

**MÉTIS CHILD, FAMILY AND  
COMMUNITY SERVICES**

# **2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT**

**RENEW  
BEAR**





# REMEMBER







# REMEMBER


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At Métis Child, Family and Community Services, we have been working hard to **ReMember** families.

**ReMembering** requires us to acknowledge that child welfare has historically dis-membered families and it is our responsibility to work to **ReMember** families and community.

**ReMembering** goes throughout all of our Agency; **ReMembering** the wisdom of the family, **ReMembering** the partnerships and relationships we hold with families and communities; **ReMembering** the words that we use can move us towards reconciliation.

**ReMembering** puts children and families at the center of all that we do and that Métis families and communities are the cornerstone of the Métis Nation.





# WHO WE ARE

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## VISION STATEMENT

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

## MISSION STATEMENT

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



The future of the Red River Métis is held in the hearts and dreams of our children. Throughout the Child and Family Services and the Treaty consultations across the Homeland and beyond, the message we heard was the same; this is for our next generation, our children are our future. Our Child and Family Service Authority and agencies are key in creating positive futures for thousands of Red River Métis children. It is our responsibility as a government to make sure our child and family services system is able to ensure the health and well being of these children and the families they belong to.

On July 6, 2021, the MMF signed a landmark Métis Self-Government agreement that immediately recognizes the MMF as the National Government of the Red River Métis. This agreement, among other things, acknowledges that our inherent right to self-government includes child and family services. The MMF and Canada are taking steps towards finalizing a Modern Treaty that uses the July 6, 2021, agreement as a base to build upon. This will be a significant next step that will further entrench our collective inherent right of self government and self-determination over the future of 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, led by outgoing Executive Director Greg Besant and the agency directors, for their hard work and dedication to support your Métis Government as we enter into this new era of child and family services.

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

Meeqwetch,

David Chartrand, President  
Manitoba Métis Federation



# MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR MÉTIS CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

MONA BUORS

I am extremely honoured and proud to be the Minister of Child and Family Services for the Red River Métis at a time when the Red River Métis people will realize our long-held hope of creating our own child welfare system founded on our traditional values. Métis Child, Family and Community Services has spent countless hours over this past year to achieve this all the while continuing to provide outstanding support to the Métis community. The Red River Métis have always deeply valued strong connections with our family and community. We see these values exemplified in the day-to-day commitment made by MCFCS.

Métis CFCS holds true to the principles laid out within An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis Children, Youth and Families to support families to prevent children from coming into care and to keep children in their own families if they can't safely live with a parent. You will see much evidence of this throughout this report in the numbers of reunifications, the involvement of family in decision making and a focus on building healthy families – the safest place for children to be.

Our coordination agreement discussions with Manitoba and Canada are still ongoing as we look to fully return to the Métis people the jurisdiction and authority to care for our children, youth, and families. Every day we are getting closer to completing these discussions and further revolutionizing child welfare in Manitoba.

I commend outgoing Métis CFCS Agency Executive Director Greg Besant, Assistant Executive Director Scott Maksymyk, the entire executive management team and every Métis CFCS staff member who have worked with dedication, professionalism, courage and passion to ensure that our children, youth and families are not only safe, but receiving ever-increasing opportunities to be supported in overcoming their challenges and improving their lives. Thank you to Chairperson Shirley Langan and the Métis CFCS Agency Board of Directors for their leadership, wisdom and time. Let us move forward together with pride in what we have achieved and with confidence that this can just be the beginning of what we can accomplish for the betterment of our families and communities.

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 the Métis Child, Family & Community Services Agency for their commitment and hard work throughout 2022/23 fiscal year.

This agency's dedication to Métis children, youth, and families continues to overcome stereotypes of traditional Child and Family Services' models and proves, time and time again, that collaborative and family-led practices are the best ways in which we can prepare and nurture our youth for their futures.

Dedicated management and staff at the agency continually go above and beyond to provide what our Red River Métis children, youth and families need. Whether that be supporting children and youth at home to enable the family to remain together, connecting youth to their Métis culture, or giving them the tools to have a seamless transitions into adulthood.

I would like to thank the former Executive Director, Greg Besant, the Acting Executive Director, Scott Maksymyk and their management team, and the Board of Directors for continuing to work tirelessly towards providing the best child and family services to our children, youth, and families.

Respectfully,  
Karla Hildebrand-Eden, Chief Executive Officer  
Métis Child & Family Services Authority



# BOARD CHAIRPERSON

SHIRLEY LANGAN

On behalf of Métis Child, Family & Community Services, I am pleased to present the 2022/2023 Annual Report. This year represents a year of re-emergence, as the restrictions imposed due to COVID-19 began to lift. We have continued to embrace many of the practices and lessons learned over the past two years, making us more efficient and continuing to deliver better outcomes for children and families. On behalf of our organization, I want to acknowledge the work and dedication of our frontline and administrative staff during the past few years. Their commitment to our families has been inspiring to us as a Board.

This year has also highlighted the need to redefine what we do as an agency, all the way from drafting new legislation down to redefining the words that we use on a daily basis. While we have a long way to go, I am proud of the steps taken by the Agency. Redefining our work is not a one-time or even one-year event, it is a lifelong journey of which we're all a part of and responsible for.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the members of the Board of Directors and the Board Executive Committee for their diligence and wholehearted commitment to the Agency's mission and vision. Your insights and expertise have played a crucial role in shaping the direction of the Agency. I would also like to extend my sincere appreciation to Greg Besant, Executive Director, the Executive Team and all of the Agency staff for their unwavering commitment to the children, youth and families we serve.

We also want to acknowledge the Manitoba Métis Federation for their support and advocating for the needs of our children and families. President Chartrand and all of the Cabinet Ministers have been resolute in advancing the needs of the Métis people. We are also very grateful for Minister Mona Buors, who has been a crucial ally and leader in our work.

Additionally, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to Karla Hildebrand-Eden, Chief Executive Officer of the Métis Child and Family Services Authority, and her dedicated team for their support and guidance. And a special recognition to Barbara Bruce, Madam Chairperson, for her counsel and knowledge.

Looking ahead, the Board of Directors remains steadfast in our commitment to our Mission and Vision and to the families that we serve.

Thank you,  
Shirley Langan, Board Chairperson





# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

GREG BESANT

It is my very great pleasure to bring to you the annual report of Métis Child, Family and Community Services for 2022/23, my final annual report as Executive Director. It has been wonderful to see the progress of the agency towards decolonizing child welfare over the years.

The changes we have made together have been many including:

- the creation of the Métis Connect program,
- the All my Relations practice model,
- the Community Addictions Response Team,
- the addition of an Ongoing Care Team,
- the recreation and enhancement of the Kinship Care Team,
- the expansion of the Métis Spirit Program
- ensuring children in care have RESPs, RDSPs
- and the expansion of cultural and supportive programs through our child and youth programs.

The results include a reduction in apprehensions, an increase in children in care living with their families, an increase in re-unifications with parents and children in care being connected to their Red River Métis community. These are just the first steps towards the required de-colonization of child welfare and I believe the work of the MMF towards reclaiming Métis jurisdiction over child welfare will enable the next steps.

I would like to acknowledge all staff for their diligence in pursuing change in child welfare. The awesome work of the Directors of the agency is well known internally at the agency but can be overlooked from the outside. I want to publicly thank Scott Maksymyk, Cathie Hamm, Jason Orchyk, Tracey Bercier, Sarah Fingas, Stacy Jerema, Cory Donald and Amanda Glassock for their never-ending dedication. The guidance of Board Chair Shirley Langan and the rest of the Board of Directors was very much appreciated. Thank you.

In this time of change the support of the Chief Executive Officers of the Métis Child and Family Services Authority Karla Hildebrand-Eden and Desiree Gillespie as well as the Authority's executive team has been critical to the success of the agency over this year and I thank them for this. The increasing partnership with Michif Child and Family Services and their Executive Director, Margaret Marin has been appreciated.

Finally, I would like to thank President Chartrand and Minister Mona Buors for their support and leadership over the past year.

# EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT

**Executive Director**  
Greg Besant

**Acting Assistant  
Executive Director**  
Scott Maksymyk

**Executive Assistant**  
Amanda Glassock

**Director of Resources**  
Jason Orchyk

**Director of Practice  
and Innovation**  
Cathie Hamm

**Director for Prevention and  
Community Support**  
Tracey Bercier

**Acting Director of Services**  
Sarah Fingas

**Acting Director of Services**  
Stacy Jerema

**Acting Director of Services**  
Cory Donald

## OUR BOARD

**Chair**  
Shirley Langan

**Vice Chair**  
Brenda Zak

**Secretary**  
Andrea Clarke

**Treasurer**  
Karen Beaudin

**Elder**  
Marcella Vezina

**Ex-Officio**  
Charlotte Nolin

**Member**  
Bev Webb

**Member**  
Edith Desrosiers





REMEMBER



# SERVICE DELIVERY

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*With more than 250 staff members across three regions and multiple locations, we deliver on our mandate of supporting families, youth and children.*

# MÉTIS CONNECT

## PROGRAMME CONNECT DE MICHIF

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*The goal of the Métis Connect Program is to support staff with a shift in practice where Métis Child, Family and Community Services staff will consistently honor and welcome family and community as partners in support, planning and decision-making for their children.*

*The role of the Métis Connect Mentor is to coach and mentor Métis Child, Family and Community Services workers in a Family Seeing way of being with families which includes searching for, connecting with and welcoming family and community as partners in the planning and decision-making for their children. The approach involves authentic and humble engagement.*

**IN THE 2022/23 FISCAL  
YEAR, MÉTIS CONNECT  
FACILITATED MORE THAN  
300 FAMILY GATHERINGS  
WITH APPROXIMATELY  
650 DIFFERENT FAMILY  
MEMBERS**

*\*This number does not include the mentoring of other staff to conduct their own gatherings as we continue to embed this practice across our Agency.*

**Great Grandma shared at the end of the a gathering that she was scared of participating due to history of having her children taken from school when they were young and the oppression and hurt that she'd experienced through CFS. But that this was a different experience and she was thankful for being invited in and willing to come back again.**



# FAMILY SERVICE

## LI SERVICES DI FAMILLES

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*Our Family Service programs ReMembers that families are the experts in their own lives and are honoured to walk alongside them to increase their capacity.*

*While we are no longer under restrictions related to the COVID 19 Pandemic, we have taken what we learned throughout those years to better serve and support families. This includes the continued use of technology to bring families together virtually, and maintaining connections over distance through virtual family time.*

*With the All My Relations Framework and with the assistance of Métis Connect, we continue to be able to help children and families find and reconnect with supports in their communities and families to support them in caring for their children.*

*Relationship and connection is at the heart of the work that we are doing. The family service teams work to strengthen families' connections with each other and to their community.*

*Through conversations with families, the Family Service workers want to hear the voice of the families and whenever possible have families take responsibility for the decision making and creation of their own plans and wishes for themselves and their children.*

*This year we have continued to be honoured to be a part of and witness the many successes of families we work alongside. We have walked alongside families who were able to end their involvement with the Agency while successfully parenting their children, and we have seen children return home to parents after many years of struggles and barriers. These successes drive the ongoing work with all families along with the belief in the inherent strength of those we work alongside.*

**65% REDUCTION IN  
APPREHENSIONS  
OVER THE PAST SIX  
(6) YEARS**

# MÉTIS CART

## CHIM DE RISPONSE D'ADDICTION COMMUNAUTAIRE

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*Métis Child, Family and Community Services recognizes that intergenerational trauma impacts parenting. Parents who have experienced trauma often struggle with substance mis-use and mental wellbeing. As the majority of referrals MCFCS receives center around parents not being able to safely parent due to these struggles, the CART program offers relationship focused and trauma informed wrap around services to the families.*

*This MCFCS CART program is an early intervention program for approximately thirty (30) families at any given time. The program pairs a Family Services Worker with a Peer Mentor (a person who has lived mental health or addiction experience) to work collaboratively with with a counselor (who is a member of the CART team) and with the family towards providing supports, treatment and services.*

## ALL CHILDREN INVOLVED WITH THE CART TEAM REMAINED AT HOME WITH FAMILY.

# ONGOING CARE

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*As the Agency continues to evolve with the development of All My Relations perspective, our Ongoing Care program walks alongside children who are being cared for by people other than their parents.*

*Staff are committed to developing relationships with families to explore opportunities where the responsibility of care can be shifted back to the family.*

# QUALITY ASSURANCE

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*The focus of the QA staff is on ensuring the child welfare services provided meets or exceeds standards combined with high service quality. QA activities include evaluating the strategic and operational activities focused on accountability and quality improvement.*

*Activities can include: reporting on service performance indicators, quantitative and qualitative audits, file reviews, conducting reviews of programs.*

# FAMILY SUPPORT

## SUPPORT POUR LA FAMILLE

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*The goal of the family support program is to walk alongside families to build connection and strengthen attachments between children and their family. In order to reach this goal, our program provides supported family time for children and their families who cannot live together at this time for a variety of reasons. We provide parent education through one to one supports with parents as well as the Circle of Security parenting program. We also work with families to connect them with community supports in order to ensure once we are no longer needed they will continue to receive the resources that they need.*

**IN THE PAST YEAR WE  
HAVE SUPPORTED  
APPROXIMATELY 178  
FAMILY VISITS PER  
MONTH IN OUR TWO  
OFFICES AND MANY MORE  
IN THE COMMUNITY AND  
FAMILY HOMES.**







# REMEMBER

**AS CHILD WELFARE WORKERS, WE ARE ON OUR OWN JOURNEY OF RECONCILIATION. ONE OF THE STEPS THAT AGENCY STAFF AND COLLEAGUES CAN TAKE IS BEING MINDFUL OF THE LANGUAGE USED WHEN SPEAKING AND WRITING ABOUT THE FAMILIES WE WORK ALONGSIDE.**

# REMEMBERING LANGUAGE

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*Our Agency has put together a list of suggested shifts we can make in our language. We ReMember that the words that we use have power to impact families, either positively or negatively. Over the past year we have noticed that more and more staff have shifted to speaking and writing in a more person centered and respectful manner. Our goal is to write and speak as though the person was standing beside you.*



# 2SLGBTQQIA+ GUIDING CIRCLE

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*In order to promote more positive outcomes for 2S and LGBTQQIA+ youth in care, the 2SLGBTQQIA+ Guiding Circle was created. Membership consists of Agency representatives from all facets of the organization, including staff from the 2SLGBTQQIA+ community and allies, with the purpose of*

*advancing organizational training, community partnerships, and youth focused services. Since the inception of the Guiding Circle, well over 100 staff members have attended training with the rest to attend in the coming year.*

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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**COME WITH AN OPEN MIND,  
HEART, AND SPIRIT**

**RECOGNIZE DIVERSITY ENTHUSIASM**

**HONOUR** A SPACE TO "COME IN"  
NOT "COME OUT"

**MAKE NO ASSUMPTIONS SUSPEND  
RESPECT - FOR YOURSELF AND JUDGEMENT  
OTHERS CONFIDENTIALITY**

**CONSIDERATION FOR YOURSELF  
AND OTHERS**



# ALL MY RELATIONS

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*In an effort to ReMember 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 through our contract with the Family Finding and Family Seeing model authors, Kevin Campbell and Elizabeth Wendel.*

*Kevin and Elizabeth provide staff with intensive training & practice sessions and ongoing coaching in the way of being with families. The training began in May 2021 and will continue until early 2024.*

**IN THIS PAST YEAR, WE'VE CONTINUED TO TRAIN OVER 100 STAFF MEMBERS IN THIS MODEL, WITH MANY OF THE PARTICIPANTS TAKING THE TRAINING MORE THAN ONCE IN ORDER TO ADVANCE THEIR PRACTICE.**

# FAMILY ENHANCEMENT

## L'AIDE POUR FAMILLES

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*The MCFCS Family Enhancement team continues to walk alongside families who come to the attention of the agency as they may be struggling to parent their children. The team connects with the family and explores what may work best for the family to help them heal and work through their struggles as their children remain at home. The FE team is trauma sensitive and recognizes that all families have strengths, wisdom and natural support networks.*

*This year, the Family Enhancement team has been in the position of supporting families where more critical safety issues are present which has meant that more children have had to be cared for out of home for a period of time. Most of these children are being cared for by kin caregivers as the team continues to walk alongside the family on their healing journey.*

# MÉTIS SPIRIT PROGRAM

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*The Métis Spirit Program is a unique funding partnership between the Agency and the MMF. The Métis Spirit Worker engages with youth between the ages of 18 to 25. Youth can find themselves struggling when they realize they are having difficulty navigating life and systems on their own. Although the Métis Spirit Worker is limited in their ability to help financially, they are there to assist the young adults to receive ongoing support, advocacy, and connections to community resources. The Métis Spirit Workers helps the young adult identify their goals and assists them in achieving them.*

*Even those young adults that received assistance from the Agency until the age of 21 may still require supports and advocacy. Those youth would still be eligible for support from the Métis Spirit Worker for four more years.*

*We are thankful with our partnership with Métis Education and Training (MET) to help fund two (2) more positions. One (1) is dedicated to work with those young adults with disabilities.*

**95 YOUNG ADULTS  
ACCESSED THE MÉTIS  
SPIRIT PROGRAM IN  
THE PAST YEAR.**

# YOUTH CELEBRATION

## CELEBRATION DI JEUNES

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*The Youth and Young Adults Team is responsible for one of the agency's most important events - the Age of Majority Celebration. Each celebration offers youth the opportunity to bring together family of all types, friends and people who have supported them on their journey. No one leaves the celebration without being touched by the experiences of these young people and being struck by the closeness of the relationships that they share with family and supports alike. Each youth honoured receives a gift which includes a candle, a Métis sash, related write-up, a lanyard, customized Infinity hoodie as well as a \$100 gift card. We also give information on our Métis Spirit Programs so they know they are not alone and can come back if they need a helping hand.*

**49 YOUTH WERE CELEBRATED AT  
OUR 40TH YOUTH CELEBRATION.**





# INFINITY RESOURCES

PROGRAMME D'ENFANTS PI LI JEUNES

## KINSHIP CARE SOINS D'PARENTII

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*Kinship care is a living arrangement in which live full-time with a relative or someone from their community when they cannot reside with their parents.*

*Kinship care is focused on minimizing trauma to children and parents while enhancing the existing skills and connections within the family. Strong families raise strong children. And as our first guiding principles states, "Métis families and communities are the cornerstone of the Métis Nation."*

*The kinship care program offers support, training, advocacy and resources to approximately 300 kinship homes. Our kinship care program is able to utilize the valuable wisdom and knowledge that a family possesses.*

**MÉTIS CONNECT HAS BEEN AN  
INVALUABLE TOOL TO FIND THOSE  
FAMILY MEMBERS THAT ARE ABLE TO  
BECOME KINSHIP CAREGIVERS.**

# FOSTER CARE AND SPECIALIZED FOSTER CARE PROGRAM

## FOSTER CARE ET PROGRAMME DE FOSTER CARE SPECIALISII

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While our emphasis is on keeping children within their families or networks, there is an ongoing need for general and specialized caregivers, especially Métis caregivers. Far too many of our Métis children are being raised outside of their own family and culture.

The General Foster Care and Specialized Foster Care programs are responsible for the recruitment, screening, training, licensing and ongoing support of foster parents who are providing care to children of all ages, with a variety of needs. The General Foster Care Program was able to add much needed emergency. We continue to recruit for emergency foster homes, short and long term homes. For youth needing highly skilled specialized caregivers to support them, the Specialized Foster Care Program provides customized homes selected for and designed around a child or youth's particular needs. These homes receive enhanced support and training from highly experienced staff.

## LIFE PROGRAM PROGRAMME DE VIE

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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 mentor who acts as a role model, support, advocate, guide and mentor for the parent(s) in order to promote the health and well-being of all family members. The family ideally resides in the LIFE home for eight (8) months or longer if needed. The LIFE mentor coach the parents toward increased parenting and life skills, as well as ensuring the safety and well-being of children in the program.

# GROUP CARE RESOURCES

RESSOURCES DE SOINS D'GROUPE

## RAILS

SVAAR - SERVICES DE VIE AUTONOME  
POUR LI ADOLESCENTS DE ROSEDALE

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*Rosedale Adolescent Inter-dependent Living Services (RAILS) is a seven (7) unit/nine (9) 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.*

*Youth have been participating in the Métis in Motion workshop series provided by our Infinity Youth and Young Adult Program staff. When a youth or young adult leaves RAILS, they are able to receive outreach from staff for up to three (3) months as they move on their own to independent living.*



# EAGLES NEST AND GLADYS COOK

## LA MAISON DE NIQUE D'EAGLE ET GLADYS COOK

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*Gladys Cook House and Eagles Nest are our Agency-operated short and long-term placement resources. The staff have been busy building relationships and giving the youth a feeling of stability and commitment. If a youth comes to live in one of our homes during the school year, staff drive them to their school, so that they experience one less change in their lives and keep them connected to their teachers, friends and community. Our Youth Care Workers offer cultural and recreational opportunities such as going to community centres, YMCA, fishing, MCFCFS programming and Cultural Camp to name a few.*

*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. The staff make every effort to support family visits and involve family members with goal setting or making plans. The pandemic created many challenges for the youth over the past year having to transition to virtual family contact and remote learning. They adjusted well and showed such maturity, understanding and responsibility during an uncertain time. Staff provided any necessary equipment or supplies to maintain family connections, provided assistance with school work and enhanced engagement to minimize the impact on the youth as we all adjusted to a new normal.*

**WE ARE HAPPY TO ANNOUNCE A NEW HOME HAS BEEN FOUND FOR GLADYS COOK HOUSE WITH THE HELP OF THE MMF HOUSING DEPARTMENT. RENOVATIONS ARE COMPLETE AND IN THE MIDST OF THE PROVINCIAL LICENSING AND THE CITY FOR A CHANGE TO OUR OCCUPANCY CLASSIFICATION. WE WILL BE UP AND RUNNING IN THE SPRING OF 2023.**

A photograph of a man and a young boy fishing by a river. The man, on the left, is partially visible in profile, wearing a dark jacket. The boy, in the center, is smiling broadly and holding a fishing rod. The background shows a river with a wire mesh trap and some vegetation. The word "REMEMBER" is overlaid in large white letters at the top right.

# REMEMBER

**"...THE ADULT YOUTH WAS INVALUABLE IN THIS NETWORK AND OFTEN THE VOICE OF HER SIBLINGS DESPITE NOT KNOWING THEM. SHE POWERFULLY STATED "WE DIDN'T CHOOSE TO BE IN CARE AND WE DIDN'T CHOOSE TO NOT BE TOGETHER. WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO KNOW EACH OTHER". SHE WAS A WONDERFUL SPOKESPERSON FOR HER FAMILY WHILE ALSO HONOURING THE RELATIONSHIPS OF THE CAREGIVERS TO HER SIBLINGS. SHE ACKNOWLEDGED LOVING AND CARING ABOUT HER OWN LONG TERM CAREGIVER BUT ALSO THAT SHE HAD SPACE IN HER LIFE FOR MORE FAMILY AND MORE LOVE."**

# REMEMBERING CULTURE

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*"We must cherish our inheritance. We must preserve our nationality for the youth of our future. The story should be written down to pass on."*

*-Louis Riel*



# INFINITY CHILD, YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS PROGRAMS

## PROGRAMME D'ENFANTS PI LI JEUNES

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*This year a new name was needed to properly reflect the ages we work with; now known as the Infinity Child, Youth and Young Adult Programs department and have also added another supervisor position to this very busy team. With that addition, the teams are separated to be able to focus on age-appropriate skills development. The Children and Youth Supervisor runs the Circle of Life programs, while the Youth and Young Adults Supervisor oversees the Skills for Life and Métis Spirit programs. All the programs provide one-to-one supports and group activities throughout the entire year.*

*They work alongside children and youth of all ages focusing on health, culture and personal development. Additionally, the Child, Youth and Young Adult Team marks the occasion of all the different holidays by preparing special events with food and activities for all to come together. Although there are now technically two(2) teams, they all still work very closely which is a great strength of the agency.*

## CULTURAL CRAFT NIGHT LI CRAFTS CULTUREL

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*The Infinity Circle of Life and Skills for Life teams work together to provide opportunities to learn crafting weekly at the McGregor location. There is always an educational and cultural component to each session. Children and youth make cultural crafts, learn lessons of the sash, learn Michif words and phrases and share a meal. They have worked on beading projects – earrings, key chains, moccasins and mitts. They enjoy painting rocks, canvases and talking sticks; as well as making drums and dream catchers. Our program room holds many examples from our talented artists.*

# SPIRIT HELPERS COMMITTEE

## COMITII D'AIDE POUR LI ESPRITS

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*The Spirit Helpers Committee is made up of staff members from different areas within the Agency. With the support of Children, Youth and Young Adults Programming Staff, the committee has organized many different cultural events from sweat lodges to medicine picking which gives everyone the opportunity to learn about medicines and ceremony for those interested in exploring their culture. We continue to offer "Wellness Workshops" for staff to gather and learn cultural crafts, cooking and teachings they can apply in their service delivery to our youth and families.*

*The Agency works very hard to ensure that the culture of our children is considered in every family plan. The cultural planning bundle continues to be used as a primary focus for our Cultural Worker who is working with children placed in non-culturally appropriate homes.*

## NATIONAL DAY FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

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*On September 29, 2022, the Agency's Spirit Helpers Committee held a small ceremony for our staff to honour the survivors of the Indian Residential Schools as well as to remember the children who never made it home. As part of our ceremony, we walked over to the Assiniboine River, offered tobacco and prayers and were gifted with a song from our Cultural Worker, Wanda Ferland-McKenzie.*



# LITTLE BEARS

## LI P'TI OURS

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*Little Bears is group programming provided bi-weekly for children and youth receiving supports from the Circle of Life program. This group has participated in Métis games, played the spoons, learned to jig and learned about Métis history.*

*A meal is prepared at each gathering which helps the kids focus and enjoy the planned activity. There is always a cultural component related to Métis history and culture. This time together as a group allows them to form relationships and bonds that are not only supportive but trusting. Relationship building creates stability and a feeling of belonging that is critical in other areas of their lives.*

## CIRCLE OF SECURITY

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*The Circle of Security Program is an attachment based program that focuses on how parents can connect with their children in order to increase their sense of safety and security. We were able to offer this program twice in the past year and had 20 parents participate in the program.*

## CHRISTMAS HAMPERS

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*In partnership with the MMF, the family support program, shops and distributes hampers at Christmas time. This year 45 families we served with hampers, which include all that is needed for a wonderful Christmas dinner and presents for all the children in the home. We would like to thank the MMF for providing funding to make these hampers possible.*

# CULTURAL CAMP

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In July and August, there is a week-long cultural camp which gives up to 15 children each week an opportunity to learn about their Métis history and culture, as well as participate in fun activities. This is a highlight of the year for both the children and staff involved. Some sites they have visited include Seven Oaks House, the St. James Museum, Lower Fort Garry and The Forks.

They have included activities such as medicine picking, enjoying Métis games, participating in ceremonies, listening to teachings and getting to sample traditional Métis food. Cultural Camp is planned and executed by the Spirit Helpers Committee, Métis Spirit Program and Children and Youth Program Staff.

## FIDDLING AND JIGGING GROUPS

### LI VIOLON ET LA JIG

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Through funding provided from the MMF, the agency has been able to offer fiddling and jigging lessons to children involved with the Agency. The Agency owns fiddles which up to 10 children and youth can use while attending virtual or in-person lessons on Thursday evenings. Jigging lessons were also adapted during Covid-19 to a virtual platform. Although we have moved to in-person, we have kept the virtual learning so no matter where you live, children aged five (5) to 12 years old can learn these staples of the Métis Culture.





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"As our practice has shifted to be more in line with our Mission, Vision, and Guiding Principles using learning from All My Relations and focusing on family decision-making it is much easier to feel good about the work we are doing with families. The weight of the difficult decisions is shared amongst a larger group of people and many of those people have a stronger understanding of the family dynamics, what will and won't work, and ultimately they are invested in a positive outcome. It feels good that when children aren't able to be with their parents, they're leaving Agency care and finding long-term homes with kin. It also feels good to build these amazing collaborative relationships with families where it genuinely feels like we're walking alongside them. I hear so often from folks that they feel supported, especially those who have been isolated from family or community. They know we're in their corner, often when others haven't been."

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**"WE GET INTO THIS TYPE OF WORK  
BECAUSE WE TRULY WANT TO HELP  
PEOPLE AND AFTER 10 YEARS OF  
PRACTICE - IT FEELS MORE AND  
MORE LIKE WE'RE DOING THE  
WORK WE ALL HOPED TO."**

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A young child with dark hair, wearing a bright yellow raincoat with colorful floral cuffs, is captured in a joyful moment. The child's arms are raised high, and they are surrounded by a flurry of vibrant autumn leaves in shades of red, orange, and yellow. The background is a soft, out-of-focus sky. A solid blue triangle is positioned in the top right corner of the image.

**REPORT**

MÉTIS CHILD, FAMILY AND  
COMMUNITY SERVICES

**2022-2023  
ANNUAL  
REPORT**