etc.). We ask that you give your therapist as much notice as possible when cancelling an appointment. This enables us to create availability for another client.

If you are having challenges attending your sessions, talk to your therapist. We'll problem solve together so you can keep accessing support.

If you skip or cancel three sessions within a short period of time, your therapist will check in with you around whether counselling is the right fit for you at this time. If you are not able to engage in therapy sessions, we will understand that it is not the right time for therapy and will close your file. You can re-access services/waitlist at any time.



Expanding Access Through Fee-for-Service

Our Clinical Team works with clients through a variety of funding sources and is seeing a growing need for support.

To increase access to counseling for the community, Trellis has developed a Fee for Service program. Our fee for service program increases access to our therapists and works to limit financial barriers that can exist when accessing therapy. The revenue generated from this service is reinvested back into the clinical team so we can provide even more accessible and affordable therapy services for others in our community.

FEE FOR SERVICE

www.growwithtrellis.ca/therapy



Abuse, Harassment and Bullying

We do not allow any of this behaviour at Trellis:

Abuse

Abuse is when someone experiences violence, pain, emotional or psychological manipulation; inappropriate or unwelcome sexual contact, neglect, bullying, inappropriate administration of medication, and/or, exploitation from another person.

Bullying

Bullying is when someone hurts, embarrasses, or scares another person on purpose.

Harassment

Harassment is when someone experiences regular and ongoing unwanted verbal or physical actions or pressure from another person.

Abuse, bullying, or harassment is not permitted by or to anyone. If you have a complaint, follow the grievance procedure.

If you have concerns with the services being provided to you at any time, you have the right to contact:

**Office of the
Child & Youth Advocate:**
Suite 2420, 801 6 Avenue SW
Calgary AB T2P 3W3
Toll-free 1-800-661-3446
403-297-8435

Office of the Ombudsman:
Suite 2560, 801 – 6 Avenue SW
Calgary, AB T2P 3W2
Toll-free 1-888-455-2756
403-297-6185
info@ombudsman.ab.ca

How We Respond to Keep Everyone Safe

We want to create and keep a positive, safe, and respectful environment.

We use strategies that are meant to help you manage your behaviors while teaching ways to deal with hard situations. These strategies may include:

- ❑ **Positive Behaviour = Positive Reward (and vice versa)**
- ❑ **Managing the Environment:** Being aware of and using the environment to prevent and de-escalate crises (ex: leave the room, go for a walk).
- ❑ **Prompting:** Signaling and cueing to someone to either start a positive behavior or to stop an inappropriate action.
- ❑ **Caring Gesture:** Non-verbal physical gesture (pat on the shoulder, etc.).
- ❑ **Hurdle Help:** Offering help and support to someone when they are feeling frustrated.
- ❑ **Redirection and Distractions:** Removing a person from a group or changing the activity.
- ❑ **Proximity:** Being mindful of how physically close we are to someone.
- ❑ **Directive Statement:** Stated in a clear and assertive manner.
- ❑ **Time Away:** Allowing the person to go to a quiet area to give them some time to process their feelings before debriefing what happened. How long this is will be based on age and how much time is needed to calm themselves. For children under 10, it is based on age (ie. 6 minutes for a 6-year-old). Time away never longer than 20 minutes.

What We Don't Do

- ✗ Use intentionally harmful or abusive practices.
- ✗ Use any behaviour that is intended to ridicule, humiliate, degrade, insult or undermine someone's dignity or self-worth.
- ✗ Inappropriate use of medications as a means of dealing with behaviours.
- ✗ Deny someone the right to spiritual observances.
- ✗ Deny someone to have contact or visits with approved family members or natural supports.
- ✗ Locked confinement.
- ✗ Denying access to advocacy (Children's Advocate) or legal support.
- ✗ Any other techniques or strategies prohibited by law or legislation.

Universal Precautions & Illness Prevention

We follow the guidelines of Universal Precautions in all interactions in our program. For the health and safety of all, please do not attend a meeting if you are feeling unwell and/or have symptoms of any illness that could put the health of others at risk.

Some indicators that you should stay home may include but are not limited to:

- ❑ Fever over 99.5F (37.5C)
- ❑ Head Lice
- ❑ Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
- ❑ Yellow skin or eyes
- ❑ Eye infections e.g. conjunctivitis
- ❑ Cough
- ❑ Runny nose
- ❑ New or unexplained rash with fever
- ❑ Rapid or difficulty breathing
- ❑ Sore throat
- ❑ Present ear infection
- ❑ Muscle or joint aches
- ❑ Chicken pox, measles, etc.



Your Rights

Your rights will always be attached to your appointment reminders so you can review them anytime.



Right to Voluntary Involvement

You have a choice whether you want to work with us or not. We encourage you to talk to staff and your supports before you decide. We can support you with accessing a different program if needed.



Right to Advocacy

You have an important voice and we will support you in advocating for yourself. We will also be there to advocate for you and can connect you to other advocates if that is something you would find helpful.



Right to Conflict Resolution & Grievance Procedure

You have the right to be supported through times where you may not agree with your worker or the program. The full procedure is outlined later in this handbook.



Right to be Supported in Diversity, Safety, and Wellbeing

You will be respected and supported for who you are, what you believe in and how you practice your culture.



Right to Access Options to Connect or Reconnect with any Natural Supports

Who are the people who are important to you? We can help you stay connected with them.



Right to Indigenous/Cultural/Spiritual/2SLGBTQIAP+ Resources

You will be encouraged and supported to access communities that are important to you.



Dignity and Respect

You will be treated with dignity and respected at all times by everyone.



Right to Confidentiality

You tell us who we can share your information with and who we can ask your information from. The only times we would share your information without your permission is for a medical emergency, a concern for you or someone's safety, or a legal subpoena.



Right to Future Planning

You have the right to be actively involved in planning for your future. This means you set goals that you want to work towards and make decisions that are important to you.



Consent to Participate in Program Activities

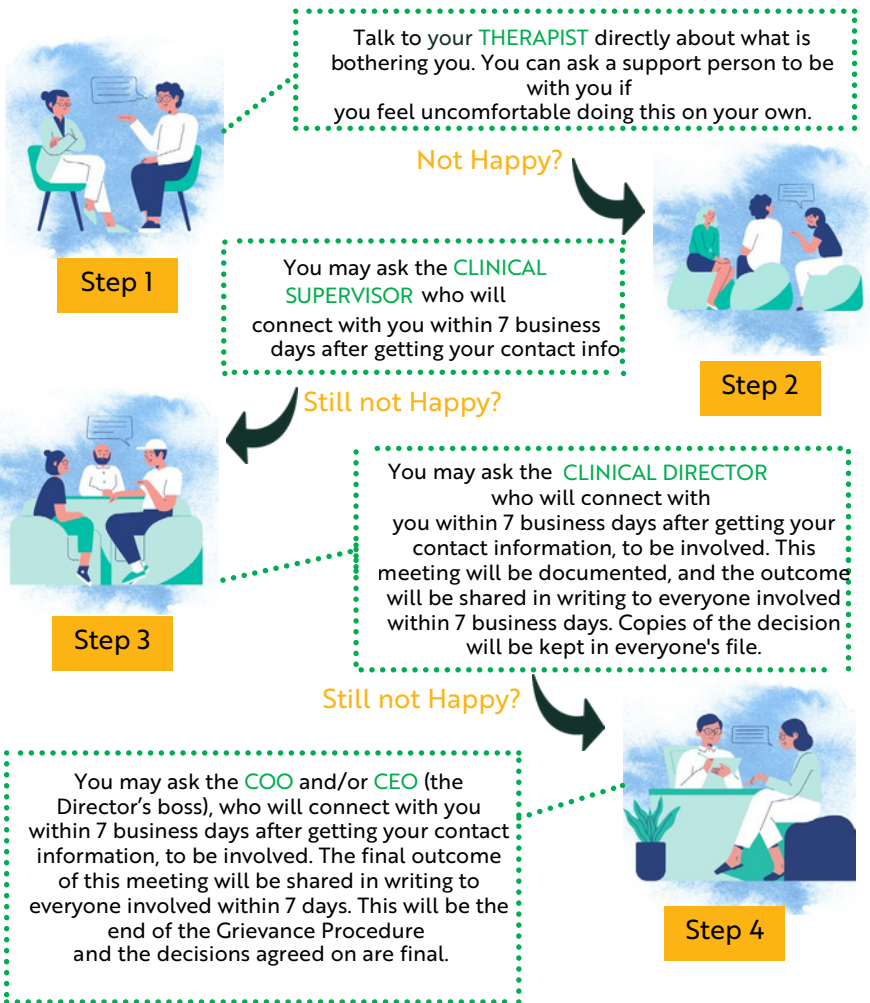
You have the option of joining the program on recreational activities, realizing that there are risks depending on the activity.

Grievance Procedure

A grievance can be made by a person served, their family and/or anyone who believes that they are not being treated properly. Persons served have the following rights:

- to initiate a complaint and utilize the following procedures -
- to use an advocate (natural or community) for support

The result should be that everyone understands the issue, how it was fixed, and how to prevent the issue from happening again.



Office of the Child & Youth
Advocate: Suite 2420, 801 6
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Calgary, AB T2P 3W2

Toll-free 1-888-455-2756
403-297-6185
info@ombudsman.ab.ca

Who You Can Call for Support

We know that sometimes you may need support between sessions. Here are some helpful community resources that you can access during those times of need:

Distress Centre 24/7 Crisis Line: Crisis line and confidential chat options available	403-266-4357 distresscentre.com
Kids Help Line: Wellness support in many languages and ways	1-800-668-6868 kidshelpphone.ca
Community Connect YYC: single session therapy appointments	communityconnectyyc.ca
Eastside Family Counselling: single session, no cost, walk-in therapy	woodshomes.ca/programs/eastside-community-mental-health-services
Emergency Services	911
211 Alberta	211
Rapid Access Counselling	www.racalberta.ca

