

2022 ANNUAL REPORT



SERVING THE
INDIGENOUS
COMMUNITY
FOR OVER 25
YEARS

MINWAASHIN HONORS OUR FOUNDERS

GRANDMOTHER LILLIAN PITAWANAKWAT IS THE FOUNDING ELDER OF MINWAASHIN LODGE

We do our work to honour all Indigenous women and always to 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 trying to do. She visited our lodge 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 religiously for us and did many pipe ceremonies so that the Creator would help all of us to rebuild our strength.



MINWAASHIN HONORS OUR FOUNDERS

IRENE COMPTON IS THE CO-FOUNDER OF MINWAASHIN LODGE

We must never forget the dedicated women that blazed the trail. 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 Indian Name and 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 we would like to honor Irene Compton for her 27 years of dedication.



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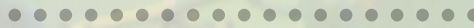
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OUR VISION

WE ENVISION A WORLD WHERE ALL OF CREATION,
THE EARTH, THE AIR, THE WATERS, ANIMALS
AND PEOPLE ARE SAFE, HONORED AND RESPECTED;
WHERE CHILDREN AND ELDERS ARE VALUED;
WHERE CULTURE AND DIVERSITY
ARE CELEBRATED.



OUR FUNDERS



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

OUR COVID FUNDERS



United Way East Ontario
Canadian Womens Foundation
Ottawa Network for Education
Healthcare Excellence Canada
Sprott Foundation
J.W. McConnell Family Foundation
Indigenous Sports and Wellness
Canadian Red Cross
City of Ottawa
CanadaLife.com
Happy Roots Foundation
Women Shelters of Canada
Ontario Trillium Foundation
Ottawa Network for Education
Ontario Native Women's Association
Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
Rogers Foundation Fund
Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport
Coast Capital Savings
Sprott Foundation: Second Harvest
Employment and Social Development Canada
Indigenous Service Canada
Ministry of Indigenous Affairs
Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition
Community Foundation of Canada
Bell Let's Talk
Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres



Velvet Migwans - President
Jo McCutcheon - Vice-President
Christina Hodgins-Stewart - Treasurer
Pamela Wolfe-Roberge - Board Member
Lane Bourbonniere - Board Member
Katelin Peltier - Board Member
Irene Goodwin - Board Member

STAFF 2021-2022

Mary Daoust - Executive Director
Frances Daly - Director, Oshki Kizis Lodge
Florence Hiltz - Manager, Child & Youth Programs
Irene Compton - Manager, Culture/Employment Programs
Angela Jeffrey-Martincich - Manager, Counselling Team, Art Therapist
Annie Kingston-Miller - Children's Therapist
Barb Wolfe - Kitchen Manager/Cultural Outreach/STORM support
Kate Holden - Book Keeper/Human Resources
Ida Kakekagumick - IT Maintenance/Reception
Paulette John - Executive Assistant
Elaine Kicknosway - Traditional Women's Counsellor
Cara Diamond - Crisis and Intake Counsellor
Storm Burgoyne - Women's Counsellor
Andrea Young - Substance Abuse/Mental Health Wellness
Eunice Decontie - Substance Abuse/Mental Health Wellness
Wendy Kitty-Milligan - Child, Youth, and Women's Counsellor
Verna McGregor - Employment Counsellor

Gina Louttit - Aunties on the Road and Employment Readiness Program Assistant
Sabrina Gideon - Employment and Training Project Coordinator
Frankie Pasap - Culture Coordinator
Patricia Animikwan - Maintenance Worker
Kateri Miles - Youth Worker
Kendall Bryant - Family Support Worker
Vanessa Jackson - Day Outreach Worker
Rebecca Migwans - Sacred Family Liasion Coordinator
Carollyn About - Cultural Youth Prevention Worker
Jeanette Jackson - Residential Support Worker
Ann Wesley - Shelter Assistant
Hayven Wawatie - Family Support Worker
Ruth Adonye - Transitional Support Workers
Tara Robertson/Andrea Ledoux - S.T.O.R.M-Human Trafficking (HT)
Agnes Kistabish/Marleny Velit - S.T.O.R.M

Stephanie Gilipin - Sacred Child Wellness Worker
Sunshine Roundpoint - Court Worker
Diane Wolfe, Nicole Edwards, Lainie Sylvester, Karen Polson - Housing First Case Manager
Sabrina Jones-Monette - Housing First (Youth)
Monica Slauenwhite-Stevens - Shelter Administrator
Kayla Spagnoli - Indigenous Provincial Anti-Human Trafficking Liasion
Veronica Spade - Youth Anti-Human Trafficking Worker

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This year was a very exciting year for Minwaashin Lodge. We have moved! Our new location, which will be a much bigger space, is located at 2323 St. Laurent Blvd. It was a gift in disguise to find a building that could accommodate our growing needs. We had to act quickly to secure the building and then began the transition shortly after. The staff got to work and made it happen, regardless of the pressures of Covid and the Occupation Convoy. Although we are not open to the public just yet, the renovations are coming along, and we anticipate to be open soon. We are so excited to share our new space!

Impacts of the Occupation Convoy did affect the Indigenous community services sector, especially in the downtown core. Many streets were blocked off, leaving no access to our most vulnerable. Minwaashin received an abundance of support through our Indigenous community partners, shelters, and funders by supporting and ensuring our safety every step of the way. Our day site located at Lola St. was very close to the Convoy Encampment on Coventry Rd, which led to more stress for staff and the women and children who needed to access our Lodge. It did not take long to resume services once the situation had been cleared.

Minwaashin had another successful year with Covid applications, community donations and financial support from our funders. Minwaashin staff do whatever is necessary to keep families together and safe. These funds prevented eviction notices and kept the lights and heat on without causing further undue hardship to our community.

For our Christmas drive this past year, staff and numerous volunteers gathered to ensure families received a nice Christmas meal and gifts. Chef Ric's team from The Mission came through for us once again, by providing 300 pre-packaged meals for our families. It was heartwarming to see the faces of these families when their delivery arrived. Thank you, Chef Ric and your team, as well as all the staff and volunteers for making Christmas special for our families.

Mental wellbeing and possible "burn out" is a constant concern for our staff. With the caseloads over stretched, it takes its toll on mind, body, and spirit. Minwaashin supported staff with virtual sharing circles/wellness sessions due to a generous gift from our sister shelter. They understood the pressures we were under working in and around the Convoy. The support given to our Lodge over this past year was truly remarkable!

I am always amazed at the resiliency and passion the staff express every day. On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank Executive Director-Mary Daoust, staff, and volunteers for their ability to leap over every hurdle placed in their path and always stepping up to 'take care of our own' people in a kind and good way.

Chi-Meegwetch,
Velvet Migwans
Board President

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director's Message - 2022 "Taking Care of our Own" is our business...

Regardless of the barriers presented by the everlasting rollercoaster effects of Covid; to the impacts caused by the "Occupation Convoy" in February; our skilled and dedicated staff never wavered in 'taking care of our own.' Clients presented a steady increase in domestic violence/substance use/anxiety-depression/food insecurity and homelessness since the beginning of Covid. Being who we are, teams continued to step up repeatedly to accommodate the already maxed out caseloads. The 'warrior women' spirit is unique and present in everything we do!

'Taking care of our own' also means making sure our staff are feeling supported during these hard times. Minwaashin was given a wonderful opportunity from our sister shelter to offer professional wellness circles to replenish and nurture spirit. When exhausted and tired, we know how easy it is to forget about oneself, while helping others. These circles were well received by those that attended and this will become part of our 'taking care' going forward.

Minwaashin continued to encourage the use of masks; Rapid testing and social distancing as the province started to lift Covid restrictions. Most programming at the Lola site continued to serve clients curbside, virtually or limited face to face. Our essential services were always available for children/youth/women in crisis of food security/housing/outreach and CASO access visits due to the amazing staff commitment in 'taking care of our own.'

We were very successful with applications to enhance new and existing programs. Each new position funded brings us closer to bridging the existing gaps that are present in our community.

Minwaashin Lodge continues to thrive with new opportunities which benefit the Indigenous community by remaining connected to culturally specific wrap around supports.

'The Mission' rocks it again! Chef Ric's team dropped off three hundred (300) delicious, pre-packaged holiday meals with beautifully decorated cupcakes the morning of our Annual Children's Christmas Giveaway.

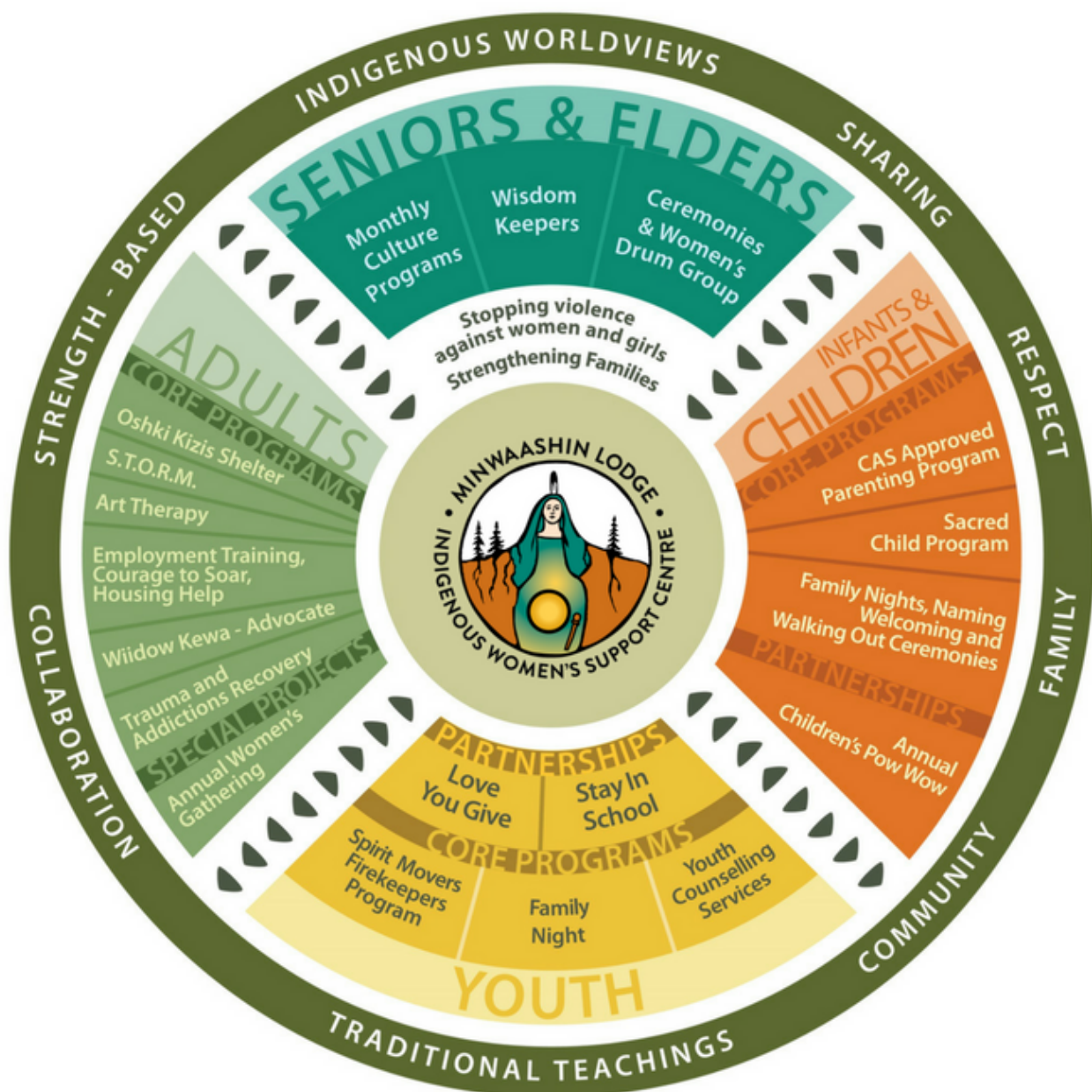
We continued to support 25 rural and remote families with hampers due to extra Covid funding from the Ministry. The curbside deliveries were possible, due to the outpour of support from Staff worker elves, Management, Board, and volunteers!

Drum roll pleassssee! Minwaashin was successful in securing a 'stand alone' building that could accommodate our ever-growing staff and services on March 1, 2022. This new site needs some 'fit ups' and will remain closed to the public until further notice.

Much gratitude for the overwhelming generosity and support received from funders, donors, volunteers, community partners and sister agencies. You made it possible by improving the quality of services necessary to enhance the quality of life for our people.

Cheers to you! For 'taking care of us' so we can do what we do best 'taking care of our own.'

Chi-Meegwetch,
Mary Daoust



MINWAASHIN LODGE: LIFE-CYCLE SERVICE MODEL

Respecting women is our culture

COUNSELLING SERVICES



Minwaashin Lodge - Indigenous Women's Support Centre provides a range of counselling services to First Nation, 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 residential school system or 60s Scoop. Our services are client centered, holistic and culturally based.

Counselling is offered at our day program site and at our emergency VAW shelter - Oshki Kizis Lodge. The team continues to partner with organizations within the city of Ottawa to enhance and bridge any gaps that may create barriers in accessing critical services.

To support Indigenous women and children, the team provides a full spectrum of therapeutic services including art therapy, traditional counselling, sand tray and play therapy, which can 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*. Additionally, traditional healing is offered through sweats, fasts, circles and drumming to our children, youth, adults, and elders.

Statistics:

Approximately 600 First Nation, Métis and Inuit women and families received counselling services with over

7000 hours of 1:1

counselling/ family art therapy/crisis intervention/to psycho-educational workshops, traditional support, healing circles, teachings, sweats, fasts, ceremonies and referral services. There was a large increase in the number of children and youth who required individual counselling.

Highlights

Ongoing

Agreement with Ottawa-Carleton District School Board and Ottawa Catholic School Board: Minwaashin Lodge entered into a partnership agreement with OCDSB and OCSB which allows Minwaashin staff to work with Indigenous children within the school setting. This is particularly useful as the children's therapists can meet with children at school when transportation is a barrier. Traditional Counselling and healing were offered to women who were dealing with trauma caused by violence/abuse/grief/loss/sexual violence.

The Strong Women's Support Group (*Mashkawizig Ikwewag*) held three full cycles throughout the year. The group is based on the seven grandfather teachings and incorporates a holistic approach to healing for women who are struggling with substance use and abuse. This open group included psycho-education around colonization, residential schools, intergenerational trauma and contemporary impacts including violence against women. Women also had the opportunity to explore past and present coping skills to help them maintain their sobriety and continue their healing journey.

This year also incorporated Dialectic Behavioral Techniques (DBT).

The relationship with the Children's Aid Society continued to grow and improve. We have often partnered with the Society to facilitate circles and advocate for clients. We have established more effective forms of communication within the FNIM pods.

Aunties on the Road Doula Collective continued to thrive, thanks to the Youth Opportunities Fund.

Minwaashin's role is to be an Organizational Mentor (OM) for the collective. They provide full-spectrum doula services to Indigenous youth 12-29 years and facilitated an annual full-spectrum doula training. Additional funding to support the training was received from the Ontario Indigenous Youth Partnership Project and Inspirit Foundation.

Minwaashin Lodge continued to offer a full complement of counselling services virtually during the Covid lockdowns and restrictions. This included phone/video sessions and eventually as restrictions began to lift, 1:1 sessions were offered outdoors. We continued to offer services with a combination of virtual and 1:1 sessions following appropriate safety measures.

New

Mental Health & Self-Care Kits were sent out to 160 women who registered with the counselling team. The kits included information/tools on mental health/wellbeing and self care supplies/activities to help them during the difficult times. Some supplies included: cultural medicines, teachings and activities (beading, dream catcher supplies), mental health journals, various art supplies (paint and drawing supplies), stress balls and fidgets, and self-care amenities.

A new Family Art Therapy group was formed and offered virtually for a first cycle. This group incorporated cultural teachings with art therapy techniques to help Indigenous families bond and develop healthy communication skills. This group will continue to be offered either virtually or in person depending on client needs and public health measures.

Many thanks to our funders: Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS), City of Ottawa, The Trillium Foundation and the United Way.

SACRED CHILD LIAISON COORDINATOR

The Sacred Family Liaison Coordinator (SFLC) works to bring a culturally safe and a client centered approach to families involved with the Children's Aid Society of Ottawa (CASO).

Under the Sacred Child Program this service is offered to First Nations, Inuit & Metis families who have open case files with CASO. This position uses a cultural lens when working on reuniting families by supporting, guiding and advocating for their rights.

The work of the Sacred Family Liaison Coordinator has become more vital in our community this year with a case load of nearly 40 families ongoing and 10 new families this past year.

The services delivered have been individually tailored to each client's needs and our rolling intake process ensures we are supporting the community to our fullest capacity.

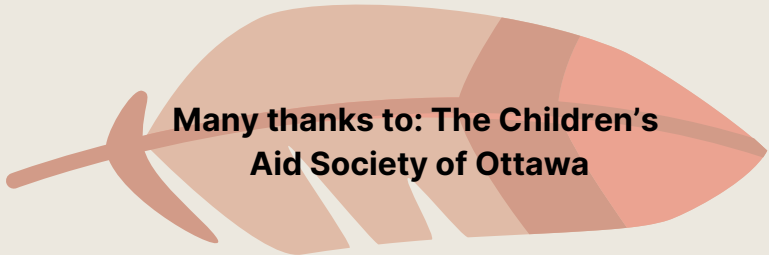
This year's focus has been to connect community members and foster families to cultural resources and programming.

A higher need for community advocacy with police services, medical and mental health emergency response in addition to CASO has widened the scope of the SFLC' position and has raised the expectations for Child Welfare Advocacy in Ottawa.

In the next year we hope to see this position grow to address the needs involving the Circle of Care.

Services Offered:

Access Visits · In-Home Support ·
Food Bank Deliveries Safety Planning · Circle of Care
Support · Advocacy Mental Wellness Support
· Life Skills Development
Foster Care Support · Family Court Support · Wrap Around Services



**Many thanks to: The Children's
Aid Society of Ottawa**

GIIWITAASHKODE PROGRAM (AROUND THE FIRE)

In 2021, The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) funded a new program called 'Giiwitaashkode' meaning "around the fire." The name was to be an extension of Minwaashin's Youth program - *The Spirit Movers and Fire Keepers program*. The philosophy behind the creation of this program was to base cultural learnings, understandings, and teachings to support Indigenous youth (ages 12 - 29) who were at risk of/or survivors of human trafficking and exploitation. The program works closely with Minwaashin's Anti-Human Trafficking teams.

Giiwitaashkode provided culturally based programming to youth using a holistic well-being approach. By informing and strengthening their life skills, resiliency, and supporting them with their self-identity, the youth would have the ability to decrease the risk factors which may contribute to violence and victimization such as human trafficking and exploitation. This program will have a mentorship element to it due to the vast age range for participants to partake.

Creating a safe cultural space for those we work with is the foundation of this future program.

"Learning together, returning together."

Gitchi-Miigwetch to our funder, The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services.



THE SPIRIT MOVERS AND 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. We continue to provide support to our youth and their families through video chat, check ins, talk and text and 'curbside and backyard visits.' They received activities and games to keep them engaged while receiving 1:1 support. All services aligned with the Ottawa Public Health guidelines in helping prevent the spread of Covid-19.

In the beginning of the school year, children and youth needed supplies. The Youth program was able to partner with other agencies to provide '*Back to School*' supplies even though the school year was a combination of in-person and virtual learning. Towards the end of the school year, the Youth program started making a slow and cautious return to the school setting by offering cultural support to the youth attending Hillcrest High School and the Ottawa Technical Secondary School. The youth participated in the annual '*Flotilla for Friendship*' which connects youth and police officers for the day by paddling 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. Our bi-weekly emergency Food bank supported 90 registered families this past year by taking some of the financial strain off their low-income budgets. Our community continued to struggle with the high cost of food brought on by this pandemic, thus, impacting their wellbeing as a whole. Though we are still moving through the pandemic, we are seeing a bit of a change happening at Minwaashin Lodge. We have moved to a new site with so much potential. The Youth program will resume in-person programming with the Wednesday night Drop-in program. Having the extra support in the program with another Youth worker and the student placements had allowed us to offer transportation to the youth who otherwise were not able to manage on their own. Here's to a new start!



COURAGE TO SOAR

Career Development Training and diploma in Administrative Assistant -Advanced Studies



Project Target

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

Highlights

The Courage to Soar Program is a

24 week

training program with a 90-day paid work placement within different departments in the Federal Government.

Stats

2021-22: 12/13 participants graduated;
4 graduated with Distinction and 1 with high honors from Willis College.

Partnerships

To enhance CTS in the delivery of support services and training opportunities, Minwaashin Lodge has partnered with other agencies and educational institutions:

Willis College (training)
Ontario Works (employment assistance benefits and job retention supports)
Kagita Mikam (training & cost sharing)
Congress of Aboriginal Peoples
Job Connect (employment services)
Apatisiwin (training & cost sharing)
Ottawa Food Bank (emergency food)
HRDC – Federal Government (Placements)

Many thanks to our funder: **The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services - Women's Economic Security Program**

Enhancements and Supports

The Courage to Soar Program is focused on ensuring each woman receives a range of supports leading to successful graduation of the program such as:

Intake and assessment identify the level of skills and supports needed for each applicant.

Violence Against Aboriginal Women services and support, individual counseling, crisis-counseling, on-going culturally based psycho-educational workshops, safety planning and advocacy to assist women's participation in the training program.

Individual Training Education and Employment Action Plans based on cultural models such as the medicine wheel and tipi pole teachings.

Work placements to assist the participants to enhance their skills and exposure to a working environment.

Office Administration Training tuition fees and books are paid by the Courage to Soar Program. Training prepares graduates for entry level positions.

Tutoring, peer support and "first day at school" supports are provided by graduates of the Courage to Soar Program.

Self care, team leading/modeling and confidence building workshops are delivered to strengthen soft skills.

Benefits to the Program

The Courage to Soar 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. Willis College has nominated the Courage to Soar Program for an award in excellence with the Ontario Ministry of Education in 2013. 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 skills they have acquired as a result of the CTS Program. The program continues to experience an 80% success rate; our graduates go on to employment or choose to pursue further training in colleges and universities.

Statistics

12 Graduates this past year.

Overall statistics:

237

women registered for the CTS program,

157 participated in the program, 136 women completed the program, 160 women got jobs; full-time, part-time and / or self-employed, 53 women pursued further training.

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. Further, the program provides opportunities for women to participate in traditional gatherings, recreational outings, and ceremonies.

Accomplishments

Canadian Heritage Canada funded virtual cultural workshops for Residential School survivors this past year.

Highlights

Due to Covid restrictions, programming was delivered virtually for most of the year. Minwaashin did have 5 small groups of face-to-face programming to attend each session.

Minwaashin ceremonies were conducted outside, alternatively, women were empowered to do their own ceremonies at home.

Our shelter-*Oshki Kizis Lodge* received bi-weekly cultural & wellness programming for women and children.

Monthly Women's Drum Circles were conducted to provide a safe space for women to connect with the drum, songs, teachings, and with their voice. Further, we delivered a drum handle making workshop.

The Culture Program continued following the seasons and the medicine wheel and facilitated the creation of traditional drums, rattles, and regalia during the summer, fall and winter months.

Visiting Elders delivered traditional knowledge workshops from Kitigan Zibi and Wiikwemkoong online.



Partnerships

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

Aboriginal Awareness Week provided opportunities for Indigenous women to demonstrate their leadership by actively participating in municipal, provincial, and federal Aboriginal Awareness Week campaigns virtually.

Stats

160

Traditional Support Services

260

Cultural Arts & Crafts

54

Healing Circles

99

Hand Drum Circle

45

Ceremonies

Ongoing longer-term funding has always been a challenge and we are grateful for the generosity of our donors to keep this vital program running!

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 program:

Funding is distributed to eligible clients for employment and training programs.

Partnerships with community colleges, private training institutes and businesses across the province provide training and employment opportunities for Ontario's urban Aboriginal people.

The Apatisiwin program matches eligible clients with potential employers.

Provides employment and training opportunities to Aboriginal clients who are not eligible through First Nation, Inuit and Metis agreements.

Progress to Date:

A total of 23 client files were processed in fiscal year ending March 31, 2022 with a total of 46 interventions. Interventions included the processing of training allowances, childcare, bus passes and the payment of tuition and books for training.

The program funded 3 participants in Minwaashin Lodge's Courage to Soar program via Willis Business College. The program was extended from a 21-week program into a 27-week Executive Administrative Assistant diploma program. The new program is now delivered once per fiscal year as opposed to twice per fiscal year in the past. The Apatisiwin also co-funded 3 clients in the new Indigenous Personal Support Worker Program through Willis College. The tuition for applicants was paid through the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP).

Pre-employment supports coupled with pre-employment training facilitated a number of women's successful entry into the labour market.

**Many thanks to our funder: The Ontario Federation of
Indigenous Friendship Centres (OFIFC)**



The Process

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

The program works in conjunction with all the Violence Against Aboriginal Women services at Minwaashin Lodge such as counselling, on-going culturally based psycho-educational workshops, safety planning and advocacy to increase women's participation in training and education programs. The Apatisiwin Program triages 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:

Minwaashin Lodge's Employment Readiness Program
Courage to Soar
Willis College
Algonquin College
Carleton University
Accenture Inc. – Management & Consulting
Kagita Mikam
Congress of Aboriginal Peoples
Academy of Learning
The Beauty Academy
Ontario Works Employment Centres
City of Ottawa.

Federal government departments such as Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) have become partners in acquiring Courage to Soar graduates to integrate into positions with the federal government this fiscal year. In addition to ISC and CIRNAC (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada).

STATISTICS

A total of 46 interventions for funding was processed in the 2021-22 fiscal year; 18 Purchase of Training interventions, 3 Courage to Soar interventions, 1 child care assistance intervention, 9 EI reach back interventions, 14 CRF interventions and a total of over 30 client interviews / requests for information were completed throughout the year.

COVID Pandemic:

The Covid pandemic resulted in a decrease in the number of interviews in the 2021-22 fiscal year as a result of Covid safety precautions.

The Apatisiwin Program also aided in the purchase of laptops for 4 individuals because of the need to train on-line.

EMPLOYMENT READINESS PROGRAM (ERP)

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

2021/22 Highlights

Group Work

FOUR, 10-WEEK CYCLES

Employment Readiness programming were delivered. Women received professional supports such as career counseling, resume writing, confidence building, education/training information, job interview skills and peer support.

TWO

Basic Computer Skills workshops to increase employability

EIGHT ADDITIONAL

Mental Health Workshops

100 ADDITIONAL HOURS

of Traditional Grandmother Support

185 ADDITIONAL HOURS

of individual Mental Health Support

Purchased additional supplies for

146 PARTICIPANTS

EIGHT ADDITIONAL

online ceremonies.

Individual Support

Participants received the following:

- Individual career counseling 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 to navigate systems such as Ontario Works, housing, education etc.

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 Indigenous women. Accenture will be launching their *Learning Exchange* digital platform to provide extended training in 2022.

Kagita Mikam: has increased our capacity to provide additional services & supports.

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

Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition (OAC): Our partnership has increased Minwaashin Lodge's inclusion in strategies with both the City of Ottawa and the Government of Canada via OAC's leadership, pursuance, and implementation of economic advancement for Indigenous peoples.

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

Stats

48 women participated in the Employment Readiness Program; **16** obtained jobs and **11** pursued further education this past year.

Many thanks to our funder: Ministry of Children, Community & Social Services- Office of Women's Issues (OWI).

VOLUNTEERISM

Minwaashin Lodge-Indigenous Women's Support Centre 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.

2021/2022 Highlights:

Volunteers assisted at various special events as follows:

- March Community speakers for International Women's Day at Minwaashin Lodge
- March-April Bi-weekly food bank pick up, sorting and distribution to 90 families
- March-April Income Tax Clinic and individual returns completed for low-income women
- May Honoring Mother's Day - compiling and delivering gifts
- June Orange T-shirt Day - several community events
- July Recreational Outings for women & children - delivered gift certificates
- August Annual Pride Float - assembling and participating in parade
- September Take Back the Night Event - Virtual panels
- September Back to School Supplies Drive
- October Farmers Harvest - providing fresh vegetables for women & children
- November Elimination of Violence Against Women weekly events
- December Annual Children's Winter Gathering - curbside home deliveries due to Covid.

Partnerships:

UOttawa, 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.

Stats:

Minwaashin Lodge provided volunteering opportunities for 109 community members. Many have served behind the scenes, helping at busy times of the year, such as Christmas, Halloween, and special events. Minwaashin Lodge depends on many individuals to enhance our programs and services.

If you would like to volunteer, please contact Irene Compton, 613-741-5590 ext. 224



OSHKI KIZIS LODGE PROGRAMS

This year the impacts on the community due to Covid-19, continued to challenge our services. Street involved and trafficked people continued to require more services and supports as other agencies and services remained closed. Food insecurity increased exponentially for all our clients and access to basic services became more difficult. This resulted in the need to bring in additional staff to meet the increased needs. We have been able to maintain our community food delivery program. The number of households served increased over this year from 34 households at the beginning to 125 households currently. We continue a biweekly delivery model to meet the increased need.

The shelter continues to face many challenges to address safety and to maintain compliance with the required measures in place to prevent the spread of the virus. Oshki does not have the physical space to accommodate isolation. We maintained new intakes and Covid positive women/families at hotels with staff supervision until they completed their isolation and could be safely brought into the Shelter. We partnered with Wabano and were grateful to send single women to their isolation house. Unfortunately, only one single woman could be accommodated at a time. Ottawa Public Health and Inner-City Health have supported and informed us throughout this pandemic, answering questions and supporting us with emerging issues. OPH has organized Immunization on site for staff and clients at our shelter. Oshki remained open with all programs offering essential services. Despite additional challenges due to the pandemic, Housing First continued to support clients to find housing.

The staff team at OKL is comprised of:

Shelter Director, Shelter Assistant, Residential Support Workers (3), Transitional Support Workers (2), Housing First Case Managers (4), Youth Housing First Case Manager (1), Family Worker (1) Street Outreach Worker (1), Cultural Outreach / Kitchen Manager (1), Street Team Outreach Mobile (STORM) (2), Anti Human Trafficking Team (STORM HT) (2), Court Support Worker (1), Human Trafficking Liaison (1) and Youth Anti Human Trafficking worker (1). We work very closely with Minwaashin staff to ensure women and children access all services they require. Many Minwaashin programs are offered in-house to the women and children at the Shelter.



OSHKI KIZIS SHELTER

Oshki Kizis Lodge (OKL), our 21-bed shelter for Indigenous women and children fleeing abuse has been in operation since 2001. Oshki Kizis 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 is used to support the women and children while they begin their healing journey. Oshki has had to reduce the number of people we served this past year due to Ottawa Public Health directives. Rooms normally shared were available to one family or one single woman at a time. This drastically reduced the number of women we served in shelter, which in turn, increased the need for outreach and hotel accommodation. Oshki staff continued to work closely with the Children's Aid Society and other service providers to preserve, maintain and reunite families. This year Oshki Kizis Lodge provided shelter and services to:

- 96 individuals accessed shelter - 61 women and 35 children;
- 39 individuals were housed; 23 women and 16 children. Some families returned to their home communities while others still waited for affordable housing;
- 117 households were provided supports through Transitional and Family Supports. Oshki's Family and Transitional Support Workers continued to assist women in navigating systems and providing advocacy for housing and other critical basic needs;
- 1145 calls were answered from women in crisis;
- 2135 calls were answered from women seeking help or needing referrals;
- 271 calls came in from women who could not be accommodated at the Shelter due to capacity or eligibility. These women were assisted in finding alternative accommodations.

Please note that due to Covid-19 emergence in March, our numbers dropped significantly to adhere to Ottawa Public Health Guidelines. We were extremely challenged to provide isolation off site for new intakes and access testing. We continue to place women and families in hotel to isolate, a negative test is required before coming to OKL. Many of our previously housed ex-residents have been supported by our food delivery program which has been in operation since March 2020.



STREET OUTREACH

This year the Outreach program served 543 individuals.

The Street Outreach worker focused on Central Downtown and Vanier area, including community shelters, food banks and drop-in centres. The Outreach worker partners with numerous Homeless Outreach teams to provide services to women who are homeless or at risk. The staff also facilitates client's access to cultural, spiritual, and practical supports. Homeless clients are referred to a Housing First Case Manager (HFCM) at Minwaashin Lodge; along with other Indigenous agencies for housing assistance. Outreach establishes and maintains relationships with community service providers ensuring service and accessibility for clients. There has been an increase in the number of people requesting tents and sleeping bags, as many are sleeping rough. There are several reasons for an increase in people refusing to go to shelters due to fear of contracting Covid in crowded shelters, fear of violence, including sexual assault, especially for women.

Primary responsibilities

- Housing referrals
- Hospital visits, court support
- 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

Continuing Initiatives

Many of our Outreach initiatives were suspended due to the pandemic. We will restart as soon as it is safe to do so, with the approval of OPH. Outreach has pivoted to serving and supporting women and families in hotels, as well as providing supports to women in our shelter.

While partner agencies have been closed or operating with very restricted access; our Outreach Team has assisted STORM and continued to provide cultural supports whenever possible to members of the community. Our Cultural Outreach worker has done some small group activities with women in community. Minwaashin's Human Trafficking (HT) Drop-Ins even offered services such as; providing transportation to clients who otherwise could not attend.

It has not been possible to go into the Ottawa Correctional Detention Centre to support incarcerated women. We look forward to re-engaging in discharge planning for incarcerated women being released. Cultural supports and programming continued to members of the community; including those housed at Cornerstone - Princeton Residence.

STORM / STORM HT

STORM/ STORM HT is a mobile outreach program consisting of two 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 is often the first point of contact for marginalized women in the sex trade who are often reluctant to access services.

Primary Responsibilities

- Referrals to Minwaashin Lodge for Crisis and Addiction Counseling
 - 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 other 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 and crack pipe distribution
- Provided bagged lunches, snacks, juice or hot chocolate, clothing, shoes, winter coats and boots
 - Provided women with updated “Bad Date” lists (Generated by Salvation Army)
- Distributed 911 phones to clients for accessing emergency services. Phones were given to STORM clients in March once the pandemic set in; to keep them connected with services, and allowing them to receive remote counselling; and
 - Provided personal alarms to women.

Stats

STORM (Street Team Outreach Mobile) Program:

ONE THOUSAND FOUR HUNDRED THIRTY NINE

individuals were served this past year;

EIGHTY THREE

transports were provided for safety reasons.

STORM (HT)-Human Trafficking Program:

ONE THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED TWENTY SIX

individuals served

SEVEN HUNDRED

identified as trafficked for sex.

ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING LIAISON POSITION



This program works with other Anti-Human Trafficking workers across the province. Indigenous women comprise 51% of all trafficked people. This is a significant portion of Indigenous communities, who comprise only 4% of the population of Canada.

Statistics and General Information

The role of the Anti-Human Trafficking Liaison worker is to support these women who are at risk, being groomed, or looking to exit from exploitation, primarily through the STORM program. The worker also supports the community at the two weekly Drop-Ins, every Monday, and Friday on Montreal Road. They also educate service providers, community members, teachers, and students on Human Trafficking with an Indigenous perspective through presentations, movies, and discussions. Due to COVID, many of the presentations were moved to Zoom and other online platforms. In June, the worker and STORM staff presented on Indigenous Outreach, highlighting the efforts of both STORM and the Drop-In. This event was hosted by Crime Prevention Ottawa, and had over 183 people from across Canada, in attendance. This past year, the worker received a monetary donation of thirty thousand dollars and was able to fundraise over ten-thousand dollars in essential items through an online wish list.

The worker is co-founder and co-chair of Anti-Violence & Coercion Taskforce for Indigenous Organizations and Networks (ACTION) alongside the former Manager of Exiting Sex Work and Human Trafficking at Tungasuvvingat Inuit (TI). ACTION was re-activated due to the vaccine roll out and looks forward to planning their 3rd Annual Indigenous Human Trafficking Day event sometime in 2022.

Drop-In

Renamed “The Drop-In” to simplify that everyone is welcome. The Drop-In reopened September 2020 after months of being inactive due to St. Margaret’s being closed. The Drop-In has been running every Monday and Friday, including holidays, since then. Thanks to the support of Ontario Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Advisory Strategy (OAHAS), the Drop-In provides harm reduction, hygiene, food, clothing, and support. Some of the Drop-In highlights include being part of a Harm Reduction Blitz in November, having a chicken take out dinner on Christmas Eve, training students from Algonquin College, hosting an online Narcan training, and hiring a peer. In the most recent weeks, the average evening will bring 40 people to our door, and to date, no one has ever walked away empty handed. The Drop-In would not be possible without the continued support from Parkdale Food Centre (for all the frozen meals, bagels, and food rescue donations), part-time Oshki staff, St. Margaret’s Parish, and community donations.



YOUTH ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING (YAHT) (COURAGE FOR CHANGE PROGRAM)

This is a new initiative with Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA). The program's mandate is to address Human Trafficking of youth. This was slow to start, hampered by COVID restrictions. This program provides supports and referrals to Youth who are currently trafficked or at risk. This program takes an active role in our Homeless Drop In where many contacts are facilitated for Youth at Risk.

Stats

- 154 are at risk of being trafficked
 - 85 females and 69 males
 - 44 were Indigenous
- 16 identified as being trafficked for sex.

Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services: Rural/Remote Funding

- 4 women were assisted to return home
- 4 women were set up in apartments
- 7 was assisted in coming to Ottawa to escape Human Trafficking.

This funding allowed us to travel to some rural locations to provide services to assist women with transport, referrals, food, and Cultural supports.

INDIGENOUS COURT WORKER (ICW)

The Indigenous Court Worker position is funded by Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres (OFIFC). This position supports Indigenous clients who are involved in Criminal Court/Family Court system. The ICW worker accepted referrals from Minwaashin teams and our various partners.

She also attended court and offered to assist Indigenous clients without other supports. This program meets a critical need for the people we serve. The caseload for this position has increased steadily, as a result. As courts closed, due to the pandemic, this worker continued to provide guidance, referral, and support whenever possible. The work was impacted by Covid restrictions, as there were periods of time when court was not in session or restricted to video only.

Primary Responsibilities

- Assistance in completing paperwork and applying for Legal Aid
 - Accompaniment to hearings
- Assistance with documentation and preparing for meetings with lawyers
 - Provided support before and after court appearances
 - Provided professional visits to incarcerated clients

Stats

- 12 clients - Family Court
- 21 clients - Criminal Court
- 58 without charges - family members/ victims / witnesses
- 56 without charges - provided referrals/ justice related information.

HOUSING FIRST

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

HBCM Workers primary responsibilities:

- Help people with paperwork and identification so they can apply for housing
 - Facilitate their application for Housing Registry status
- Provide guidance and support which includes making a housing plan with the client based on their preferences and needs
 - Liaison with prospective landlords
 - Search for available housing that meets the clients needs
 - 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
 - Assist with initial grocery shop with the client
 - Provide ongoing support in the form of visits
 - Provide telephone crisis support
- Support clients in disputes with landlords/other tenants as required
 - Find secondary accommodations when necessary.

HBCM workers establish supportive relationships with the people they serve. This has resulted in increased success for the clients we serve, and this meant workers had the ability to provide many supports that are not specific to housing, but essential for housing to be successful. We have four (4) adult Housing First Workers. Their average caseload is 15-24, many of whom are high acuity. We have one (1) Youth Housing First Worker serving young people ages 17-24 yrs. Our Youth Housing First Case Manager (YHFCM) had a case load of 15-18 individuals this past year. The Housing First team successfully housed 30 clients and their children despite last year's intensifying barriers.



FAMILY SUPPORT WORKER



A part-time position specifically to serve families within the shelter.

Primary Responsibilities

- Assisted clients to apply for financial support i.e. Ontario Works, ODSP
 - Assisted in access to school registration
 - Planning to address family needs
- Assisted women with paperwork/ identification needs to apply for housing
 - Facilitated their application for Housing Registry status
 - Accompaniment to house viewings
 - Hands on assistance with obtaining furniture
- Secure available subsidies for housewares, shopped with the client
 - Developed a safety plan for clients that address their concerns
 - Assisted the client in moving into new home.

Stats:

NINETY NINE
women

THIRTY THREE

children received services

- Collaborated to house 23 women and families.

This position continued to be vital once the pandemic emerged, as client needs remained high.

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING SUPPORT WORKER (THSW)

This past year has been very challenging as Covid restrictions and lockdowns reduced the access to services in all agencies. This made Zoom or other communication methods the practical choice, thus, significantly reducing the frequency of face-to-face meetings. The Transitional Support Workers report to the Shelter Director of Oshki Kizis Lodge. They both serve residents at Oshki as well as community clients. The Transitional Worker's focus and responsibility is to provide support for the practical needs of women who have left the shelter and have been in the community for two to three months. They serve women from the Indigenous, Metis, and Inuit community who may need practical support resulting from domestic violence, however, are not necessarily in the shelter. Provision of service to current shelter residents is determined by their readiness to begin planning to move to independent living or those requiring complex system navigation to address time sensitive matters (legal, CAS, police).

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 (OW, ODSP, housing, legal, police, CAS)
 - 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 region (understanding and practicing from an anti-oppression framework)
- To maintain clear and professional boundaries

Stats:

TWENTY SIX

- women were supported by this position
- 38 face to face meetings /accompaniments
 - 3692 contacts were supported (txt/ phone/email).



June 17, 2022

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, 2022 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

Minwaashin Lodge - Aboriginal Women's Support Centre

Summary of Program Revenue and Program Expenditures

Year Ended March 31 2022

Revenues		Expenditures	
MCCSS	1,592,836.00	Staffing Costs	2,685,692.00
City Of Ottawa	1,143,960.00	Professional/consulting services	60,944.00
Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres	843,791.00	Occupancy	228,938.00
Province of Ontario	346,000.00	Computer Equipment	37,045.00
Trilium	325,833.00	Program Costs	2,268,584.00
Operations And other Programs	1,963,295.00	Travel and Meetings	71,614.00
		Amortization Of Capital Assets	96,563.00
		Other	96,098.00
		Program Evaluations	9,614.00
		Professional Development	5,888.00
	6,215,715.00		5,560,980.00



Designed by Jenna Spagnoli