

family



# METIS CHILD, FAMILY & COMMUNITY SERVICES

ANNUAL REPORT

| APRIL 1, 2018 - MARCH 31, 2019

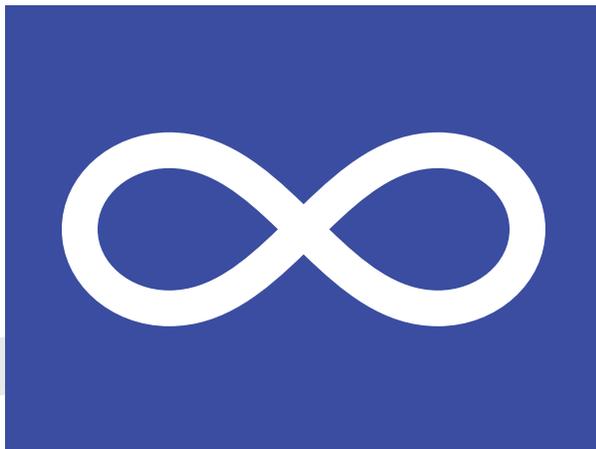
# VISION STATEMENT

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

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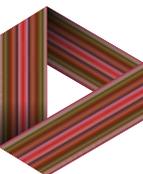
## MISSION STATEMENT

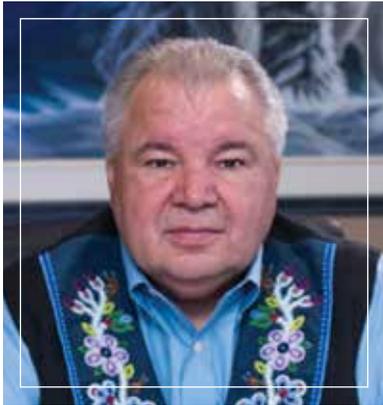
Métis families and communities have the right and responsibility to care for children. Metis Child, Family and Community Services will work to strengthen the capacity of families to care for children through culturally relevant community-based programs. We believe in the inherent strength of our families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



## 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

Our children and youth are the future of our Nation. Our greatest strength is our families and Community. When I think about our future, I envision a time when our children and family Authority and agencies are supported by our own laws, not the laws of the province. As Metis People we are focused on supporting our families and ensuring our children and youth remain in their kinship networks, connected to our culture, within our community, and a part of our Metis Nation.

To this end the MMF supports the Government of Canada's *Bill C-92: An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Metis Children, Youth and Families*. Known as enabling legislation, Bill C-92 implicitly backs the inherent right of the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) as the Manitoba Metis Government to develop our own laws for Metis children, youth, and family services. In keeping with our traditions, these laws would focus on prevention. Our laws would support our families so that we ensure the well-being of our children and youth.

This shift from intervention to culturally-appropriate prevention and family (re)unification is an important step towards reconciliation. Our children and youth will be where they belong, with their families. I applaud the Trudeau government for recognizing the need for systemic change to the child welfare system.

I want to give thanks to MCFCS staff and volunteers for their unwavering dedication and commitment to our children, youth, families, and community of the Metis Nation's Manitoba Metis Community. Metis Child, Family and Community Services Agency (MCFCS) invests in this vision by establishing programs that address child and youth concerns, strengthen family relationships, and provide support to our community.

I would also like to commend our Minister of Metis Child and Family Services, Mona Buors, and Associate Minister JoAnne Remillard for their tireless work to ensure that our vision for child and family services is recognized provincially and nationally.

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 a year since I was assigned to this portfolio that I take very seriously and hold dearly to heart, along with my Associate Minister JoAnne Remillard. Believing in yourself, your family and the Metis Nation is very important. It is with this philosophy that the Metis Government provides services to Metis Citizens. Supporting our children as they participate in our culture and teaching them to grow into respectful, thoughtful and energized young adults is something we all want to see. Listening to our Elders as they provide advice, guidance and wisdom is something we must always remember. It is the knowledge that we have family support through our grandparents, parents, aunties, uncles, cousins and community that strengthens us.

Our Metis Child and Family Services System provides strength to our Nation and the quality of services that our Metis CFS System provides is among the best in this country.

It was a very proud day when we took control back through devolution and the development of child and family services, but we must remain vigilant and never take our achievements for granted. It is with hard work and dedication that we must protect the future of the Metis children, just as our forebearers did. It is the Metis children that will carry the fire of our beliefs into the digital age and beyond.

I thank the boards and staff of our Authority and its two agencies for their dedication to improving services offered to our children, youth and families. They deliver them with the passion and compassion that has earned us accolades nationally for the innovation and quality of our Métis CFS programs. We are particularly grateful to them for their work locating extended family so more children can stay connected to family and community, as well as their dedication to keeping families together and safe.

Let us continue to move forward with pride in our past and a never-ending ambition to continual improvement so we can always do the best work possible for our children, youth and families.



**MONA BUORS**  
Minister of Metis CFS



**JOANNE REMILLARD**  
Associate Minister of Metis CFS





MESSAGE FROM THE

# CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

OF THE METIS CHILD AND FAMILY  
SERVICES AUTHORITY

The Metis Child and Family Services Authority is incredibly proud of the work being done at the Metis Child, Family and Community Services Agency. We wish to acknowledge the very dynamic efforts of its visionary managers and the hard work and dedication of its front line staff.

As our nation talks about truth and reconciliation and all that goes with it, we must remember that we have much more to do than just talk about it. We need to take immediate action. We need to begin to turn the tide and take action. That is exactly what our Metis Agency is doing right now – today! Their work recognizes that a lot of the strength already exists in family and extended family. It is about acknowledging that a large portion of the response to a family’s needs should come from community.

The agency has birthed creative programs that highlight the importance of preserving families, finding extended family members to be connected to their family’s children, and in ensuring young people know who they are and where they belong so that they never feel lost in their identity. We know that historically the youth that come through any child welfare experience have had some of their greatest struggles around trying to define and recapture who they are. We really commend the Metis Child, Family and Community Services Agency for the cutting edge work they are doing on these fronts. They reflect our Metis CFS system philosophy through asking themselves “Is It Good For The Children?”

We thank our Metis Agency and continue to support them in their ongoing development.

Miigwetch!

Billie Schibler



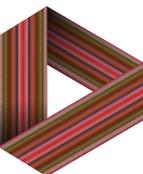
MESSAGE FROM THE

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am proud to present the 2018 – 2019 Annual Report of the Metis Child, Family and Community Services Agency. The report reflects the successes of the past year and the greater achievement of our Guiding Principles into the delivery of services to our Métis families and children.

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the Metis Child, Family & Community Services staff for their ongoing commitment, compassion, and professionalism they bring to the families and children that they work with each day. Despite facing many challenges and struggles, you work collaboratively to achieve the best possible outcomes for children in care. Your hard work does not go unnoticed and is much appreciated.

Our Agency is doing the hard work needed to ensure that children in care receive a fair chance. From the nationally applauded LIFE (Live-in Family Enhancement) program to the Metis Connect Program that ensures that we continue to connect children to extended family when they are unable to return to their parents, we are striving to meet the needs of children and families in our community.



From our Board of Directors, we would like to acknowledge and give our thanks to the Metis Child & Family Services Authority for their continued work to ensure that the delivery system is operated in an efficient and effective manner.

We would also like to offer our sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Manitoba Metis Federation government for always supporting our Agency and advocating for the needs of our children and families. A special thank you to Minister Mona Buors and Associate-Minister Joanne Remillard for your knowledge, dedication and continued advocacy.

On behalf of the Metis Child, Family & Community Services Board of Directors, I would like to extend our gratitude to Executive Director, Greg Besant, for his invaluable dedication and contributions to our Agency.

A sincere thank you to my fellow board members of the Metis Child, Family & Community Service Agency for your service and commitment.

Finally, I would like to offer my thoughts of appreciation and gratitude to the late, Ms. Loretta Boulard. Loretta's contributions to Metis Child, Family & Community Services are immeasurable and her selfless work behind the scenes has helped to shape the Agency into what it is today. Metis Child, Family & Community Services was incredibly fortunate to have had Ms. Boulard as Chairperson of the Board of Directors and her dreams and aspirations will live on in her legacy.

Miigwetch,

Shirley Langan  
Chairperson

## 2018-2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

<b>Chair:</b>	Shirley Langan, Southeast Region
<b>Vice Chair:</b>	Beverly Webb, Interlake Region
<b>Secretary:</b>	Florence Lamoureux, Interlake Region
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Marcella Vezina, Southeast Region
<b>Members:</b>	Eric Chartrand, Winnipeg Region
<b>Ex-Officio Members:</b>	Rita Cullen Barbara Lavallee Lorraine Laramee

### SPECIAL RECOGNITION



*We were saddened to say goodbye to Metis Child, Family & Community Services Agency Board Chair Loretta Boulard, who passed away on November 25, 2018. Loretta had been very involved with Metis CFCS for many years and her contributions will be greatly missed.*





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

Child welfare has become a matter of national interest leading to much debate and many promising ideas. To date though, no new funding or completed legislative changes to help resolve the problems facing families, children, or child welfare agencies has emerged. As an Agency, we accept and acknowledge that child welfare systems must change and have taken steps towards meaningful changes in our own work in this past year. This is most significantly demonstrated by our launching of the Metis Connect program.

Metis Connect is our intensive family search and family based decision making program. The project has its roots in the Bringing Families Together provincial pilot that ran for the two prior years. The agency's success in this pilot was the focus of a presentation to the 2018 National Child Welfare Conference. We have focused the program's efforts on primarily working with the Family Service Units in the past year. We anticipate that we will be gradually shifting the focus towards increasing the use of this approach with more of our families who have children in our ongoing care. Already, family based decision making is becoming the norm throughout the Agency. It is worth noting that we are doing this without further funding being provided from any source. This change is critical if we are to live up to our Guiding Principle that the "responsibility for decision-making regarding Métis children and families lies within the family, extended family and community whenever possible".

Our Live In Family Enhancement (LIFE) program continues to be the subject of national attention. It has been discussed as a promising practice at the 2018 National Child Welfare Conference and it was featured within the Métis community consultations for proposed legislative review. Other jurisdictions within Canada are seeking to emulate the program. In the past year, we have added a number of new LIFE homes and continue to seek to expand the program. Although small in scale, it is proving effective in reducing trauma and keeping children with their mothers.

Significant time has been spent preparing for the anticipated changes in the provincial funding model over the past year. The new formula does not directly address the major issues the Agency faces and provides no significant new funding. The formula incentivizes diverting funds to prevention but savings must first be found. As the primary cost centres for agencies are staffing and the maintenance of children in care, savings are difficult to find without impacting children directly or indirectly.

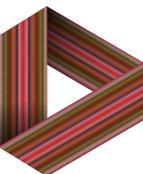
In the coming year, the Agency will be seeking the support of external funders in order to provide further assistance to youth formerly in care and to reduce the number of children currently under permanent orders through reunification or guardianship to extended family members. Through initiatives such as these, we believe we will be able to move towards prevention in a meaningful way.

I wish to acknowledge the dedication of the staff and management of the Agency. They truly bring their best selves to work on a daily basis, working with heart, spirit and intelligence.

I also wish to thank the Metis Government, President Chartrand, Minister Buors, Associate Minister Remillard, the MCFCFS 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



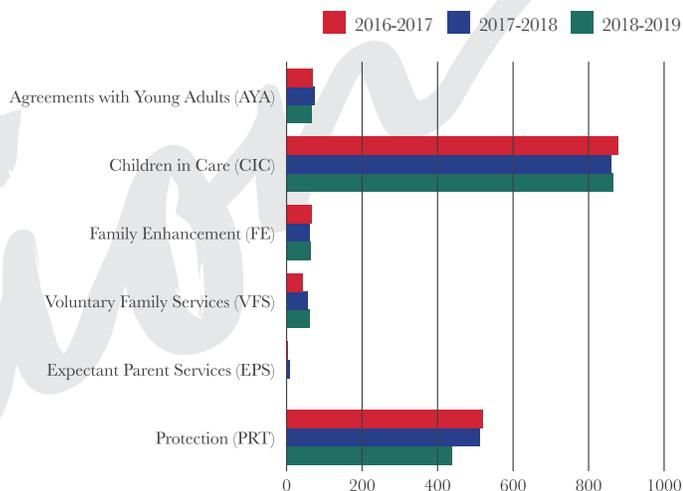
# YEAR AT A GLANCE 2018-2019 STATS

Total caseload numbers are relatively stable year over year. There is a slight trend in positive directions overall. These numbers only reflect the cases open on March 31, 2019. Files opened and closed within the fiscal year will not be reflected within these numbers. The high number of children under permanent orders is of ongoing concern. This year, 26 children under permanent orders were transferred to our agency from other agencies.

## The Year at a Glance 2018-2019 STATS

Regions	Protection	Extension of Care	Voluntary Family Services	Expectant Parent Services	Family Enhancement	Children In Care	Total Cases
Southeast (Eastman)	8	5	1	0	0	141	155
Interlake	18	15	5	0	0	180	218
Winnipeg	413	49	55	1	65	545	1128
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>439</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>866</b>	<b>1501</b>

## Year at a Glance - 3 Year Comparison



Data and file management are important to both service provision and future planning for the Agency. Each year a service team with the highest 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.



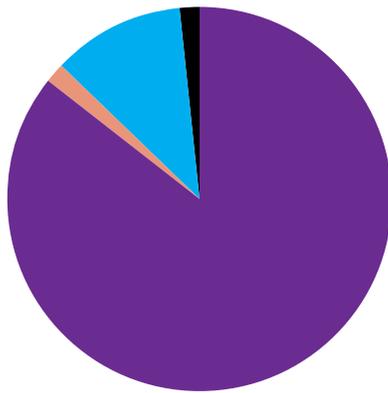
Back Row: Jill Dueck, Melissa Fast, Adetoro Eludipo, Marlee Yusim, Melanie Troia, Alina Kratsberg, Marla Rees, Savannah Tabin, Scott Maksymyk  
Front Row: Greg Besant, Billie Schibler, Carla Burton, Karla Hildebrand-Eden



# KEEPING CHILDREN WITH THEIR PARENTS

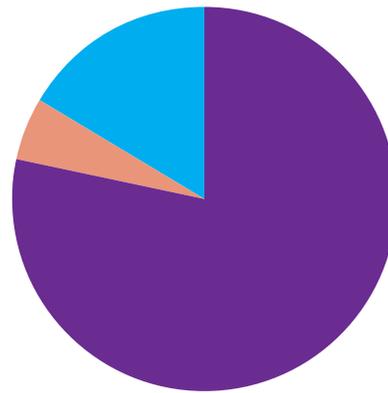
Ensuring children remain safe at home is critical to the health of children, families and the nation. The Agency supports far more children to remain home than are brought into care.

## Supporting Families to Care for their Children



Children at Home	800	
Voluntary Placement Agreement	17	
Temporary Ward/Petition for Further Order	105	
Apprehension	13	

## Number of Children Being Supported in their Family by Case Type

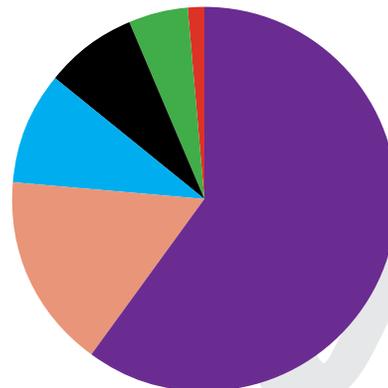


Protection	628	
Voluntary Family Services	41	
Family Enhancement	131	

When children do come into care, having them return to a parent is the preferred outcome. There are times when this is not possible, at which point we work with the family to identify which family member is best able to provide for the child on an ongoing basis.

## Number of Children Reunified April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019

Mother	107	
Father	29	
Both Parents	17	
Legal Guardianship to Grandparent/Extended Family	14	
Private Arrangement with Grandparent/Extended Family	9	
Adoption	2	



# 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 focusses 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.

In the coming year, the program will begin to explore using group based interventions.

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# FAMILY SERVICES

Family Service teams deliver the core child welfare prevention and protection services through four teams in Winnipeg as well as in Interlake and Southeast Regions. The Agency has several key goals in this program including involving families in all decisions which affect them, reducing the average length of involvement and reducing the length of time in care. These fit within the overall need for reforming child welfare services.

Key methods to achieving these goals have been the deepening use of Signs of Safety® practices including the use of Family Safety Plans and Family Networks.

To support this work, the agency has introduced the Metis Connect Program (see page 12). In addition, the Agency is re-orienting the Family Support program to allow for their earlier involvement with families when familial or community resources are not available.

**“So far I’m appreciative of the meetings we’ve had with the agency as well as having supports such as my family being involved. It’s helped me immensely knowing that I have such a structured group of people helping me along the way. You guys have been phenomenal in helping me move forward in a positive manner. I’m grateful & positively influenced by the family group meetings we’ve shared & will continue to look forward to our meetings in the future!”**

**– Quote from a mom**



# METIS CONNECT PROGRAM

The Agency was champions of the Bringing Families Together two year pilot project as this practice aligns greatly with the Agency's Mission and Vision Statements and Guiding Principles. When the pilot ended, MCFCS established our own **Metis Connect Program** in October 2018. The Agency hired 3 staff who had previously been involved in the Bringing Families Together pilot project. Two of the staff members are Family Participation Facilitators (aka: Metis Connect Workers) and the third was hired as our new Director of Practice and Innovation who oversees the Metis Connect Program.

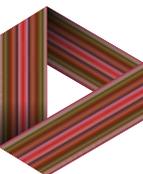
The goal of the Metis Connect Program is that MCFCS will continue to experience a shift in practice where MCFCS staff will consistently include family and community as partners in planning and decision making for their children. This will increase children's connections to family, community and culture and ensure the children have a sense of belonging.

The role of the Metis Connect workers is to coach and mentor MCFCS workers in a participatory practice approach which includes searching for, engaging with, and involving family and community as partners in the planning and decision making for their children. The approach involves authentic and humble engagement practices.

From October 2018 - March 31, 2019, MCFCS case managers referred 50 families (81 children) to the Metis Connect Program. Staff are embracing the practice approach and families who have been involved report feeling valued and honored.

Below are a few stories from the program:

- An expectant mom was referred to the program as there was worry about her being able to parent safely. We were able to bring together the mother and extended family members to develop a safe and realistic plan to care for the baby in order for baby to go straight to family once born. The baby was born just before Christmas and was discharged to her grandparent's care, where she remains to date. The mom spends time with her baby in the grandparents' home and is able to spend holidays in the home with her child in a natural family setting.
- We were able to locate and connect with grandparents of a baby who had been in a shelter. Within a couple of weeks, with the support of family and the Agency, the grandparents assumed care of the baby in their home community where the baby will have access to many extended family members and where the child will grow up within their own culture.
- We worked with a youth who had been in care for some time, had no knowledge of her paternal family and in fact described her father as "a ghost" stating that "no one knows where he is". Through search efforts, we were able to learn about the paternal family tree. We were also able to outreach to a paternal uncle who had no idea about his niece. The two now have regular contact and the uncle shares with the youth stories about her paternal family.



# AURORA FAMILY THERAPY PARTNERSHIP

Three practicum therapists in their 3rd and 4th year of their Masters of Marriage and Family Therapy Program at the University of Winnipeg met with MCFCS families in their homes and in the community to develop trusting relationships with the hope of providing therapeutic interventions, coping strategies, addressing family patterns and exploring resources for families. On average the sessions were 1.5 hours long and each family had sessions offered bi-weekly, depending on need. Most of the participants in therapy were engaged and motivated, and seemed appreciative of receiving therapeutic support.

## MCFCS/Aurora Practicum Statistics 2018-2019

Total # of Referrals:	69 <i>(21 referrals could not be assigned due to full caseloads of therapists, and late in the year referrals)</i>
Total # of Client Referral Seen:	48
Total # of Individual Adult Therapy Clients:	8 <i>(7 female; 1 male)</i>
Total # of Couple Therapy Clients:	5
Total # of Family Therapy Clients:	31 <i>(i.e. parent-teen, parent-child(ren), grandparent-child)</i>
Total # of Teen Therapy Clients:	4
<b>Total # of Therapy Hours provided:</b>	<b>523.5</b>

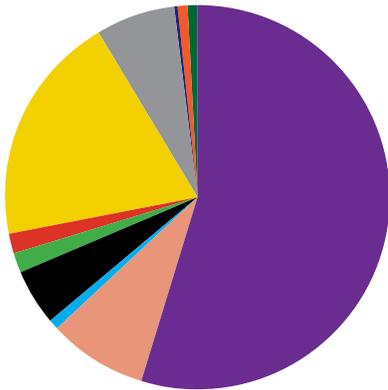
## CHILDREN IN CARE

The lifelong impact of being raised in care and apart from your family can never be understated. In addition to the impacts on the child and immediate family, there are also lasting impacts on the Métis Nation itself. When children are in care, the Agency diligently works to mitigate these impacts within the constraints of the larger child welfare system. Having children under Permanent Orders raised within their family or, if family is not an option, within a culturally appropriate home is a primary way to mitigate these lifelong impacts. Over the past year we have seen improvement in this. We have increased the total number of children under Permanent Orders in relative or culturally appropriate homes by 36 children in one year. This is approximately a five per cent improvement year over year.

In the coming year we are focusing on reunifying permanent wards with their parents or families through both terminating permanent orders or having guardianship granted to family members where financially possible.

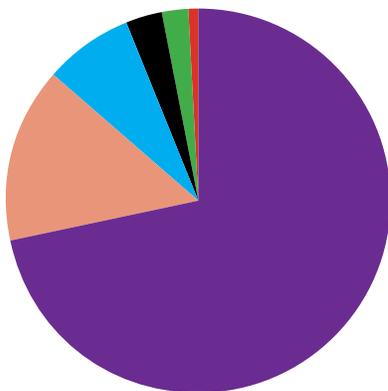


### Placement Types for Children in Care



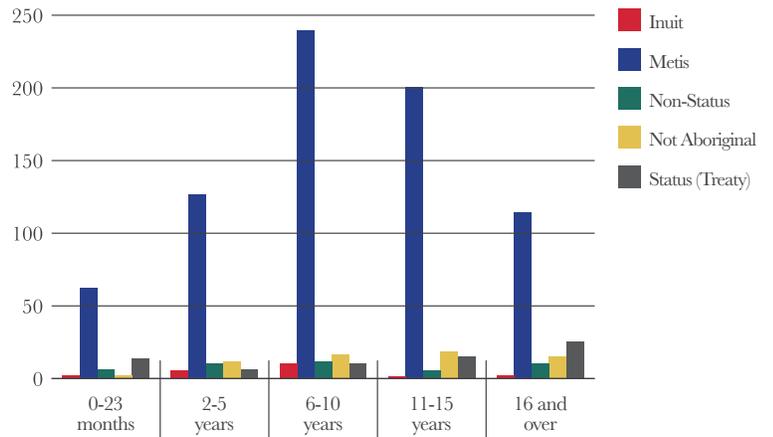
Foster Homes & Licensed Kinship	514	
Specialized Foster Homes	78	
Health/Mental Health Facility	6	
Independent Living	44	
Out of Province	17	
Own Home/Relative	14	
Place of Safety	183	
Residential Care	63	
Adoption Probation	3	
AWOL	7	
Corrections	6	

### Legal Authorities of Children in Care

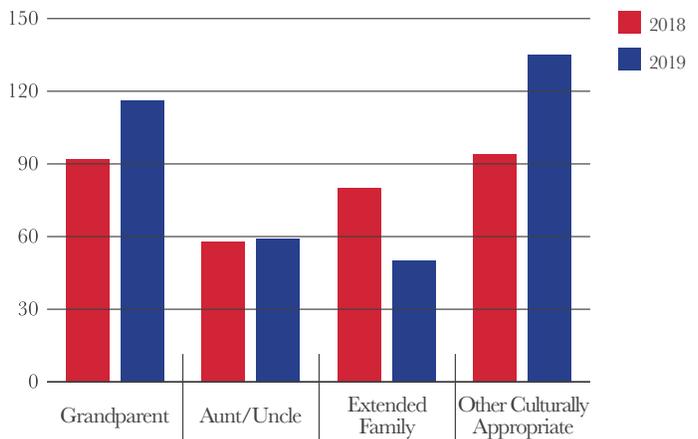


Permanent Ward (PW)	672	
Temporary Ward (TW)/ Petition Filed for Further Order (PFFO)	138	
Transitional Planning (Extension of Care)	68	
Voluntary Placement Agreement (VPA)	30	
Apprehension	20	
Supervised for Other Agency	7	

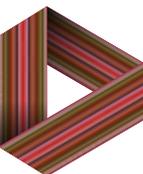
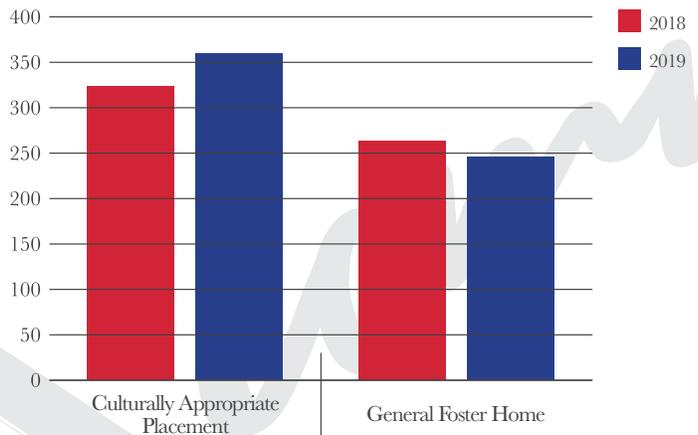
### Children in Care by Indigenous Status and Age



### Permanent Wards Placed in Culturally Appropriate Foster Homes/Kinship/Place of Safety as at March 31, 2018 vs March 31, 2019



### Permanent Wards Placed in Culturally Appropriate Foster Homes vs General Foster Homes as at March 31, 2018 vs March 31, 2019



# PERMANENT WARD

The Agency has two Winnipeg teams solely dedicated to serving the needs of children under Permanent Orders as well as the Southeast and Interlake teams which predominantly serve these children. Metis Child, Family and Community Services has long been recognized for continuing ongoing and meaningful contact for children with their families after a Permanent Order has been granted. This contact is imperative for the healthy development and positive outcomes for children. It also is important so parents do not lose hope of ever parenting. Over the past year, three children under permanent orders were re-unified with their parents and the orders extinguished.

In addition to this excellent work, the permanent ward staff continue to focus on supporting youth to achieve success in all parts of their lives. Every life requires some adventure, and we have had children participating in student exchanges and travelling with schools and caregivers literally around the world this past year.

In the coming year, resources are being sought to ensure children living with non-culturally appropriate caregivers are provided enhanced opportunities to become knowledgeable and involved with their culture. Additionally, supports will be sought to assist more parents and relatives to resume care of their children under Permanent Orders.

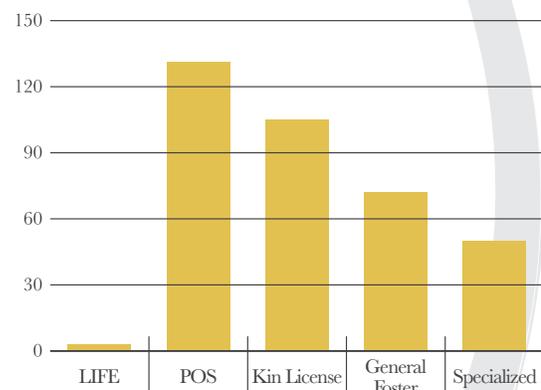
# INFINITY RESOURCES

## 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 require a more skilled caregiver. Our Kinship Care Program provides services to the 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 and uncles, and 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 make, and for the sacrifices they make in order to take on these responsibilities.

**Alternative Care Licenses**



## 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 who 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 eight months to two years. They coach the parents towards increasing parenting and life skills, attachment, structure and routine and ensure the safety and well-being of children in the program. There are currently two home studies underway which will increase our LIFE program to five homes.

Last year, there was much interest in this innovative program. The University of Manitoba Inner City Social Work Program had their findings of the LIFE program published in the *Journal of the First Peoples Child and Family Review*, Volume 13, Number 1. In the study, they wrote, “The findings show a significant set of benefits to families such as stronger attachment between parents and children, improved parenting skills, strengthened social support for families, newly acquired household management skills, successful completion of employment training, and significantly improved trust in social workers and the agency. Many of these factors are correlated in research with increased rates of family reunification. The paper documents these findings, and recommends that this approach be expanded for use in prevention as well as reunification.”

## GLADYS COOK AND EAGLES NEST

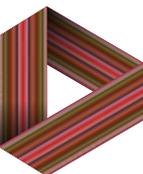
It has been just over a year since the homes changed from assessment to short and long term placements. Gladys Cook House and Eagles Nest continue to embrace the changes to their licensing. The staff have been busy building relationships and giving the youth a feeling of stability and commitment.



*Santa had gifts for all our kids*



*We have many talented artists (craft night)*



If a youth comes to live in our homes during the school year, staff drive them to their school so that they experience one less change in their lives and keeps them connected to their teachers, friends and community. Our Youth Care Workers offer cultural and recreational opportunities such as accessing community centres, YMCA, fishing, MCFCS Cultural Camp and many others. There is also a greater focus on what the youth want, which allows them to be a part of their care planning. With increased focus on life skills such as shopping, cooking, meal planning, cleaning and budgeting, our youth will have a greater chance of success moving into adulthood.

## RAILS

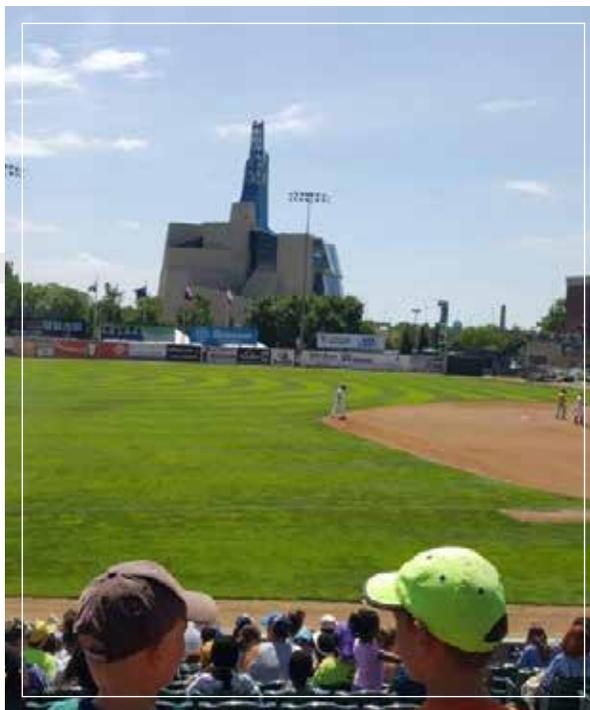
Rosedale Adolescent Inter-dependent Living Services (RAILS) is a seven unit/nine bed inter-dependent living program. It supports youth aged 16 - 21 to live on their own with the support and guidance of staff available on site 24 hours a day. Staff mentor the youth in areas such as: budgeting, proper nutrition, smart shopping, educational support, personal health, and hygiene, as well as other independent living skills.

Staff provide educational, employment, recreational and cultural activities in the common area, which always comes with a prepared meal with the help of the youth. When a youth or young adult leaves RAILS, they are able to receive outreach from staff for up to three months as they move on their own to independent living.

Three of the six current residents are on the high school honour roll.

**This is what our youth had to say about the supports we provided:**

**“Thank you for helping me. I would have never had this opportunity to make this kind of money and get all these certificates for this training. This would have never been possible if you didn’t help me with everything and driving me to all the places I needed to go. Thank you so much, you were always there for me, I really appreciate it. I tell everyone how awesome you are and how much you’ve helped me.”**



*Goldeyes outing for Circle of Life kids*



# CHILD 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, Metis in Motion and Metis Spirit.

## HIGHLIGHTS

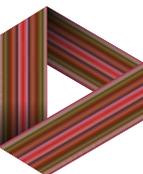
There were a number of activities facilitated by the Children and Youth Team in 2018/19. The team continued to highlight every holiday by preparing food and activities to mark the occasions. They also hosted “Metis Night”, where they prepared different traditional foods, including bannock dogs. Another highlight was the two week-long cultural camps, which gave children an opportunity to learn about their Metis history and culture as well as fun activities. The team also organized cultural activities such as sweat lodges, sage and cedar picking. The team continued to put their hearts into organizing and putting on our “Age of Majority” celebration for youth who turn 18, where everyone enjoyed the dinner and entertainment. Children and Youth workers pitched in where ever they were needed, including helping with the Child in Care Picnic and the MCFCS booth at the MMF’s Annual General Assembly.

**This is what our youth had to say about the supports we provided:**

**“Thanks for always being there for me and helping me with everything. If I did not have you in my life, I would not know how to do any of these things or where to go to get these things done. Even when I moved out of province you were there for me. And now I’m back and your helping me start all over again, again.”**



*The fruits of our labours (sage)*





*Fort LaReine guided tour*

## CIRCLE OF LIFE

The Circle of Life program provides group and one-to-one supports to our children and youth in care. Staff are goal-oriented and strength-based when working with the unique needs of each child or youth. They help develop better communication and conflict resolution 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 cultural and educational components. Children and youth are guided in discovering their culture and heritage and take part in sweats, smudging, sharing circles and lessons of the sash. Staff teach the benefits of incorporating those teachings into their everyday lives while instilling positive values and respect for themselves and others.

## SKILLS FOR LIFE

The Skills for Life Team provides one-to-one and group supports to youth ages 15 - 21. They are goal-oriented and focus on the needs of the youth to prepare them for adulthood. Using cultural, educational and recreational components, staff are able to foster the learning of life skills, such as budgeting, banking, resume and job search,

**This is what our youth had to say about the supports we provided:**

**“I had a lot of fun sweetgrass picking...I never did that before. I was scared there might be snakes but then the worker told me to put tobacco and ask the snakes to leave me alone while I picked the sweetgrass. The fish that we had for lunch was awesome. I can't wait to do this again next year.”**



nutrition, cooking, personal care and safety. This program assists youth by helping them develop problem solving skills and helping youth navigate services through nonprofit or government programs. They also provide programming alongside the Metis Spirit program. Metis Education and Training provides financial support for our staff to prepare and present job readiness programming.

## LITTLE BEARS

Little Bears group provides bi-weekly programming to children ages 7-14. They have a meal with each activity, which helps them to focus and enjoy the planned activity. Each evening includes a component related to Métis history and culture, which includes smudging and sharing circles whenever possible. This time together also allows them to form relationships that are both supportive and trusting. Through this relationship building, they are able to create a stability that is critical in helping in other areas of their lives.

## CULTURAL CRAFT NIGHTS

We offer weekly cultural craft nights at our McGregor Street location. We strive to ensure that there is an educational, recreational and cultural component to each night. Children and youth make cultural crafts, learn lessons of the sash and share a meal. They have worked on beading projects, including earrings, key chains, moccasins and mitts. They enjoy rock painting and talking sticks, as well as making drums and dream catchers. Our program room showcases the talents of many of our artists.



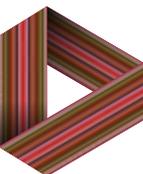
*Little Bears Tinker Town, one of their favorite annual outings*



*Little Bears outing to Crockadoodle*

**This is what our youth had to say about the supports we provided:**

**“I really like attending the sweatlodge ceremonies. I want to get my spirit name. At the next sweatlodge ceremony, I’m going to ask the elder for my spirit name and colours.”**



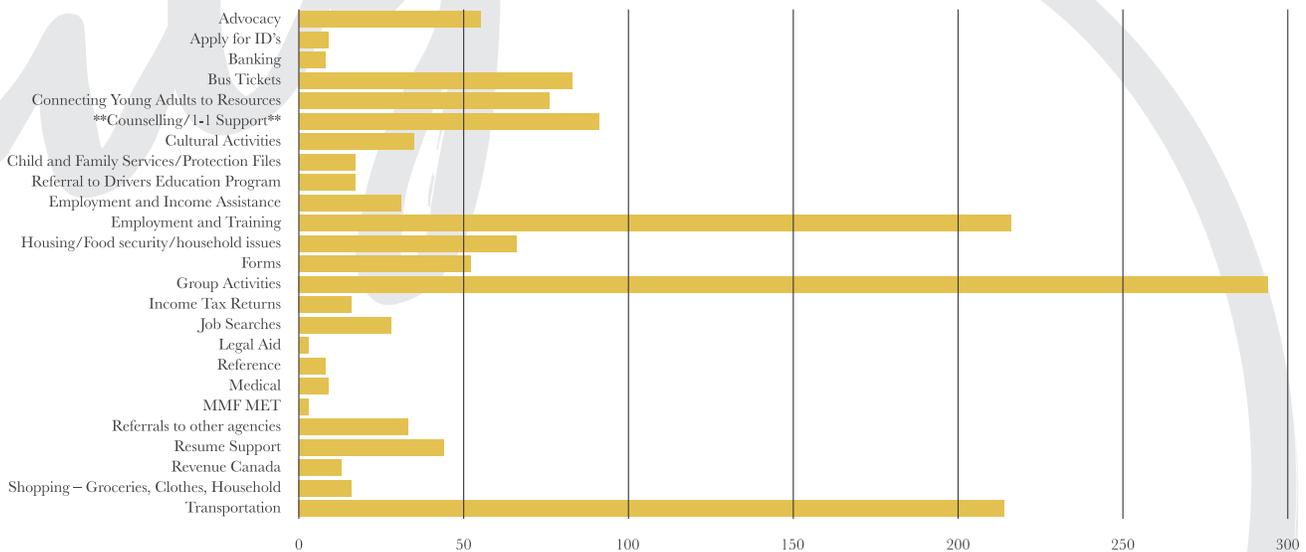
# METIS SPIRIT PROGRAM

The Metis Spirit Program is a unique funding partnership between the Agency and the MME. The Metis Spirit Worker engages with youth between the ages of 18 to 25, as well as youth who are no longer in care. Youth who have aged out of care can find themselves struggling when they no longer have the same support structure as they did when they were in care. Although the Metis Spirit Worker is not able to help financially, they are there to assist the young adult with ongoing support, advocacy, and connections to community resources, housing, employment and job readiness. The Metis Spirit Worker helps the young adult identify their goals and assists them in achieving those goals. They can even help explore adult education and post-secondary opportunities.

Even young adults that received assistance from the Agency until the age of 21 may still require additional supports and advocacy. Those youth would still be eligible for support from the Metis Spirit Worker for an additional four years. There has been a great demand for this program, and it is hoped that one day the Agency will be able to hold two Metis Spirit Workers to meet the ever-increasing demands placed on youth, as entering into adulthood become more complex.

*This year, we are excited to report that we served 14 male young adults, and 36 female young adults through this program, ranging between the ages of 18-25, for a total of 50 young adults!*

## Number of Contacts



# SPIRIT HELPER COMMITTEE

The Metis Spirit Helper Committee is made up of staff members throughout the Agency. With the support of Children and Youth Programming staff, the Committee has been able to offer youth, staff and foster parents the opportunity to partake in sweat lodge ceremonies. Sweet grass, sage and cedar picking has also been offered giving the opportunity to learn about medicines and ceremony. The Spirit Helper Committee also can assist individual workers, families or children.

In the past year, the Spirit Helper Committee has completed work on a new “Cultural Bundle” which will be a new tool used in case planning and ensuring children in the care of MCFCS are aware of and involved within their culture.



*Medicine picking sage during cultural camp*

## FAMILY SUPPORT

### FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM

Family Support has been shifting its focus in the past year to focus on doing more preventative work. We recognize the importance of offering support to families before children come into care. By building relationships and offering that added level of support, we hope to lend that extra level of prevention that might help families.

The majority of our services are still focused on supporting family contact for children in care. For those families requiring additional support, this past year we had a total of **5331** family visits. Over half of those visits occurred outside of our main office. This means we are slowly shifting family times away from the office and into community locations, or family homes. This always provides a more natural environment for families.

*This past year our family support program had a total of*

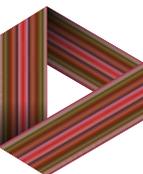
**5331**

*family visits occur*

*Family Support Workers met with parents*

**2161**

*times this year*



The Family Support team was busy providing more parent education to families this year. Family Support Workers met with parents **2161** times this year. This was a significant increase from last year. The team provides a variety of support including supporting Kinship homes.

Family Support also had some great partnerships this year. Cuddles for Kids donated teddy bears that we can give to the kids. A generous donor donated Blue Bomber tickets to our families. An anonymous donation of luggage was also received. This allows for children's belongings to be in luggage when they come into care, move or are reunified. Without community support, MCFCS would not be able to have these enhanced services for families. We truly appreciate it!

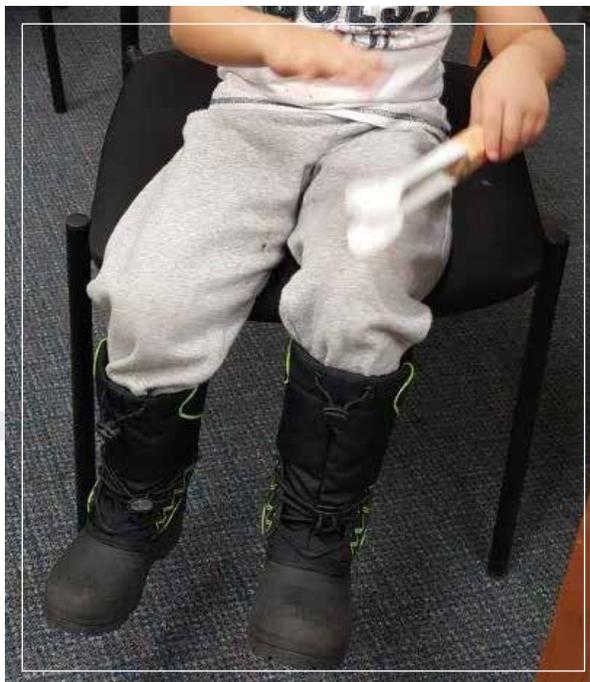
## BUTTERFLY PROGRAM

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

Family Support staff are assigned to a family for a duration of 12-20 weeks alongside a Heart Stories Attachment Therapist. During this time the family works along with their Family Support worker and therapist to build and strengthen 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. Then activities are introduced that will enhance and promote attachment between parent and child. These activities are worked on throughout the week as "homework".

**"I really learned a lot and I really enjoyed it. Vic was a lot of fun and he helped me focus on certain things that I hadn't even thought of as I was so focused on other things I am going to miss Butterfly and didn't want it to end."**

**– Quote from mom who had completed the Butterfly program**



*Our littlest Little Bear having fun playing the spoons he made*

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 six families successfully complete the Butterfly program and from there we had three families reunify with their child(ren).



# CHRISTMAS HAMPERS

In partnership with the Manitoba Metis Federation for the last four last years, the Family Support program works every December to provide Christmas hampers to families that receive services from our Agency.

This past December the Family Support Program delivered 26 hampers to families. This is an activity that is a favorite of staff and families alike.

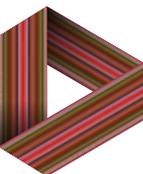
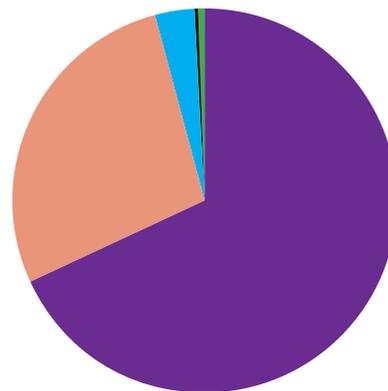
# TRANSPORTATION

This has been another successful year for the transportation department. It was a year of changes and growth as our need to transport children to various locations increases. The transportation department ensures that children are able to attend therapy and medical appointments, camps, school, and most importantly to time with their families.

The most valuable piece of the transportation department is the drivers themselves. The majority of the drivers are volunteers. All of them give their time on a regular basis to enhance the lives of others. Due to high demands for more transports for the children, the driver's numbers have increased this year requiring a total of 17 drivers. We look forward to the next year as we continue to grow and focus on removing barriers so that our families can focus on getting stronger and being together, and not have to worry about the logistics of how children will get to where they need to be.

## Number of Rides Provided

Family times/get together/gatherings/visits	1848	
Therapy transports	757	
School runs	89	
Camp runs	11	
Misc.	9	



# CELEBRATING OUR YOUTH

Each year Metis Child, Family and Community Services celebrates the entry into adulthood of the youth in our care by holding Youth Celebrations. These events are amongst the most important events held during our year. Each celebration offers the youth the opportunity to celebrate with family, caregivers, supports, staff and friends their entry into the next phase of their lives. Youth and their network members share their thanks, triumphs and hopes for the future. No one leaves the celebration without being touched by the experiences of these young people and being struck by the closeness of the relationships they share with both family and professionals.

This year we celebrated 45 children at two celebrations.

**“What strikes me is seeing the entirety of the child, the love they have shared with both foster family and birth family and how the relationships between the foster and birth family has grown. Even after the youth ages out you can see that they will remain a family.”**

**– Tracy Oleschak, Director of Service**



**“The Celebration emphasizes the success stories of our youth which stems from the excellent work and collaboration of the staff working with them hand in hand.”**

**– Shirley Langan, Board Chairperson**

## Workers share that:

- *The youth celebration gave an opportunity for the foster parents to share how proud they were of the youth, making him feel extremely loved and accomplished. It was very special for me to be able to stand up with the family as the worker to celebrate the youth who had worked so hard to get there. It was an emotional and memorable evening for the entire family.*
- *It felt good that they had the chance to show the youth how much they care and acknowledge all the good things about the youth and not just telling them what they had to do.*
- *It is beautiful to see how far kids have come, how successful they are.*
- *You see their strength, resilience and how they have blossomed after going through challenges in life.*
- *It is beautiful to see the youth wrapped in the support, surrounded by all the people that love them. Like a SASH around the youth & their people at the tables. A beautiful gift, literally and figuratively.*
- *Youth and caregivers have shared with workers that they have felt supported and important. Like they matter. The kids feel a sense of pride in themselves and hear good things about themselves.*

## INSPIRATIONAL THOUGHT ON THE YOUTH CELEBRATION BY JOANNE NOBESS

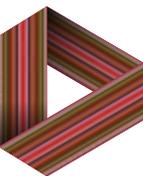
Over the years I have had the opportunity to attend many Youth Celebrations and I can recall many conversations with them after the celebration.

One youth that I brought to be celebrated lived out in Steinbach, MB and was very excited to be going to an event that required her to dress up. This youth purchased a new dress borrowed some shoes and accessories and said she felt so good to dress up as she has never been required to dress up for any event in the past. After the celebration, I drove her back home to Steinbach and she was very grateful to our Agency that she was able to attend a fancy event that she would never have the opportunity to take part in otherwise. She also said that when the dignitaries were making their speeches she really felt like they were talking to her directly about how they care about the youth and made her feel really special.

One youth that I took years back had absolutely no one to invite other than me and her worker. She really didn't want to go but with some constant personal invites she agreed to come and spend the evening with me there. We invited her to our table to sit for the evening with the resource staff and when she was called up we all went up with her for support. The worker and I read her speeches out and she cried on the stage when we were done, gave us both a big hug. We went back to the table after and staff congratulated her and she was so emotional and said that she just wished she could have us all work with her because she felt so loved by all of us. She always asked me about the staff when we would meet and I would occasionally bring her to the office to visit with the staff whenever possible. This youth told me she really felt like a family with the staff on this evening, and really loved that the staff joked around with her and made her feel very comfortable. This particular youth aged out about five years ago and she still calls me to touch base and chat about how things are going.

A lot of the youth I have worked with would always be very positive about experiencing the youth celebrations. Many have told me that they have never been to fancy events and for some the gifts they received at the youth celebration were the only gifts they have received for their 18th birthday.

When at the youth celebration I always find it very emotional to hear the speeches done by workers, caregivers, friends, and family members. I have witnessed many speeches that have made the room tear up with emotion at the love that is between them and the youth. I find this celebration to be very important as these youth may never have experienced this type of event and I always hear how this makes them feel more like a family with the agency and staff!



# YOUTH RECOGNITION

## HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

Jacob	Jordan	Cory
Julia	Griffen	Tristen
Thomas	Nicholas	Theodore
Kerian	Tishara	
Lily	Montana	

## 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  
Metis Child and Family Services  
Authority  
Ted and Loretta Rogers  
Children's Aid Foundation  
Royal Bank of Canada  
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  
Dreams Take Flight  
Pemmican Publications  
The Assiniboine Park Zoo  
The Manitoba Museum  
Peguis Treatment Centre

### DONATIONS

Springhill Lumber  
Rainbow Stage  
Winnipeg Goldeyes  
RCMP  
Geoffrey Ritchie  
Cuddles for Kids  
Ryan Lawrence - Automotive  
Alliance  
Winnipeg Blue Bombers  
Winnipeg International  
Children's Festival



# community

