

Our Treaty Commitment: More Than Words

At Bissell Centre, reconciliation isn't a statement on a wall – it's woven into everything we do. We recognize, like you, that a commitment to truth and reconciliation and to treaty is imperative as we work collectively towards a vision of eliminating poverty.

Our Treaty Commitment was created through conversation with staff, leaders and community members about what a genuine commitment to treaty requires, especially as it relates to the sector we are in and as a non-Indigenous organization. We were privileged to have the opportunity to share our Treaty Commitment with a special group of elders, knowledge keepers and our own Indigenous Engagement team here at Bissell for input and reflection as part of this process. We are proud to share our Treaty Commitment with you.

We are grateful to live and gather in amiskwaciwâskahikan, Beaver Hills House in Treaty 6 Territory, an abundant and sacred ancestral land, that witnesses the truths and wisdom of Indigenous peoples— past, present, and future.

At Bissell Centre we strive to act with purpose and intention, knowing that truth and reconciliation is essential to our vision to eliminate poverty. Our solidarity to learn and grow alongside Indigenous peoples is lifelong.

We are interconnected, known as wâhkôtowin in Cree, and are in relationship with each other and the land that nourishes us. We are all treaty people, responsible for upholding promises of peace, equity, and mutual care in this land we call home.

Métis Money Moves: A New Way of Knowing Your Finances

Money is more than numbers. It's shaped by family history, values, and lived experience.

Métis Money Moves is a culturally informed financial education program that explores the emotions behind managing money. Bissell Centre is proud to partner with Métis Money Moves and Prosper Canada to bring this four-part course to **Bissell Centre.**

"Indigenous teachings about things that relate to money go deeper into why a person wants to be better with finances," says Sophia Mejia, Bissell Centre's Manager of Specialized Services.

Founder JoLynn Parenteau created Métis Money Moves to help individuals and families build a healthier relationship with their finances — guided by Indigenous values.

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“Métis Money Moves is making change for the next seven generations,” says Parenteau.

When you give to Bissell Centre, your gift is part of that change — helping bring programs like this to the people who need them most.

Leah’s Story: When Giving Gives Back

Leah Deriger of St. Albert recalls how her parents were long-time supporters of Bissell Centre. Fast forward to today, and history is happily repeating itself. For just over 2 years, Leah has been making contributions as a monthly donor to Bissell.

Leah’s life changed drastically with the passing of her husband 11 years ago. Coupled with a serious health scare that followed, Leah felt like she was under a dark cloud. She turned to the United Church in her local community as she knew that helping others could be a step in a more positive direction.

“I was so down and yet, I knew I wanted to feel better. Volunteering at my church was a way to stay engaged. It re-introduced me to Bissell and reminded me that there are others in struggles more difficult than my own. After a bit of thought, I became a monthly donor to Bissell. I felt terrific about supporting a cause that means a lot to me.”

To learn more about making a monthly donation to help community members on their path to stability, visit <https://bissellcentre.org/community-heroes/>

Samantha’s Story: Making Every Return Count

Samantha spent her career in finance. When she was ready to give back beyond her own neighbourhood, Bissell Centre’s tax clinic was a natural fit.

Each week, Samantha files 15 to 20 tax returns for people in the community — up to 1,000 a year. What drives her isn’t the numbers. It’s seeing how much money comes back to people who need it most.

“There are so many people that don’t do their taxes, and they’re leaving all this money on the table,” she says. “Taxes for people can be intimidating, so this is a place to be able to overcome the barriers they have and navigate some of those challenges people might experience.”

Samantha’s work is part of Bissell Centre’s broader Financial Empowerment program —

offering workshops, one-on-one coaching, and tax filing support to help people in our community build stability from the ground up.

Because of donors like you, Samantha can keep filing those returns — and keep putting money back in the hands of people who need it most.

Den of Willows Opens Its Doors

In January 2026, residents moved into Den of Willows, Bissell Centre's first supportive recovery housing site. In May, Bissell Centre officially welcomed the Edmonton community to celebrate its opening.

Den of Willows is a 5-bedroom home, offering substance-free, shared living for people transitioning out of treatment who have or may have FASD. Residents have access to 24/7 wraparound supports including life-skills development, employment readiness, cultural connection, and referrals to health and community services. And they're welcome to stay for as long as they need.

The early signs are already promising.

"Having a culturally safe space allows me to interact with my spiritual path and become a better version of myself," says resident Chance Goddard. "I have found the thing that all us residents say more than anything else is how wonderful it is to have a home that is ours for as long as we want and a small community to belong to."

Den of Willows fills a gap that has long gone unaddressed.

"Den of Willows ensures people with FASD who were experiencing addiction are supported in their recovery and can integrate into community," says Candace Noble, Bissell Centre's Executive Services Officer.

This milestone is part of Bissell Centre's broader three-year Housing Development Strategy — a commitment to expanding sustainable, human-centred housing options in Edmonton through partnerships with government, Indigenous Nations, and community organizations.

Chance says the best part is having a home that's theirs for as long as they want. You helped make that possible. Thank you.

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