



METIS CHILD, FAMILY & COMMUNITY SERVICES

ANNUAL REPORT
APRIL 1, 2017 - MARCH 31, 2018





VISION STATEMENT

THE MÉTIS FAMILY AND COMMUNITY IS THE CORNERSTONE OF OUR NATION AND IS BUILT UPON LOVE, RESPECT, HONOUR, STRENGTH AND HERITAGE.

MISSION STATEMENT

Métis families and communities have the right and responsibility to care for children. Metis Child, Family and Community Services will work to strengthen the capacity of families to care for children through culturally relevant community-based programs. We believe in the inherent strength of our families and in the need to build on the capacity of our community to care for and nurture Métis children.

“We were guided by the family’s pace, opened with a prayer and led by the great grandmother. As a result they felt heard and respected.”

– Family Service Supervisor

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Métis families and communities are the cornerstone of the Métis Nation and the service delivery system must reflect this vision.
2. Responsibility for decision-making regarding Métis children and families lies with the family, extended family and community whenever possible.
3. The organizational structure promotes and supports community governance at all levels.
4. The service delivery system will encompass both formal and informal elements.
5. The service delivery system must be operated in an efficient and effective manner.
6. The service delivery system will be outcome based and will reflect the core guiding principles of MCFCS.



GREETINGS FROM THE **PRESIDENT**

The present and future wellbeing of our children, their families, and our Community is of utmost importance to the Metis Child, Family, and Community Services Agency, and our Metis Government. This is confirmed year after year by the intense dedication and continuing good work of the Agency's staff and board leadership.

Our mutual desire is to prevent suffering by working proactively to develop new models for child welfare reform. True reform must recognize the right of the Metis Nation's Manitoba Metis Community to care for our own children and in our own way. Towards this end we participated in several important national and provincial initiatives to plan for the future of our children and their families.

This past year brought many opportunities for participation. We took leading roles in conferences and consultations focused on child welfare. Your Metis Government continues to advocate that the Manitoba Metis Community must have full jurisdiction and authority to guarantee the safety of our children. Ensuring this outcome requires building healthy families.

I applaud the commitment of both the Metis Child, Family, and Community Services Agency and the Authority. I offer sincere thanks to our previous Minister, Vice President Judy Mayer, and my full support for our recently appointed Minister, Mona Buors. I also want to thank all our staff, leaders, and families for their tireless efforts focused on protecting and creating bright futures for our children.

Meeqwetch,

President David Chartrand
LL.D (hon), O.M.





MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER AND ASSOCIATE MINISTER OF METIS CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

It has been an historic year for Indigenous child and family services in Canada.

The most important thing that is happening today in child welfare is that both the provincial and, now, federal government have joined us in recognizing that the CFS system in this province and in our nation does not work, especially for Indigenous families.

While Devolution was intended to return the care of our children and youth to our Métis, Inuit and First Nations communities, we ended up more than doubling the number of young people in care in Manitoba since its launch about a decade and a half ago. Our Métis Government and Métis CFS leaders have long been vocal about our inability to do Métis specific programs that were “outside the box” and “more prevention” because the way we were funded by the province never changed.

The other thing is that Métis people are saying –ENOUGH! We will be the catalyst for change – and that is what we have been seeing strongly, especially in 2018. The above being said, we will work congenially, but strongly, with our community and with all levels of government to make positive change!

Thank you to Metis Child, Family and Community Service Agency’s Executive Director, Greg Besant, the management and board teams, and every worker for your continuing hard work and dedication to improving lives for children and youth. It is greatly appreciated.

In the spirit of Riel, let’s continue to move forward!



JUDY MAYER
Minister of Metis CFS



CAROL LARAMEE
Associate Minister of Metis CFS



MESSAGE FROM THE

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

OF THE METIS CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AUTHORITY

I would like to begin by welcoming Mr. Greg Besant to his role as Executive Director of Metis Child, Family and Community Services as he launches his first annual report for the agency. This change came just in advance of a flurry of activity for child welfare reform, both provincially and federally. Thank you to your agency Management, Board and Staff for your continuing hard work and dedication to the families who need our support and for meeting the challenges of an evolving and increasingly complicated child welfare system.

Métis-led provincial and national consultations clearly showed that a majority of Métis people see child welfare today as being akin to generations of wrongdoing where our children were snatched from their homes and sent to Residential and Day Schools or adopted out across North America and beyond in the 60's Scoop.

As a Métis child welfare system, we understand the impact of this trauma. Yet, we have been stymied by limited prevention funding. We know the front-line child welfare workers at our agencies want to practice differently. They want to strengthen families and keep children in their homes. In order for us to achieve this together, we need to work without the confines of the current provincial funding model. We need to move into a flexible funding model as the entryway to use our Child Maintenance dollars creatively.

I believe a historic change is on the horizon across our nation. We continue to hear that our Métis system is innovative and is known for our creative work with families... but we can do better, and we want to do better. Through the spirit of the children, the voice of our communities and the guidance of our Elders, we will make that change!

Miigwetch!

Billie Schibler



MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

It's hard to believe another year has already come and gone! It's been a very busy and exciting year full of many challenges and changes that we faced, dealt with and overcame. Despite the challenges, the many day-to-day hurdles and significant changes, the agency continued to deliver and provide excellent programs, services and resources for the children, families and communities throughout Manitoba.

On behalf of the Agency Board of Directors, I truly and sincerely thank our Executive Director, Greg Besant, the Executive Management team and all the Agency staff for their hard work, their commitment and dedication. You made it possible; for our Agency to move forward in exploring new and exciting ideas in 2017/2018 as you continued to do an amazing and professional job. The Agency is truly blessed to have such a great team working for and with us!

The Metis Child, Family and Community Services (MCFCS) Agency Board looks forward to another year of working collaboratively with the Authority Board in achieving our commitment of empowering families and communities.



The Agency Board of Directors also acknowledges all the front line workers for the amazing work they do on a daily basis for the families and communities and most of all for the children in Manitoba. It is because of you that MCFCS is the Agency of choice for many people. We thank you for all your hard work, your dedication and commitment in providing a high standard of professionalism and service for the children and families we serve.

From the Executive Director to the front line workers, the Agency Board of Directors got to see and experience firsthand their achievements, their hard work and dedication through the Youth Celebrations, where many of the youth were transitioning and aging out of care but yet still hold many of the Agency workers as their mentor and for support.

The MCFCS Agency Board looks forward to continue working alongside the Executive Director as well as the Authority in the upcoming year to provide support for the MCFCS Agency.

The Agency Board will continue to work alongside the Authority Board to support the Agency's staff, its programs and resources. With our Vision and Mission statements always in mind, we will continue to support Métis families in raising the next generation to be proud to be Métis. MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL!

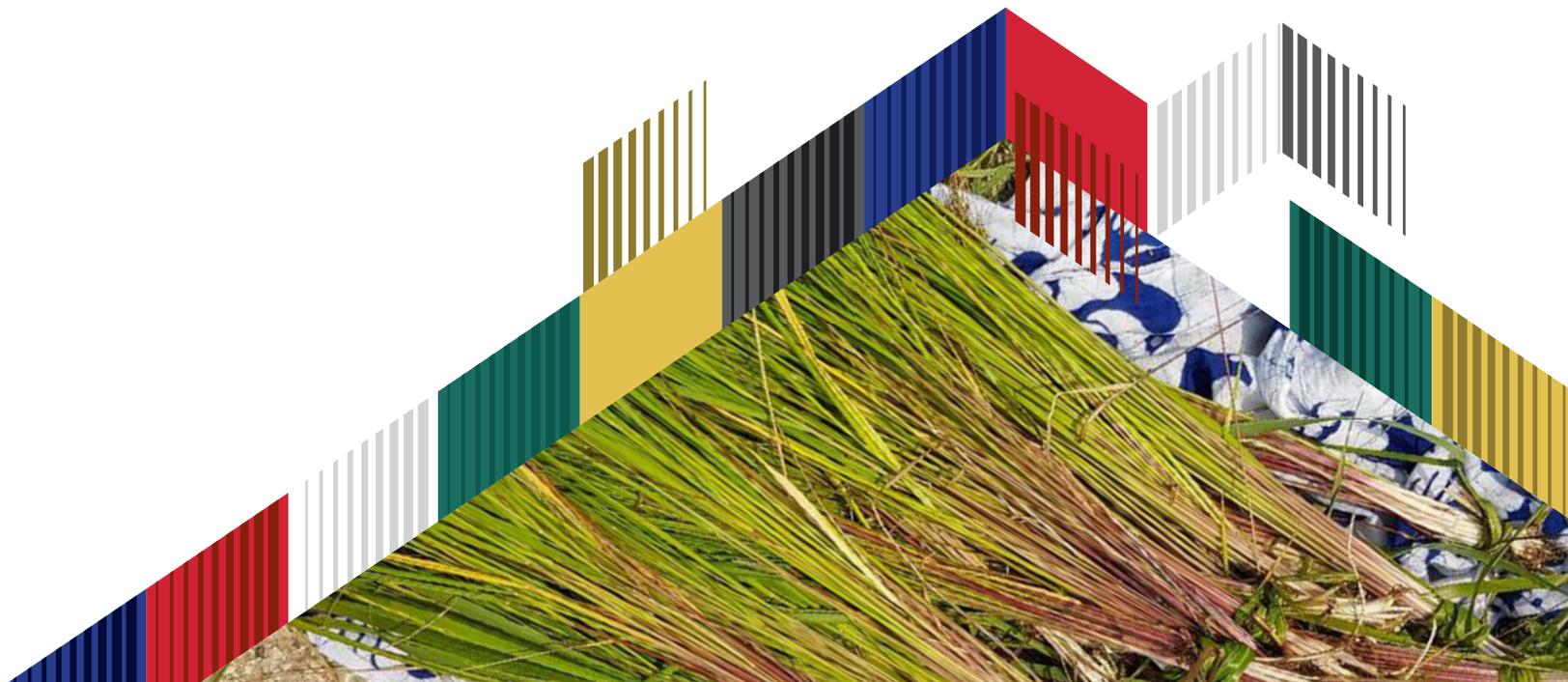
Thank you. Merci.

2017-2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| A/Chair: | Eric Chartrand, Winnipeg Region |
| Vice Chair: | Shirley Langan, Southeast Region |
| Secretary | Beverly Webb, Interlake Region |
| Treasurer: | Marcella Vezina, Southeast Region |
| Members: | Florence Lamoureux, Interlake Region Gertrude Klatt, Elder Advisor |
| Ex-Officio Members: | Rita Cullen Barbara Lavallee Lorraine Laramee |



EXPLORING
NEW AND
EXCITING
IDEAS





MESSAGE FROM THE
**EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR**
OF METIS CHILD, FAMILY AND
COMMUNITY SERVICES

It is my pleasure to present the annual report for 2017/18 of Metis Child, Family and Community Services. I would like to thank the staff for their hard work and dedication over this past year. They have demonstrated remarkable skill, grace and perseverance in adapting to an everchanging landscape within the agency and child welfare as a whole. It is an honour to work with them on a daily basis.

Reviews of legislation and promised amendments, provincial governmental re-organization and community consultations hosted by the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) have brought the agency to the edge of the greatest opportunity for meaningful change in child welfare since devolution. As always, Metis Child, Family and Community Services has been leading innovation and incorporating emerging practices on a daily basis. Like never before, extended families are involved in creating safety and are active participants in planning and decision making for their children. Fewer children are entering care and the ground work is being done to have more children re-unify with their parents or extended family.

This year we are publishing more data than in prior year's reports in an attempt to provide a more accurate view of the agency. I hope you find this interesting and useful. It is important for people to see beyond the number of children in care to recognize the much greater numbers of Metis children and families we provide support and services to.

Finally, I wish to thank the Metis Government, President Chartrand, Minister Mayer, the MCFCS Board of Directors, the Metis Child and Family Services Authority and their Board of Directors for their support and leadership over this past year.

Thank you,

Greg Besant
Executive Director

“You have to believe in your families and believe that they can do it!”

– Family Service Worker

THE YEAR AT A GLANCE 2017-2018 STATS

Total case numbers year to year have remained stable with a slight drop in the overall total. These numbers reflect the cases open on March 31, 2018 only due to the limitations of the provincial data system. Files opened and closed within the fiscal year will not be reflected within these numbers. This is particularly important when considering the Family Enhancement data as these cases are limited by policy to 270 days length. Reducing the average time a case is open is a goal for the Province of Manitoba so better data is needed in this area. The agency has made a commitment to improving the data gathered and using the data to inform practice development. You will see some initial results of this throughout this report.

The Year at a Glance 2017-2018 STATS

| Regions | Protection | Extension of Care | Voluntary Family Services | Expectant Parent Services | Family Enhancement | Children In Care | Total Cases |
|---------------------|------------|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------|
| SOUTHEAST (EASTMAN) | 10 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 139 | 158 |
| INTERLAKE | 19 | 16 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 167 | 206 |
| WINNIPEG | 484 | 52 | 51 | 8 | 63 | 554 | 1212 |
| TOTAL | 513 | 75 | 57 | 8 | 63 | 860 | 1576 |



Data and file management are important to both service provision and future planning for the agency. Each year a service team with the highest standard of compliance in funding criteria, digital photos and face to face contact, while maintaining the lowest number of Waiting Closure files is recognized for their outstanding achievement in this area.

Back: Bree Anderson, Lauren Paluck, Stacey Campbell, Courtney Wrightson, Jamie Munro, Rachelle Fray, Tina Shumilak, Janelle Wentz-Chisholm.

Front: Greg Besant, Melody Chateauf, Billie Schibler



STRENGTHENING FAMILIES THROUGH ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION

FAMILY ENHANCEMENT

Since its inception, the Family Enhancement Team has been the testing ground for the evolution of our family preservation services. This team was the first to systematically implement Structured Decision Making tools, Signs of Safety practices and Family Led Decision Making. These practices are now well established within the broader agency.

Family Enhancement involves approaching families from a supportive perspective, recognizing that all families have strengths as well as struggles. The importance of maintaining children within their family is emphasized. This allows the Agency to provide a supportive service focusing on both the overall needs of the family and the well-being of the children. Services are goal focused and time limited (up to 270 days). This builds on identified strengths and focuses on needs identified through an assessment process with the family used to broaden families' support networks, sharing circles, with the support of the program's cultural worker, and planning meetings with extended family members.

“A father whose file had been closed for two years dropped a note at the office giving an update on his family and children – their progress and successes – and gave thanks for our support. I found it touching that he wanted to share this with us.”

– Family Enhancement Worker

FAMILY SERVICES

Our Family Service Teams use strength oriented and relationship based approaches to support families and children whether the children are in the home or have come into care due to safety issues. Over the past year, there has been an increasing focus on Family Led Decision Making within the agency. This involves facilitating family meetings, inclusive of extended family members and other supportive people, whenever significant decisions or plans are being made. Keeping the power and responsibility to make family decisions within the family is a cornerstone of our practice model.

Over the past year there has been a significant reduction in the number of apprehensions the agency has made in comparison to the prior year. At the same time, changes in court processes are leading to orders – including permanent orders - being granted more quickly. This has the beneficial effect of increasing certainty in some cases but may also reduce the time a parent has to resolve the safety or health issues they face.

The agency is proud to have been a leader in the Bringing Families Together Pilot Project (see page 12) which emphasized the importance of involving family in planning and decisions even when returning home was unlikely.

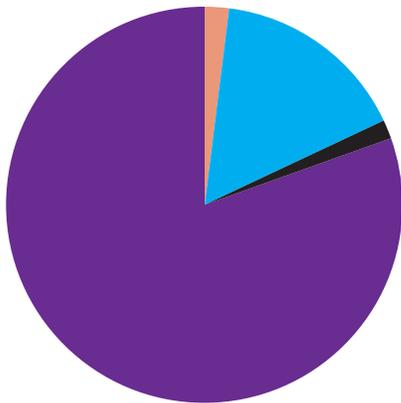
“The mother liked that we gave her the power to make decisions. We were able to return her infant and now she is working to get her other children in the permanent care of another agency returned to her.”

– Family Service Worker

SUPPORTING FAMILIES TO CARE FOR THEIR CHILDREN

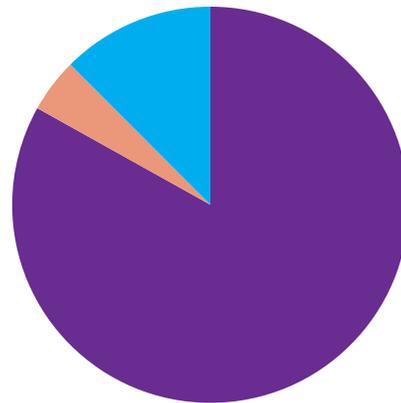
The vast majority of children and families who receive services from the Family Enhancement and Family Service teams remain safe at home with their parents. Helping families resolve issues while they care for their children reduces trauma for all family members and leads to improved outcomes and brighter futures for children. We are making efforts to enhance the supports we provide to families so their children will always remain safe at home.

SUPPORTING FAMILIES TO CARE FOR THEIR CHILDREN



| | | |
|---|-----|---|
| Children at Home | 953 |  |
| Voluntary Placement Agreement | 24 |  |
| Temporary Ward/Petition for Further Order | 189 |  |
| Apprehension | 17 |  |

NUMBER OF CHILDREN BEING SUPPORTED IN THEIR FAMILY BY CASE TYPE



| | | |
|---------------------------|-----|---|
| Protection | 792 |  |
| Voluntary Family Services | 42 |  |
| Family Enhancement | 119 |  |





BRINGING FAMILIES TOGETHER PILOT PROJECT

“Bringing Families Together” is a two year pilot with the objective of increasing permanency opportunities for children in care. The pilot explores additional ways that the Manitoba child and family service system can engage with children, families and communities to establish lifelong connections and create a strong sense of belonging for children in care. “Bringing Families Together” recognizes that all children have a right to be connected to their family, community and culture and that these connections are vital to one’s sense of belonging and identity. Child welfare has too often disrupted these connections and needs to work in partnership with families and communities to maintain and strengthen these connections.

The pilot does this through a dedicated team of workers that use Kevin Campbell’s internationally recognized Family Finding practice approach (www.familyfinding.org) to establish lifelong connections for children in care with their family and community. The pilot went live in September 2016 and has served approximately 150 children to date from agencies across the four Child and Family Service Authorities, the vast majority of whom have been sibling groups and other children in Winnipeg’s emergency care system.

This leading practice approach shifts how we work with families. As a part of this practice approach these dedicated workers use specific skills and strategies to locate and engage family and community connections who are or have been significant in the child and family’s life and that may have been disrupted as a result of the child coming into care, and include them in planning for the child’s future. The goal of this process is to restore the child’s natural family and community support network and ensure these supports are lifelong and are not dependent on long term child welfare service. Once this support network is in place, the network shares the decision making responsibility for the child’s safety, permanency and well being.

The pilot is a formal partnership between Until the Last Child www.untilthelastchild.com, the Southern First Nations Network of Care Child and Family Services Authority, the First Nations of Northern Manitoba Child and Family Services Authority, the Metis Child and Family Services Authority, the General Child and Family Services Authority and the Province of Manitoba (Department of Families). Until The Last Child works alongside child welfare agencies, encouraging and supporting innovation. They provide funding and other necessary resources to enable enhanced, stable outcomes for children in care— outcomes that cannot be achieved with public-sector resources alone. In many cases, child welfare agencies already have the creativity and best practice models they need, but lack the funding to implement.

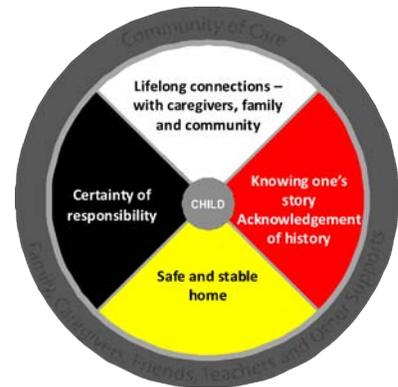
WHAT WILL THIS MEAN FOR MANITOBA IN THE FUTURE?

There has been ongoing evaluation throughout the two year pilot project that is examining implementation of the Family Finding practice approach and results pertaining to the four markers of permanency as defined by Manitoba’s definition of permanency. The evaluation is gathering evidence and perceptions of services and results from several sources, including the families and children who received services, service providers, and caregivers. The evaluation is also gathering information from other key individuals in Manitoba’s child welfare system who have general knowledge and experience with local or other best practice approaches that emphasize family involvement in ways intended to empower families and communities in sharing responsibility for planning and decision-making in meeting the goals of safety, permanence and well-being for children in the child welfare system. The lessons learned from the final evaluation (due after the pilot ends in September 2018) can inform the development of possible strategies to implement this practice approach on a broader scale.

WHAT IS MANITOBA'S DEFINITION OF PERMANENCY?

Manitoba's definition of permanency was developed by the four Child and Family Services Authorities and is inclusive of each of the four Child and Family Services Authority's unique perspectives on permanency.

Children require safety and stability from childhood through to adulthood. Fundamental to the required safety and stability is "certainty of responsibility" –caregiver(s) who accept lifelong responsibility and commitment to care for the child and whom the child mutually understands and accepts to be a trusted support. Manitoba's definition of permanency recognizes that all children have natural certainty and belonging through their family and community of origin and that these connections are vital to maintain.



The four markers of permanency are intended to provide children the connections, supports and understanding they require to find 'certainty of responsibility' following child and family services involvement with the child and their family. Each marker has specific and important intended outcomes:

- **Knowing one's story and history** – this provides the child with a distinguishable sense of belonging, culture and identity.
- **Safe and stable home** – creates a safe, stable and reliable place for the child to learn life skills, grow and develop
- **Certainty of responsibility** - establishes trusted caregiver(s) in the child's life who will provide the supports and resources for the child into and throughout adulthood. Provides the child with the security of an ongoing lifelong connection with supportive caregiver(s).
- **Lifelong connections** – emphasizes the importance of making every effort to maintain connections with the child's natural network of support and extended family whenever possible. Creates the safety and security required to foster resilience and ensure the child has the connections and supports in place to pursue education, employment and any other aspirations into and throughout adulthood.

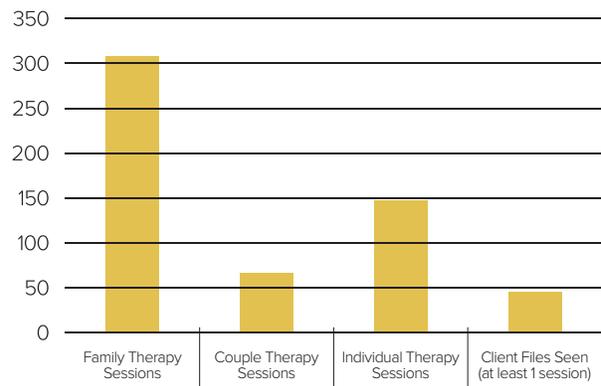
Although difficult to measure, each marker of permanency is also rooted in providing the opportunity for the child to love and feel loved. Love is an imperative part of a healthy and safe childhood, and a key aspect of a successful transition to adulthood.



AURORA FAMILY THERAPY PARTNERSHIP

Through the ongoing partnership with the University of Winnipeg’s Master of Marriage and Family Therapy Program we were able to offer families the opportunity to receive free family therapy services on a confidential basis. The issues dealt with were very broad including conflict within the family, trauma and related issues, parenting and behavioural issues, addiction and sense of identity and self-esteem.

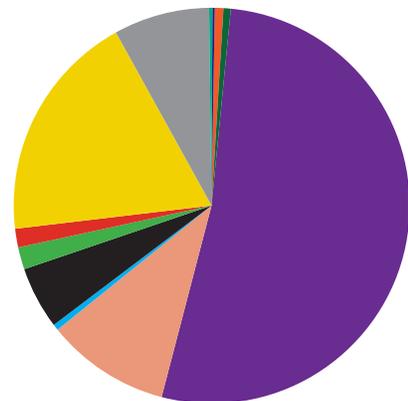
MCFSC/AURORA PRACTICUM STATISTICS 2017-2018



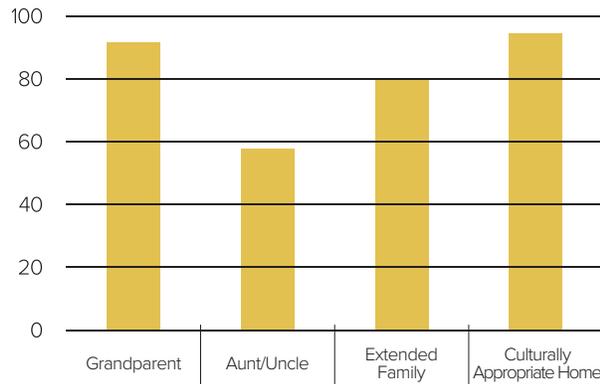
CHILDREN IN CARE

PLACEMENT TYPES FOR CHILDREN IN CARE

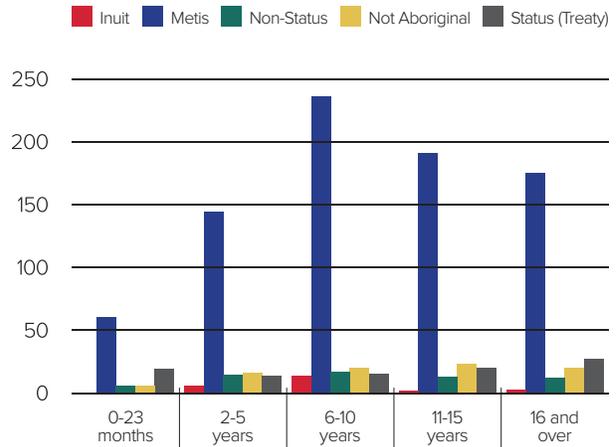
| | | |
|---------------------------------|-----|--|
| Foster Homes & Licensed Kinship | 492 | |
| Specialized Foster Homes | 95 | |
| Health/Mental Health Facility | 4 | |
| Independent Living | 48 | |
| Out of Province | 17 | |
| Own Home/Relative | 14 | |
| Place of Safety | 176 | |
| Residential Care | 73 | |
| Other Agency | 2 | |
| Adoption Probation | 2 | |
| AWOL | 7 | |
| Corrections | 5 | |



PERMANENT WARDS PLACED IN CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE FOSTER HOMES / KINSHIP / PLACE OF SAFETY

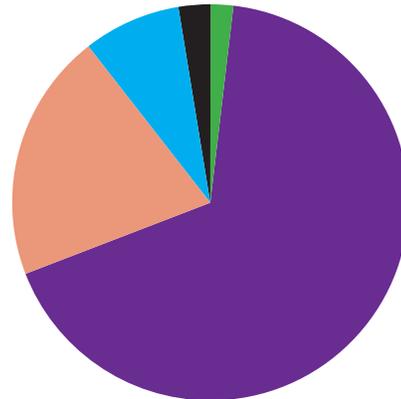


CHILDREN IN CARE BY INDIGENOUS STATUS AND AGE



LEGAL AUTHORITIES OF CHILDREN IN CARE

| | | |
|---|-----|---|
| Permanent Ward (PW) | 630 |  |
| Temporary Ward (TW)/ Petition Filed for Further Order (PFFO) | 189 |  |
| Transitional Planning (Extension of Care) | 75 |  |
| Voluntary Placement Agreement (VPA) | 24 |  |
| Apprehension | 17 |  |



The increasing number of children in care in Manitoba is widely recognized as a tragedy. At the same time, Manitoba suffers from one of the highest child poverty rates in the country. Our focus this past year has been to reduce the number of children coming into care through changes in policy and practice. Internally tracked data indicates that the number of apprehensions decreased in the last 8 months of the fiscal year by 26% year over year. However, the significantly lower number of children under apprehension, Petition Filed and Temporary Orders in this year's data (206 versus 254 children) also is reflective of court process changes leading to earlier permanent orders. We also continue to receive Metis children under permanent orders from other agencies on a regular basis. In the coming year, we look forward to changes which may enhance the likelihood of children under permanent orders leaving care and remaining supported by their family or extended family.



PERMANENT WARD

The agency continues to focus on implementing the Manitoba Definition of Permanency when reviewing permanent ward cases. Too often parents and relatives have lost hope after a permanent order is made and feel that their children “are lost to the system”. Metis Child, Family and Community Services not only supports ongoing, meaningful contact for children with their family after a permanent order, but believes that this contact is imperative to positive outcomes for the child. Over the past year, **seven children** under permanent orders were re-united with their parents.

The agency also continues to focus on ensuring that children “aging out” of the child welfare system are supported. We had 71 youth receiving supports under an Agreement with a Young Adult (Extension of Care) on March 31, 2018. This year we had our highest ever number of children receive supports to attend post-secondary education. Improving educational and employment opportunities for youth leaving care is a priority area for the coming year.

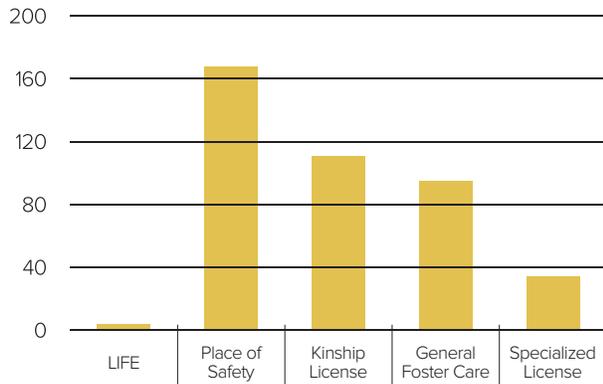
INFINITY RESOURCES

ALTERNATIVE CARE PROGRAM

Our Alternative Care Program consists of three sub-units, each of which has a unique mandate. Our General Foster Care Program is responsible for the recruitment, screening, training and ongoing support of Foster Parents who are providing care to children of all ages, with a variety of needs. Our Specialized Foster Care Program provides the same range of services to Foster Parents who are providing care to children and youth whose needs fall into the very highest levels of care. Our Kinship Care Program provides services to individuals who have opened their homes to children with whom they already have a relationship. Many of these Kinship Caregivers are grandparents, some are aunts or uncles, some are family friends or members of the child’s home community.

Without exception, we are grateful each day for the contribution that each of our caregivers makes, and for the sacrifices they make in order to take on these responsibilities. There are stories of aunts sleeping on the floor beside their niece’s bed to make sure they are safe through the night, of teachers taking sibling groups of children into their homes from emergency shelters, and great aunts travelling from Nunavut to meet and open their homes for their families. We have been particularly touched this year to see so many extended family members join Lifetime Networks and decide together how their children should be cared for and by whom.

ALTERNATIVE CARE LICENSE



Children placed in Places of Safety or in Licensed Kinship Care are living with a relative or someone that knew them before they entered care. This is incredibly important for children. The vast majority of homes supported by our agency are related caregivers.

LIFE PROGRAM

The LIFE (Live In Family Enhancement) program offers a unique option to keep the family together while children are in care. Families are matched with a trained LIFE caregiver who acts as a role model and supports, advocates, guides and mentors the parent in order to promote the health and well-being of all family members. The family resides in the LIFE home for 8 months to 2 years. They coach the parents towards increased parenting and life skills, attachment, structure and routine and ensure the safety and well-being of children in the program.

Last year there was much interest in this innovative program. CBC “The Current” did a follow up story based on a previous radio show. The Yukon Government contacted the agency to learn more about the LIFE program because they are introducing this ideology directly into legislation. It is a best practice to keep families together as long as the parent is in a place to benefit from this type of program. The University of Manitoba also requested permission of the agency to submit the study they did of the LIFE program for publication.





CHILDREN AND YOUTH PROGRAMS

Programming for children and youth runs all year long. These programs include Circle of Life, Little Bears, Cultural Craft Nights, Skills for Life, and Metis Spirit.

There were a number of activities facilitated by the Children and Youth Team in 2017/18. The team continues to highlight all the different holidays by preparing food and activities. They also hosted an “Around the World” night where they played International Jeopardy and prepared different foods themed by 5 different countries. Another highlight is two week long cultural camps which gives children an opportunity to learn about their Metis history and culture as well as fun activities. The team also organizes cultural activities such as sweat lodges and sweet grass picking. The team puts their hearts into organizing and putting on our “age of majority” celebration as youth turn 18 and celebrate that milestone in their lives. Everyone enjoys the dinner and entertainment.

CIRCLE OF LIFE

The Circle of Life program provides group and one to one supports to both children and youth in care and those who are not. Staff are goal oriented and strength based in meeting the unique needs of each child or youth. They help develop communication and conflict resolution skills while building self esteem, confidence and social skills. The programming promotes resilience and the development of positive and healthy relationships. Not only do children and youth participate in healthy and fun activities, the team also focuses on both cultural and educational components. Children and youth are guided to discovering their culture and heritage and have taken part in sweats, smudging, sharing circles and lessons of the sash. They are taught the benefits of incorporating those teachings into their everyday lives while instilling positive values and respect for self and others.

“At the (high school) graduation it was very heart-warming to watch as K received a special cash prize award which went to the most improved student of the year.”

– MCFCS One-One worker

SKILLS FOR LIFE

The Skills for Life team provides one to one and group supports to youth ages 15 to 21. They are goal oriented and focus on developing the necessary skills to successfully transition to adulthood. Using cultural, educational and recreational components, staff support the youth to develop life skills such as budgeting, banking, resume and job search skills, nutrition, cooking, personal care and safety. This program also assists youth by helping to develop problem solving skills and navigating other government services. They also provide programming alongside the Metis Spirit program with evening programming which is supported by Metis Education and Training.

“None of this would have been possible if it wasn’t for your help. Thank you, I would never have had this opportunity.”

– Young adult upon completing Pipeline Training through MET

LITTLE BEARS

Little Bears group provides bi-weekly programming to children and youth, ages 7 to 14. Children and youth receive a hot dinner prepared by staff. This helps them focus and enjoy the activity planned for the evening. By allowing them to form relationships that are not only supportive, but trusting, they are able to create a stability that is crucial to the lives of our children and translated into their daily lives.

METIS SPIRIT PROGRAM

The Metis Spirit Program works with youth between the ages of 18 to 25 who have left the care of the agency. Youth voluntarily engage with the program and receive ongoing support, advocacy, connections to community resources, employment focused group programming, and assistance in pursuing post secondary education. The Metis Spirit Worker helps the youth identify their goals and assists in achieving those specific goals.

The Metis Spirit Worker is essential to the organization of the Youth Celebration in which the agency recognizes every youth that turns 18. This is a very important milestone and is celebrated with a dinner and evening of entertainment.

This program is made possible through funding provided by the Manitoba Metis Federation.

“T always makes sure he sets aside every 2nd Thursday - no matter what is going on - to come to the Little Bears Group because he really enjoys the activities, atmosphere, kids and staff.”

– Caregiving Grandmother





SHELTER RESOURCES

GLADYS COOK AND EAGLES NEST

Gladys Cook House and Eagles Nest are now licensed as short to long-term homes. This allows staff to build meaningful relationships over time and gives the children and youth a feeling of stability and commitment. Staff in both facilities are very busy meeting the needs of the children and youth in their care. Staff help ensure there is one less change in the youth's lives by driving them to their familiar school which allows them to maintain relationships with friends and teachers. They also offer recreational opportunities such as community centres, YMCA, camping, fishing, MCFCS Cultural Camp and any other interests the children and youth have.

RAILS

Rosedale Adolescent Inter-dependent Living Services (RAILS) is a 7 unit/9 bed inter-dependent living program. It supports youth living on their own with the support and guidance of having staff available on site 24 hours a day. Staff mentor the youth in areas such as: budgeting, proper nutrition, smart shopping, educational support, personal health and hygiene among other independent living skills.

Staff help youth prepare meals for group functions in the common area for educational, employment and recreational activities. When a youth leaves RAILS they are able to receive supports from staff for up to 3 months as they move on their own to independent living.



“Don’t mess up your stay at RAILS – I miss it!”

– Former resident

FAMILY SUPPORT

FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM

Our family support program had another busy year. The majority of our family support work is focused on providing support to parents that have children in care and supporting family times, comprising of 75% of the services we provide. Over time we hope to see a transition from supporting family times to providing more preventative work of parent education. We have shifted the way family support does provide parent education to the families to help meet the needs of the family services workers. We are assisting with more frequent “drop in” support services. This type of support allows us to check in on families and meet the immediate needs of the families. It also eliminates the demand of the social worker needing to go and provide that short piece of support that the family may feel they need. By providing this type of collaborative work it strengthens the teamwork model and builds the relationship between all the parties involved.

The Family Support Program supported 4369 visits between children in care and their parents this past year. 65% of these visits were supported in office. We would like to see these numbers continue to shift towards supporting contact in home or community settings.

DRAGONFLY

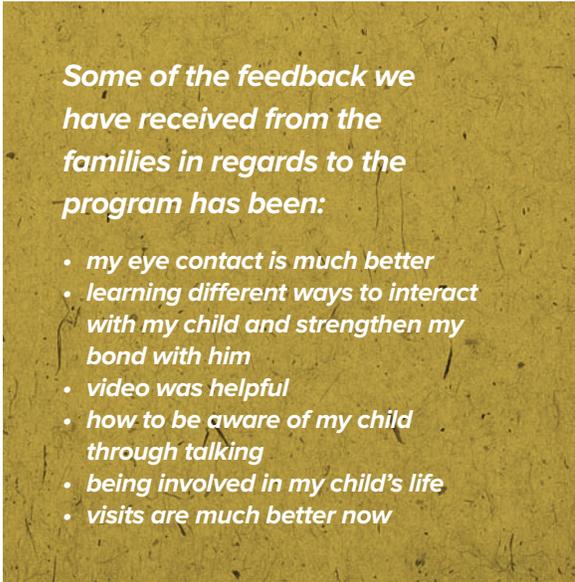
This program is offered to our families that are actively in the reunification process or LIFE Program. If reunification is no longer possible, we focus on how to make each family time more meaningful and strengthen their existing attachments.

Family Support staff are assigned to a family, for a duration of 12-20 weeks alongside an Aulneau Renewal Center Therapist. During this time the family works with their family support worker and therapist to build and strengthen their attachment with their child(ren). Each week the family is recorded, with the parent, family support worker, and therapist watching the video immediately afterward. The family support worker leads the discussion with guidance from the therapist and provides feedback about the family interaction in the video. Activities are then introduced that will enhance and promote attachment between parent and child(ren). These activities are worked on throughout the week as “homework”.

The whole basis of the model is to be strength based and provide parents with positive feedback. We always want to build off the existing strengths of the parents and continue to encourage parents to work on their parent/child attachment.

In the past year we have had 10 families successfully complete the Dragonfly program and from there we had 6 families reunify with their child(ren).

Dragonfly currently runs twice a year and is offered to both protection and permanent ward families.



CHRISTMAS HAMPERS

In partnership with the Manitoba Metis Federation and the Metis Authority for the last three last years, the Family Support program provides Christmas hampers to select families that receive services from our agency.

This past December the Family Support program gave out 26 hampers to families that had no knowledge they were receiving a hamper.

This is an activity that is a favorite of staff and families alike. Being able to provide families and children with items to make Christmas a little bit better makes our jobs that much more rewarding.



COMFORT KITS

In November 2015, the agency began the Comfort Kit program. This program is made possible through a generous grant from the Ted and Loretta Rogers Foster Care Transition Program.

This year the Agency was gifted 210 back packs and along with the grant, additional items were purchased to create the Comfort Kits. Each kit is gender neutral, set up based on age groups and contains items designed to bring comfort to a child during a time of a lot of changes. Some of the age appropriate items included in the kits are: blankets, books, lunch kits, water bottles, board games, teddy bears, hygiene items and Metis sashes.

The kits are intended for children at the time they are being brought into care.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

SPIRIT HELPER COMMITTEE

The Spirit Helper Committee is made up of staff members from throughout the agency. With the support of Children and Youth Programming Staff, the committee has been able to offer youth and staff, sweat lodge ceremonies and sweet grass, cedar and sage picking over the last year, giving them the opportunity to learn about medicines and Ceremony.

The agency has been diligent in ensuring that the culture of our children in their care has been considered in every case plan. Staff are required to do cultural planning for our children and the Metis Spirit Helper Committee has been available to assist staff in this if required. We are launching a new cultural planning bundle. This will be an inclusive document for families, youth and staff.

CULTURAL CRAFT NIGHTS

We offer this opportunity weekly at our McGregor location. We try to ensure that there is an educational, recreational and cultural component each session. Children and youth make cultural crafts, learn lessons of the sash and share a meal. They have worked on beading projects – earrings, key chains, moccasins and mitts. They enjoy painting rocks and talking sticks as well as making drums and dream catchers. Our program room holds many examples from our talented artists.

CULTURAL CAMP

Cultural Camp was offered over two weeks in July and August by the Spirit Helper Committee, Metis Spirit Program, and Children and Youth Program Staff. Youth visit historical sites, go medicine picking, enjoy Metis games, participate in a sweat lodge ceremony and get to sample a traditional fish fry.

YOUTH RECOGNITION

GRADUATIONS

- Nicholas:** High School
Ellarie: High School
Devon: High School
Lydia: High School
Breanna: High School
Damien: High School, Sun Dancer
Amber: Medical assistant program
Ryan: Completed welding course for certificate

ACADEMICS

- Matthew:** For reading and school performance
Rene: Honour role, selected for foreign exchange trip
Lily: Honour role
Summer: Honour role, acting

SPORT AND ARTS

- T.:** Selected for the Provincial Varsity Baseball Team
Anthony: High School Basketball
Jayden: High School Football
Evita: Independant Musician and Visual Artist
Ryen: Volleyball, Basketball, Theatre
Austin: Golf
Ava: Singer
Tristan: Cadets
Joshua: Cadets
Julian: Hockey

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Metis Child, Family and Community Services would like to acknowledge the kind and generous donations made to the agency in support of our special events such as our Youth Celebration, Cookies with Santa, Child in Care Picnic, Christmas Hampers, Comfort Kit and Back Pack programs. These events and programs would not have been such a success without the kindness of the following:

Manitoba Metis Federation
Ted and Loretta Rogers
Children's Aid Foundation
Metis Child and Family Services Authority
Royal Bank of Canada
Gerry Wuirch
Winnipeg School Division
Park Avenue Vending
Old Dutch Foods
La Cocina Foods

City of Winnipeg Parks and Recreation Department
Winnipeg Fire and Paramedic Services
Martha and Trayden Chartrand
Pat and Lloyd Vermelyn
St Johns Ambulance
Fit Kids
Dreams Take Flight
The Joyful Life Company
Pemmican Publications

DONATIONS

The Fishing Hole
Springhill Lumber
Rainbow Stage
Winnipeg Goldeyes
North End Women's Centre

