



2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT

MÉTIS CHILD, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES



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**We Walk
Alongside**

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We Walk Alongside

This year's annual report centers around the theme "We Walk Alongside," reflecting a fundamental shift in our agency's approach towards decolonizing our practice and empowering families. This transformation signifies a profound change in how we engage with the families, moving away from traditional paradigms of enforcement and oversight to a way of being rooted in collaboration and support.


Historically, child welfare practices often involved enforcing case plans and overseeing families, which can perpetuate power imbalances and disempower those we aim to support. Recognizing this, our agency has embraced a decolonized approach that prioritizes the inherent strengths and capacities within families and communities. We believe in the power of walking alongside the families we work with, offering support, guidance, and encouragement as they navigate their unique journeys.

Walking alongside means building relationships based on trust, respect, and mutual understanding. It means listening to families' stories, valuing their perspectives, and co-creating solutions that honor their cultural heritage and lived experiences. This approach acknowledges that families are the experts in their own lives and empowers them to take an active role in the decision-making processes that affect them.

This shift is pivotal in all that we do. It informs our interactions, our programs, and our policies. By focusing on collaboration and partnership, we strive to create an environment where families feel valued, supported, and empowered to thrive. Our commitment to decolonizing our practice is not just about changing procedures; it's about transforming mindsets.

As we continue on this journey, we are inspired by the wisdom and strength of the families we walk alongside. Their courage and determination fuel our commitment to walk alongside them every step of the way. Together, we are continually working on building a more inclusive, equitable, and supportive child welfare system that honors the dignity and potential of every family.

This annual report celebrates our collective achievements and highlights the progress we've made in embracing this transformative approach. We are proud of the strides we've taken and look forward to continuing this important work, always walking alongside the families and communities we walk alongside.





WHO WE ARE

VISION

The Métis family and community is the cornerstone of our Nation and is built upon love, respect, honour, strength and heritage.



MISSION

Métis families and communities have the right and responsibility to care for children. Métis 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



Métis families and communities are the cornerstone of the Métis Nation and the service delivery system must reflect this vision.


Responsibility for decision-making regarding Métis children and families lies with the family, extended family and community whenever possible.

The organizational structure promotes and supports community governance at all levels.

The service delivery system will encompass both formal and informal elements.

The service delivery system must be operated in an efficient and effective manner.

The service delivery system will be outcome based and will reflect the core guiding principles of MCFCS.





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PRESIDENT DAVID CHARTRAND

This past year has seen many successes for our children, families, and, indeed, our Nation.

We saw a historic win through the Lafontaine Class Action which won compensation for children formerly in our care from 2005 - 2019 who had the provincial government claw back Children's Special Allowance benefits that were supposed to benefit them. I had promised to return every penny of those dollars to those children and we will be doing that and more! We look forward to being able to provide more updates as this process unfolds.

In yet another historic event this past year, on June 3, 2023, the Red River Métis unanimously voted in support of the Red River Métis Self-Government Recognition and Implementation Treaty. This is another monumental step forward in our journey of Self-Government and Self-Determination. This Treaty was built on the backs of our Ancestors, Elders, and other leaders who came before us and is yet another positive step for our Nation.

This Treaty will recognize, among many things, that the MMF has jurisdiction over Child and Family Services. We have known for decades that it is our responsibility, as a government, to ensure that our children, youth and families are able to live their healthiest, happiest, and safest life.

I know that our Métis CFS agencies are among the best of the best. You work miracles despite the limited tools at your disposal. We hope that we can utilize the upcoming Treaty and Coordination Agreement to help expand the toolbox and give you even more opportunities to strengthen our families.

I would like to extend my sincerest thank you to the Métis Child, Family and Community Services Board of Directors, chaired by Chairperson Shirley Langan, and staff for their hard work and dedication to support your Red River Métis Government as we enter this new era of child and family services.

I would especially like to thank Minister Mona Buors for her insight, guidance, and the direction she brings in her role as Minister of Métis Child and Family Services.

Meeqwetch,

David Chartrand, President
Manitoba Metis Federation

MINISTER OF CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES MONA BUORS



I am proud to be the Minister Responsible for Child and Family Services for the Red River Métis as we continue to distinctly separate ourselves from the historic child welfare system. While our progress has been slowed, the vision and destination remain the same -a truly Red River Métis child welfare system founded on our traditional values.

When a coordination agreement with Manitoba and Canada is complete, we will work with other Red River Métis Government departments to deliver meaningful prevention programs and the child and family services system will legally reunite children with families with supports in place. While this remains a work in progress, the Children's Special Allowance Class Action Lawsuit is coming to a conclusion. The conclusion being a resounding victory for every person who was ever in the care of the Red River Métis child welfare system. The filing of the Lafontaine Class Action ensured that all the people formerly in the care of our agencies could receive compensation – including for the time they were in the care of other agencies. The filling of almost every seat in the court room by the agencies and Authority was a sight to behold!

I had the pleasure of attending many agency events this past year including the Summer Celebration. It is wonderful to see so many children and families having fun and seeing the close relationships they have to their workers.

I would like to thank the Agency's Executive Director, Scott Maksymyk, the executive team and staff of the Agency for their dedication towards constant improvement.

I would especially like to recognize the long service of Board Chairperson Shirley Langan as she nears the end of her term of service on the board. Shirley has contributed greatly to the mentoring and development of the board for many years. Similarly, Board member Bev Webb has actively participated on the Board in many roles over the years and has also reached the end of her term. As well, Edith Desrosiers is leaving the board this year as a Southeast Region representative. These ladies deserve many thanks and recognition for their lengthy service. Of course, I also thank the rest of the Board of Directors who will carry on in their footsteps. And finally, I would like to thank President David Chartrand and the Cabinet of the Manitoba Métis Federation, the National Government of the Red River Métis, for their support as we continue forward into these new times.

Merci,

Mona Buors
Minister Responsible for Métis Child and
Family Services
Manitoba Métis Federation





CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER KARLA HILDEBRAND-EDEN

On behalf of the Métis Child and Family Services Authority and our Board of Directors, we would like to commend Métis Child, Family and Community Services (MCFCS) on their dedication throughout the 2023/24 fiscal year.

This agency has gone above and beyond, and continually provides support, empathy, and culturally-relevant practices to the communities they serve throughout Manitoba.

We would like to thank the MCFCS Executive Director, Scott Maksymyk, the MCFCS board, the executive management team, and the staff for their tireless efforts in providing care to our Red River Métis children, youth, and families. The work you have done over this past year will have ever-lasting impacts on the families we serve.

Whether it be the various programs, the participation in legal battles, or the small acts of kindness to comfort children in their most difficult times, your agency continues to be leaders in delivering child and family services.

Respectfully,
Karla Hildebrand-Eden
Chief Executive Officer



BOARD CHAIR SHIRLEY LANGAN



As we reflect on the past year, I am filled with immense pride and gratitude for the incredible work and dedication demonstrated by our entire team. Our staff's tireless efforts have significantly impacted the lives of the children and families we walk alongside, and I want to extend my heartfelt thanks for your hard work and unwavering commitment.

I am proud of the many accomplishments we have achieved together over the past year. From innovative programs to the successful implementation of critical initiatives, our agency continues to make strides in enhancing the well-being of our community.

I would like to express my deep appreciation to the board of directors and the board executive committee for their invaluable guidance and support. Your leadership has been instrumental in steering our organization towards success. A special thank you to Bev Webb and Edith Desrosiers for their long-standing service and contribution to MCFCS.

This year marks my last year serving on the board of directors, and it has been an honor to serve not only as a board member but also as the chairperson. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to have been part of such a dedicated and compassionate team.

A special thank you to our Executive Director, Scott Maksymyk, and the entire executive and management team. Your dedication to our mission and your relentless efforts to support our children and families are truly commendable.

We are incredibly grateful for the support of the Manitoba Métis Federation, including President Chartrand and the cabinet members. Your partnership has been vital in our journey, and we deeply appreciate your continued commitment to our cause.

I would also like to extend a special acknowledgment to the Minister of Child and Family Services, Minister Mona Buors. Your leadership and advocacy have been crucial in driving positive change, and we are fortunate to have you championing our efforts.

To Karla Hildebrand-Eden, Chief Executive Officer of the Métis Child and Family Services Authority, and her dedicated team, thank you for your unwavering support and collaboration. Your efforts have significantly strengthened our ability to serve our community effectively.

Lastly, I want to recognize Barbara Bruce, Madame Chairperson of the Métis Authority's board of directors, and the entire board of directors for their steadfast support. Your commitment and guidance have been invaluable to our organization.

As we look ahead, I am confident that, with the continued dedication and collaboration of our incredible team and partners, we will achieve even greater milestones. Thank you all for your unwavering support and commitment to our mission.

With sincere gratitude,
Shirley Langan
Chairperson of the Board



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SCOTT MAKSYMUK

It is my pleasure to present the 2023/2024 annual report for our organization. This year has been one of remarkable achievements and steadfast dedication to improving the services we provide to families and children. Our theme for this year, "We Walk Alongside," signifies our shift towards decolonizing our practice and empowering families through collaboration and mutual respect.

First and foremost, I extend my profound gratitude to the executive management team, the management, and the entire staff. Your tireless pursuit of excellence and unwavering commitment to our mission have been the driving force behind our successes. Your dedication and hard work, aligned with our "We Walk Alongside" philosophy, have made a significant difference in the lives of those we serve.

I would also like to thank Shirley Langan, our Board Chairperson, and the entire board of directors. Your guidance and support have been invaluable, and we are deeply appreciative of your leadership and dedication.

Our accomplishments would not have been possible without the incredible support from the Métis Authority. I am particularly grateful to Karla Hildebrand-Eden, Chief Executive Officer, and Desiree Gillespie, Associate Chief Executive Officer, as well as the entire Métis Authority team. Your collaboration and support have been essential in our journey towards enhancing our services and reaching new heights.

Additionally, I want to express our heartfelt thanks to President Chartrand and Minister Mona Buors for their unwavering support of the entire Métis Child and Family Services system. Your commitment and advocacy have been instrumental in driving positive change and supporting our mission.

As we look ahead, I am confident that our collective efforts, grounded in our commitment to walk alongside families, will continue to yield positive outcomes for the families and children we walk alongside. Thank you all for your continued dedication and support.

With sincere appreciation,
Scott Maksymuk
Executive Director

OUR BOARD

Chair – Shirley Langan

Vice Chair – Brenda Zak

Secretary – Andrea Clarke

Treasurer – Karen Beaudin

Elder – Marcella Vezina

Member – Bev Webb

Member – Edith Desrosiers

Ex-Officio – Charlotte Nolin

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT

Executive Director – Scott Maksymyk

Associate Executive Director – Tracey Bercier

Executive Assistant – Amanda Glassock

Director of Resources – Jason Orchyk

Director of Practice and Innovation – Cathie Hamm

Director of Prevention and Community Support – Ashley Brown


Director of Services (Family Services) – Sarah Fingas

Acting Director of Services (Ongoing Care) – Stacy Jerema

Acting Director of Services (Eastman and Interlake) – Cory Donald

Human Resources Manager – Ashley Catcheway-Harrison

Director of Finance – Joyce Luyun



BILL C-92:

AN ACT RESPECTING FIRST NATIONS, INUIT AND MÉTIS CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES.

We are very excited about Bill C-92: An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families. This ground-breaking legislation represents a significant shift in the landscape of child and family services. We have been diligently working alongside the Manitoba Métis Federation to negotiate with the federal and provincial governments, striving towards the recognition of our jurisdiction over child and family services for Métis people.

This collaborative effort is paving the way for a future where Métis families and communities are empowered to lead and shape the services that directly impact their lives, ensuring culturally appropriate and community-led support systems.





CHILDREN'S SPECIAL ALLOWANCE

On December 13, 2023, a momentous day unfolded as a multitude of our dedicated staff congregated at the law courts, awaiting the decision regarding the certification of the Children's Special Allowance (CSA) lawsuit. The anticipation was palpable, with not only the courtroom packed to the brim but over 50 additional staff eagerly waiting in the halls, eager to hear the outcome. The lawsuit, which addresses the distribution of CSA payments to child welfare agencies and various institutions caring for children, akin to the Canada Child Benefit, was certified on the very same day.

The CSA funds, ranging from \$530 to \$800 per child monthly, were historically allocated to support children in care with essential needs such as medicine, clothing, school supplies, or as a safety net for those transitioning out of care. The legal battle stems from the province's decision in 2006 to redirect these crucial funds into general revenues, and this recent development marks a significant milestone in the pursuit of justice and fair allocation for the well-being of the children we walk alongside.

FAMILY SERVICE

LI SERVICES DI FAMILLES





EASTMAN/ INTERLAKE



We proudly walk alongside families in the Interlake and Eastman regions, providing dedicated support and services from our offices in Beausejour and Winnipeg. In the Eastman and Interlake regions, we have established strong relationships with the families we walk alongside, recognizing and respecting their unique cultural heritage and lived experiences.

By focusing on walking alongside families, we foster an environment of trust and mutual respect. Our approach is centered on listening to families' needs, valuing their perspectives, and co-creating solutions that honor their strengths and capacities. This shift away from traditional oversight to a more collaborative model is pivotal in all our interactions and programs.

As we continue to walk alongside the families of the Eastman and Interlake regions, we are inspired by their wisdom and strength. Together, we are making strides towards a brighter future, grounded in respect, empowerment, and shared responsibility.

ALL MY RELATIONS

To honor the practice of humble connection with families on their healing journey and to ensure that families are consistently welcomed to participate in planning and decision-making, MCFCS and Michif CFS continue to offer "All My Relations" training. This training is provided through our contract with the Family Finding and Family Seeing model authors, Kevin Campbell and Elizabeth Wendel.

Kevin and Elizabeth offer staff intensive training, practice sessions, and ongoing coaching in engaging with families. The training program began in May 2021 and will continue through 2024.

"It is essential to get people to put the training into practice. I think it was a fantastic idea to have time to try out those lessons and then come back and discuss what went wrong and what went well. That's a great idea on how to bridge the gap between knowledge and putting knowledge into practice."

Staff Member



MÉTIS CONNECT

The Métis Connect Program aims to facilitate a transformative shift in practice among the staff at Métis Child, Family and Community Services. The goal is for staff to consistently honor and include family and community as essential partners in the support, planning, and decision-making processes for their children.

The Métis Connect Mentor plays a crucial role in guiding and mentoring Métis Child, Family and Community Services workers. This mentorship focuses on adopting a Family Seeing approach, which emphasizes the importance of connecting with, and welcoming family and community as active partners in the planning and decision-making for their children. This approach is characterized by genuine and respectful engagement.

Two of the Métis Connect team members also facilitated two 3-day Youth Lead Network gatherings (assisted by Kevin Campbell and Elizabeth Wendel) this year and both were a resounding success. The young people reported feeling empowered and were able to really connect with each other leading to some lasting friendships/supports.

BUILDING TRUST AND REUNITING A FAMILY

In the fall of 2022, a father of five children reluctantly attended a network gathering to plan for his children's care. He expressed feelings of not being supported and doubted the Agency's intentions to help him. However, over the course of the next year, an Agency Worker, Métis Connect, and the father worked diligently to build a relationship founded on mutual respect and trust.

Through consistent effort and open communication, our Agency got to know the father as a whole person. This approach allowed him to see Métis CFCS as a genuine support and part of his "team." The transformation in their relationship was evident when the father began calling the worker to seek parenting advice.

As a result of this collaborative effort, two of his children returned home to him in 2023. The other three children now spend weekends at home with their dad and siblings, with plans underway for them to move home permanently. This story is a powerful example of how trust and partnership can lead to positive outcomes for families, highlighting our commitment to supporting and reuniting families whenever possible.






MÉTIS CART

The Métis CART (Creating Authentic Relationships Together) Program acknowledges the impact of intergenerational trauma on parenting. Many parents who have experienced trauma face challenges with substance misuse and mental health, leading to difficulties in safely caring for their children. As most of the referrals MCFCS receives involve such cases, the CART program provides relationship-focused, trauma-informed wraparound services to these families, with a strong emphasis on harm reduction strategies.

The Métis CART program serves as an early intervention initiative, assisting approximately thirty (30) families at any given time. The program pairs a Family Services Worker with a Peer Mentor, who has lived experience with mental health or addiction, to collaborate with a counselor from the CART team and the family. Together, they work towards offering comprehensive support, treatment, and services. Peer Mentors also extend their support to other family members working with different teams within the agency, demonstrating their openness and willingness to help.

Remarkably, the CART program has not brought any children into care for the past two years, instead utilizing private family arrangements whenever possible. This approach highlights the program's commitment to maintaining family unity and supporting families in the community.



CART'S IMPACT ON SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

CART supported a mom whose mental health and substance misuse challenges were impacting mom's ability to get her child to attend school regularly and the child couldn't independently get to school. CART developed a comprehensive plan involving various stakeholders to address the issue, including the Peer Mentor supporting mom one-on-one. Initially, the child stayed with grandparents, but they couldn't provide transportation.

CART engaged school staff, Peer Mentors, and unit assistants to assist with transportation. Referrals to Little Bears and the Scotia Stay In School Grant provided additional support and incentives. Through these collaborative efforts, the child began attending school regularly. With a gradual transition back home, the mom ensured the child continued attending school consistently. By the end of the school year, the child was back home full-time, and the school reported significant improvement in attendance.





ONGOING CARE

As the Agency progresses with the development of the All My Relations perspective, our Ongoing Care program provides crucial support to children who are being cared for by individuals other than their parents. This program emphasizes the importance of maintaining cultural connections and ensuring that children remain rooted in their community and heritage.

Our staff are dedicated to building strong, trusting relationships with families. They walk alongside families to explore and create opportunities where the responsibility of care can be returned to the family whenever possible. This involves regular communication, personalized support plans, and ongoing assessments to ensure that both the children and their caregivers receive the necessary resources and assistance.

By fostering these connections and providing comprehensive support, the Ongoing Care program aims to strengthen family bonds and promote stability and well-being for the children in our care. Staff members are trained to approach each situation with sensitivity and respect, recognizing the unique challenges and strengths of each family. Through this approach, we strive to create a supportive environment where families feel empowered and capable of resuming their caregiving roles.

FAMILY SERVICES

Throughout the 2023-2024 year, our Family Services teams have continued to collaborate closely with just under 400 families to support children in remaining at home with their loved ones, whether that be with their parents or other family members in alternative care arrangements, thus avoiding the need for Agency care. During this period, approximately 28 children were in private arrangements across about 60 families, enabling them to stay out of care. Among these families, around 20 children were in care but being cared for by with family members. In cases where children did require entering care, our primary goal of reunification was achieved for 67 children.

Central to our work is the emphasis on building relationships and connections, with a strong commitment to keeping children at home with their parents whenever feasible and ensuring children are being cared for by family if they cannot remain with their parents. Our Family Service teams are dedicated to supporting families in making decisions and creating plans that align with their own wishes and goals.

We have been privileged to witness numerous successes of families throughout the year. We have celebrated alongside families who have successfully ended their involvement with the Agency while effectively parenting their children. Additionally, we have seen children reunite with their parents. These successes inspire our ongoing work with all families, rooted in our belief in the inherent strength of those we have the privilege to support.





FAMILY SUPPORT

The objective of the Family Support Program is to support families in building connections and strengthening attachments between children and their families. To achieve this goal, our program offers supported family time for children and their families who, for various reasons, cannot currently live together.

We provide parent education through personalized one-on-one support and the Circle of Security parenting program. Additionally, we assist families in connecting with community resources to ensure that they continue to receive necessary support even after our involvement ends.

The Family Support Team supported approximately 2650 family visits and parent education times over the course of the year.

FAMILY ENHANCEMENT

The MCFCS Family Enhancement (FE) team continues to walk alongside families who come to the agency's attention due to difficulties in parenting their children. The team engages with families to identify the best approaches to help them heal and address their challenges while keeping their children at home. The FE team operates with a trauma-sensitive approach, acknowledging that all families possess strengths, wisdom, and natural support networks.

This year, the Family Enhancement team has encountered situations involving more critical safety issues, resulting in a greater number of children needing temporary out-of-home care. Most of these children are being cared for by kin caregivers as the team continues to support families on their healing journey.

INFINITY RESOURCES

PROGRAMME D'ENFANTS PI LI JEUNES



PROGRAM KICK OFF

The Infinity Children, Youth & Young Adult Programs kicked off another exciting year with a memorable event held at Kildonan Park. We invited youth and families to join us for a vibrant BBQ gathering where our dedicated staff introduced the diverse range of programming planned for the upcoming year. It was an opportunity for families to learn about the array of enriching activities and support services we have in store.

Approximately 70 young people attended, enjoying delicious food and engaging conversations amidst the natural beauty of Kildonan Park. This event exemplified our commitment to fostering community engagement and providing transparent, informative sessions that empower families with the knowledge and resources they need.

We are also looking forward to a new intensive partnership with Métis Employment and Training in the coming year.

MÉTIS SPIRIT

The Métis Spirit Program is a unique funding partnership between the Agency and the MMF. The Métis Spirit Worker engages with young adults between the ages of 18 and 25. Many of these young people find themselves struggling as they navigate life and various systems independently. While the Métis Spirit Worker has limited capacity to provide financial assistance, they offer essential support, advocacy, and connections to community resources.

The Métis Spirit Worker helps young adults identify their goals and assists them in achieving these goals. Even those who received assistance from the Agency until the age of 21 may still need ongoing support and advocacy. These individuals remain eligible for support from the Métis Spirit Worker for an additional four years.

We are grateful for our partnership with Métis Education and Training (MET), which has enabled us to fund one more position. One of these positions is specifically dedicated to working with young adults with disabilities.



YOUTH CELEBRATION

The Youth and Young Adults Team is responsible for organizing one of the agency's most significant events – the Youth Celebration. This event provides youth, who reach the age of majority, with the opportunity to gather with family, friends, and those who have supported them on their journey. The celebration is a touching experience for all attendees, highlighting the strong relationships between the youth and their support networks.

Each youth honored at the event receives a gift package, which includes a candle, a Métis sash with a related write-up, a lanyard, a customized Infinity hoodie, and a \$100 gift card. Additionally, we provide information on our Métis Spirit Programs to ensure that these young adults know they are not alone and can seek support whenever they need it.



CULTURAL CRAFT NIGHT

The Infinity Circle of Life and Skills for Life teams collaborate to offer weekly crafting sessions at our McGregor location. Each session includes educational and cultural elements. Children and youth engage in crafting cultural items such as beading projects (earrings, key chains, moccasins, and mitts), painting rocks and canvases, creating talking sticks, and making drums and dream catchers. They also learn about the significance of the sash and Michif language through interactive lessons, followed by shared meals. Our program room proudly displays numerous creations from our talented young artists.



SPIRIT HELPERS COMMITTEE

The Spirit Helpers Committee consists of staff members from various departments within the Agency. With support from our Children, Youth, and Young Adults Programming Staff, the committee has coordinated numerous cultural events, ranging from sweat lodges to medicine picking, offering opportunities for those interested in exploring their heritage to learn about traditional medicines and ceremonies. We also conduct 'Wellness Workshops' for staff, where they gather to learn cultural crafts, cooking techniques, and teachings that enrich their service delivery to our youth and families.

The Agency remains committed to integrating the cultural backgrounds of our children into every family plan. Our Cultural Worker continues to prioritize the cultural planning bundle, particularly when working with children placed in environments that may not reflect their cultural heritage.



LITTLE BEARS

Little Bears is a bi-weekly group program designed for children and youth supported by the Circle of Life program. Participants engage in Métis games, learn traditional skills like playing the spoons and jigging, and explore Métis history. Each session includes a shared meal, enhancing focus and enjoyment during planned activities. The program always incorporates a cultural component that highlights Métis history and traditions.

These group gatherings foster relationships and bonds that are supportive and trusting. Building these connections provides stability and a sense of belonging, which are crucial for their overall well-being and development."



CULTURAL CAMP

In July and August, our agency hosted two weeklong cultural camps, with 16 youth attending from July 24-28 and 15 youth attending from August 21-25. These camps provided a rich opportunity for youth to immerse themselves in Métis heritage and culture. We were fortunate to employ two youth leaders through the MMF's Métis Employment & Training Summer Employment Program.

Activities at the cultural camps included harvesting experiences such as fishing and a traditional fish fry, tours of the Selkirk Marine Museum and the Canadian Museum of Human Rights, and a guided boat tour at The Forks focusing on Métis history. Youth participated in Métis music sessions with fiddling and jigging demonstrations and instructions, as well as a sweat ceremony led by Elder Robert Greene, which included traditional teachings and a feast featuring hamburger soup, bannock, and berries. The planning and execution of these enriching experiences were made possible through the collaborative efforts of the Spirit Helpers Committee, Métis Spirit Program, and Children and Youth Program Staff.



A JOURNEY OF TRIUMPH AND ASPIRATION

We are delighted to share the inspiring journey of one of our exceptional youths, who has achieved remarkable milestones this year. Graduating with honors, she attended our youth celebration and has been accepted into the University of Winnipeg for the fall of 2024, where she aspires to become a therapist.

Her dedication and hard work have been recognized through three prestigious awards: the PRTA Award for Academic Achievement, the MMF Award for Achievements, and an award for Visual Arts. These accolades are a testament to her perseverance, talent, and unwavering commitment to her goals.

We are incredibly proud of her accomplishments and look forward to seeing her continue to shine as she embarks on this exciting new chapter. Her story is a beacon of hope and a powerful reminder of the potential within each of our youth.



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FIDDLING AND JIGGING GROUPS

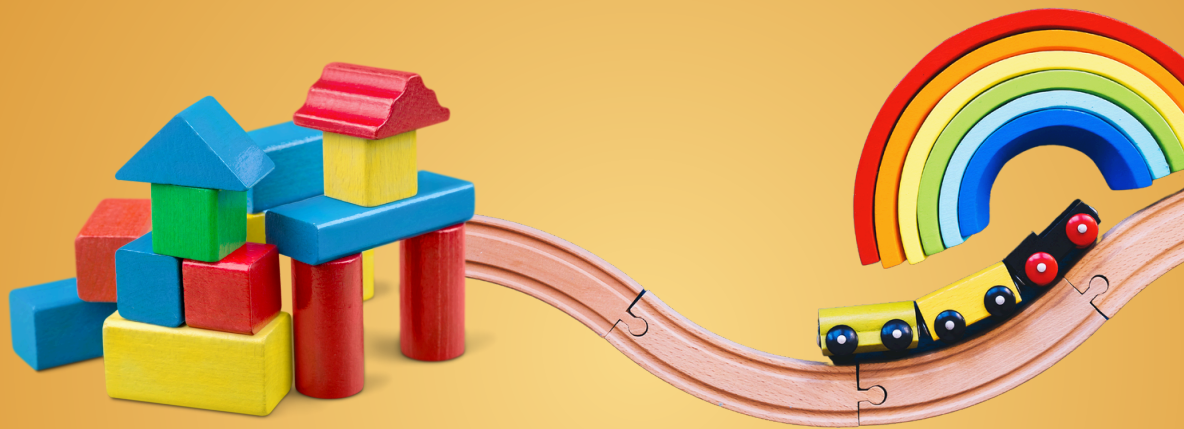
Thanks to funding provided by the MMF, our agency has been able to offer fiddling and jigging lessons to children under our care. We provide fiddles to children and youth , who participate in lessons. These lessons can accommodate up to 10 children and youth, either virtually or in person on Thursday evenings.

Jigging lessons were successfully adapted to a virtual format during the Covid-19 pandemic and have since transitioned back into in-person sessions. We continue to offer virtual options to ensure accessibility, enabling children aged five (5) to seventeen (17) years old to learn these essential aspects of Métis culture regardless of their location.



KINSHIP CARE

Kinship care involves children residing full-time with relatives or members of their community when they cannot live with their parents. This approach aims to reduce trauma for children and parents while bolstering the family's existing skills and connections. Strong families nurture resilient children, aligning with our core belief that 'Métis families and communities are the foundation of the Métis Nation.' Our kinship care program supports approximately 300 kinship homes with training, advocacy, and essential resources, harnessing the valuable wisdom and knowledge inherent within families.



FOSTER CARE AND SPECIALIZED FOSTER CARE PROGRAM

While our primary focus remains on keeping children connected to their families or communities, there continues to be a critical demand for both general and specialized caregivers, particularly within the Métis community. Many Métis children still face the challenge of being raised outside of their own cultural and familial contexts.

Our General Foster Care and Specialized Foster Care programs are responsible for recruiting, screening, training, licensing, and providing ongoing support to foster parents who care for children of all ages and diverse needs.

The General Foster Care Program successfully expanded emergency placement services last year, addressing urgent needs. We are actively recruiting for emergency, short-term, and long-term foster homes.

For youth requiring specialized care tailored to their specific needs, the Specialized Foster Care Program offers customized homes equipped and supported by highly experienced staff.

LIFE

The LIFE (Live In Family Enhancement) Program offers a distinctive opportunity to preserve family unity during periods of child care. Each family is matched with a trained LIFE mentor who serves as a role model, supporter, advocate, and guide, aiming to enhance the overall health and well-being of all family members. Families typically reside in a LIFE home for a minimum of eight months, with the option to extend as needed. LIFE mentors work closely with parents to enhance parenting skills, life competencies, and ensure the safety and welfare of children in the program.

For the past year, we have been working diligently to have the LIFE program entered into the California Evidence Based Clearinghouse (CEBC), a searchable database of child welfare related programs. We are thrilled to announce that as of September 9, the LIFE program is now recognized in the CEBC database.

A GREAT FATHER'S DAY

We are honored to share the heartfelt journey of a dedicated father whose determination and love for his young daughter have led to a reunion. His daughter had been in care, and he was unwavering in his commitment to parenting her, making remarkable strides in a short period.

Despite facing various challenges, this father consistently attended family time with his daughter and was committed to his healing journey, even during difficult times. Eventually time with his daughter was moved from the office to the comfort of the dad's home.

On Father's Day, the child was reunified with her dad. A testament to the power of love and healing.



GROUP CARE RESOURCES

RESSOURCES DE SOINS D'GROUPE



RAILS

The Rosedale Adolescent Inter-Dependent Living Services (RAILS) comprises seven units with nine beds, providing an inter-dependent living program tailored for youth aged 16-21. This program empowers youth to live independently with 24-hour on-site staff available for guidance and support. Staff at RAILS mentor youth in vital life skills including budgeting, nutrition, smart shopping, academic support, personal health, hygiene, and other essential independent living skills. Additionally, they coordinate educational, employment, recreational, and cultural activities in the Common Area.

Youth at RAILS actively participate in the Métis in Motion workshop series provided by our Infinity Youth and Young Adult Program staff. Upon transitioning from RAILS to independent living, youth receive outreach support from staff for up to three months.

Recently, we repurposed a two-bedroom apartment within RAILS to create a designated space tailored for families, providing a comfortable environment conducive to quality time together. This initiative was driven by the realization that the previous roommate setting was underutilized by many youth. Whether families are visiting from out of town, need additional accommodation, or simply wish to spend time together outside of the office setting, this suite offers an ideal solution.

Our RAILS staff are available on-site during both day and evening shifts, ensuring the well-being of families. Our dedicated Family Support team also stands ready to provide additional assistance as needed. This apartment allows families to stay overnight, prepare and share meals, and engage in leisure activities together. Access to the open space on the main floor, equipped with entertainment systems and various activities, further enriches the experience.





EAGLES NEST AND GLADYS COOK

The Gladys Cook House and Eagles Nest are our Agency-operated short and long-term care facilities. Our dedicated staff focus on nurturing relationships and providing youth with a sense of stability and commitment. On October 24th, 2023, we hosted our Gladys Cook Open House, which was a highly successful event. The positive staff attendance highlighted the excellent home environment created by our team. During the school year, staff ensure continuity by transporting youth to their schools, reducing disruptions and maintaining connections with teachers, friends, and the community. Youth Care Workers organize cultural and recreational activities such as community center visits, YMCA outings, fishing trips, MCFCS programs, and Cultural Camp experiences.

There's a strong emphasis on youth engagement in their care planning, empowering them to contribute their perspectives. Increased attention to life skills training—including shopping, cooking, meal planning, cleaning, and budgeting—aims to enhance their readiness for adulthood. Staff actively support family visits and involve family members in goal setting and planning. Despite challenges posed by the pandemic, such as virtual family contact and remote learning transitions, youth demonstrated remarkable maturity, understanding, and responsibility. Staff provided necessary equipment and support to maintain family connections, assisted with schoolwork, and fostered engagement to mitigate disruptions during this period of adjustment to a new normal.

MAZOUN INFINITII PAKOSHAYIMOOHK “INFINITY HOUSE OF HOPE”

In October 2023, we marked a significant milestone with the ground-breaking of Mazoun Ininitii Pakoshayimoohk (House of Hope). Mazoun represents a transformative initiative aimed at providing culturally safe urban transition homes for Red River Métis Youth who are aging out of care or have already aged out. This facility will serve as a beacon of support, offering essential education in life skills, therapeutic interventions, and culturally enriching programming.

Mazoun will feature emergency suites dedicated to youth formerly involved with Métis Child and Family Services, ensuring they always have a supportive environment to return to, with specialized care. Additionally, Mazoun will extend its support to young mothers striving to keep their children out of the system, providing them with essential resources and guidance.

Furthermore, Mazoun aims to offer temporary housing solutions for families working towards reunification, promoting stability and nurturing family bonds wherever possible.





CIRCLE OF SECURITY

Circle of Security (COS) is a vital program offered by our agency to support caregivers in understanding and strengthening parent-child attachment relationships. This evidence-based intervention helps caregivers identify and respond to their child's emotional needs, promoting secure attachment and emotional wisdom from infancy through adolescence.

In the past year, we have expanded our COS program to include training sessions for our staff. This initiative aims to equip our team with enhanced knowledge and skills in attachment theory, enabling them to better support children and families under our care. By integrating COS principles into our staff training, we are reinforcing our commitment to nurturing healthy attachments and promoting positive developmental outcomes for the children and youth we walk alongside.

Through COS, caregivers and staff alike gain valuable insights into the dynamics of attachment, fostering environments where children feel secure, valued, and supported in their emotional growth.

CHILDREN'S AID FOUNDATION

Children's Aid Foundation of Canada (CAFC) approved a grant in the amount of \$75,000 plus an additional \$42,500 for CAFC's Ignite the Spark Fund for three years. This is used to provide funding for enrichment activities through athletic pursuits, the arts, cultural activities and recreational activities that will give children and youth the opportunity to spark their interests and to nurture the spark that they may discover.



NATIONAL DAY FOR TRUTH & RECONCILIATION

On September 29, 2023, the Agency's Spirit Helpers Committee organized a ceremony to commemorate the survivors of the Indian Residential Schools and honor the children who did not return home. As part of the ceremony, our staff gathered at the Assiniboine River, where they offered tobacco and prayers. The event was marked by a song performed by our Cultural Worker, Wanda Ferland-McKenzie. All staff participated by wearing orange shirts, symbolizing our solidarity and support.



YOUTH CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

On December 20th, 2023, our organization spread holiday cheer by hosting a Youth Christmas Celebration. Attendees were treated to a delightful array of Christmas classics served with love, setting the perfect backdrop for the festivities. The talented Little Métis Toe Tappers took the stage, adding a rhythm of joy to the celebration with their captivating performance. To top it all off, the highlight of the day was Santa himself, who made a special appearance, delighting the children as he distributed presents and spread the magic of the season. It was a heartwarming occasion that brought smiles, laughter, and the essence of Christmas to our community.



CHRISTMAS HAMPERS

In partnership with the MMF President's Office, our Family Support Program has continued its tradition of spreading holiday cheer by assembling and distributing Christmas hampers. This year, we were able to provide hampers to 44 families we walk alongside, ensuring they had everything needed for a joyful Christmas dinner and presents for all children in the home. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the MMF President's Office for their generous funding, which made these hampers possible.

We recognize the heightened need for extra support during the holiday season, and our commitment to providing essential resources and assistance remains steadfast. Through initiatives like the Christmas hampers, we aim to alleviate some of the challenges faced by families, ensuring they can celebrate and cherish the holiday season together.

MÉTIS CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES FAMILY CHRISTMAS PARTY

We were thrilled to host our inaugural Métis Child and Family Services Family Christmas Party in collaboration with Michif Child and Family Services and the Métis CFS Authority. This event brought together families we support for a truly memorable day of joy and togetherness, with approximately 1000 people attending!

The Holiday celebration featured an array of activities including rides, crafts, face painting, and delightful treats such as hot dogs and mini donuts. The highlight of the event was the arrival of Santa Claus himself, who brought together families we walk alongside. The atmosphere was filled with palpable excitement as children entered the venue, eagerly awaiting their turn to meet Santa.

This celebration exemplified our commitment to creating meaningful experiences and strengthening community bonds among the families we walk alongside. It was a heartwarming event that brought joy and festive spirit to all who attended





SUMMER CELEBRATION

Our annual Summer Celebration was a tremendous success, inviting all families, children, and caregivers to join us for a day of joyous festivities. Held on July 6, 2023, the event featured an array of activities including bouncy castles, a free Slurpee truck, engaging games, face painting, a photo booth, creative crafts, and a delicious complimentary lunch for all attendees. It was a vibrant occasion filled with laughter, community spirit, and memorable moments.

We were thrilled to welcome over 400 families and children to this special event, fostering connections and creating lasting memories within our community. The Summer Celebration Picnic exemplified our commitment to providing inclusive and joyful experiences that bring families together and celebrate our shared journey.



OFFICES



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Fax: 204-927-6943



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Fax: 204-927-7278



550 Selch Street
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Fax: 204-268-6490

HUMAN RESOURCES

On June 1, 2023, Human Resources returned to the agency after previously being centralized at the authority. We are thrilled to have the team back with us, enhancing our ability to support staff directly and fostering a stronger, more cohesive work environment. This transition marks a positive step towards better collaboration and responsiveness within our organization.



Total Employees by Office Location

2000 Portage Ave.	101
100 Sutherland Ave.	40
412 McGregor St.	37
550 Selch St. (Beausejour)	11
Facilities	39
Total	228

KEY FINANCIALS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024

Assets	13,812,020
Liabilities & Net Assets	
Liabilities	14,003,152
Net assets	(191,132)
Total	13,812,020

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024

Revenue	51,088,957
Expenses	
Operations	16,641,142
Child Maintenance	31,742,970
RAILS	792,056
LIFE	149,412
Shelters	1,422,934
CART	531,575
Total	51,280,089
Net Deficit	(191,132)



We Walk Alongside

