

# OUR LEGACY, OUR FUTURE:

## A STRATEGIC COMMITMENT 2025-2028



bgc



Big Brothers  
Big Sisters

BGCBigs.ca  
Edmonton & Area

### WHY THIS?

Our 2025-2028 strategy is designed to reaffirm our **mission** to provide safe, supportive spaces and positive mentoring relationships where young people experience new opportunities and develop confidence and skills for life. This plan will deepen our impact, ensuring more youth have access to the support and encouragement they need to thrive.

### WHY US?

As the region's largest provider of mentoring and out-of-school support, BGC Big Brothers Big Sisters (BGCBigs) plays a crucial role in the healthy development of children, youth and families. With a **vision** of enabling all young people to discover and achieve their full potential, we create life-changing opportunities that foster resilience, growth and success for the next generation. We support children and youth to develop healthy relationships with themselves and others, while learning and growing, and building social emotional competencies.

### WHY NOW?

The landscape in which families live (and in which we, alongside other non-profits, operate) is constantly evolving. With new leadership, we are ready to reaffirm priorities, enhance our operations and write the next chapter of our impact. Now is the time to adapt, innovate and expand our reach—because young people deserve nothing less.

### WE ARE...

Established leaders in Edmonton and surrounding areas\*. We deliver impactful mentoring, out-of-school programming and youth engagement initiatives for children and youth ages 6–24. As committed members of two national movements (BGC Canada and Big Brothers Big Sisters Canada) we create meaningful opportunities that empower young people to thrive.

We recognize that our work does not happen in isolation. Children and youth are best supported when caring adults and organizations come together with a shared purpose.

Our impact is strengthened through interdependence with schools, community agencies, volunteers and families—we are all essential collaborators.

We approach our role with humility and a spirit of partnership.

Together, we build networks of support that ensure every young person has the chance to reach their full potential.

\*Surrounding areas include: Leduc/Devon & Area, Parkland County, St. Albert/Morinville & Area, Strathcona County and Lac La Biche







## THE HEART OF OUR WORK

Our work is rooted in a set of core values that guide our decisions, actions, and relationships. In our strategic plan, we highlight them here as the commitments that shape our approach to supporting young people, families and communities.

### VALUES:



#### **BELONGING**

We are a safe, accepting, inclusive organization in which differences are valued in all aspects of service delivery and organizational practices.



#### **RESPECT**

We ensure that everyone (children, youth, families, volunteers, staff and partners) are heard, valued and treated fairly.



#### **ENCOURAGEMENT & SUPPORT**

We encourage and support children, youth and families in learning and growing to achieve their dreams.



#### **WORKING TOGETHER**

We work together with young people, families, volunteers, communities and government to promote healthy and safe environments for children and youth.



#### **SPEAKING OUT**

The voices of children, youth and families are essential to shaping our goals, priorities and work. We encourage them to speak out and we support their voices as needed.



#### **EQUITY & STEWARDSHIP**

We believe in diligent equitable stewardship of community resources.





## THE EVER-EVOLVING LANDSCAPE

We are operating in a time of ongoing change, complexity and uncertainty. As we look to the future, several key forces are shaping the lives of children, youth and families, as well as the systems we work within and the way we must show up as an organization. These factors fall into three main areas: **Trends**, **Systems** and **Shocks**; each carrying important implications for our strategy and work ahead.

### TRENDS: SHIFTING NEEDS & EMERGING REALITIES



#### GREATER DIVERSITY

Increasing cultural, gender, linguistic and lived-experience diversity in the populations we serve along with our commitment to inclusion and reconciliation.



#### COMPLEXITY OF NEEDS

Children and youth are navigating more layered and interconnected needs, including mental well-being and identity.



#### ECONOMIC VULNERABILITY

Many families are experiencing greater financial strain and instability.



#### POPULATION GROWTH & MOVEMENT

Alberta's growing population, fueled by an influx of newcomers, refugees, and individuals migrating from other regions, brings new strengths and needs.



#### DIGITALLY EMPOWERED YOUTH

Young people are more informed, connected, and ready to speak out.



## SYSTEMS: STRUCTURES, RELATIONSHIPS & CONSTRAINTS



### NATIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Our work is influenced by relationships and expectations set by two national organizations.



### CHANGING FUNDRAISING LANDSCAPE

Government funding is limited and increasingly targeted, requiring greater focus on accountability and impact.



### FUNDING CONSTRAINTS

The donor environment is competitive, with greater emphasis on outcomes and storytelling.



### WORKFORCE PRESSURES

Recruiting, retaining and supporting staff is more challenging amid high expectations and limited resources.

## SHOCKS: DISRUPTIONS THAT TEST RESILIENCE



### PANDEMIC AFTERSHOCKS

Lingering mental health, economic and community effects continue to shape service needs.



### CLIMATE DISRUPTIONS

Wildfires and other extreme weather events are becoming more frequent and disruptive.



### ECONOMIC INSTABILITY

Global and local uncertainty, including market fluctuations and inflation, affects families and funding alike.



### GLOBAL CONFLICTS

Wars and humanitarian crises abroad bring increased need for refugee resettlement and trauma-informed support.





## BUILDING OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

This strategic plan builds on the foundation laid by our previous strategic direction and reflects both continuity and evolution. We began by revisiting our past plan and reviewing the strategic priorities of our national movements—BGC Canada and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada—to ensure alignment and learning across the broader network.

To deepen our understanding of the environment in which we are working, we examined the external landscape (including emerging trends, system dynamics and potential disruptions) to better understand the realities facing the children, youth, families and communities we serve.

Next, we engaged the people who bring our mission to life every day: Our staff. From senior leaders to part-time frontline team members, voices from across the organization helped shape this plan. We asked about their vision for the future of BGC Bigs and their insights affirmed our direction and brought clarity to the areas where we must **grow, strengthen and lead**.

While this is a refresh of previous strategic plans, our focus over the next three years will be on implementation, evaluation, adaptation and capacity building—all aimed at ensuring BGC Bigs is well-positioned for its next strategic planning cycle



## SO WHAT, NOW WHAT: FROM INSIGHT TO ACTION

The challenges and opportunities we face are clear: youth and families need **more** (and more nuanced) support. Systems and funding environments are shifting. Our organization is being called to adapt, grow and lead. We must respond not only with urgency, but with clarity, purpose and strategic alignment.

Our response is grounded in **four strategic priorities** that directly reflect what we've learned through examining trends, navigating systems and weathering shocks. These priorities are both a commitment and a call to action—ensuring that we are not just reacting to change but actively shaping our work based on insights gained from both the community and our evaluative practices. This approach helps us remain responsive and intentional in how we serve those who need us and those who serve alongside us.





# OUR LEGACY, OUR FUTURE: A STRATEGIC COMMITMENT

## OUR 2025-2028 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Our strategic priorities focus on key areas of impact as we navigate an ever-evolving landscape. They chart a clear course for action, ensuring we respond to the changing needs of young people and the communities we serve, while driving organizational growth, strengthening partnerships, and enhancing systems. Each priority is anchored by a clear focus and supported by concrete actions that will guide our work over the next three years. Further, through each priority we aim to advance Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Anti-Racism, and Truth & Reconciliation across our systems, services, partnerships and workforce to build a more inclusive organization and better serve diverse communities.



### EMPOWER YOUNG PEOPLE TO THRIVE

BGCBigs is committed to helping young people build a stronger future by delivering high-quality mentoring, out-of-school time and youth engagement programs. We are dedicated to refining our approaches, expanding programming for older youth (especially those aged 14+) and ensuring youth-led initiatives are prioritized. Through continuous learning and evaluation, we will adapt our methods to meet the evolving needs of children and youth, while strengthening our impact and fostering inclusive opportunities for growth.



### STRENGTHEN OUR RESOURCES

BGCBigs will focus on increasing investments in the future of young people by strengthening relationships with key partners, including volunteers, staff, community organizations and funders. We will empower our volunteers by deepening engagement and creating pathways for long-term involvement. Additionally, we will support employee growth through continuous learning and leadership development. Our financial foundation will be fortified by securing mission-aligned funding, building stronger donor relationships and ensuring financial sustainability through strategic fundraising efforts.





### **OPTIMIZE OUR SYSTEMS**

BGCBigs is dedicated to building a stronger, more resilient organization by enhancing our internal systems, infrastructure and operational practices. We will strengthen our data management and evaluation systems to support evidence-informed decisions that drive impactful outcomes. Investments in IT infrastructure and cybersecurity will ensure seamless operations and secure client information. We will also maintain safe, accessible and welcoming spaces that align with our mission and reflect our values.



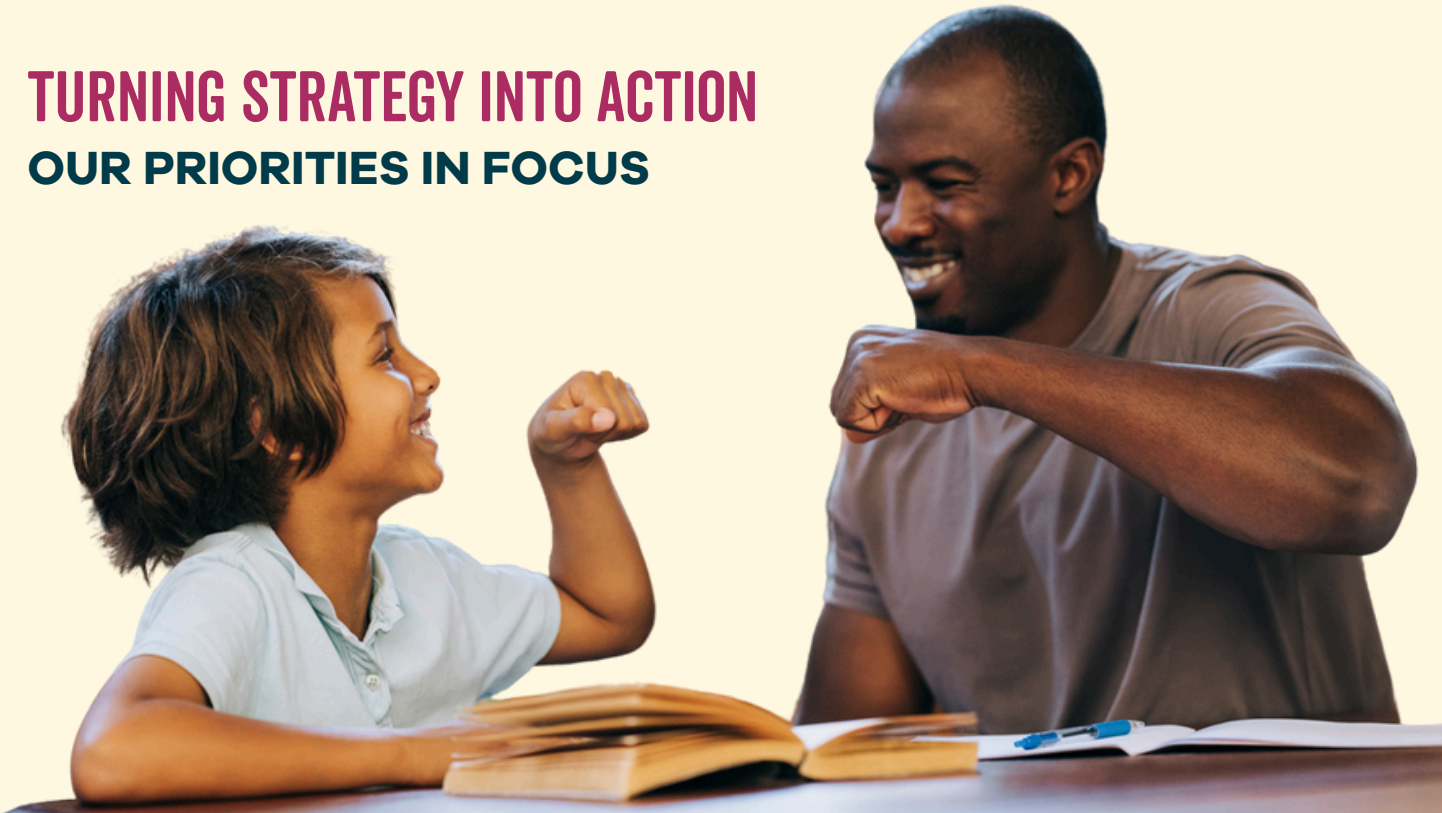
### **TAKE BOLD STEPS FORWARD**

BGCBigs is committed to stepping beyond the status quo and positioning itself as a leader in child and youth services. By showcasing our tangible outcomes and critically examining our methods and assumptions, we will ensure our work remains responsive to the needs of children and youth. We will increase our readiness for new collaboration models, including mergers and shared services and expand relationships with key stakeholders to advocate for innovative opportunities. Through proactive engagement with governments and other partners, we will align our work with larger systemic changes to create a lasting impact.



# TURNING STRATEGY INTO ACTION

## OUR PRIORITIES IN FOCUS



### EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE TO THRIVE

BGCBigs will help today's young people build a stronger tomorrow by delivering mentoring, out of school time and youth engagement programs that empower them to reach their full potential.

OUR FOCUS	OUR ACTIONS
<b>Deliver &amp; Evolve High-Quality Programs</b>	Deliver high-quality mentoring, out-of-school time and youth engagement programs.
	Refine and expand alternative models that lead to strong outcomes for both mentors and mentees.
	Expand programming for youth aged 14+ with a focus on supporting their future pathways.
	Enhance opportunities for youth-led and youth-informed programming rooted in our commitment to inclusion and reconciliation.
<b>Adapt, Strengthen &amp; Improve</b>	Adapt and strengthen programs, services and organizational capacity to proactively meet the evolving and increasingly complex needs of children, youth, families and communities.
	Conduct evaluations of all service delivery programs to support continuous learning, improvement and impact.



## STRENGTHEN OUR RESOURCES

BGCBig's will increase investments in the future of young people by strengthening relationships with key players (including volunteers, staff, community partners and funders.)

OUR FOCUS	OUR ACTIONS
<b>Inspire &amp; Empower Volunteers</b>	Deepen volunteer engagement and retention across all programs by building stronger pathways for involvement, growth and long-term connection
	Refine virtual systems, streamline onboarding and strengthen early volunteer engagement.
<b>Fuel Collective Impact with Community Partnerships</b>	Strengthen and expand partnerships that enhance our ability to serve children/youth through shared resources, coordinated services and aligned missions.
	Foster strategic collaborations to support diverse volunteer recruitment, secure funding opportunities and enhance workforce capacity
<b>Ignite Employee Growth &amp; Leadership</b>	Hire, support and develop employees to thrive in a rapidly changing environment.
	Develop employee teams that embody diversity and are dedicated to advancing equity and inclusion in all aspects of their work.
	Foster a culture of continuous learning through responsive training and employee-driven development.
<b>Strengthen Financial Foundations for the Future</b>	Expand and diversify mission-aligned funding through strategic grants, individual and corporate donor relationships and stewardship, and community-driven fundraising.
	Execute successful fundraising initiatives including building a viable and sustainable Agency Foundation, engaging donors in key signature events and diversifying revenue streams.
	Ensure long-term financial sustainability by updating the technology/systems to support budgeting and financial planning processes, that are supported by transparent, timely reporting to employees, board members and funders, to drive accountability and support informed decision-making.





## OPTIMIZE OUR SYSTEMS

BGCBiggs will build a strong, diverse and resilient organization by enhancing systems, infrastructure and practices that drive operational excellence and sustainable impact.

OUR FOCUS	OUR ACTIONS
<b>Harness Evaluation &amp; Data for Strategic Impact</b>	Advance data fluency across the Agency to support smarter, evidence-informed decisions
	Maintain and evolve strong evaluation practices to deepen insight and support strategic decision-making
<b>Enhance IT Infrastructure</b>	Ensure IT infrastructure and hardware are reliable, aligned with organizational needs and capable of supporting seamless operations and future growth
	Identify and address technology gaps to optimize work and improve organizational efficiency.
	Strengthen cybersecurity measures to safeguard organizational and client information and ensure regulatory compliance.
<b>Create Safe, Inclusive &amp; Sustainable Spaces</b>	Maintain safe and well-functioning environments through proactive safety measures and a comprehensive maintenance program.
	Enhance facility functionality, aesthetics and sustainability to ensure all spaces reflect our mission and are welcoming, inclusive and accessible.
<b>Unify &amp; Strengthen Brand Identity</b>	Elevate brand visibility and recognition through consistent messaging and strategic promotion across all platforms.



TAKE BOLD STEPS FORWARD

BGCBigs will move beyond the status quo to be recognized as a leading child and youth-serving agency.

OUR FOCUS	OUR ACTIONS
Showcase Outcomes & Strengthen What Works	Develop and communicate an impactful Agency story that highlights the diverse youth we serve and the tangible outcomes we achieve.
	Critically examine our models, methods and assumptions to ensure our work remains relevant, effective, inclusive and aligned with reconciliation efforts, and grounded in what children and youth truly need
Drive Collective Innovation & Prepare for New Opportunities	Partner with BGCC, BBBSC and local entities to share research and insights on emerging issues affecting children and youth, driving collective innovation and coordination.
	Increase our readiness to explore new models, including mergers and shared services, ensuring we are prepared to respond effectively and succeed in these opportunities
	Build stronger relationships with all levels of government to advocate for innovative opportunities and secure collaborative support.



## WHAT TO EXPECT OVER THE NEXT 3 YEARS

### OUR FUTURE

To position BGCBigs for a successful next strategic planning cycle, our focus will extend beyond executing the current plan.

**We aim to lay a strong foundation for future strategy development by:**



- **LEARNING FROM THIS STRATEGIC PLAN:** Embedding feedback loops, evaluating progress and adapting our approach based on what we learn.
- **BUILDING FUTURE INSIGHTS:** Engaging youth, families and partners to co-create solutions and tracking evolving needs across the next three years.
- **STRENGTHENING SYSTEMS:** Investing in leadership development, board engagement and aligned resource planning to support long-term goals.
- **PLANNING AHEAD:** Creating a culture of reflection, reconciliation, and innovation and laying out the timeline and tools needed for the next strategic planning process.

By embedding these forward-looking practices now, we not only strengthen the success of this strategic plan, but we also ensure BGCBigs enters the next cycle with clarity, momentum and a deepened understanding of how to meet the changing needs of our community.

These priorities will be put into action over the next three years, as outlined in the implementation and planning timeline below.



## A TIMELINE FOR OUR WORK

GOAL	ACTION	TIMELINE
<b>LEARNING FROM THE NEW PLAN BY:</b>		
<b>IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate the plan internally (staff, board, volunteers) and externally (funders, partners, community).</li> <li>Align the annual business plan with the refreshed strategic plan by translating strategic goals into actionable steps with timelines, responsibilities and resources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Immediate &amp; Ongoing</li> <li>For April 2026</li> </ul>
<b>MONITORING &amp; EVALUATING THE PLAN</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review progress by creating learning feedback loops and monitoring results to inform adjustments in programming and operations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annually with leadership, staff &amp; Board</li> </ul>
<b>BUILD FUTURE INSIGHT BY:</b>		
<b>ENGAGING PARTNERS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with partners, community and youth. Continue involving young people and families in feedback and co-creation.</li> <li>Build and nurture partnerships with schools, community agencies, funders, and government bodies.</li> <li>Track partner insights, including documenting their evolving needs, experiences and ideas over the three years to inform future planning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Starting in late 2025</li> <li>Ongoing</li> <li>As part of each engagement</li> </ul>
<b>ENGAGING PARTNERS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with partners community and youth. Continue involving young people and families in feedback and co-creation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Main focus in Year 3 (2027/2028)</li> </ul>

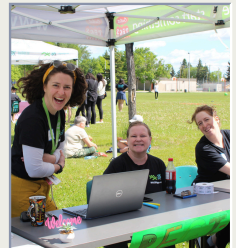
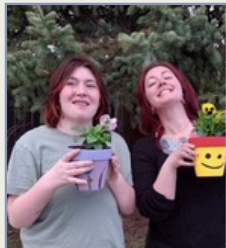
**A TIMELINE FOR OUR WORK**

(continued)

GOAL	ACTION	TIMELINE
<b>STRENGTHEN SYSTEMS BY:</b>		
<b>BUILDING CAPACITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to invest in staff development; specifically the EDI focused leadership to develop future oriented leadership and identify and mentor emerging leaders who can play a role in the next planning process.</li> <li>Ensure board readiness by involving the board in strategic reflection annually, so they're primed for the next planning cycle.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing with annual sessions in February</li> <li>Annually at Board retreat</li> </ul>
<b>DEVELOP &amp; SUSTAIN RESOURCES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Align fundraising strategies to ensure the fund development plan supports the long-term strategic goals.</li> <li>Plan for the resources that will be needed for the next strategic planning process (e.g., evaluation consultants, community engagement tools).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> <li>Each year with focus in Year 3</li> </ul>
<b>COLLECTING DATA &amp; TELLING THE STORY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collect and communicate meaningful data that informs both decision-making and storytelling.</li> <li>Use data to refine programs, be responsive and adaptive based on what the data shows.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> <li>Ongoing with annual roll up</li> </ul>
<b>PLAN AHEAD BY:</b>		
<b>PREPARING FOR THE NEXT STRATEGIC CYCLE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Record what works and what doesn't across next three years.</li> <li>Develop a culture of strategic thinking by encouraging innovation and reflection at all levels of the organization.</li> <li>Schedule annual key components for the next strategic cycle, including identifying when environmental scans, community consultations and board retreats should be held.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing</li> <li>Ongoing with key touch points</li> <li>Annually. First Board event will be November 2025</li> </ul>



# GUIDED BY LEGACY. GROWING WITH HEART.



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