

2025

MINWAASHIN LODGE

Annual Report

Respecting Women Is Our Culture



Minwaashin Honours our Founders

GRANDMOTHER LILLIAN PITAWANAKWA IS THE FOUNDING ELDER OF MINWAASHIN LODGE

We do our work to honour all Indigenous women and to always honour our founding Elder, Lillian Pitawanakwat.

From the beginning, Grandmother tirelessly traveled to Minwaashin Lodge, Ottawa to see how we were progressing. Lillian believed in us! She believed in the work we were doing.

She visited to bring guidance, healing, and support to our fledgling organization and to the small group of staff, who in the beginning, for the most part, were searching for their own identity and culture. Lillian prayed for us and did many pipe ceremonies so that the Creator would help us rebuild our strength.



Minwaashin Honours our Founders

GRANDMOTHER IRENE COMPTON IS THE CO-FOUNDER OF MINWAASHIN LODGE

For more than 30 years, Grandmother Irene has shown an unwavering dedication to empowering Indigenous women affected by violence and inter-generational trauma.

Irene is Saulteaux, originally from the Keeseekoose First Nation in Saskatchewan and is a first generation survivor of residential school. The power of Irene Compton (Thunderbird Lady in the Sky) came to us from the west as Creator gave her the bundle of co-founding Minwaashin. Through Irene's strong cultural beliefs, she has managed to maintain a lasting presence in the community and at the Lodge. Irene stands as a witness and keeper of the stories of Minwaashin Lodge, and is the Director of Culture and Employment programs.



Honouring Karen Green

**"I WANT TO DO SOMETHING WORTH
DOING, I WANT TO BE SOMEONE WORTH
KNOWING"**



We want to honour Karen Green; our former Board President, community leader, and friend. From Tyendinaga First Nation, Karen championed the rights of Indigenous people, especially women and children, and made an immeasurable impact on our community. A lawyer by profession, Karen was part of many community organizations, most recently as the Relationship Coordinator with the Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition. Karen was also part of large national movements, working for the Department of Justice, Native Women's Association, and was a key writer and advisor for the women's chapter of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples Report. She held director positions on a number of boards beyond Minwaashin, including CHEO, and Makonsag. Karen was a shining example of Indigenous leadership and dedication. Her legacy lives on through the countless lives she touched and her decades of work.

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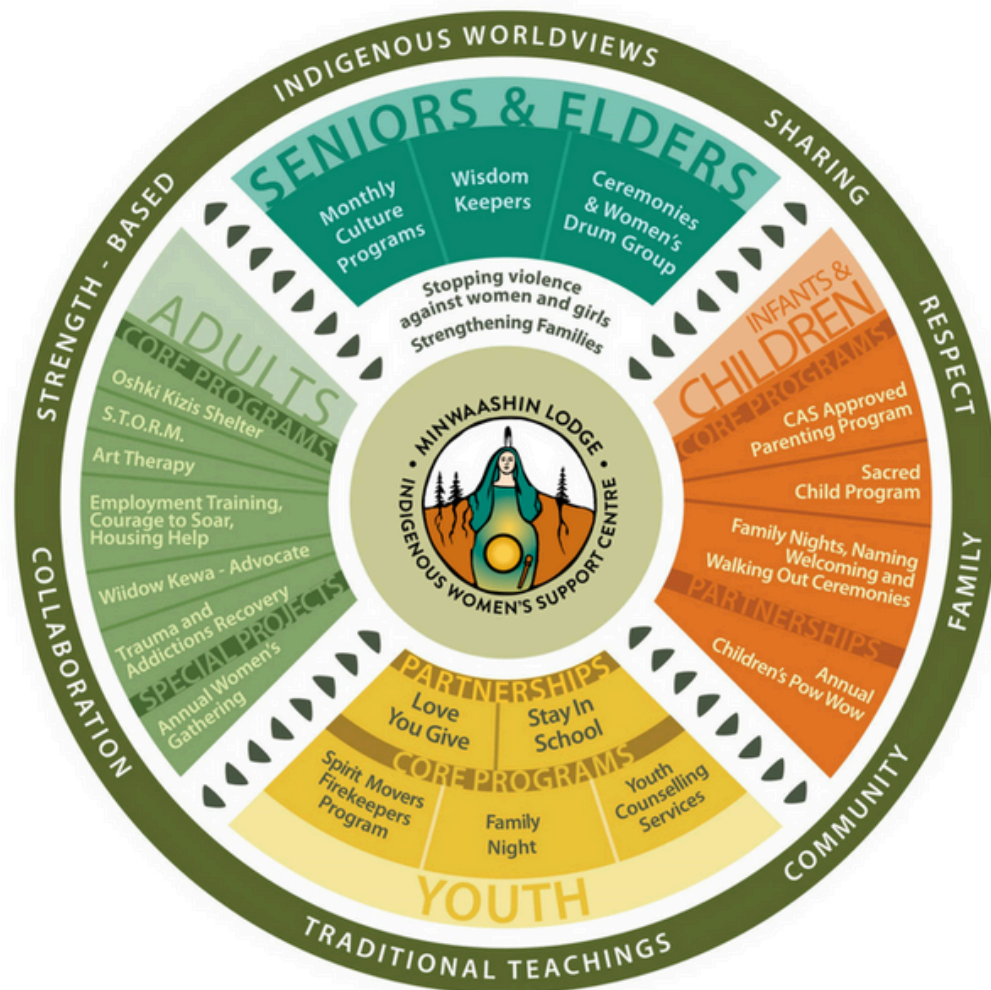
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Our Service Model



MINWAASHIN LODGE: LIFE-CYCLE SERVICE MODEL

Respecting women is our culture



Our Board and Management

Board of Directors

Velvet Migwans
President

Jo McCutcheon
Vice President

Rylee Godin
Director

Irene Goodwin
Director

**Lane
Bourbonniere**
Treasurer

Katelin Peltier
Director

Management

Mary Daoust
Executive Director

Frances Daly
Director, Oshki Kizis

**Angela Martincich-
Jefferies**
Director, Counselling

Irene Compton
Director,
Employment and
Culture Programs

Florence Hiltz
Director, Children,
Youth, and Family
Programs



Minwaashin Staff

Kate Holden
Paulette John
Castille Troy
Ida Kakekagumick
Jenna Spagnoli
Marleny Velit
Sabrina Gideon
Frankie Pasap
Rose Foley
Delana Land
Roxanne Duhaime
Carrie Square
Kateri Miles
Monica Slauenwhite-
Stevens
Ania Paluch
Tasha Nelms

Elaine Kicknosway
Storm Burgoyne
Agnes Kistabish
Eunice DeContie
Georgia Minnie
Sequoyah Thompson
Ashley Lawrenson
Emily McMahon
Cheyenne Eddy
Kecia Monague
Ember Boshaw
Illen Abraham
Robin Baeza
Alexa Irwin
Angelique Chenier
Nibi Hiltz-Andre

Rosie Marhin
Andrea Ledoux
Stephanie Anderson
Sunshine Roundpoint
Nicole Edwards
Alayna Sylvester
Karen Polson
Diane Gordon
Joy Benjamin
Valerie Tully
Gillian Walsh
Jasmin Paynter
Annie Kingston-Miller
Atheena (Shyne)
Cote-Ratt
Kassidy Dinelle
Diane Wolfe



Mission and Vision

We envision a world where all of creation, the earth, the air, the waters, animals and people are safe, honoured and respected; where children and elders are valued; where culture and diversity are celebrated.



FUNDERS

Public Health Agency of Canada
Kagita Mikam
Bell Let's Talk
Canadian Heritage Canada
Canadian Red Cross
Caring and Sharing Exchange
Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres
The City of Ottawa
Ontario Council of Arts
Childrens Aid Society of Ottawa
Ottawa Community Foundation
The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
Ministry of Leisure, Sports and Entertainment
Ministry of Attorney General
Inspirit Foundation
United Way of Eastern Ontario
Accenture Inc.
Government of Ontario
Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA)
Indigenous Services Canada
Service Canada
Sisters of St. Joseph Canada
Ontario Trillium Foundation
Laidlaw Foundation: Indigenous Youth and Community Futures Fund
(IYCFF)
Ecclesiastical Insurance Foundation

President's Report

This past fiscal year has been a year of celebration, growth and loss.

The Indigenous and non-Indigenous community suffered a devastating loss with the passing of Karen Green in January 2025. Minwaashin had a long-standing relationship with Karen, not only as our first Board President, but as a confidant, friend, ally, and advocate. All will miss her strong leadership skills and compassionate heart.

First in the National capital! A long-standing critical gap for Inuit women and children fleeing violence has been fulfilled. Thanks to the Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition (OAC) member organizations, Minwaashin's role as co-lead and the commitment from funders, Ottawa will have the first Inuit VAW shelter in place by December 2026. The vision came from community and will continue to involve community throughout the project. What a success story!

The Family Healing Lodge takes on its own journey. Minwaashin in partnership with the Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition (OAC) is reconsidering new options for land through the city. The relationships created through the Inuit shelter project will be an asset for when we are ready to start building our healing lodge. This brings great comfort in knowing the competency and cultural perspective is a guarantee!

The demand for services doubled such as; the Annual Children's Christmas Giveaway which reached 568 family members in need. This is an increase from 300 in the previous year. There was a huge influx in community partners and service volunteers who were eager to be involved with wrapping and delivering Christmas gifts. Chi-Miigwetch to 'The Mission' Chef Ric and his team for delivering 600 prepackaged turkey dinners and desserts to top off the Christmas hampers. This ongoing partnership with "The Mission" has expanded to supporting our emergency shelter-Oshki Kizis residents with prepared meals. Minwaashin is incredibly grateful to everyone involved!



Congratulations to both our co-founder Grandmother Irene Compton and our Executive Director, Mary Daoust who were honoured and celebrated for all their community heart work over the years. Each received the King Charles 111-Coronation Medal. Thank you to the United Way and the Ontario Native Women's Organization for the nominations. Well deserved ladies!

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank the Executive Director, Mary Daoust, Management and staff for all the demanding work you do every day. The growth of the lodge over time only speaks to the funders/donors who are committed in growing and expanding cultural specific services and programs to the Indigenous community. We always go the extra mile!

Chi-Meegwetch,

Velvet Migwans
Board President

Executive Director's Report

The work behind the scenes has been a whirlwind of learning, strategizing, rejoicing and feeling proud! This is the Indigenous way.

Truly a warrior's heart! It has been a bittersweet journey this past year with a balance of growth and celebrating the life of a loved colleague and friend. "I want to do something worth doing, I want to be someone worth knowing." (Karen Green – Gr.8). Karen originated our core message "Respecting Women is our Culture." She was also Minwaashin's first Board President since our inception. Karen carried a silent and humble leadership quality that opened doors across Canada. Her heart was driven by the work necessary in addressing and making systemic changes that would benefit Indigenous peoples across Turtle Island.

The added pressures of nonexistent affordable housing, food insecurity, rising food costs and lack of culturally relevant mental health supports, continues to rise with no relief in sight. Minwaashin feels the pressure at ground level with all our families being impacted repeatedly. Fortunately, some of our longer existing relationships with funders are moving away from annual renewals. Donations continue to rise due to reaching a wider networking community. However, core funding is the key to sustaining programs and services.



Our dream project - The Family Healing Lodge journey rolls forward. Our women, moms and children will be able to access culturally specific trauma informed healing when dealing with substance use, historical trauma and familial breakdown caused by the effects of Intergenerational trauma. Under the Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition (OAC) lead and Minwaashin, our Business Plan was submitted to the National Indigenous Collaborative Housing Inc. (NICH) for 10 million dollars in February 2025 to cover capital costs. A pre-development application will be submitted to the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). We still need to secure monies for the operational costs, however, the city had graciously offered a list of potential vacant lots to the OAC and Minwaashin Lodge for consideration. So grateful for all the movers and shakers behind the scenes who are working on this becoming a reality! Stay tuned

Proud to share! Minwaashin's shelter experience was vital in the early days of being co-lead while working with the OAC to bring the first ever Inuit Violence Against Women's shelter to a reality. The need for an Inuit specific shelter in Ontario is groundbreaking! The 30-bed family shelter will be completed in December 2026.

I am proud to have received the King Charles 111 Coronation Medal along with Co-founder Grandmother Irene Compton for our contributions and dedication to the Indigenous community. Nominations were received from the United Way and the Ontario Native Women's Association.

The Movers & Shakers: The Board of Directors are true warriors at the helm; they are an amazing group of women who believe in our vision whole heartedly and who offer their precious time to support management/staff on all levels. Minwaashin appreciates all the extra miles travelled by management and their teams who continue to step up repeatedly with resiliency and dedication in serving our community.

Much gratitude for the continued understanding and financial support received from all our funders, caring donors who give from the heart, community partners, sister organizations and numerous kind and willing volunteers who want to make a difference in times of re-con-cil-i-ACTION. The time to act is NOW.

Chi-Miigwetch,
Mary Daoust
Executive Director

The Sacred Child Program

3

clothing drives

50

average number of Family Dinner
Night attendees

500

individuals served at Winter Solstice
Giveaway

This past year has been an incredible journey of growth, connection, and commitment to our families and the broader community. The Sacred Child Program continues to play an essential role within Minwaashin Lodge's circle of care, working with numerous community partners to empower parents and caregivers through culture and support on a wide range of topics, including nutrition, family violence, child development, and parenting skills.

Sacred Child Programming Highlights

Our programming has expanded significantly to meet the evolving needs of the families we serve. Weekly Tuesday Family Nights have seen a consistent increase in attendance, averaging around 50 guests each week. These evenings offer more than just a healthy, delicious meal—they serve as an opportunity to strengthen community ties and address real challenges such as food insecurity. In response to this, we introduced school snack bags, allowing parents to pick up a bag of nutritious snacks weekly to help support their children during the school days.



The Food Bank continues to provide essential relief to families, although availability has been reduced due to rising demand. Food scarcity remains a critical concern, and we continue reaching out to donors and community partners to replenish our resources and sustain this vital support.

We proudly hosted three highly successful clothing events at Minwaashin this year. Through a generous outpouring of community donations, we provided an abundance of gently used clothing and household items to our clients—supporting children returning to school, young adults entering the workforce, and families in need of everyday essentials.

We are deeply grateful for our growing community partnerships across the Ottawa region, which have enabled us to host not only a vibrant women's gathering but also a full-family event just 40 minutes from Minwaashin. These gatherings have enriched connections—not only between Minwaashin staff and clients, but among clients themselves—fostering a sense of belonging, support, and shared healing.

One of our most heartwarming events of the year was the Winter Solstice Giveaway, where we had the privilege of serving over 500 individuals with gifts and resources to support their households during the holiday season.

None of this would be possible without the incredible generosity of our donors, sponsors, and volunteers—people who step in to make a difference in ways both big and small. And how could we not recognize two incredible individuals who contribute to Minwaashin in such meaningful ways?

We are immensely thankful for the donation of our much-needed, and now much-loved, storage shed. The labor and materials were donated by Bruce Nichol who—alongside his team—came in and assembled the shed in a location best suited to our needs. This thoughtful contribution has helped minimize overcrowding in our storage areas and has made a big difference in how we organize and access our resources. Miigwech!

And much thanks, and a shout out to Barb who is an amazing volunteer.

As we reflect on the many ways our work has been uplifted this year, we also want to take a moment to acknowledge the incredible network of donors, sponsors, and community partners who continue to walk alongside us. Your contributions—whether through time, resources, or financial support—have helped shape each program, event, and initiative shared here.

Below is a list of the many hearts and hands that have helped us carry this work forward.
Chi-miigwech to each of you.

Partnerships include

Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition	Kitigan Zibi Police
John Howard Society	Ottawa Public Health
Innuuqatigiit	National Arts Center
Tungasuuvingat	Lionheart
ONWA – Ontario Native Women’s Association	Salvation Army Bethany Hope Center
Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health	Ottawa Public Health Nurse
Makonsag Aboriginal Head Start	Ottawa Food Bank
Odawa Native Friendship Centre	City of Ottawa
Ottawa Public Library	CAMH – Shkawbe Makwa Training
IEYC – Indigenous Early Years Circle	Children’s Aid Society of Ottawa
Aunties On The Road	Ottawa Police Services
Rideau Hill Camp	RCMP - Royal Canadian Mounted Police
Akwesasne Mohawk Police	Chef Ric’s
Gatineau Police	Knox United Church

We want to acknowledge our funders – Public Health Agency of Canada for their continued support of Sacred Child Team and Minwaashin as a whole.

Giiwitaashkode Youth Program (Come Sit by the Fire)



The Giiwitaashkode Youth Program (Come Sit by the Fire) is funded by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS). Giiwitaashkode is for youth between the ages of sixteen and twenty-nine years. We use a holistic well-being approach to strengthen and inform self-identity, decrease the risk factors that contribute to violence and victimization, including human-trafficking, and increase protective factors to build strengths, skills and resiliency in Indigenous youth and their families with a safe cultural approach.

This program is not limited to group and community work. We also provide personal one-on-one support for any basic needs, emotional needs, mental health referrals, crisis support, advocacy, and mentorship. These are all necessities for the empowerment of the women we work with.

The goal for this program is to build a culturally safe space for young women at Minwaashin Lodge. Within Giiwitaashkode, we will continue to come together and share our culture to grow as strong Indigenous youth.

Highlights: Craft making, self-care teachings, in school circles, safety planning, beading, and sharing meals. Spirit names were given and participated in family camp. Our Family nights consists of our programming serving over 20 young adults each week.

Miigwetch to our funder for making this program possible!





Zaagigi

Zaagigi was born October 17th, 2024, to create a safe cultural space for Indigenous 2SLBTQIA+ youth. With a focus on inclusion and mental health awareness, Zaagigi has been a vital service for this vulnerable demographic.

We empower and elevate the voices of our youth, giving them the chance to connect to their culture and find their power. We meet once a week, and we provide connection and support through Discord.

At community gatherings we were in contact with over 300 people who were able to reach out to, during the Indigenous Early Years Circle Back to School event as well as the Odawa Powwow.

Zaagigi will continue to hold space and a safe circle for our queer youth and allies. Programming included:

- Sacred medicine teachings/Medicine wheel teachings
- Monthly medicine walks
- Gender-neutral traditional teachings
- Powwow 101
- Sacred fires
- Sweat lodge ceremony
- Berry fast teachings for trans femme and those who didn't have the opportunity.
- Eagle staff creation and ceremony to represent all Indigenous 2SLGBTQIA+ youth in Powwow
- Deer hide rattles
- Medicine bags
- Spirit naming ceremony

We look forward to more amazing on the land programming!

We would like to extend our gratitude to Justice Canada, TELUS, and the Ottawa Community Foundation for their generous support



Family Systems Navigator Program

Our Family Systems Navigator continues to be such an important role here at Minwaashin. This position is all about walking alongside families, offering support and guidance as they navigate some of the more complicated systems—whether that’s around mental wellness, housing, social services, or even the justice system. The goal is always to help clients feel empowered, supported, and capable of moving forward with confidence and independence.

The work is deeply personal. From helping with birth certificate applications to Jordan’s Principle requests, housing forms, or just showing up to support someone at an appointment, the Navigator is there. It’s about removing barriers and creating a clear path for families to access what they need.

Some of the services provided include:

- Supporting families to access financial resources
- Helping with paperwork, scheduling, and following up on appointments
- Connecting clients with the right supports and community resources
- Helping improve communication with child welfare and other community workers
- Assist with birth/status/medical/social housing applications and forms when required

During this past year, the Family Systems Navigator conducted 19 intakes, each one marking the beginning of a meaningful relationship with a family or individual seeking support. These clients are not simply numbers—they are mothers, and children, and caregivers navigating complex systems. The Navigator walks with them, step by step, offering encouragement and advocacy as they face barriers. Whether it’s accompanying someone to a difficult meeting or following up on a housing application, a Jordan’s Principle application, this role is about presence, persistence, and genuine care.

We know how overwhelming the system can feel, especially when you’re already carrying so much. That’s why this role exists—to help lighten the load, to remind families they don’t have to walk alone, and to ensure that no one is left behind.

Spirit Movers & Fire Keepers Youth Program

Is a First Nations, Inuit and Métis focused program for boys and girls aged 7-11 years old and youth 12-18 years. Activities are based on traditional cultural teachings. The youth gain knowledge of their Indigenous roots with age-appropriate discussions and activities. The core program is to promote and maintain healthy lifestyles, friendships and to offer Indigenous teachings and ceremonies.



This past year, we've continued to provide cultural support and advocacy in 7 local schools with the Ottawa Carleton District School Board, by offering cultural activities, and creating conversation by providing safe and inclusive sharing circles. The youth have been able to learn about traditional teachings in a safe, supportive setting and have been able to incorporate those teachings into their lives.

In addition to supporting children and youth in schools, we have begun a new partnership with Ayabeh Skills Academy by providing an additional cultural component to their existing program. Ayabeh provides education to youth from neighboring reserves with an emphasis on sports

We look forward to creating more space for fun, friendship, learning culture and taking care of each other with continued support in our communities, schools and at home at Minwaashin Lodge

Key events



Weekly drop-in program

The program offers cultural activities and crafts, healthy snacks and meals, life skills, and promotes healthy relationships with family and peers. We have had the opportunity to have Elders visit, share their stories and ceremony, such as a naming ceremony. It was a very grounding experience for the youth.



Visited local Pow wows

We visited some local pow wows, Assembly of 7 Generations (A7G) and Odawa Native Friendship Centre. For some it was a first time experience; they loved it.



Field trips

Additional programming included visits to local museums, laser tag, trampoline parks and local parks and wading pools for cooling off. We were also fortunate to partner with Big Brothers Big Sisters to promote their new Thrift Store. The youth also attended workshops regarding employment readiness, employment barriers, and continuing education.



Flotilla for Friendship

The annual Flotilla for Friendship connects youth and police officers for the day by canoeing down the Rideau River. The outcome of this annual event is to continue closing the gap and building stronger relationships between Indigenous youth and police. The youth in our program love this event, they participate every year.

Counselling Services

Minwaashin Lodge - Indigenous Women's Support Centre provides a range of counselling services to First Nations, Métis and Inuit women, youth and children who are survivors of various forms of violence, many of whom are survivors or intergenerational survivors of the Indian Residential School System, the 60s Scoop and the Millennial Scoop. Our services are client-centered, trauma-informed, holistic and culturally based.

The counselling program provides a full spectrum of therapeutic services including art therapy, traditional counselling, sand tray therapy and play therapy, which support healing from sexual abuse, substance use, family breakdown, childhood trauma, mental health issues related to anxiety and depression, grief and loss, all forms of violence, anger management and sexuality and gender expression. To support Indigenous women and children, counselling is offered at our agency main location and our shelter Oshki Kizis Lodge, as well as at partner organizations within the city. Additionally, traditional healing such as sweats, fasts, circles and drumming are offered to children, youth, adults, and elders.



New Initiative: Through funding from Indigenous Services Canada, Minwaashin Lodge has expanded counselling supports to include a Land- Based Healing Counsellor. This position offers Indigenous counselling to women, children and families and provides on-the-land healing opportunities for women and their families.

Ongoing: Partnership agreements with the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) and the Ottawa Catholic School Board (OCSB) supports counselling staff to work directly with Indigenous children in the school setting. This is particularly beneficial for the children's therapy program where transportation is a barrier to accessing services, while also enabling greater collaboration among care providers and professionals in the lives of children and youth

Ongoing: Funding from the City of Ottawa and the Ontario Council for the Arts supports traditional counselling and healing for survivors of violence and abuse.

700+

First Nation, Métis and
Inuit women and families
served

6000+

hours of free one-on-one
and family counselling
and interventions

- Ongoing: Funding from the City of Ottawa's Community, Safety and Wellbeing Funding Stream was renewed for an additional year to support culturally-based child and youth counselling. Funding from the United Way of Eastern Ontario was also renewed to support culture-based harm reduction, focused substance and alcohol counselling for an additional year.
- Ongoing: The Strong Women's Support Group (Mashkawizig Ikwewag) continues to offer a supportive and non-judgemental group therapy environment for women who are living with or are in recovery from problematic alcohol or substance use. The group's curriculum blends the Indigenous Seven Grandfather Teachings with Dialectical Behaviour Therapy.
- Ongoing: In addition to one-on-one counselling services, counsellors support clients through advocacy, systems navigation, referrals, transportation, and other particular individual needs.
- Ongoing: During the Covid-19 Pandemic, Minwaashin Lodge adapted counselling services to a virtual/hybrid model, including phone and video sessions, as well as text support. We continue to offer services through both virtual and in-person offerings.
- Closing: Aunties on the Road: Indigenous Full Spectrum Doula Collective entered it's final year of core funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation's Youth Opportunities Fund. Minwaashin acts as an organizational home and mentor for the collective, which provides no cost, culturally-based, full spectrum doula services to Indigenous youth 12-29. Additional funding to support doula trainings and workshops was received from the Laidlaw Foundation and Health Canada.
- Closing: Through three year funding from Community Foundations of Ottawa, Minwaashin Lodge offers quarterly family art therapy groups. This program will be coming to an end this year. This programming helps Indigenous children and youth connect with their families through culturally-based art therapy, and to work towards healing the effects of intergenerational trauma. This program also provides families with individual family therapy sessions.

Thank you to our funders: Ministry of Children and Community Social Services (MCCSS), Indigenous Services Canada, The City of Ottawa, The Ontario Trillium Foundation, The Ontario Council for the Arts, The Laidlaw Foundation, Indigenous Youth Voices, Future Generations Fund, Community Foundation of Ottawa and the United Way of Eastern Ontario.

Culture Program

The Culture Program empowers women to seek a healthy and culturally enhanced lifestyle – Mino Bemaadziwin /the Good Life - for themselves and their families. The mandate of the program is to assist First Nations, Inuit and Métis women find, cultivate, and develop cultural leadership and traditional skills. As well, the program provides opportunities for women to participate in traditional gatherings, recreational outings, and ceremonies.

Accomplishments

This past year, Minwaashin Lodge received grants from Indigenous Reconciliation Fund and City of Ottawa, Heritage Fund.

Partnerships

Oshki Kizis Lodge received bi-weekly Culture & Wellness programming for women and children.

Women's Events Network Organizers of Ottawa provided opportunities for Indigenous women to participate in the December 6th Vigil and the Annual Take Back the Night Walk. Indigenous women demonstrated leadership, public speaking, and drumming at these annual vigils to raise awareness of the impacts of violence against all women.

159

traditional support
services

209

cultural arts &
crafts

147

healing
circles

126

traditional
ceremonies

Highlights

Programming was a hybrid mix of virtual and in person sessions. Friday's program was in person. Zoom sessions captured Elder Teachings from Grandmother Juanita from Wiikwemkoong.

Brenda McIntyre, Medicine Song Woman delivered a series of drumming sessions to teach women songs and healing sessions to soothe and heal their spirits. Many of our women appreciated the online offerings as some were isolated. We did, however, get some of these women to venture to Minwaashin to take part in the Culture Program in person.

Our land-based activities were conducted outside. Women and their children participated in summer teachings and ceremonies. Some of the highlights were Medicine Walks and Sweat Lodges, strawberry picking and sweetgrass picking.

The Culture Program facilitated the creation of traditional drums, rattles, and regalia during the summer, fall and winter months.

Visiting Elders from USA visited our lodge to give American Indian Movement history and teachings of the Cheyene specifically in Montana and their story of (The Trail of Tears) exodus to Oklahoma.



Apatisiwin

The Apatisiwin Program is a training and employment program funded by the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres (OFIFC) through an agreement with Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) and the Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ISETS). The ISET Program provides funding to Indigenous service delivery organizations that design and deliver job training services to First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban/non affiliated Indigenous people in their communities. Indigenous service delivery organizations can be found across Canada.

Objectives of the Program

Funding is distributed to eligible clients for employment and training programs. Partnerships with community colleges, local universities, private training institutes and businesses across the province provide training and employment opportunities for Ontario's urban Indigenous people. The Apatisiwin program matches eligible clients with potential employers.

Progress to Date

A total of client 13 files were processed in this fiscal year with a total of 42 interventions which included processing of training allowances, childcare, bus passes and the payment of tuition and books for training.

- Total 13 Client Files
- Total 11 Purchase Training Interventions
- Total 6 E.I. Reach Back Interventions
- Total 5 CRF Interventions
- Total 1 Entrepreneurship Intervention
- Total 5 Bus Fare Interventions
- Total 5 Training Allowance Intervention
- Total 1 Job Support & Retention Interventions
- Total 7 Courage to Soar Interventions
- Total 1 Job Start-Up

13
clients

42
interventions

The Process

The program funded 7 participants in Minwaashin Lodge's Courage to Soar program via Algonquin College. The success of the program has become a popular option for the federal government, City of Ottawa and other Indigenous agencies in the recruitment of graduates. More organizations in the greater Ottawa area are becoming aware of the program, and this ensures the entry of clients into the workforce and financial security for clients who are often single parent households. We received many clients with dependents necessitating the maximum amount give for interventions.

Intake and assessment to determine the level of skills and supports needed.

The program works in conjunction with all the violence against Indigenous women services at Minwaashin Lodge such as counselling, culturally based psycho-educational workshops, safety planning and advocacy.

The Apatisiwin Program works closely with the Courage to Soar and Employment Readiness Program to prioritize and deliver best training and career options for each woman registering with the Apatisiwin Program.

The program ensures on-going monitoring of participants in training and employment interventions.

Upon completion of training and employment interventions follow-up is done to assist in the entry into the labour market or provision of other opportunities.

Partnerships:

Algonquin College

Carleton University

Accenture INC/Faundala – Management & Consulting

Kagita Mikam

Academy of Learning

City of Ottawa

Federal Government departments such as Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)

John Howard Society

Employment Readiness Program

Courage to Soar Program

Thank you to our funder Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendships Centres

Courage to Soar

Project Design

The Courage to Soar (CTS) program is designed for survivors of domestic violence or women who are at risk of domestic violence and are ready to build economic self-sufficiency.

Highlights

The CTS program offers 13 women the opportunity to learn administrative skills for 7 months, followed by a paid placement in the federal government. The program focuses on ensuring each woman receives a range of supports that will lead to successful graduation. Eleven participants graduated in fiscal 2023-2024 year with Distinction and one with high honours from Algonquin College

Program Components

Intake and assessment identify the level of skill and support needed for each applicant. With this assessment, women are assisted to maintain their commitment by taking part in the Employment Readiness Program, individual counselling, crisis counselling, culturally based psycho-educational workshops, and other services provided by Minwaashin.

Individual training, education, and employment action plans are devised, based on cultural models such as the Medicine Wheel and Tipi Pole Teachings.

These action plans encompass the following critical components:

- Office Administration Training tuition fees and books are paid for by the CTS program.
- Training prepares graduates for entry level administrative positions.
- Work placements assist participants to enhance their skills and give exposure to a working environment.
- Tutoring, peer support and “first day at school” support is provided by graduates of the CTS program.
- Self-care, team leading and modeling, and confidence building workshops are delivered to strengthen soft skills

Benefits of the Program

The CTS program has proven to be a model program, gaining high recognition in the Indigenous community, and establishing continued support from the Ministry of the Status of Women and Ontario Works. Many applicants are referred by past graduates who have had a positive experience in the program. Graduates are proud of and use the leadership, self-esteem, and confidence they have acquired because of the CTS program. The program continues to experience an 80% success rate, with graduates going on to employment or to pursue further training in colleges and universities.

Partnership

This program would not be possible without our partners who we are very grateful to:

- Willis College (training)
- Ontario Works (employment assistant benefits and job retention support)
- Kagita Mikam (training and cost sharing)
- Congress of Aboriginal Peoples
- Job Connect (employment services)
- Apatisiwin (training and cost sharing)
- Ottawa Food Bank (emergency food)
- Human Resources Development Canada (placements)

**Thank you to our funder Thank you to our
funder Ministry of Children, Community
and Social Services
- OWSEO Investing in Women's Futures
Funding Program**



Employment Readiness Program

The Employment Readiness Program (ERP) works in tandem with the Courage to Soar and Apatsiwin program. This has strengthened ERP's capacity to deliver more effective supports and increase economic advancement for Indigenous women.

Highlights

Group Work

Through 4 cycles of Employment Readiness Program, participants received digital skills training, hidden job market, resume support, occupational skills training via a learning exchange platform. ERP also delivered two basic computer class sessions, and supported several women to start post-secondary education. The ERP held an Indigenous Entrepreneurial Workshop for First Nation, Inuit and Métis women to become small business vendors. Participants were informed how to apply and obtain small grants for Indigenous Vendors. The program also collaborated with 10 Indigenous agencies via The Ottawa Aboriginal Coalitions Job/Career Fair in November 2024. Government and private sector agencies attended, recruiting Indigenous people. In December, we held an annual Christmas Gathering inviting all ERP participants to attend with their children. They received gifts for their whole family and participated in the community feast and activities. Further, we delivered hampers and grocery cards to all ERP participants throughout the year.

Individual career counselling and support

- Microsoft Word Classes
- Entrepreneurship training and support
- College and university entrance assessment
- PLAR – Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition Assessments
- Individual coaching and mentoring for interviews.
- Pre-employment services to identify career goals, develop and implement an Employment/ Training Action Plan
- Referrals to specific occupational skills training
- Violence Against Women counseling, support and safety planning
- Support navigating systems such as Ontario Works, housing, education etc.
- Wrap around support to mitigate barriers to employment and training.



Partnerships

Accenture - has raised the profile of Minwaashin Lodge's Employment Readiness Program and increased our capacity to add more workshops and engage with professionals to assist Aboriginal women.

Kagita Mikam - has increased our capacity to provide additional services & support.

Employment Ontario, St. Lawrence College, Algonquin College, Carleton University, Ottawa University and Willis College have increased Indigenous women's participation in education and training institutions.

City Of Ottawa/Ontario Works - has reduced barriers to employment by assisting participants with tangible needs such as bus passes, food, and work wear to become employment ready.

42		14		10
women participated		jobs obtained		pursued further education

Thank you to our funder Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
- OWSEO Investing in Women's Futures Funding Program

Volunteerism

Minwaashin Lodge provides a wide range of volunteerism opportunities for community members. Volunteers are from all walks of life and work. Students, grassroots and professional women work together to make sure Minwaashin Lodge's programs and services are effortlessly delivered. Volunteers provided support in areas of event planning and delivery, care giving, clerical, fundraising activities, education, mentorship and programming support.

Volunteers assisted at various special events as follows:

·March	Community speakers at Minwaashin Lodge, International Women's Day
·March-April	Bi-weekly, food bank pick up and distribution
·March-April	Income Tax Clinic and individual returns completed for low income women
·May	Honoring Mother's Day, compiling and delivering gifts, Red Dress Day
·June	Orange T-shirt Day, Summer Solstice, and National Indigenous Day
·July	Recreational Outings for women & children – delivered gift certificates
·Aug	Annual Pride Float – assembling and participating in parade
·Sept	Take Back the Night Event, Back to School Supplies Drive
·Oct	Farmers Harvest – providing fresh vegetables for women & children
·Nov	Elimination of Violence Against Women weekly events
·Dec	Dec 06 Vigil, Annual Children's Winter Gathering
·Jan	Food Bank
·Feb	Food Bank, Spa Day Valentines

Partnerships:

University of Ottawa, Carleton University, Algonquin College and Willis College. Minwaashin Lodge hosted volunteer students from various programs of study.

Salvation Army. Minwaashin Lodge provided Indigenous-specific, options for completion of Community Service Orders.

This past year, Minwaashin Lodge provided volunteering opportunities for 84 community members. Many have served behind the scenes, helping out at busy times of the year like Christmas, Halloween and special events. Minwaashin Lodge depends on many individuals to enhance its programs and services.

If you would like to volunteer, please contact Roxanne Duhaime, 613-869-7041

Healing Our Spirits, Reclaiming Our Traditions

Healing Our Spirits, Reclaiming Our Traditions: Improving Access to Traditional Healing and Counselling for Community Members Impacted by missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit in the Ottawa-Gatineau Region

1. Enhance victim assistance programs across Canada.
2. Promote access to justice and participation in the justice system and the development of law, policies and programs.
3. Promote the implementation of principles, guidelines and laws designed to address the needs of victims of crime and articulate their role in the criminal justice system.
4. Contribute to increased knowledge and awareness of the impact of victimization, the needs of victims of crime, available services, assistance and programs and legislation.
5. Promote, encourage and/or enhance governmental and non-governmental organizations' involvement in the identification of victim needs and gaps in services and in the development and delivery of programs, services, and assistance to victims, including capacity building within non-governmental organizations (NGO)

Progress to Date:

- Seasonal teachings - medicines, rattles, moon teachings, traditional family life cycle, spirit names, spirit colours, rattles and thunderbird teachings.
- Workshops - Grief and aftercare, vicarious trauma, chair yoga, ongoing seasonal walks on the trails of the National Capital Commission looking for medicines, cedar bath foot care and meditations, Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) mental health supports, violence prevention information, importance of safety and cultural competency.
- Community sweats for MMIWG2S+ family members and survivors.
- Impacts - support community members within the MMIWG2S+ at a national level with traditional mental health support.
- Twenty five (participants/clients) emergency sessions or registered.
- Supported family members and survivors within the Sundance, Back to Batoche Days, and local/regional/national ceremonies.

The Process

- Intake and assessment to determine the level of MMIWG2S+ supports needed.
- The program works in conjunction with all the violence against Indigenous women services at Minwaashin Lodge
- The program ensures on-going communication with participants in aftercare, seasonal ceremonies offered through the Culture programming, or independent sessions.
- Consistent follow-up to assist in the ongoing after care of trauma, after violence or provide other opportunities for cultural and psychological supports.

Partnerships

Mādahòki Farm
Ottawa-Carleton District School Board-
(OCDSB)
Ottawa Catholic School Board- (OCSB)
Kitigan Zibi Cultural Programming
Survivors Circle of Reproductive Justice
Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre - (ORCC)
Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition (OAC)
Odawa Native Friendship Centre
Gatineau Friendship Centre

Statistics

A caseload of 25 active clients (adults and children), while also providing crisis counselling supports at events and workshops in the city relating to the missing and murdered crisis. Helped more than 250 participants within community ceremonies, gatherings, teachings, and programming.



Elaine Kicknosway pronouns Qwe/she/her. Traditional helper Counsellor. She is Swampy Cree through her biological mother from Amisk Lake, and her biological father's side is from Buffalo Narrows Sk. She is a member of Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation in Northern Saskatchewan and is Wolf Clan. She is a Sixties Scoop Survivor and returned home in 1996. Elaine is an Indigenous land based focusing therapist & trauma Counsellor, a Blanket exercise facilitator and trainer, Indigenous full spectrum birth to death Doula, Traditional dancer, singer, drummer and is the Cofounder of The Sixties Scoop Network and carrier of ceremonial teachings.

Oshki Kizis Lodge

Oshki Kizis Lodge hosts many programs in addition to the violence against women (VAW) shelter including extensive services to street involved, unhoused, and trafficked people. Ottawa Public Health (OPH) and Inner-City Health have supported and kept us up to date on emerging issues. OPH continues to organize Immunization on site for staff and clients at OKL, and also provide us with harm reduction supplies.

We recently renovated our shelter and now have 28 beds for Indigenous women and children fleeing abuse. Oshki Kizis has been in operation since 2001. The shelter provides a safe place where traditional cultural values and practice are honoured. All programs and services are rooted in the Seven Sacred Teachings, a holistic approach supports the women and children while they begin their healing journey.

We work very closely with Minwaashin's main location staff to ensure that residents can access the services they need. Program staff come to the shelter to offer in-house programs and services to the women and children at the Shelter.

Shelter staff continues to work closely with all Indigenous service providers as well as the Children's Aid Society to preserve, maintain and reunite families.



Statistics

- 54 women and 43 children stayed at the shelter.
- 46 women and 36 children were housed by our Housing staff with some returning to their home communities.
- 78 households were provided support by the Transitional and Family Support workers.
- 1,452 calls were taken on the crisis line.
- 2,569 calls were taken from women seeking help or referral.
- 301 women could not be accommodated at OKL because we were at capacity. They were assisted in finding alternative accommodation.

Due to the lack of appropriate housing units in the community, families and singles are waiting longer for housing. This results in less capacity to serve new families needing shelter.



Oshki Kizis Food Program



Food insecurity continues to be a very real issue for our clients, and access to basic services remains difficult. We maintain our community food program, delivering food to community members monthly. The number of households receiving food this year fluctuates slightly, we maintain a list of 120 households. When a woman or family no longer needs our help, we take on new community members from our wait list.

Street Outreach/Cultural Outreach

The street outreach services focused on central downtown and Vanier including community shelters, food banks, drop-in centres and encampments.

Street Outreach works with other homeless outreach teams to provide services to women who are unhoused or at risk of becoming unhoused. The worker also facilitates clients' access to cultural, spiritual, and practical supports. Outreach connects unhoused clients with Housing First Case Managers (HBCM) at Minwaashin.

Requests for tents and sleeping bags remain high as many are sleeping rough. Reasons for the increase in the number of people refusing to go to shelters include the fear of violence and sexual assault (especially for women), potential theft of their belongings, and increase number of challenges in maintaining sobriety.

Street Outreach

- Housing referrals
- Hospital visits, medical accompaniment
- Police support
- Ontario Works advocacy
- Ontario Disability Services Program advocacy
- Facilitates access to legal supports
- Informal mental health support
- Promotion of harm reduction
- One on one individual support
- Distribution of clothing,
- Providing hygiene and feminine products
- Snacks, drinks
- Bus tickets to provide transportation to appointments



Cultural Outreach

The Cultural Outreach worker continues to provide cultural supports and programming to members of the community housed at Cornerstone Princeton Residence. She also organizes programming for Shelter residents. New this year; Cultural outreach has expanded her service to two other Cornerstone residences, Eccles, and Booth Street locations as well as John Howard residence on Lisgar St.

1533

services

540

referrals

Continuing Initiatives

Outreach serves the most vulnerable members of the community many of whom do not access other services. providing emotional and practical supports including food, clothing, harm reduction supplies, hygiene items, bus tickets, emergency first aid and referrals to services. This program provides approximately 60 meals and water each day

The Outreach workers assist Street Team Outreach Mobile (STORM) to provide cultural supports to members of the community. Outreach also provides supports to our Anti-Human Trafficking drop-in.

Street Team Outreach Mobile (STORM) and Street Team Outreach Mobile Human Trafficking (STORM HT)

Mobile outreach program consisting of three teams that reach out to First Nations, Inuit and Métis women who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, or trafficked in the City of Ottawa. STORM/ STORM HT provides individual support and advocacy to women. Staff are often the first point of contact for marginalized women in the sex trade who are often reluctant to access services.

- Referrals to Minwaashin Lodge for crisis and addiction counselling
- Referrals to Elders and Traditional Healing
- Referrals to Health Centers and/or transport to hospitals
- Supports and advocacy for trafficked women
- Referrals to Housing First Case Managers (HFCM), housing and community services
- Safety planning for all women, including exit planning
- Transportation and bus tickets
- Health and hygiene products, condoms and various other harm reduction supplies
- Needle exchange, crack pipe distribution, Naloxone
- Provides bagged lunches (60-80 per day), snacks, juice or hot chocolate, clothing, shoes, winter coats and boots
- Provides overdose support including Naloxone
- Distributes 911 phones to clients to be used to access emergency services
- Provides personal alarms /phones to women for access to emergency assistance

STORM

1840

individuals served

39

safety transports

STORM HT

2060

individuals served

360

identified as trafficked

Youth Anti-Human Trafficking (YAHT)

(Courage for Change)

This initiative is through the Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA). This program provides supports and referrals to Youth who are currently trafficked as well as those who are at risk. This program takes an active role in our Homeless drop-in where many contacts are formed for youth at risk.

105

Indigenous women
and
girls supported

Rural/ Remote Funding

8 women were assisted to return home

9 women were assisted in coming to Ottawa to escape human trafficking. This funding allowed us to travel to some rural locations to provide services.

21 women were provided with food.

2 women received Court supports

This funding also allowed us to assist women in rural areas with transport, referrals, food, and cultural supports.



Human Trafficking Liaison Program

The Indigenous Provincial Anti-Human Trafficking Liaison position works with other Anti-Human Trafficking workers across the province. Indigenous women comprise 51% of all trafficked people. This is a significant number as Indigenous people comprise only 4% of the population of Canada.

Statistics and General Information

The role of the Anti-Human Trafficking Liaison (AHTL) worker is to support these women who are at risk, being groomed, or looking to exit from exploitation, primarily through the STORM program, as well as through the weekly drop-in, every Monday and Friday at St. Margarets Inuit Church on Montreal Road.

The worker also educates service providers, community members, teachers, and students on Human Trafficking through an Indigenous perspective through presentations, movies, and discussions. AHT Liaison held an event for staff and Community members with four individuals with lived experience who spoke of their lives as trafficked people.

The Drop-In St. Margaret's Church

The program was renamed "The Indigenous Drop-In" to signify that this is a program for Indigenous Community members. Non-Indigenous people are also welcome. Participants are provided with food and supplies and a list of other services where they can access help. The Drop In continues to operate every Monday, and has been expanded to two days per week, Monday from 6-8pm and Friday from 2-6 pm. This past year we have partnered with Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health as part of a shared expanded Street Outreach. Their support has assisted the Drop-in in providing a designated staff on site for our two Drop-In days.

Drop-In highlights - clothing giveaways in partnership with the Vanier Business Improvement Area (BIA). On average, 60 + people come to our door for support; however, with a growing need for food we often run out of meals and are only able to provide granola bars, juice, and fruit. The Drop-In would not be possible without the continued support from part-time staff, St. Margaret's Parish, and community donations.

Housing First

Minwaashin Lodge provides Housing First Services to unhoused Indigenous women. In addition to the services provided to unhoused adults, we have a Youth Housing First worker who serves unhoused Indigenous youth.

Housing Based Case Managers (HBCM) provide the following services:

- Guidance and support to make a housing plan with clients that includes their preferences and needs
- Helping people with the paperwork and identification needed to apply for housing
- Facilitating applications for Housing Registry status
- Liaison with prospective landlords
- Searching for available housing that meets the clients needs
- Accompaniment to house viewings
- Assistance to obtain furniture
- Secure available subsidies for housewares; shopping with clients
- Develop a safety plan for clients that addresses their concerns
- Helping clients to move into new home
- Assist with initial grocery shopping with clients
- Provide ongoing support in the form of visits
- Provide telephone crises support
- Support clients in disputes with landlords / other tenants
- If necessary find secondary accommodations

HBCM workers establish supportive relationships with the people they serve. This has resulted in increased success for the clients and has meant that workers have been able to provide many supports that are not specific to housing but essential for housing to be successful



4 Adult Housing First Workers with an average caseload of 15-24, many with complex needs

1 Youth Housing First Worker serving young people aged 17-24. Our Youth Housing First Case Manager (YHFCM) currently has a case load of 15-18 individuals

2 General Housing Workers with an average caseload of 16-20 individuals



Housing Relations Specialist



This is a new team lead position; the mandate is to support the Housing workers, who work with the City of Ottawa on the Damage Fund, provide coordination for moves, assist in registry applications and liaise with landlords. Last year despite intensifying barriers, Housing First successfully housed 56 women and their families.

Indigenous Court Worker

This position supports Indigenous clients who are involved in the Criminal or Family Court system. Referrals come from Minwaashin staff and various other partners. The worker assists Indigenous clients who do not have other supports. This program meets a critical need for the people we serve, and the caseload of this position has increased steadily. Courts have resumed, however there is still a back log due to the pandemic. The court worker continues to provide guidance, referral, and support.

Court Worker provides the following services:

- Assistance completing paperwork and applying for Legal Aid
- Accompaniment to hearings
- Assistance with documentation and preparing for meetings with lawyers
- Providing support before and after court appearances
- Providing professional visits to incarcerated client, discharge planning

Statistics

21 clients involved in Family Court
16 clients involved in Criminal Court
8 clients involved in Diversion / Referral
and Alternative Dispute Resolution

Family Support Worker (FSW)

The duties of the FSW include:

- Assisting clients to apply for income supports
- Assist the in access to school registration
- Planning to address the families needs
- Helping women get the paperwork and identification needed to apply for housing
- Facilitating their application for Housing Registry status
- Accompaniment to house viewings
- Hands on assistance with obtaining furniture
- Secure available subsidies for housewares, shop with the client
- Develop a safety plan for clients that addresses their concerns
- Help the client to move into new home

This continues as a full-time position, she serves families in the Shelter.

Statistics

53 women and 35 children were
served
42 women and families were housed

Transitional Housing and Support Worker (THSW)

The Transitional Housing and Support Worker serves clients at the Shelter and community clients, she reports to the Shelter Director of Oshki Kizis Lodge.

Primary Responsibilities

- To work with women to develop transition plans that will enable them to move to independent living and to assist with their departure plans
- To assist in identifying natural and formal support systems to achieve goals
- To assist ex-residents in referral to legal, financial, housing, employment, educational upgrading, training, parenting support, counselling, and health and wellness services, court support, and any other healing services deemed appropriate
- To bridge clients to other community services
- To network and build strong working relationships with other community services and relevant organizations
- Accompany clients to appointments (Ontario Works, Ontario Disability Support Program, housing, legal, police, Children's Aid Society)
- Assist client with systems navigation
- To advocate on behalf of clients for the services they need
- Provide advocacy letters and letters of support
- To act as a resource person for other staff members
- To assist in safety planning for women and their children
- To work within the context of the Framework for services for abused women in Ottawa-Carleton (understanding and practice from an anti-oppression framework)
- To maintain clear and professional boundaries

78

Indigenous women
were served

13

Social Housing
Applications
completed

9

were referred to
more appropriate
services



Thank You to Our Oshki Kizis Program Funders:

Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services – Oshki Kizis Lodge, Transitional Support
and Anti Human Trafficking

Sisters of St. Joseph Canada - Oshki Kizis Lodge

Ministry of Children, Community and Social Service - Supports (AHTC) Indigenous Led Initiatives
Fund, STORM HT

City of Ottawa - Housing First Case Management, Housing First Youth Case Management,
STORM Outreach, Street Outreach

Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres - Court Support Worker, Cultural Outreach,
Outreach Worker

Indigenous Services Canada - Family Support Worker

Ontario Native Women's Association - Human Trafficking Liaison, General Housing Workers

Summary of Program Revenue and Program Expenditures

Minwaashin Lodge - Aboriginal Women's Support Centre			
Summary of Program Revenue and Program Expenditures			
Year Ended March 31 2025			
Revenues		Expenditures	
MCCSS	1,702,908.00	Staffing Costs	3,733,707.00
City Of Ottawa	1,205,425.00	Professional/consulting services	150,487.00
Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres	933,385.00	Occupancy	244,668.00
Indigenious Services Canada	349,540.00	Computer Equipment	69,483.00
Province of Ontario	287,438.00	Program Costs	1,950,510.00
Trilium	213,994.00	Travel and Meetings	129,418.00
Operations And other Programs	2,001,613.00	Amortization Of Capital Assets	153,647.00
		Other	23,387.00
		Program Evaluations	5,000.00
		Professional Development	18,139.00
	6,694,303.00		6,478,446.00

Audited financial statements are available upon request.



June 26, 2025

Audit Findings Letter

The Board of Directors
Minwaashin Lodge
100-2323 St. Laurent Boulevard
Ottawa ON K1G 4J8

Dear Board Members:

We have been engaged to audit the financial statements of your organization as of March 31, 2025 and for the period then ended. Canadian generally accepted standards for audit engagements require that we communicate any significant findings to you in relation to our audit.

Evaluation of Internal Controls

Audits include a review of internal control relevant to the entity's preparation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control.

During the course of our audit, we did not encounter any specific internal control matters that we wish to bring to your attention, however, as with any small office, the opportunity for proper internal control is limited. We suggest that the Board periodically reviews all controls it has in place to safeguard the organization's assets and financial reporting process.

Significant Accounting Policies

Management is responsible for the appropriate selection and application of accounting policies. Our role is to review their appropriateness and application as part of our audit. The accounting policies used by your organization are described in the notes to the financial statements.

There was no new accounting policies adopted or changes to the application of accounting policies of the organization during the year.

Significant Unusual Transactions

There were no unusual transactions identified during the audit.

Accounting Estimates

Management is responsible for the accounting estimates included in financial statements. Estimates and the related judgments and assumptions are based on management's knowledge of the business and past experience about current and future events.

Our responsibility as auditors is to obtain sufficient appropriate evidence to provide reasonable assurance that management's accounting estimates are reasonable within the context of the financial statements as a whole. An audit includes performing appropriate procedures to verify the:

- Calculation of accounting estimates;
- Analyzing of key factors such as underlying management assumptions; and
- Materiality of estimates individually and in the aggregate in relation to the financial statements as a whole.

During the audit we did not identify any significant accounting estimates that we considered to be unreasonable.

Disagreements with Management

We are required to communicate any disagreements with management, whether or not resolved, about matters that are individually or in aggregate significant to your organization's financial statements or auditor's report. Disagreements may arise over:

- Selection or application of accounting principles;
- Assumptions and related judgments for accounting estimates;
- Financial statement disclosures;
- Scope of the audit; or
- Wording of the auditor's report.

We are pleased to inform you that we had no disagreements with management during the course of our audit.

Issues Discussed

The auditor generally discusses, among other matters, the application of accounting principles and auditing standards, and fees, etc. with management during the initial or recurring appointment of the auditor during the normal course of business. There were no major issues discussed during our audit with regards to our retention that were not in the normal course of business.

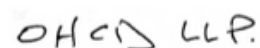
Difficulties Encountered During the Audit

We encountered no significant difficulties during our audit that should be brought to the attention of the Board.

We shall be pleased to discuss further with you and at your convenience any matters mentioned above.

This communication is prepared solely for the information of the Board and is not intended for any other purpose. We accept no responsibility to a third party who uses this communication.

Yours truly,



OUSELEY HANVEY CLIPSHAM DEEP LLP

Per: Eric Wilson



Design by Jenna Spagnoli
Photos by Kayla Spagnoli