trellis SOCIETY

CLINICAL TEAM

Program Handbook



trellis SOCIETY

OUR VISION

A community where everyone can flourish

OUR PURPOSE

We support growth across generations

OUR VALUES

We support growth across generations

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

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 Acknowledgement

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, Îyãrĥé 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 contact the program manager or director with any concerns or feedback, please call 403-219-3477 or visit www.growwithtrellis.ca.

Therapy Approaches

Your motivation to change and your participation in counselling are key 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 at every step of your healing journey. Our therapists use a variety of evidence-based approaches tailored 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.

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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.



OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

YOUR RIGHTS WILL BE REVIEWED EVERY 3 MONTHS



STAY CONNECTED

Who matters most to you in your life? We will help you stay in touch with the people who are important and meaningful to you.



ADVOCACY

You have a voice, and we'll support you in speaking up. We can also advocate for you and connect you with others who can help.



VALUED & SEEN

You deserve to always be treated with dignity, respect, and care, in every situation, at all times, and by everyone around you.



CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Sometimes you might not agree with a worker or program. You have the right to support through these situations.



RESOURCES

We encourage and support you in accessing and connecting with the communities that are most important to you.



CONFIDENTIALITY

You control who sees your information. We only share it in emergencies, if there are safety concerns, or if the law requires it. You can always ask to see it, it's yours.



FUTURE PLANNING

You have the right to plan your own future. Set your goals, make your decisions, and take steps to work toward what truly matters to you.



VOLUNTARY INVOLVEMENT

You can choose whether to work with us. Speak with your staff or support team, and we'll help you access an alternative program if needed.



RESPECT AND SUPPORT

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



CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

You have the right to choose whether to participate in program activities. We will help you understand any risks so you can make an informed decision that feels right for you.



WHAT YOU SAY IN HERE STAYS IN HERE

EXCEPT IF YOU ARE BEING HURT, YOU WANT TO HARM YOURSELF OR SOMEONE ELSE, SOMEONE MIGHT WANT TO HURT YOU, OR YOU GIVE PERMISSION TO SHARE.

What To Expect

Counselling is often like an educational experience. You learn more about yourself while also learning new skills. 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 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 these 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 an 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 about 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.

How We Respond to Keep Everyone Safe

We want to create and maintain a positive, safe, and healthy environment. We use strategies that are meant to help you manage your behaviours while teaching better ways to deal with hard situations. These may include:

- **Positive Behaviour = Positive Reward (and vice versa)**
- **Managing the Environment**
- **Prompting**
  Signalling and cueing someone to either start a positive behaviour 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 clearly and assertively.
- **Time Away**
  Allowing the person to go to a quiet area to give them some time to process their feelings before debriefing what happened.

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 access to their personal observances.
- Not allowing someone to have contact or visits with approved family members or natural supports.
- Locked confinement.
- Deny someone the right to connect with their Child Intervention Practitioner, the Children's Advocate, and/or a lawyer.
- Any other techniques or strategies prohibited by law or legislation.

SAFE & RESPECTFUL BEHAVIOUR

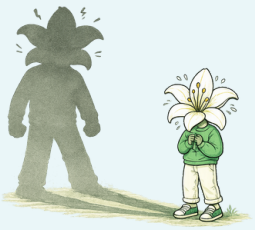
Everyone deserves to feel safe, welcome, and respected at Trellis.



BULLYING

Bullying means trying to hurt, embarrass, scare or leave someone out.

BULLYING:



- Name-calling or teasing
- Leaving people out on purpose
- Mean texts or online comments
- Blocking or intimidating others
- Spreading rumours or sharing private information

KIND CHOICES:



- Including others
- Speaking respectfully
- Using social media safely
- Respect people's private information
- Giving people space when they ask for it

ABUSE

Abuse means hurting someone or making them feel unsafe.

RESPECTFUL BEHAVIOUR:



- Speaking calmly
- Keeping hands to yourself
- Respecting boundaries
- Helping others feel safe

ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR:



- Unsafe touching
- Hitting, pushing, kicking
- Threatening someone
- Making someone do unsafe things

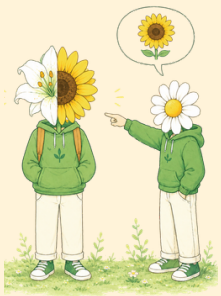
RACISM, HARASSMENT & DISCRIMINATION

Everyone deserves respect for who they are.

IT'S NOT OKAY TO MAKE HURTFUL COMMENTS ABOUT SOMEONE'S:

- Skin colour
- Religion
- Disability
- Body type
- Gender or pronouns
- Family or who they love
- Culture or language

EXAMPLES:



- Racist jokes
- Making fun of disabilities
- Making fun of appearance
- Mean comments about religion
- Making fun of accents or food
- Using wrong pronouns on purpose
- Hurtful comments about identity

WHAT WE EXPECT FROM YOU

DO:

- ✓ Tell staff if someone feels unsafe
- ✓ Tell the truth
- ✓ Be respectful
- ✓ Use correct names and pronouns
- ✓ Respect space and belongings
- ✓ Listen to staff directions
- ✓ Ask for help when needed



DON'T:

- ⊘ Threaten people
- ⊘ Damage belongings
- ⊘ Exclude or embarrass others
- ⊘ Bully or intimidate others
- ⊘ Make others feel unsafe
- ⊘ Ignore unsafe behaviour
- ⊘ Use hateful language



WHEN MISTAKES HAPPEN

Sometimes people hurt others even when they do not mean to.



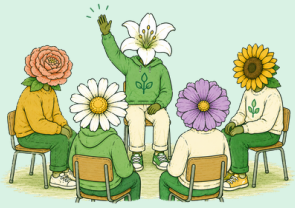
WHAT YOU SHOULD DO:

- Listen
- Take responsibility
- Say sorry if needed
- Take steps to repair the harm, with staff support if needed

Serious safety concerns may result in staff contacting caregivers, case workers, or police.



NEED HELP?



TELL STAFF IF:

- You see unsafe behaviour
- Someone hurts you
- Someone scares you
- You are being bullied

If you want to make a complaint, ask staff about the Grievance Procedure, which you can find in this handbook.

Everyone Deserves Safety, Respect, Kindness & Inclusion

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 counselling 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.

Grievance Procedure

The result should be that everyone understands the issue, how it was fixed, and how to prevent the issue from happening again. Every step of this process will be documented in your file.

STEP 1
Talk to STAFF directly about what is bothering you. You can ask a support person to be with you if you feel uncomfortable doing this on your own.



Not Happy? → Go to Step 2

STEP 2
You may ask the Program Manager (your staff's boss), who will connect with you within 7 business days after getting your contact information, to be involved.



Not Happy? → Go to Step 3

STEP 3
You may ask the Program Director (your Manager's boss) who will connect with you within 7 business days after getting your contact information, to be involved.



Not Happy? → Go to Step 4

STEP 4
You may ask the COO (Chief Operating Officer) and/or CEO (the Director's boss), who will connect with you within 7 business days after getting your contact information, to be involved.

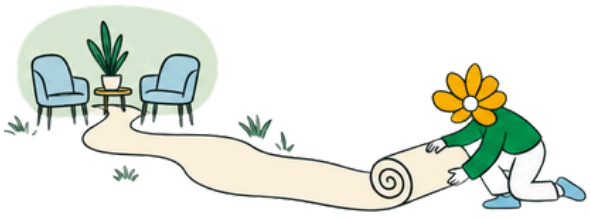
The final outcome of this meeting will be shared in writing to everyone involved within 7 days.



This will be the end of the Grievance Procedure and the decisions agreed on are final.

Therapy That Meets You Where You're At

Scan and explore therapy options, including fees and insurance options.



IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT THE SERVICES PROVIDED TO YOU, YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO CONTACT:



Office of the Child & Youth Advocate
Suite 2420, 801 6 Avenue SW
Toll-free 1-800-661-3446 OR
(403) 297-8435

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