File #: BIR-27-025, **Version:** 1

TAMRMS#: B05

BUDGET INFORMATION REQUEST (BIR) - Cost to Operate the Children's Festival
Requested by: Councillor Korotash
Date of Request: October 27, 2026
Date Response Due: November 2, 2026
Confidential: No

QUESTION

What is the net cost to the City to operate the Children's Festival including actual dollars spent as well as the approximate FTE equivalents across all departments?

RESPONSE

The 2026 International Children's Festival of the Arts had an approximate budget of $1.4 million.

The City's direct contribution comprised of $180,200 in Council-approved operating funding and an estimated $545,000 in permanent staff time, funded through existing personnel budgets, for a total investment of $725,200.

Staff time estimates are based on planning for worst-case operational scenarios, such as extreme weather or poor air quality, and use the upper range of hourly rates. The estimates include time allocated across 31 positions throughout the organization, representing approximately 7.7 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions.

City staff support the Festival through year-round planning and delivery, including marketing and promotion, funding partnerships, public safety, financial accountability and operational risk management.

Non-City contributions totaled approximately $700,000, including $485,000 in ticket sales, sponsorship, grants and fundraising, as well as $215,000 in in-kind support from outside organizations. In addition, more than 300 volunteers contributed over 3,000 hours.

Included in the Council-approved operating funding is a full-time term Festival and Events Coordinator. This position reflects organizational restructuring and operational streamlining undertaken between 2020 and 2025, following the elimination of two FTE positions in 2020 (one of which was a management position) and the temporary pause of the Festival Liaison role during post - pandemic recovery demands.

Responsibilities that were previously distributed across multiple positions, including management-level functions, have been consolidated into the Coordinator role. Key responsibilities include festival and event planning, delivery, strategic and operational coordination, nonprofit and community stakeholder relationships, support for volunteer program coordination, grant administration, partnership management, coordination of communication assets required for ongoing promotion of the event, budget development and tracking, and oversight and guidance of staff, contractors, and vendors.

This approach has enabled the City to maintain its capacity to deliver the Festival while reducing staffing costs and demands on organizational resources. It represents a significant consolidation of responsibilities with a single position and supports continued operational efficiencies through ongoing introduction of standardized processes and practices.

For additional information on the International Children's Festival of the Arts Budget please see the 2026 Children’s Festival of the Arts Report (Attachment A).

Report Date: October 30, 2026
Author(s): Adam Turnbull, Connie Smigielski, and Elizabeth Budd
Department: Community Services
Department Director: Elizabeth Budd
Managing Director: Dinu Alex
Chief Administrative Officer: William Fletcher



International Children's Festival of the Arts

2026 FINAL REPORT

childfest.com

City of St. Albert Cultivate Life

MISSION AND VISION







MISSION

To bring the best in children's arts and cultural experiences to the region in a way that removes barriers, fosters joy and creativity, and inspires the next generation of artists and patrons of the arts.

VISION

To create safe, inclusive and creative spaces where children can explore and deepen their understanding of themselves, the perspectives of others and the world around them.

We respectfully acknowledge that we are on Treaty 6 territory, traditional lands of First Nations and Métis Peoples. As treaty People, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, we share the responsibility for stewardship of this beautiful land.

THANK YOU FOR CELEBRATING WITH US!



From incredible feats of athleticism to mind-bending magic, and the joyous recognition of bravery, the City of St. Albert's 2026 International Children's Festival of the Arts filled downtown St. Albert and the adjacent river valley with laughter, joy, colour, music, dance, art, imagination and smiles!

Through unique, world-class programming specifically created and curated for young audiences and their families, thousands of people were treated to positive, self-affirming, inspirational and heart-growing performances as well as hands-on opportunities to celebrate and connect to the world around them while they shared one-of-a-kind moments and memories.

As an event dedicated to making the arts accessible to every child, we depend upon the generous support of our incredible and dedicated volunteers, government funders and supporters, sponsors, and community organizations. Our heartfelt thanks to everyone who makes the Children's Festival possible and recognizes its importance to our community's children and arts scene. Thank you all for your dedication to providing children with inspiration, hope for their futures and experiences that encourage them to dream big and imagine a world of endless possibility, imagination, and creativity!

– The Festival Team

CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL BY THE NUMBERS

45th year

Total attendance
16,484
(including ticketed and free events/activities)

20 shows
on the Alberta Blue Cross Outdoor Stage

13,187 tickets sold

1,642 people
used the Park & Ride

7 Feature Performances
performed **43 times**

3,129,500
digital media impressions
(Facebook/Instagram)

350 lunches
were served daily by our hospitality team to volunteers, staff and artists

Over 110 artists performed
over the four days (feature performances, site activity facilitators, toddler town, rovers and outdoor stage)

Over **60** free performances by roving artists

354 Volunteers contributed 3,192 hours
834 volunteer shifts over 4 days, including 33 specialized Youth Ambassadors

11 hands-on/
Ticketed Activities scheduled more than 140 times (including Toddler Town)

Over 3,000 people
visited the Open Art Studio to create unique masterpieces

13 FREE Things To Do

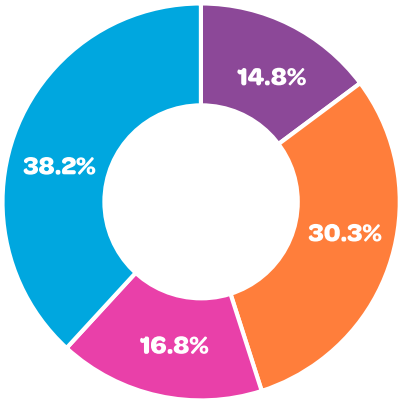
Alberta Blue Cross Outdoor Stage, Roving Artists, Alberta Blue Cross Tent, Education Station, FUNctional Therapy (Sensory Circuit), Wild Child Temporary Tattoos, Maze Craze, IDEA Lab Kids - St. Albert, Open Art Studio, Public Art Installation – Starface Castle (Artist: Nikelas Johnson), Eco Warrior Challenge, Edmonton Elks and Lifecycle of a Butterfly Cut-outs

2026 FINANCIALS



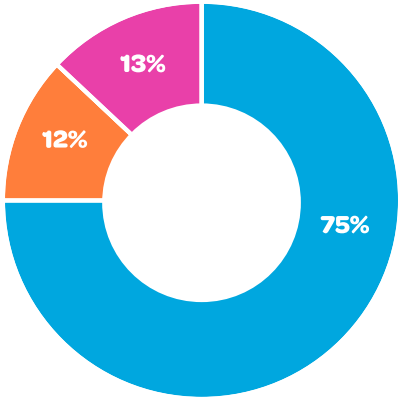


BUDGET



- Grants (Federal and Provincial)
- City of St. Albert
- Earned (box office, merch, vendor fees)
- Private (sponsorship, donations and fundraising)

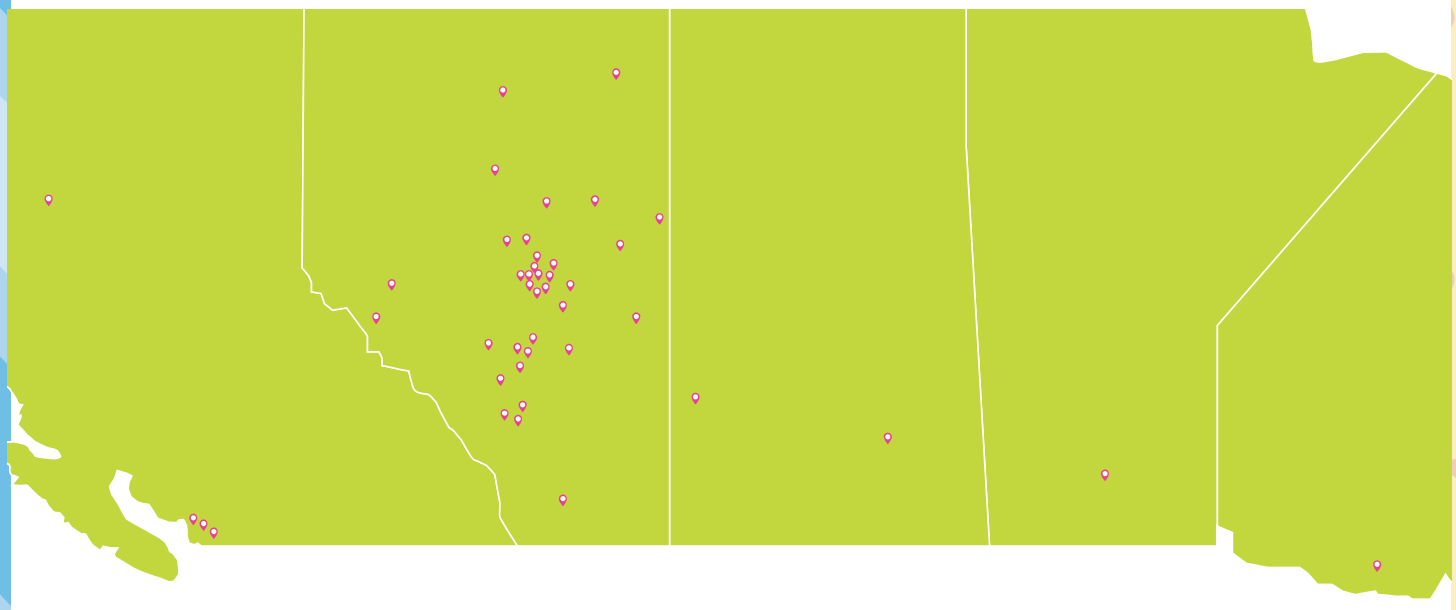
EXPENSES



- Artistic/Production
- Admin
- Marketing

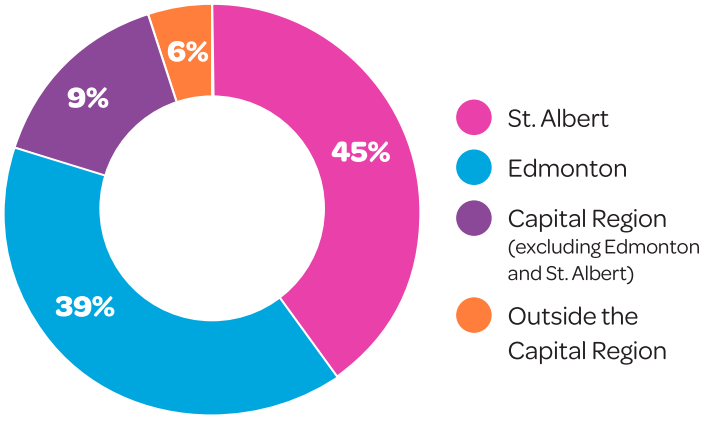
Volunteers contributed 3,192 hours to the Children's Festival. Based on an average living wage of $25 per hour, this represents an in-kind community contribution of approximately **$79,800**.

GEOGRAPHIC REACH

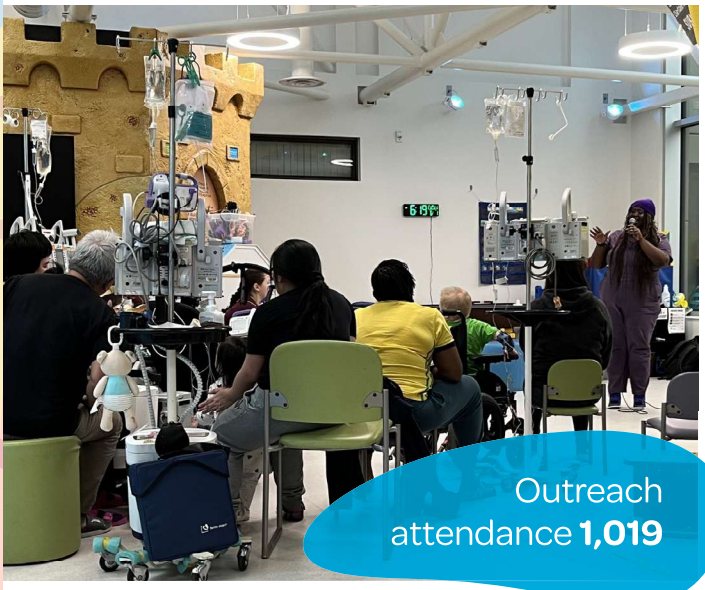


- Airdrie, AB
- Athabasca, AB
- Barrhead, AB
- Beaumont AB
- Calgary, AB
- Cambridge, ON
- Camrose, AB
- Cochrane, AB
- Cold Lake AB
- Devon, AB
- Edmonton, AB
- Fort McMurray, AB
- Fort Qu'Appelle, SK
- Fort Saskatchewan, AB
- Hinton, AB
- Innisfail, AB
- Jasper, AB
- Kindersley, SK
- Lac La Biche, AB
- Lacombe, AB
- Langley, BC
- Leduc, AB
- Lethbridge, AB
- Morinville, AB
- Red Deer, AB
- Rocky Mountain House AB
- Saddle Lake, AB
- Sarnia, ON
- Sherwood Park, AB
- Slave Lake, AB
- Smithers. BC
- Spruce Grove, AB
- St. Albert, AB
- St. Paul, AB
- Stettler, AB
- Stonewall, MB
- Stony Plain, AB
- Sundre AB
- Surrey, BC
- Sylvan Lake, AB
- Thunder Bay, ON
- Tofield, AB
- Trout Lake, AB
- Vancouver, BC
- Wainwright, AB
- Westlock, AB

FESTIVAL GOERS



OUTREACH INITIATIVES



Outreach attendance **1,019**



We recognize that some children and families face barriers to participating in arts programming. At the Children's Festival, the City of St. Albert strives to reduce these barriers by providing programs, supports and opportunities that make participation more accessible:

ADOPT-A-SCHOOL PROGRAM

Matches funders with schools to provide a day of out-of-school learning at no cost to underserved schools.

901 students from **4** schools



PROJECT SMILE AT THE STOLLERY

As part of Project Smile, the City of St. Albert's Children's Festival extended the reach of its programming to **32 young patients** at the Stollery Children's Hospital through a special visit by Yuki the Juggler: All the Way from Japan and Missy D. Their uplifting performances blended high-energy juggling, music and storytelling to create a sense of wonder, laughter, and emotional comfort for children and their families. This initiative reflects the Festival's commitment to expanding access to arts and cultural experiences, ensuring that children can participate in meaningful creative experiences regardless of where they are, and highlighting the important role the arts can play in fostering wellbeing and community connection.

OTHER INITIATIVES

- The Friends of the International Children's Festival Society provided busing for **118 students**
- Provided tickets to the St. Albert Family Resource Centre and LoSeCa Foundation, St. Albert for their clients.

OUTCOMES & MEASUREMENTS

OUTCOME #1:

The Festival enhances community well-being by promoting social connectivity and removing barriers to participating in arts and culture activities for children and families.

349 classes attended from **50 schools** and purchased **8,726 tickets**

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

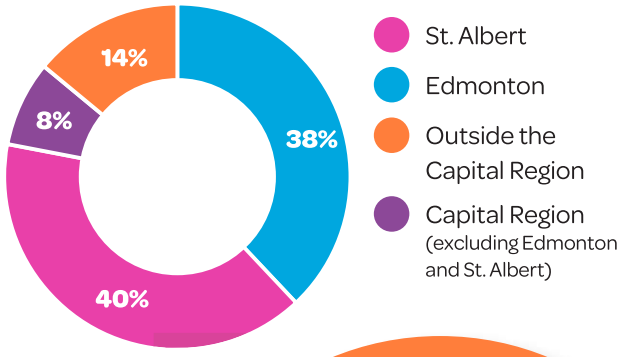
Survey

- **100%** of attendees say the event made them feel welcome and included in the community.
- **96%** of teachers bring their students to the Festival to expose them to the arts, to foster arts appreciation and because of the diverse range of performances and site activities.
- **95%** of public attendees plan to attend the Festival next year.
- **94%** of attendees were satisfied with their Festival experience.
- **86%** of all attendees felt the Festival contributed to their quality of life and well-being.
- **78%** of teachers plan to attend the Festival in 2027.
- **88%** of attendees felt moved and inspired by the Festival.
- **27%** of attendees were new to the Festival.

The top three most important reasons the public attends the Festival are:

1. To have fun
2. To spend quality time together
3. The range of performances and activities

Where did schools come from







The **farthest travelled schools** came from Trout Lake (550–600 km), Lac La Biche (220 km), and Saddle Lake (180 km), demonstrating the Festival's ability to attract school participants from communities across Alberta.

OUTCOMES & MEASUREMENTS

OUTCOME #2:

The Festival fosters the exchange of ideas and cultivates a safe, inclusive, and accessible environment for residents and visitors to engage in the arts, celebrate diversity, and access arts, culture, and heritage offerings regardless of physical, financial or geographical constraints.

The Festival brings artists with new and diverse stories to children, teachers and families that offer fresh, creative, and varied perspectives through world-class live performances and interactive activities that bring us all closer together as a community.

CANADA

Feature Performances

- Missy D
- Rupert Appleyard – Fizzlewit and the Magic Colours
- St. Albert Children's Theatre – Finding Nemo Jr.
- Yuki the Juggler – All The Way From Japan

Site Activities (Paid & Free)

- Anna Muskego and Chantel Akinneah - Make Your Mark (Indigenous Crafting and Storytelling)
- Art Gallery of St. Albert – Sparkle Spiral Weaving
- Emma Wales – ArtVentures: Open Art Studio
- Eunju Park – Hanji Art: Korean Paper and Alphabet
- Joël Lavoie – Hameçon Ligne et Rigodon (Hook, Line and Single!) (French & Bilingual Music and Songwriting)
- Sean Arceta – Bust a Move with B Boy Pharush (Break Dancing)
- Musée Héritage Museum – The First Draft of History: Newspapers in St. Albert
- Nickelas "Smokey" Johnson – Starface Castle (Public Art Installation)
- Reckie Lloyd – Sangea Academy: Hands That Speak (African Drumming)
- Ron Pearson – Secrets of Magic
- Sarah Teakle – Spin, Toss and Play (Circus Arts)
- Toddler Town

Stage and Roving Artists:

- Alysse Billings – Loppity The Clown
- Elizabeth Hobbs – Clara The Ballerina
- Demmi Dupri – (Music)
- Hong De Canada (Chinese Dragon and Lion Dance)
- Kim Craig - Kimberly's Pocket Circus
- Michelle Todd – Outdoor Stage Emcee
- Michelle Remple – Michelle and Friends (Music)
- Ryan Arcand (Indigenous storytelling)
- Spandy Andy

FRENCH / BILINGUAL

- Eunju Park – Hanji Art: Korean Paper and Alphabet
- Joël Lavoie – Hameçon, Ligne et Rigodon! (Hook, Line and Single!)
- Missy D

INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS

- 360 ALLSTARS – Australia
- Goupil et Kosmao – France
- Koo Koo – USA

INDIGENOUS ARTISTS

- Anna Muskego – Make Your Mark (Indigenous Crafting and Storytelling)
- Chantel Akinneah – Make Your Mark (Indigenous Crafting and Storytelling)
- Ryan Arcand

EMERGING ARTISTS

- DanceCo
- Dynamix Gymnastics Club
- Overdrive Dance Force
- St. Albert Children's Theatre – Disney's Finding Nemo Jr.
- St. Albert Gymnastics Club
- Swamped! The MusicalVisionary Centre for the Performing Arts

IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY

The Festival welcomes all patrons and works to support inclusive participation through sensory inclusion kits, a calming room and pre-Festival tours that help attendees become familiar with the Festival environment before their visit.

OUTCOMES & MEASUREMENTS

OUTCOME #3:

The Festival increases awareness of the benefits of the arts through community engagement.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- Art Gallery of St. Albert
- Arts and Heritage St. Albert
- Musée Heritage Museum
- St. Albert Family Community Support Services (FCSS)
- St. Albert Public Library
- St. Albert Seniors' Association

TODDLER TOWN

- DanceCo (St. Albert)
- Gymnastics – Dynamix and St. Albert Gymnastics Club (St. Albert)
- Jojo's Magic Circus (Edmonton)
- Kathy Kelley Storytime with Yoga Moves (St. Albert)
- Movement with Mandy (Calgary)
- Mugsy the Juggler (Edmonton)
- Music with Mandy (Calgary)
- Princess Sing-along (St. Albert)
- Sally Sea Turtle Puppet Show (St. Albert)
- Swamped! The Musical (St. Albert & Edmonton)









Over **1,000** participants, presented by Visionary Centre for the Performing Arts



OUTCOMES & MEASUREMENTS

OUTCOME #4:

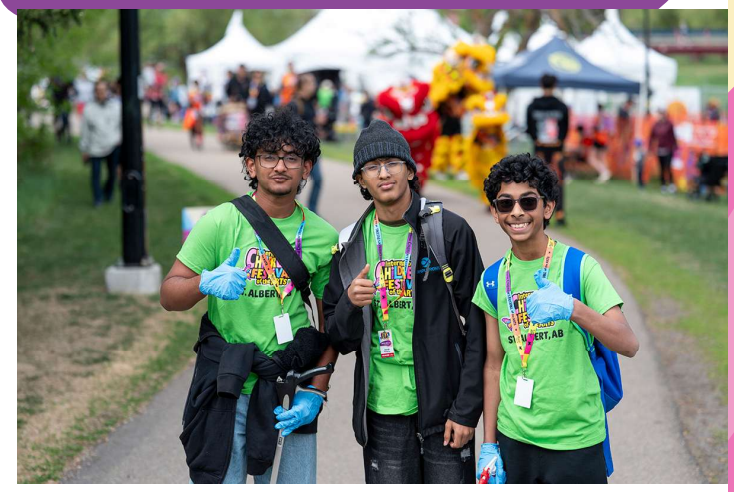
Community Social Road Map, Focus Area: Civic Involvement and Volunteerism: Residents are actively engaged and participate in civic processes and volunteer opportunities.

VOLUNTEERS



- 75+: 3.2%
- 65-74: 6.9%
- 55-64: 6.5%
- 45-54: 7.6%
- 35-44: 6.9%
- 25-34: 6.5%
- 18-24: 19%
- 12-17: 43%

100% of volunteers say they would volunteer next year *(if their schedule allows).*



What is your favourite part about volunteering at Children's Festival?

- "Seeing how much joy it brings to all the children who attend!"
- "Volunteering for Festival is one of my favourite things!!! I so look forward to this incredible experience every year!"
- "Amazing festival! Memorable people! Incredible entertainment and workshops!"
- "A very pro-social event that thoughtfully includes so many different people with varying backgrounds. The festival really highlights the city and its people."
- "Spending time with our student volunteers and witnessing their faces as they interacted with the toddlers. Imparting my experiences with them provided me with a great sense of worth."



MARKETING CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS

PRINT

- 4-page wrap (1st page appeared on the front cover) in Edmonton Journal on May 2: 255,000 readers
- 3 Banners ads on the front cover in Edmonton Journal on May 12, 14 and 15: 765,000 readers
- Canada Post mail out in April: 12,000 copies
- ATA Magazine advertisement in February issue: 34,500 readers
- 2 St. Albert Gazette advertisements on April 9 and May 14: 42,546 readers

RADIO

CISN COUNTRY 103.9

- 28 on-air produced event calendar inclusion (May 11-17)
- 3 week online contest page (April 27-May 17): 220 Entries & 546 interactions
- 5 week online event page (April 27-June 1)
- 1 Listener club e-newsletter inclusions (Week of May 11): 19,383 sends
- 30, 7 second on air tags ran Monday-Friday 5 a.m.-7 p.m. (May 19-30)

CHUCK @ 92.5

- 28 on-air produced event calendar inclusion (May 11-17)
- 3 week online contest page (April 27-May 17) 35 entries & 105 interactions
- 5 week online event page (April 27-June 1)
- 1 Listener club e-newsletter inclusions (May 11) 3,286 sends

880 CHED

- 28 on-air "OurYEG" produced promotional inclusions (May 5-11)
- 2 week online contest page (April 28-June 1): 255 entires & 949 interactions
- 5 week online event page (April 28-June 1):
- 1 Listener club e-newsletter inclusions (week of May 5)



MARKETING CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS

LANDMARK CINEMAS

- 10 second video ad played at 23 movie theatre screens in 3 Locations with 43,849 guests and 1,887 impressions from May 2-22 during the Super Mario Galaxy movie release.

GLOBAL EDMONTON

- 15s commercial – aired 20 times
- Event bumpers – aired from May 25-29
- Community L frame – live May 11-May 25 and ran an average of 5x per hour
- OurYEG calendar – live from May 14-24, 42 mentions

PATTISON

May 5-June 1:

- 3 Digital Superboard Billboard Ads
- 5 Digital Poster Billboard Ads
- 4 Print Poster Billboard Ads

April 21-June 1:

- 6 Ultratail St. Albert Transit Ads
- 50 Interior Card St. Albert Transit Ads
- 10 Bus Bench St. Albert Transit Ad

Total Impressions combined = 10,937,293



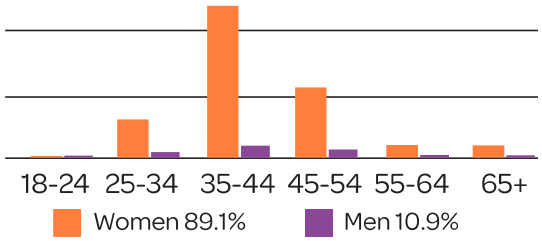
From January 7-June 1, **125,994** total pageviews (and counting!) to childfest.com and **438,890** website views to tickets.stalbert.ca.



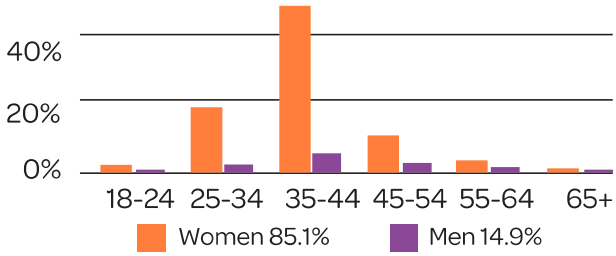
SOCIAL MEDIA

FOLLOWERS (AS OF JULY 29, 2026)

Facebook
- 4,914 (397 new followers)
- 2025: 4,517 (379 new followers)
- Age and gender breakdown



Instagram
- 3,440 (390 new)
- 2025: 3,050 (543 new)
- Age and gender breakdown



JANUARY 1 – JUNE 2, 2026

Profile Visits
- **Facebook:** 577,299 (15.3k in 2025)
- **Instagram:** 326,500 (4.1k in 2025)

Reach
- **Facebook:** 575,336 (430,895 in 2025)
- **Instagram:** 73,300 (63,150 in 2025)

Paid Reach
- **Facebook:** 455,942, +22.3%
- **Combined** 657,00

Engagements
(Number of actions. This can include likes, shares, views, reactions, link clicks, etc.)
- **Facebook:** 22,828 (3k in 2025)
- **Instagram:** 5,600 (2.8k in 2025)

Link Clicks:
- **Facebook:** 1,234
- **Instagram:** 2,900

Impressions
- **Facebook:** 576,336
- **Instagram:** 9,800

META PAID ADVERTISING

From January 29-June 1, 2026:
- Paid Reach: 890,233
- Paid Impressions: 1,589,328
- Paid Clicks: 36,370
- Engagement: 144,091

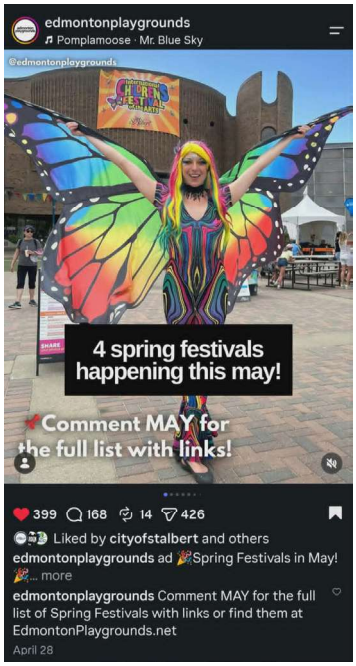
LOKNOW DIGITAL ADVERTISING

(YouTube, Hyper Video & Google Ads)
- Impressions: 321,280
- Clicks: 1,553

INFLUENCER PAID REELS

From April 1-June 1, 2026:
- Paid Views: 160,634
- Paid Reach: 29,506
- Paid Engagement: 4,964

HIGHEST VIEWS & REACH
Instagram influencer post
Posted on April 29
37,924 views, 18,920 reach



TOP PERFORMING ORGANIC INSTAGRAM POST
Posted on May 30
20,484 views, 3,122 reach, 150 interactions



TOP PERFORMING ORGANIC FACEBOOK POST:
Posted on May 31
17,381 views, 19,289 impressions, 734 interactions



HIGHEST LINK CLICKS ON A PAID AD:
Facebook/Instagram Ad from May 30-June 1
5,581 link clicks



TESTIMONIALS

"Amazing experiences when I was a kid, I wanted our class to experience it!"

"Made my kids happy."

"Easy to book, patient with my million questions, affordable, awesome stations and presentations."

"As always, the workshops were outstanding. We also enjoyed 2 performances."

"The performances were sensational."

"Even though it rained, the children had fun and are still talking about it."

"Everyone was so friendly and welcoming. I saw so many smiles. This was my first time attending with my little one and she had so much fun. There was so much to do and see!"

"Kids had a blast!"

"It was beautiful and so interactive for the children."

"I was very impressed with the quality of the shows and events, and the volunteers were very welcoming and helpful. We attended the Finding Nemo and we created bookmarks. The children, parents and I thoroughly enjoyed it!!"

"The children's festival had lots of amazing volunteers that made the environment more fun and enjoyable."

"Loved the feature performances - saw Groupil et Cosmao and 360 Allstars. We came with our mother-in-law who has dementia and she really enjoyed watching and singing along with the songs on the outdoor stage. It was great to spend time together as a family. We really loved the activities we did - Hanji art and the magic show. Really felt like we learned something new."

"We love Toddler Town! Fantastic for my 2- and 4-year-olds."

"We love the wide range of activities. Booking was very easy. Volunteers are always so amazing and helpful."

"My kids had fun with many outdoor activities and performances. They liked the 360 Allstars show and Kimberly's Pocket Circus hula hoop performance the most. It catered to their visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning."

"Love the free activities. Love the music. Love the hands-on things."



THANK YOU SPONSORS

Presenting Sponsors:

The Friends of the Northern Alberta International Children's Festival of the Arts Society

Alberta Blue Cross

Sunbelt Rentals

Government Sponsors:

Canada

Alberta Foundation for the Arts

Supporting Sponsors:

SG – A Colas Company

Special Event Rentals

Creativity Sponsors:

Fortis Alberta

DQ Grill & Chill

Education Station – Teacher Resources & Educational Materials

FenceLine Rentals Ltd.

Chérot

TD

Kin Canada – Kinsmen Club of St. Albert

Tridon

functional Therapy Inc.

Hunters – Print • Labels • Signs • Design – Office Supplies

Mortada's – Owned & Operated by Your Neighbours

Best Western Plus

Contributors:

Pizza 73

Nordic – Managing Building Systems

Chambers Plumbing & Heating

Finning CAT

idealab st.albert – rock your grey matter!

Royal Treats

Sentag Modular

BigSteelBox

Edmonton Elks

i'm lovin' it

marlin travel

Coca-Cola

Community Partners:

arts and heritage St Albert

St. Albert Public Library

Visionary Centre for the Performing Arts

Media Sponsors:

Global Edmonton

CISN Country 103.9

International Children's Festival of the Arts

JOIN US NEXT YEAR

JUNE 3 - 6, 2027

For more information about donor or sponsorship opportunities, contact:

Troy Funk
Sponsorship Development Coordinator
780-399-4853 • tfunk@stalbert.ca