Southern First Nations Network of Care

Annual Report

2023-2024

Standing Strong

Zongi Kabawii (Ojibway)

Washaked nazin (Dakota)

Kamaskwikapawi (Cree)

www.SouthernNetwork.org

Our Member Agencies

Animikii Ozoson Child & Family Services

Ontario First Nations members residing in Winnipeg, and other families as are assigned by the Southern First Nations Network of Care (SFNNC).

ANCR

Winnipeg
Headingley
East St. Paul
West St. Paul

Anishinaabe Pimadiziwin Inc.

Dauphin River
Pinaymootang
Lake Manitoba
Lake. St Martin
Little Saskatchewan

Dakota Ojibway CFS

Birdtail Sioux
Canupawakpa
Long Plain
Roseau River
Swan Lake
Dakota Plains
Dakota Tipi

Dakota Tiwahe Services

Sioux Valley

Intertribal CFS

Fisher River

Kinonje Abinoojiiag Niigan

Kinonjeoshtegon (Jackhead)

Sandy Bay Child & Family Services

Sandy Bay

Sagkeeng CFS

Sagkeeng

Southeast CFS

Berens River
Black River
Bloodvein
Brokenhead
Hollow Water
Little Grand Rapids
Pauingassi
Poplar River

West Region CFS

Ebb and Flow
Gambler
Keesekoowenin
O-Chi-Chak-Ko-Sipi
Pine Creek
Rolling River
Skownan
Tootinaowaziibeengn
Waywayseecappo

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Governance

Mission Statement

In partnership with its Child and Family Services (CFS) agencies, the Southern First Nations Network of Care makes a difference in the quality of life of all children and youth by ensuring their protection through the provision of safe homes with responsible caregivers, promoting the wellness of families and strengthening of First Nations peoples and communities. Services and resources will align with community needs; and activities will be more focused on prevention than crisis management. It will serve as a model of successful self-governance that will inspire similar levels of professionalism, compassion, and effectiveness among all CFS agencies.

Vision Statement:

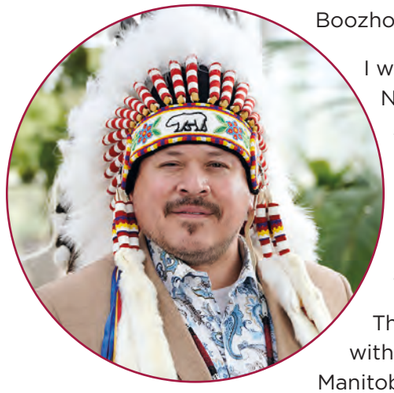
First Nations children, families, and communities will be healthy, strong, empowered and enjoy an enhanced quality of life.

Mandate:

The Southern First Nations Network of Care receives it mandate from the First Nations in southern Manitoba and from the provincial Child and Family Services Authorities Act (CFSSAA).

The Southern First Nations Network of Care, along with the other three CFS Authorities, is responsible for the establishment and management of a province-wide service delivery system. This includes ensuring that services are delivered to southern First Nations citizens throughout the province, as well as people who chose the Southern First Nations Network of Care.

Message from the Grand Chief



Boozhoo, Aniin, Ho, and Hello!

I would like to acknowledge and congratulate the Southern First Nations Network of Care (SFNNC) Board of Directors, staff, and CEO Shirlene Asham for providing steady and unwavering leadership when it comes to advocating for our children and families. I am proud of our collaborative and strong relationship as we all collectively strive to provide the best outcomes possible for our children and youth. I truly believe our families form the foundation of our organizations and we must continue to advance their safety and well-being.

This is a remarkable time for SFNNC and Southern Chiefs' Organization with an historic $530 million settlement that will see the province of Manitoba finally address the misappropriation of the Children's Special Allowance. The settlement will compensate every child affected by the province's actions through the creation of a resolution fund. This is another important milestone as we continue to work diligently on meaningful reconciliation with all our Treaty partners. I encourage everyone involved to read the details of these notices, and to do what is best for them and their loved ones.

As partners in child and family advocacy, SCO's Waakaabit-Woksape "Working Together Within the circle to make good decisions for our Children and Families" Initiative continues to connect with pilot communities to build out the circles wrapping around the child, grounded in strong families, communities, and relationships (prevention) to ensure security and safety (protection). Under the guidance of our Director of Child Welfare, Margaret Swan, we are creating tools to assist southern First Nations in their individual paths to legally recognized jurisdiction in child welfare.

Our Nations have exercised their inherent jurisdiction in relation to their children and families from time immemorial. We have our own laws and principles that have survived the onslaught of colonialism and community Leadership has consistently taken steps to regain control and decision-making regarding their children and families.

The relationship between SCO and the SFNNC continues to evolve and strengthen. I am eager to see what we can accomplish together in the years to come and to witness the positive impacts we will create for our Nations, families, and children. Let's continue to work together in a good way.

Ogema-Ma Kwa

Grand Chief Jerry Daniels

Southern Chiefs' Organization Grand Chief

Message from the Board Chair

Aniin;

As the Board Chairperson of the Southern First Nations Network of Care, I am honored to extend my heartfelt gratitude to our Southern Network staff and our partner Agencies for their unwavering dedication during these challenging times. The work we do to support our families and children within the Child Care system is ongoing, and it is truly inspiring to witness our team members and partners rising to the occasion with resilience and commitment. Together, we continue to “stand strong” in meeting the needs of our communities.

Over the past year, the Southern Network has experienced transformative changes in our governance structure. Notably, we welcomed Shirlene Asham as our new CEO in March 2024. In addition, we are actively implementing key recommendations from a recent organizational review to enhance our governance practices. These efforts are crucial in supporting First Nations communities as they advance toward self-governance and child welfare jurisdiction.

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to First Nations leadership and the Board for their steadfast commitment to fostering cultural and positive changes for our children and families. Our progress would not be possible without the dedicated work of our Board members and the tireless efforts of our staff within the Southern Network and all the Agencies.

Miigwetch,

Margaret Swan

Board Chair
Board President 2023-2024
Southern First Nations Network of Care

The Southern First Nations Network of Care Board of Directors as of March 31, 2024:

Board Chair - **Margaret Swan**

Vice Chair - **Josephine Hartin**

Youth Board Member
- **Diandre Thomas-Hart**

Board Member
- **Lorraine Pompana**

Message from the Acting CEO

The Southern Network was incorporated on November 24, 2003, under the Government of Manitoba through the Child and Family Services Authority Act (CFSAA). The Southern Network was established as a non-profit organization with the responsibility for administering and providing for the delivery of a system of child and family services to Southern First Nations people who are members of the Southern First Nations and other persons who are identified with those Southern First Nations. In partnership with the Government of Manitoba, the Southern Network is committed to establish a jointly coordinated child and family services system that recognizes the distinct and inherent rights of First Nations people in Manitoba.

Southern First Nations Network of Care is governed by a board, appointed by Southern Chiefs Organization.

From December 2022 until July 2023 Sharon Desmarias Director of Operations became Southern First Nations Network of Care’s Acting Chief Executive Officer, in August of 2023 Thomas Sidebottom became our Acting Chief Executive Officer until March 2024.

Office Manager

Our focus over this past year has been our offices move. SFNNC has relocated most staff to the new Winnipeg sub office with our head office remaining in Headingley, MB. I would like to add a special thanks to Putt's Transfer who did an awesome job with our move and to our Admin unit for their hard work and dedication, our move was successful. Over the course of the year the unit also underwent a reorganization of duties and responsibilities. Each Admin has been assigned to a unit to provide their exemplary skills to various units which include Service Support, Alternative Care, Quality Assurance and Finance to ensure the support and backlogs are met.

Our other accomplishment was the completion of the archive filing system. Which was a lot of creating files, scanning and filing we did it!

Shirley Perreault (Receptionist/Admin) continues to provide administrative support and reception coverage to both Southern Network and Southern Chiefs Organization.

The past two years The Southern Network received:

2022 - 2023	2023 – 2024
Phones calls: **5,846**	Phone calls: **4,097**
Faxes: **328**	Faxes: 1**94**
Letters of correspondence: **1,054**	Letters of correspondence: **754**

Communications that come directly to workers via cell phones and emails are not captured in the numbers above.

Karen Desjarlais

Office Manager

Administrative Unit

Karen Desjarlais

Office Manager

Shirley Perreault

Reception/ Administrative Assistant

Tiffany Newton

Administrative Assistant

Theresa Shingoose

Executive Assistant

Roanna Hall

Administrative Assistant

Clarissa Fontaine - Administrative Assistant (no photo)

Service Support Unit

Aniin, since July 2021, I have been proudly carrying out the role and responsibility of the Service Support Manager. This role involves providing supervision, guidance, direction and most of all, overall support to the unit staff. I currently supervise two Intake Coordinators, a Transfers Specialist, an AYA Specialist and an administrative assistant. My role also involves supporting our member agencies in different capacities. Particularly, I enjoy working with our member agencies during this time of the quickly changing environment of Indigenous Child Welfare. Exciting.

Over a three-year period, the unit has faced many staffing challenges, as well as aiming to identify and resolve issues within our intake and service support delivery process. Despite these challenges, our unit staff has strived and worked tirelessly to provide best practice with intake services in a collaborative effort with agencies, families and community members of the Southern Network of Care. During this reporting period, we had one practicum student from the University of Manitoba, Inner Social Work Program.

I would like to acknowledge each unit staff member who strives to help guide, support and advocate for families. I am appreciative of the intake Coordinators who are in an emotionally charged high paced role, who deal with families who are experiencing a crisis that necessitates immediate attention and response. Also, to the Transfers Specialist and AYA Specialist, who take a teamwork approach to assist the unit in addition to performing their duties. Chi-miigwetch!

On behalf of the Service Support Unit, I present the service support annual report for the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

Intake

Culturally appropriate Intake services are provided by Shannon Allard and Sarah Flattery, in accordance with the Child and Family Services Act, the CFS Authorities Act and regulations and standards applicable to child welfare. In this role there is a significant amount of time and work involved. Staff are mindful of response time from start to finish with each concern or complaint. Intake coverage operates on a rotational schedule throughout the year.

Intake is responsible to assess all incoming complaints, ministerial queries, requests for intervention, resolving concerns, connecting families with resources, supports or services to enhance/preserve the family unit, or to assist with communication strategies between families and agencies.

In May of 2023, for the purpose of transparency, the intake unit begun inputting information into a tracking system that identifies what types of intakes come in. Intake work includes extensive CFSIS reviews, information gathering, and working with community collaterals as required

Stat Category	Totals
Adoption	1
ADP	34
Case Planning	45
Child Abuse	10
Child Protection Centre	5
Child Removal	237
Community Concern	855
Complaint	1,394
Critical Incident Report	61
ECF	479
Foster Parent	71
Information	1,548
IPPA	107
Level V	1,429
Minister Inquiry	270
Notice of Hearing	1
Notice of Significant Measures	36
One time only	14
Other	1,473
Petition for further order	0
PPD Referral	11
Repatriation	3
Requests for Information	293
Restricted access	0
Section 12 (significant Means)	5
Section 28	2
Section 42	58
Section 49	734
Transfers	81
Transitional Planning (AYA)	1,730
VPA	125
VSG	62
Website Inquiry	142

Transfers

Transfers is an integral part of the Service Support Unit; its main function is to facilitate family file/ ADP's, section 42 & section 49 transfer process using the Inter-Authority Permanent Ward Transfer Protocol and provide dispute resolution. The transfer protocol is to ensure children and families are being connected to their culturally appropriate agency/community dating back to the AJI-CWI and even more so today with An Act Respecting First Nation Inuit, Metis, Children, Youth and Families. However, this process does not come without its challenges and barriers such as lack of funding, non-status designation and family/community disconnect, and the Authority Determination Protocol also known as the ADP process and its entirety. We also recognize the administration of the ADP can increase the barriers if not properly administered.

The Authority Determination Protocol is administered when the designated intake agency determines that the family requires ongoing supports and services. This tool is to help align the family/child/ youth to its Culturally Appropriate Authority CAA however the family has the right to choose any one of the three authorities: General Authority, Southern Authority (SFNNC) and the Northern Authority. With the nations drawing down on their Family Laws, the ADP process becomes infringing therefore leaving children and families sitting in limbo.

There are two types of transfers tracked by the Southern Network: Section 42 Transfers and Section 49 Transfers.

Section 42 of The Child and Family Services Act, allows the court to grant an order of guardianship to the agency making application or to another agency, with that agency's consent. This is an appropriate method of transfer when matters are before the court.

Section 49 Transfers of the Child and Family Services act, allows for an administrative transfer process for an Order where guardianship has been granted to an agency.

Type of Transfer	S. 42	S. 49	ADP/Family Files	Total
Member Agencies	8	87		95
ANCR TO SOUTH			58	58
ANCR TO NORTH			11	11
GA DIA to SOUTH			16	16
Disputes		5	4	9

Table 1 Depiction of the amount of transfers our agencies receives per fiscal year.

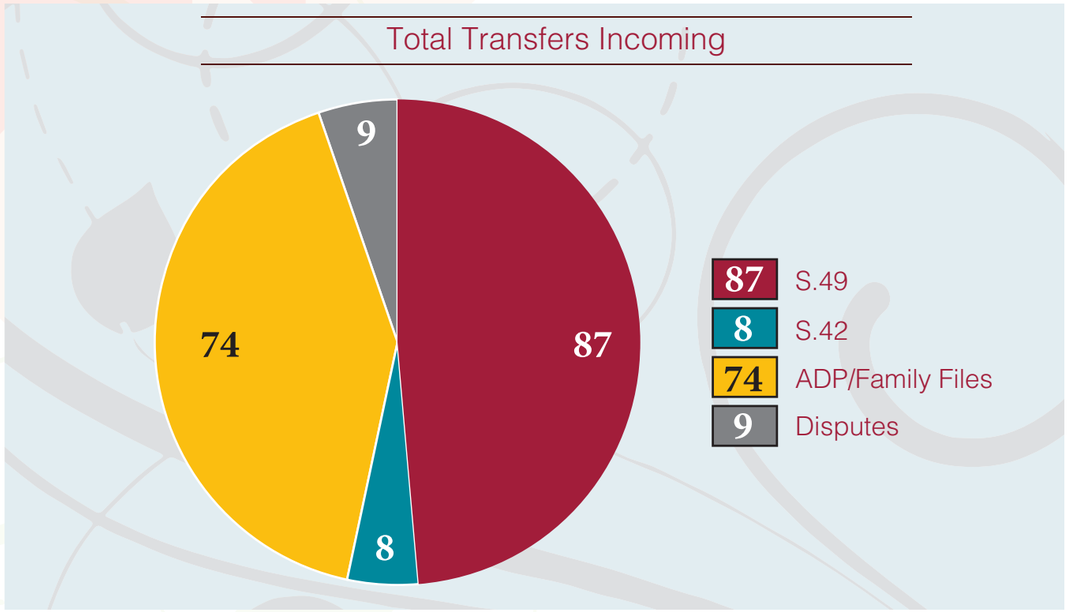


Chart 1: Shows the majority of transfers coming into the SFNNC are S.49 and ADP's per fiscal year.

It is important to note not all successful transfers are received at the Network.

Youth in Care Tuition Waiver Program

Established in 2012, 10 participating colleges and universities in Manitoba have each established a fund to provide scholarships to current and former youth in Child and Family Services Care in Manitoba. Tuition waiver students are also eligible to apply for a living stipend throught the Province of Manitoba to cover the cost of books and supplies, transportation and housing while attending a their post-secondary education.

The institutions covering tuition waivers include the following: University of Manitoba, University of Winnipeg, University College of the North, Brandon University, Assiniboine Community College, Red River College, Manitoba Institute of Trades & Technology, Booth University College, Universite de Saint-Boniface and the Canadian Mennonite University.

- For the 2023-2024 Academic year there were 37 Southern Network applicants and of those 18 received Tuition Waivers.

Keith Cooper Scholarship

This fund acknowledges the late Keith Cooper, former educator and Chief Executive Officer of Winnipeg Child and Family Services, and his commitment to youth in care accessing post secondary education. The scholarship committee awards $1000 based on financial need, academic achievement and demonstrated career focus and support system.

The Keith Cooper Scholarship Committee selects 10 scholarship recipients each year, Those selected are awarded $1000.00 each for their post-secondary related expenses.

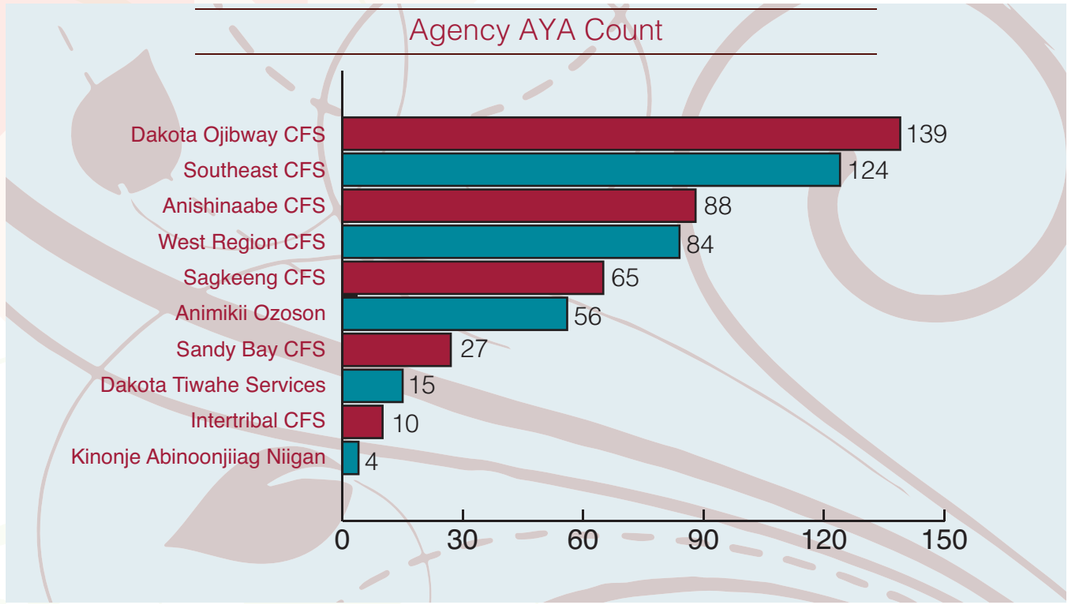
- Of the 10 recipients, 3 youth in care/formerly in care of the Southern Network and our member agencies were awarded a scholarship.

AYA

An AYA is an agreement for support services offered to a youth who is under a permanent order at the time they turn 18 years of age and require transition or other identified services. The Authority will continue to provide approval for the care and control of AYA up to the age of 21 years, except in the case of federally funded AYA.

In March 2023, the Network made changes to the AYA submission process. Previously, all member agencies were to submit AYA requests under $130.00 to the Network however, agencies are now able to approve requests under $130.00. This approval process, grants agencies greater autonomy in the ability to make decisions. Agencies continue to submit all AYA requests over $130.00 to the Network.

Agency	AYA Count
Dakota Ojibway CFS	139
Southeast CFS	124
Anishinaabe CFS	88
West Region CFS	84
Sagkeeng CFS	65
Animikii Ozoson	56
Sandy Bay CFS	27
Dakota Tiwahe Services	15
Intertribal CFS	10
Kinonje Abinoonjiiag Niigan	4
Grand Total	**612**



SYA

Supports for Young Adults under the Social Service Administration Act. SYA is a one-year policy that grants supports to young adults who would otherwise be ineligible to receive ongoing Child and Family Services due to prior legal status or age. The SYA policy authorizes the presenting of funds to the Southern Network of Care for distribution to our member agencies for continued services including promotion, advancement, improvement, protection, security and well being of our young adults. The policy provides CFS agencies the ability to provide continued services, funding, resources and supports up to the age of 26. Participation is voluntary, young adults may decline at any time to continue receiving services.

Agency	SYA Count
Animikii Ozoson	19
Anishinaabe CFS	50
Dakota Ojibway CFS	22
Dakota Tiwahe Services	2
Kinonje Abinoonjiiag Niigan Inc	5
Sagkeeng CFS	73
Sandy Bay CFS	21
Southeast CFS	25
West Region CFS	90
Grand Total	**307**

Organizational Chart

Southern First Nations Network of Care (SFNNC) Organization Chart

March 31, 2024

- **SCO Chiefs in Summit**
  - **SFNNC Board of Directors**
    - **Chief Executive Officer** — Shirlene Asham
      - **Director of Community Engagement** — Vacant
      - **Associate CEO** — Ian Ross
      - **Office & Admin**
        - **Office Manager** — Karen Desjarlais
        - **Receptionist/Admin** — Shirley Perreault
      - **Service Support**
        - **Service Support Manager** — Sandra Starr
          - **Ser. Support Specialist AYA** — Vacant
          - **Ser. Support Specialist Transfers** — Vacant
          - **Ser. Support Specialist Intake** — Shannon Allard
          - **Ser. Support Specialist Intake** — Sarah Flattery
          - **Foster Care Specialist** — Lucinda Massan
          - **Placement Res. Worker** — Jessica Thordarson
          - **Administrative Assistant** — Tiffany Newton
          - **Administrative Assistant** — Vacant
      - **Quality Assurance**
        - **Quality Assurance Manager** — Vacant
          - **QA Specialist (Acting QA Mgr)** — Jade Chymy
          - **QA Data Analyst** — Yogapriya Veerasamy (hired but not started yet)
          - **Investigator** — Vacant
          - **Administrative Assistant** — Vacant
      - **Policy**
        - **Sr. Policy Analyst** — Jennifer Parkman
        - **Researcher & Policy Analyst** — Danelle Guenther
      - **Finance**
        - **Chief Financial Officer** — Zhenyu Wu
          - **Financial Officer** — Vacant
          - **Accounting Clerk** — Kitt Boken
          - **Financial Analyst** — Samuel Paulos
          - **Financial Analyst** — Kyle Newton
    - **CEO Executive Assistant** — Wanda Brown (coverage-SCO)
    - **Human Resources**
      - **Sr Human Resources Manager** — Karleigh Philpott
      - **Human Resources Assistant** — Stefani Braiki (term)

Organizational Chart as of june 5, 2020

KEY:

- **Prior Employees**/Current Employees
- **Indirect Reporting**
- **Direct Reporting**

2023/2024 Fiscal – Departed Employees

Gloria Cochrane – Receptionist, May 2023

Tim Spring – Training and System Coordinator, June 2023

Patti Sansregret – Executive Assistant, June 2023

Candace Campbell – Service Support, August 2023

Sharon Desmarais – Acting CEO, September 2023

Grace Wang – Financial Analyst, September 2023

Pam Big George – Service Support Specialist, December 2023

Roanna Hall – Administrative Assistant, December 2023

Christian Torfason – QA Manager, February 2024

Theresa Shingoose – Executive Assistant, February 2023

Eunice Roulette – Financial Officer, February 2024

Clarissa Fontaine – Administrative Assistant, March 2024

The Strategic Initiatives Unit

The Strategic Initiatives Unit (SIU) collaborates, advocates, and supports our 36 Southern First Nation stakeholders and its CFS agencies serving Indigenous children, youth and families who are involved within Provincial systems. Our unit works with CFS agency partners, First Nation communities and collaterals to ensure we shift and pivot under the National Standards as outlined in the 2019 Federal Act “An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit, and Metis children, youth and families”. This shift guides our work to create innovative initiatives that promote wise prevention practices, policy adaptations, and culturally safe approaches for families through Indigenous worldviews which build healthier outcomes for children and families. The Southern First Nations Network of Care (SFNNC) is committed to bridging the gap between CFS agencies and our First Nation communities in anticipation of Indigenous Nation laws that will govern Indigenous lives, families, and communities. We recognize the way colonial attitudes have shaped our current Provincial child welfare system and we aim to work with all stakeholders to de-colonize and work to continually strengthen First Nation community needs in a space where all are welcomed and heard.

Major Functions of our Unit:

- Planning, developing, and implementing innovative initiatives that align with National Standards
- Supporting agencies and communities in implementation of new initiatives
- Collaborating with agencies to develop guiding policy and practices
- Collaborating with external collaterals to implement wise practice through culturally informed innovative initiatives.

Tracey Arnold
Theresa Shingoose
Jennifer Parkman

Alternative Care and Resource Development

The Alternative Care and Resource Development Unit assists our member agencies. It plans, develops, and implements applicable Indigenous resources to support children, families, and communities. The major functions of the unit are outlined below.

Collaborating with Agencies to Develop Alternative Care Options for Children and Youth: This is a joint effort, and the agencies’ input and participation are crucial but integral to executing these programs. Each agency has a unique perspective and experience, which is what makes our approach effective. We value your role in this process.

The Alternative Care Specialist is Lucinda Massan

Kinship Care

Kinship care is a cornerstone of our approach, based on a traditional connection between children, caregivers, and the community. For the Southern Network, kinship care is more than a concept; it’s a commitment. We continue to support our member agencies steadfastly in promoting kinship care because we believe in the strength of our community.

Customary Care

The Manitoba Child and Family Services Act has been amended to encompass agreements through Bill 32, An Act Respecting Child and Family Services (Indigenous Jurisdiction and Related Amendments). The Federal Act, An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit, and Metis children, youth, and families, is the legislative basis for supporting customary care for Indigenous children through this customary care policy.

POLICY OBJECTIVES

The Southern First Nations Network of Care has introduced a policy to support adult caregivers in providing Kinship and Customary care within Child and Family Services. The policy aims to preserve a child’s cultural identity, respect their heritage, foster cross-generational connections, and recognize the role of the community in raising its children. This policy is a set of rules and a commitment to ensuring that the children we serve remain connected to their roots and community.

The policy is built on a set of fundamental objectives, each providing a basis for honoring and enhancing the cultural fabric of the communities. However, it should be a starting point for the

Southern First Nations Network of Care agencies to develop policies that reflect the needs, values, and perspectives of the diverse communities they serve.

The policy aims to reduce the number of children in care and bring them back to their rightful place within their communities, surrounded by culture and inherent familiarity.

Agency Alternative Care Committee

The Agency Alternative Care Committee (AACC) comprises the Foster Care managers/Coordinators of the 11 agencies mandated under the Southern First Nations Network of Care. The purpose of the AACC is to develop a comprehensive continuum of care system and help to achieve permanency for children and youth requiring out-of-home care. To meet these major goals, the Committee strives to achieve the following objectives: enforce the Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children and Youth and Families; enhance resource development; improve support to the system; identify ways of achieving permanency; identify barriers to permanency; and develop programs that support permanency. Furthermore, the AACC will review and create culturally designated foster regulations, a carer's manual, and training for our carers.

Unanimously, one objective is to reduce the number of Indigenous children entering care with the least disruption; the other is to return children in care to their cultural heritage. The AACC will comply with the resolution set forth by our leaders, the Southern Chiefs Organization, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, and the Assembly of First Nation, which is to have First Nation laws govern how communities will manage and have jurisdiction over their own families and children's affairs.

SFNNC can confirm that $25,000.00 was allocated for agencies to hire contract writers to complete foster home studies. As this is an ongoing need, another $25,000.00 was allocated for 2023-24. Only a few member agencies have completed home studies, and a few member agencies did not participate in this program.

Processing Foster Parent Appeals and Agency Foster Home Variances

Foster Parent Reconsideration/Appeal

The Southern Network is responsible for reconsidering all appeals regarding the removal of children from foster homes and the cancellation of a license to a foster home. The SFNNC has sanctioned an appeal policy that reflects the act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Metis children, youth and families. The SFNNC has accepted five cancellations of licensed foster homes. The SFFNC reconsidered three appeals from our member agencies, all supported by the Southern First Nations Network of Care.

Variances

The Southern First Nations Network of Care reviews variance requests from our member agencies. If approved, this allows a foster home to operate when there are more than seven dependents in the home, more than two children under two years old who reside in the home, or more than three children under five years old who reside in the home; or they are operating as a mixed facility and providing care for both dependent adults and foster children in a foster home.

In 2022/2023, the Southern First Nations Network of Care received 23 variances requested from our member agencies. Out of these variance requests, the member Agencies requested three variances approved to have more than four related children in care placed in a foster home. There was no variance granted to a foster home for more than three children under five years old, but one foster home was granted an emergency infant bed. Six variances were approved for more than seven dependents in the foster home, and thirteen foster homes were approved for mixed facilities.

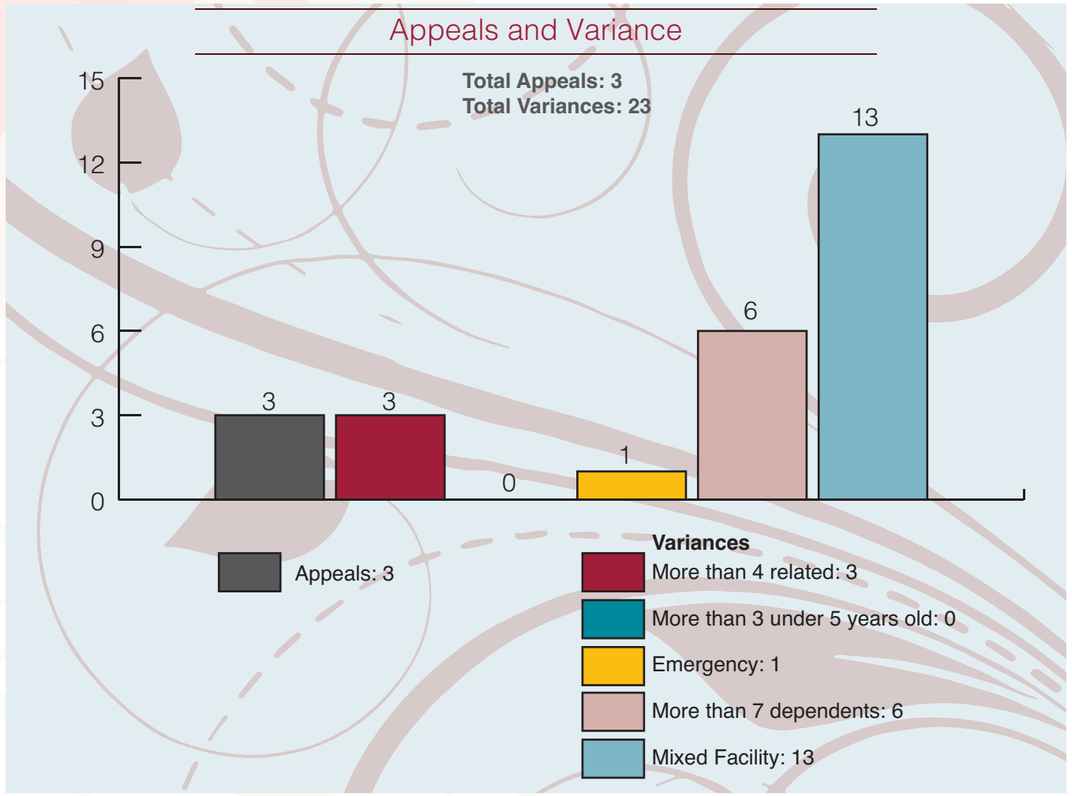
Amendments to the foster regulations have been a welcome change to prevent barriers to licencing more family foster homes.

- Section 51 (2) of the Child and Family Services (CFS) Act which previously allowed for children to remain in foster homes during the appeal process has been repealed. There is no longer a requirement for a child to remain in the home if the foster parent file an objection with the Agency.
- In addition, a foster parent's right to Authority reconsideration and independent appeal about a decision to remove a child from the foster home under Section 51 (4) of the CFS Act has also been repealed. CFS Authorities will give final determination on the removal of a child.
- In addition, a foster parent's right to Authority reconsideration and independent appeal about a decision to remove a child from the foster home under Section 51 (4) of the CFS Act has also been repealed.

The approval of minimal safety standards, including the physical inspection of potential carers' homes, will allow First Nation communities to use standards based on their community appraisal and community exceptions that will allow children to remain in the community with their familial surroundings.

As we enter the new year, the Southern First Nations Network of Care will place more emphasis on and endorse An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children, youth, and families, particularly the Best Interests of Indigenous Children, its Purpose and Principles, Placement of Indigenous Children, and Provision of Child and Family Services.

Currently, SFNNC has declined to attend the Standardized Modernization Working Group. Once directed to reconnect with the SMWG, SFNNC will participate in the negotiations concerning the changes to the new proposed agreement regarding how agencies will operate within their child welfare system.



Alternative Care Unit

Tiffany Newton
Administrative Assistant

Lucinda Massan
Alternative Care Specialist

Sandra Starr
Acting Alternative Care Manager

Jessica Thordarson
Alternative Care Coordinator

Collaborative Authority Resource Team

Assisting Agencies with Placement Resources for Children and Youth

Collaborative Authority Resource Team

The focus of CART (Collaborative Authority Resource Team), which is comprised of one representative from each Authority, remains working collaboratively with agencies to locate long-term placements for children and youth.

CART activities continue to include:

- Monitoring agency EPR usage
- Meeting bi-weekly with EPR staff
- Attending placement planning conferences

The Southern Network of Care Representative is Jessica Thordarson

Provincial Placement Desk

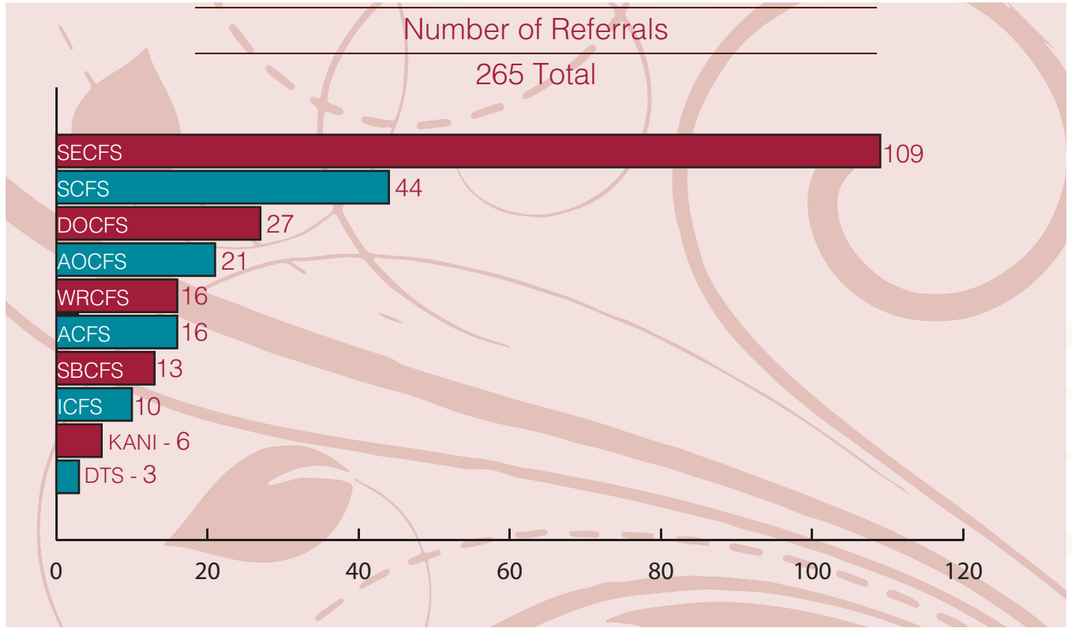
In an effort to streamline and collaborate on the placement of children and youth to provincially approved level IV and V group and foster care resources. This process continues to involve referrals being sent directly to the Southern Network CART representative. The responsibilities of the Southern Network CART representative continue to include the following:

- Screening all incoming PPD referrals and offer suggestions for alternative placement resources if required (i.e. direct referral resources)
- Attending weekly meetings between CART and the PPD to review resource vacancies and to track referrals
- Attending quarterly PPD Panel meetings between CART, the CFSD and community care providers (Knowles, Project Neecheewam, MYS, Marymound etc.)
- Attending placement planning conferences as requested

In 2023/24, the following statistics from the Southern Network member agencies were reported regarding the PPD: the number of referrals by agency; the outcome of referrals; and the type of placement.

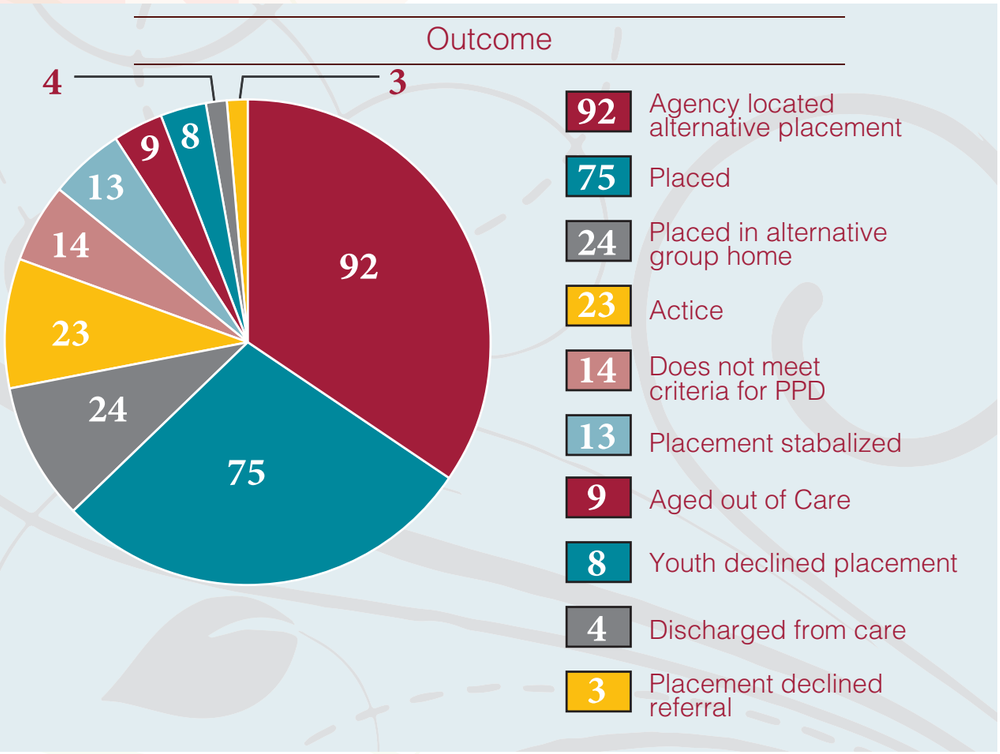
Number of Referrals

SFNNC received a total of 265 referrals by the agencies, with Southeast having the greatest (109) and Dakota Tiwahe Services the least (3).



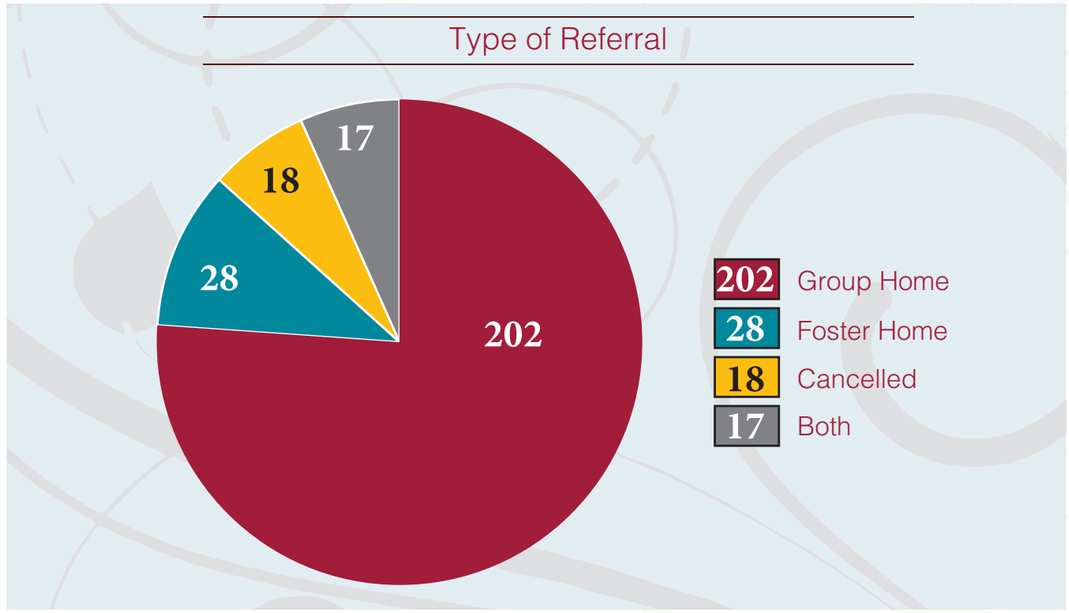
Outcome of Referral

Of the 265 referrals: 92 resulted in agency finding alternative placement; 75 resulted in their PPD referral placement; 24 resulted in youth being placed in an alternative PPD resource; 23 are still on the waitlist for their referred resource; 14 did not meet the requirements of a PPD referral and therefore closed; 13 referrals were cancelled as the youth's current placement had stabilized; 9 aged out of care before placement occurred; 8 were closed as the youth refused to be placed in a group home; 4 were discharged from care prior to placement; and 3 were closed as the placement resources declined the referrals.



Resource Type for Referrals

Of the 265 referrals, 202 were referred to group homes and 17 were referred to treatment foster homes. 18 were referred to both a group home and treatment foster homes. 28 were not referred anywhere as the referral was closed prior to being referred to a placement resource.



Process:

The agency sends me an email with the PRU Referral Form, current Social History, and any assessments that have been completed within the past 3 years. Once I have reviewed and approved this referral, it is forwarded to the Provincial Placement Desk. Every Tuesday morning a representative from the PPD and I meet to discuss the referrals made the week prior. We determine which placement resource would be best for each youth. Either a Treatment Foster Home or a Group Care Resource is identified. Systems meetings occur when a youth is struggling in a PPD placement.

Emergency Placement Resource

Process:

EPR sends regular notifications regarding recent admissions into Emergency Placement Resources as well as any discharges. Monthly meetings occur to discuss any issues, trends, or needs for high-risk youth.

Every 30 days, discharge planning meetings occur with EPR staff, Agency staff to ensure Agency is actively working towards other placement options. EPR sends regular notifications to address any child who has been in EPR for an extended period.

Financing the Restoring the Sacred Bond Initiative

The Restoring the Sacred Bond initiative is financed through Manitoba's landmark Social Impact Bond Strategy. Social Impact Bonds serve as an innovative tool for funding social services where investors assist in the funding of the program with the expectation of financial return from the provincial government upon successful outcomes. The Government of Manitoba launched the landmark Social Impact Bond in 2018 to support children and families who are in contact with (or at risk of being in contact with) the child welfare system. Through innovative methods of funding such as social impact bonds, there is an opportunity to learn and develop best practices to inform other key stakeholders, governments and services going forward.

As the Intermediary for the development of the Restoring the Sacred Bond Initiative, MaRS Centre for Impact Investing, provided expertise, support and served as a liaison to recruit potential investors for this social impact bond. With their support the Southern Network was able to secure financial investments from eight philanthropic foundations and private investors. These investors are committed to making a social impact to the Indigenous community through an innovative and culturally appropriate program that aims to help children by keeping families together.

Special thanks and Gratitude

to the Government of Manitoba, MaRS, and the Restoring the Sacred Bond Investors:

- Anonymous Investor
- Balsam Foundation
- Children's Aid Foundation of Canada
- C.P. Loewen Family Foundation
- Inspirit Foundation
- Lawson Foundation
- McConnell Foundation
- The Winnipeg Foundation

Quality Assurance (Vision Keepers)

The Southern First Nations Quality Assurance Unit (QA Unit) works collectively with our Chiefs and Councils, Board of Directors, Senior Management, and provincial and federal compliance bodies to monitor, review, and recommend best practices and services to agencies working with children and families within our jurisdiction.

The Quality Assurance Unit works directly with both on- and off-reserve agency staff. The primary goals of QA are to promote organizational stability and ensure that quality and efficient services are delivered to children, youth, young adults, and their families across the province.

Major Functions of the Quality Assurance Unit:

- Partner with SFNNC agencies to complete Quality Assurance Reviews.
- Ensure management is aware of their staff's compliance with the guidelines set forth by the Province of Manitoba and the Government of Canada.
- Provide real-time and accurate data so management can make informed decisions concerning workflow and the needs of their respective community.

The focus of the SFNNC Quality Assurance Unit in the 2023/2024 fiscal year:

- Critical Incidents Reviews
- Child Abuse Committees
- Training and Staff Development
- Year-End Reporting Data Compliance

Critical Incident Reviews & Reporting

What is a critical incident?

A critical incident is an incident that has resulted in the death or serious injury of a child or youth.

What is a serious Injury?

A serious injury is a physical or psychological injury that will have life-long, permanent effects.

SFNNC agencies are required to report critical incidents if the child or youth was receiving services from the agency or if that child or its parent/guardian received services from an agency within one year before a critical incident occurred. The agency should complete a Critical Incident Report. If more than one agency was involved, both agencies may be required to report.

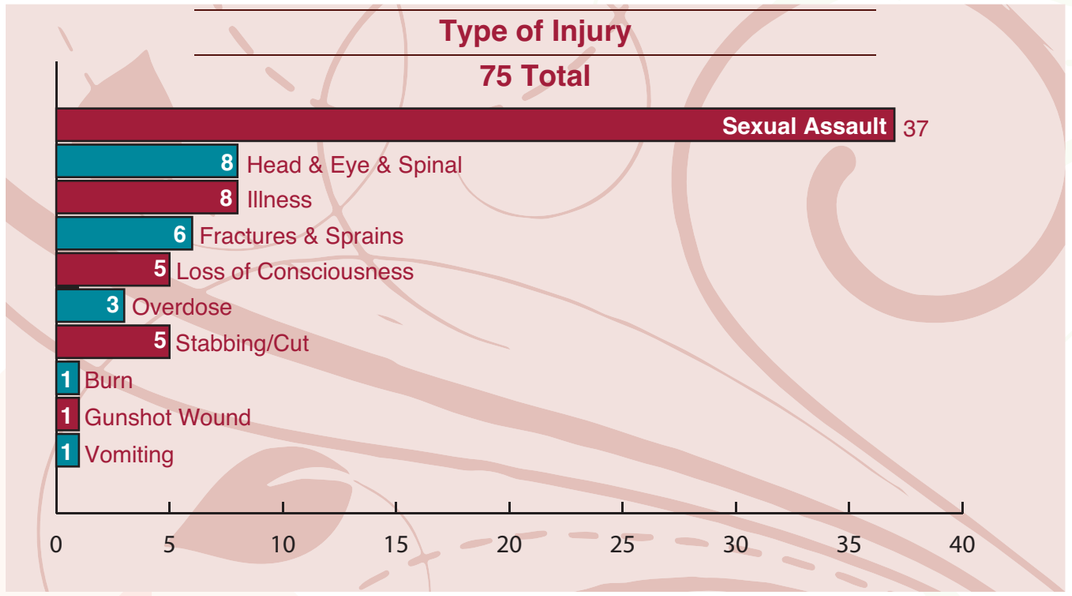
- All serious injuries occurring **July 1, 2023, or later** must be reported to the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth (MACY). Injuries that occurred between the proclamation of the Advocate for Children and Youth Act (ACYA) on March 15, 2018, and June 30, 2023, can be reported but will only be reviewed or investigated at the discretion of the Manitoba Advocate.

Critical Incidents in the 2023/2024 fiscal year:

Children and Youth Injuries

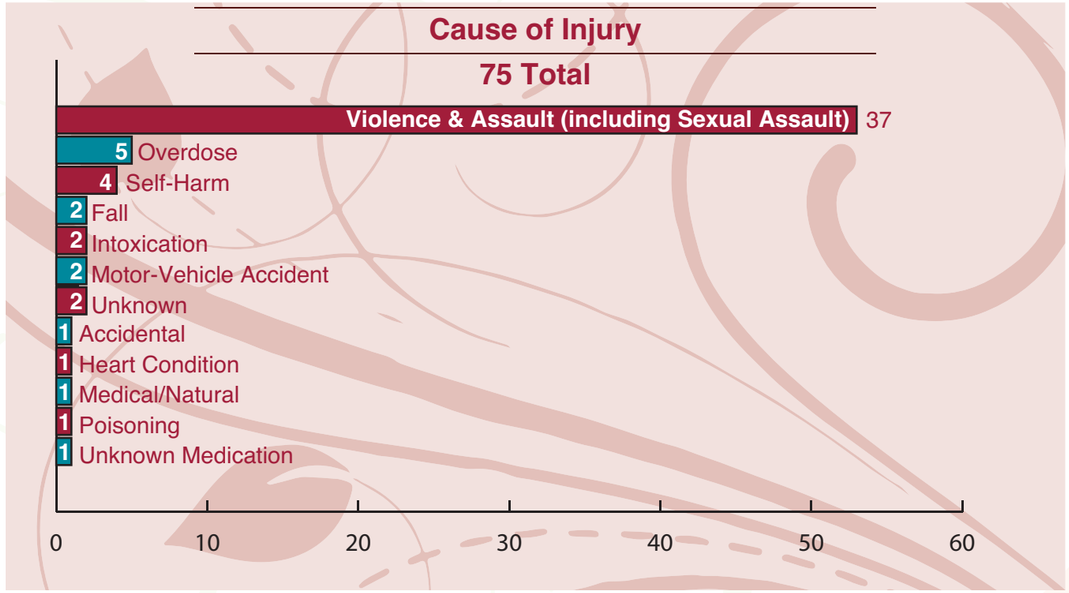
Injuries by Type:

Type of Injury	Count
Sexual Assault	37
Head & Eye & Spinal	8
Illness	8
Fractures & Sprains	6
Loss of Consciousness	5
Overdose	3
Stabbing/Cut	5
Burn	1
Gunshot Wound	1
Vomiting	1
Grand Total	**75**



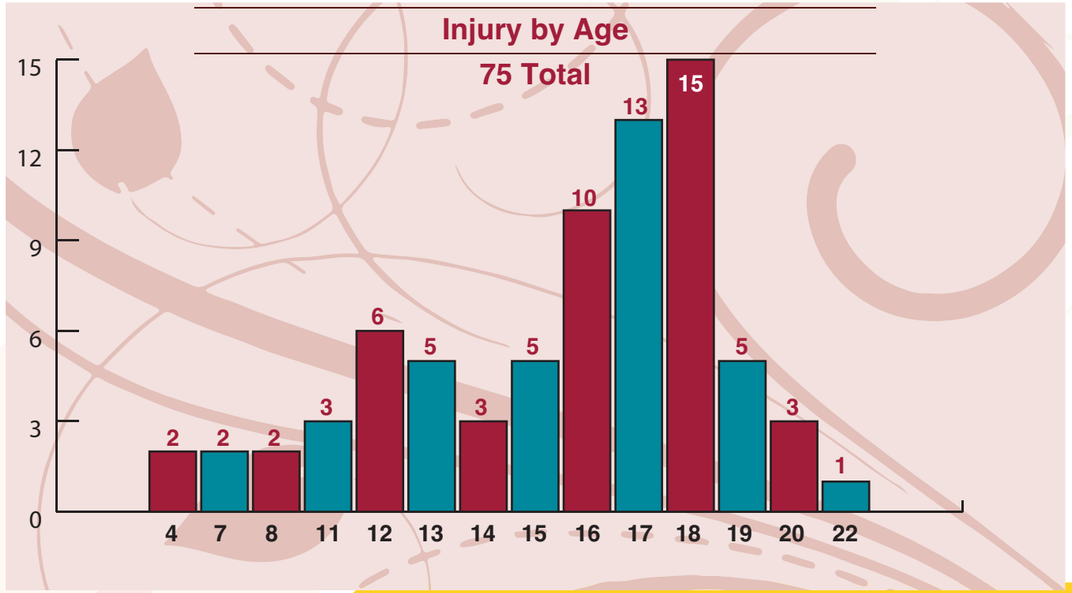
Injuries by Cause:

Cause of Injury	Count
Violence & Assault (including Sexual Assault)	53
Overdose	5
Self-Harm	4
Fall	2
Intoxication	2
Motor-Vehicle Accident	2
Unknown	2
Accidental	1
Heart Condition	1
Medical/Natural	1
Poisoning	1
Unknown Medication	1
Grand Total	**75**



Injuries by Age:

Age	Count
4	2
7	2
8	2
11	3
12	6
13	5
14	3
15	5
16	10
17	13
18	15
19	5
20	3
22	1
Grand Total	**75**



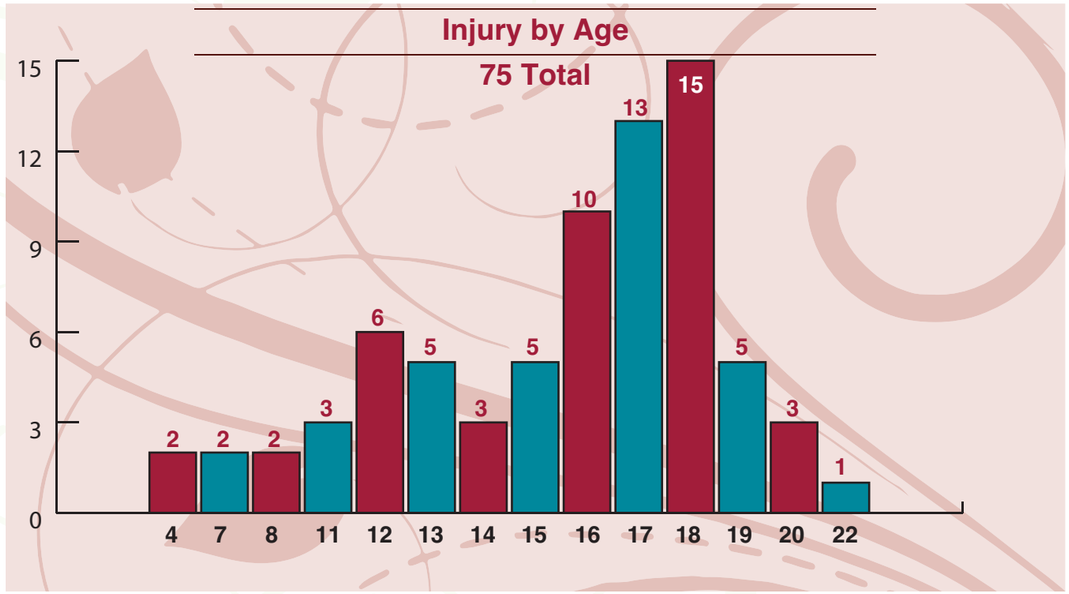
Child and Youth Death:

Manner of Death:

Manner of Death	Count
**Undetermined	17
Natural	16
Accidental	10
Suicide	5
Homicide	3
Illness	1
Grand Total	**52**

*Undetermined deaths may be related to safe sleep.

**Autopsy reports may not be available for 1-2 years after death, and therefore may not be known at the time of the release of this report.



Cause of Death:

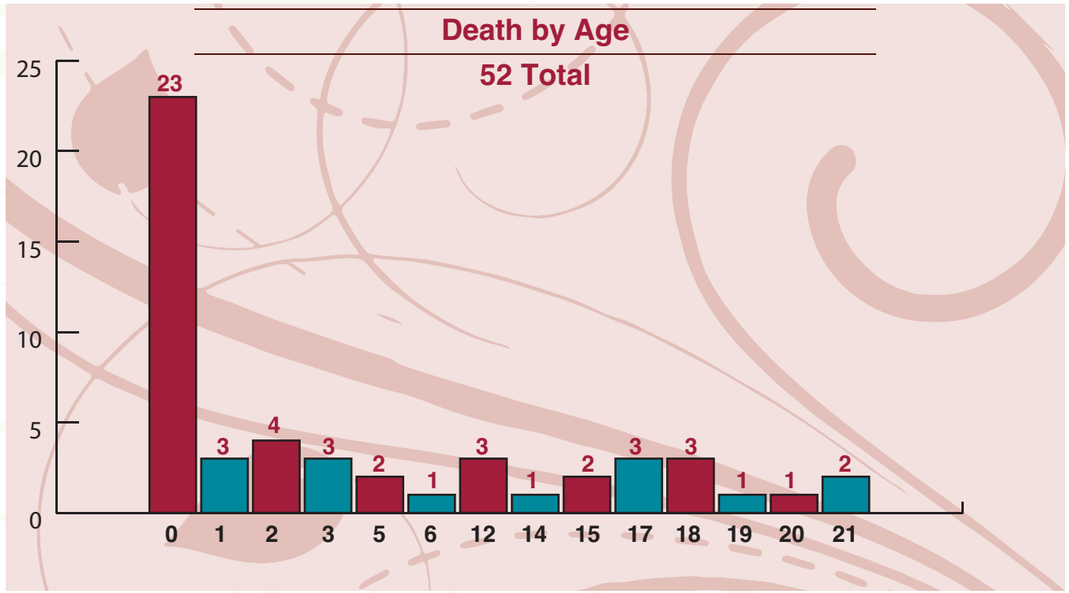
Cause of Death	Count
**Unknown	17
Medical Complications	6
Hanging/Strangulation	5
Car Accident	2
Gunshot Wound	2
Premature birth	2
Asphyxiation/Choking	1
Carbon Monoxide Poisoning	1
Cardiac Arrest/ Suspected Overdose	1
Couch Accident	1
COVID-related - Medically fragile	1
Drowning	1
Failure to Thrive	1
Genetic Abnormality	1
House/Apartment Fire	1
Influenza	1
Medical - Tuberculosis	1
Overdose	1
Physical Assault	1
Stillbirth	1
Suffocation	1
Unknown, Possible Aspiration	1
Unknown, Possible Neglect	1
Grand Total	**52**

*Undetermined deaths may be related to safe sleep.

**Autopsy reports may not be available for 1-2 years after death, and therefore may not be known at the time of the release of this report.

Death by Age:

Age	Count
0	23
1	3
2	4
3	3
5	2
6	1
12	3
14	1
15	2
17	3
18	3
19	1
20	1
21	2
Grand Total	**52**



Child Abuse Committees

The Child and Family Services Act (CFSA) requires agencies to establish at least one Child Abuse Committee (CAC) to review cases of suspected abuse and to advise the agency concerning what actions may in its opinion be required to protect a child or other children. Child and family services authorities are individually and collectively responsible for ensuring CACs operate throughout the province.

The CAC composition is made up of a multi-disciplinary group of individuals including a medical practitioner, a police officer, a representative of a school division, a staff member of the agency, and a Child Abuse Coordinator.

The provincial Child Abuse Registry established under section 19.1 of the CFSA contains information on persons who have abused a child as defined in the CFSA. The director is responsible for the operation of the provincial Child Abuse Registry.

The Child Abuse Committee has four primary functions:

- Review every case of suspected abuse referred to the committee
- Review as required, the involvement of the police, medical and hospital professionals, and others involved in the investigation and management of the case
- Provide consultation in the investigation and management of the case
- Make recommendations where it is considered appropriate or necessary to protect the child or any other child. This includes recommending that an alleged offender be named on the Child Abuse Registry.

The SFNNC currently has 11 Child Abuse Committees in operation.

In the Spring of 2024, the Child Protection Branch (CPB) began a review of the composition and function of CACs within the four authorities in Manitoba. Working groups were established to discuss the future of these committees, including the possibility of centralizing the committees to ensure consistency for each potential Child Abuse Registry review. This audit will continue into the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

Training and Staff Development

Southern First Nation Network of Care agencies design and implement their Education and Training (E&T) programs. E&T Funds are provided to each agency at the start of the fiscal year, and then quarterly thereafter. The step away from hosting training at the SFNNC promotes the independence and unique needs of each agency. This also permits agencies to identify the training needs within their staff compliments and create space to change their training programs regularly, as needed.

The Joint Training Team: The Joint Training Team (JTT) is a permanent subcommittee of the provincial Child and Family Services Standing Committee. The JTT originated in 2007 under the name Joint Training Unit (JTU) and though it changed its name in 2009, the committee has continued to collaboratively explore and address the training needs of the child and family services (CFS) workforce in Manitoba successfully for the last 15 years.

The purpose of the JTT is to develop a professional, qualified, culturally competent workforce in the CFS system. Through inter-authority partnership, the JTT is responsible for developing, coordinating, implementing, and evaluating education and training activities and curricula for staff and caregivers in the Child and Family Services system.

Throughout the 23/24 fiscal year, the SFNNC JTT representative attended monthly meetings and worked in conjunction with the other three authorities and the Child and Family Services Branch, to provide important learning opportunities to agency staff and service providers throughout Manitoba.

Membership

The Manitoba Joint Training Team is comprised of a training representative from each of the four Child and Family Services Authorities and the Child and Family Services Branch.

Joint Training Team Annual Priorities for 2023/2024:

It is the intention of JTT, in consultation with the Standing Committee governing body, to set annual priorities of focus for training in each fiscal year. The following joint training initiatives were prioritized with the Standing Committee for the 23/24 fiscal year:

- Clinical Supervision Training
- Safer Sleep for Infants
- Global Interview Training
- Child Abuse Investigation Training
- Within Arm's Reach: Ice & Water Safety Training
- Child and Family Services Application Training (CFSA)
- Gender Diversity Workshops
- Youth and Substance Abuse Training
- Safe & Together Training (domestic violence awareness)

New in 2023/2024:

- **Residential School Training:**

This two-day workshop provides an overview of residential schools, the historical and current intergenerational effects, and truth and reconciliation from a traditional Indigenous perspective. Workshop objectives include the development of reconciliation strategies that can be implemented in personal and professional circles.

This training stems from recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action (2015) and the report entitled The Legacy of Phoenix Sinclair, Achieving the Best for All Our Children (2013).

The 2023-24 fiscal year saw three new Residential School Training Facilitators trained in a "Train-the-Trainer series. The preceding facilitator (who retired in 2021) worked with each trainee to prepare them to carry on this material independently (as a group of 3).

There was also some opportunity for agency staff to join in the facilitator training workshops. In total 14 staff attended the workshops throughout the year.

Workshops will be starting again in Fall 2024.

This training will always be offered in person to gauge the impact of the materials on participants, and to provide support if required.

Work in Development:

- **Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's Training)**

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommended that training be developed to educate service providers on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). ACEs can impact kids' health and well-being. They can have long-term effects on adult health and wellness. Their consequences can affect families, communities, and even society. These e-training courses will help staff and service providers understand, recognize, and prevent ACEs.

JTT worked with Red River Polytech, led by Dr. Rob Santos, to develop several e-learning modules. These modules are expected to be ready for rollout in the fall of 2024 and will be accessible on the CFS Learning Management System at www.cfslearning.mb.ca.

Restoring the Sacred Bond Initiative

The Restoring the Sacred Bond (RSB) Initiative sought to improve maternal and child health and strengthen cultural identity in Manitoba's First Nation communities, through access to culturally grounded birth helpers in Winnipeg and the surrounding areas. The three-year pilot project, led by the Southern First Nations Network of Care (SFNNC) and Wiijii'idiwag Ikwewag, matched Indigenous Birth Helpers with Indigenous mothers at risk of having their infant apprehended into the child welfare system. The initiative was funded through a Social Impact Bond – a financial arrangement in which private investors provide the capital to fund the Intervention and the Government of Manitoba repays the investors, with interest, based on the achievement of agreed-upon outcomes.

In addition to comparing the number of days in care between participants and the matched control group, program evaluation focused on assessing program implementation and effectiveness. Based on observational data and interviews, findings from the program evaluation sought to determine the degree to which the program delivered services responsive to participants' needs and contributed to enhanced health and well-being.

The evaluation was overseen by an Evaluation Committee with representatives from partner agencies, the Government of Manitoba, the RSB Project Board, the external evaluator, and the University of Manitoba's Manitoba Centre for Health Policy. Ethics approval and permissions to access data to compare the number of days in care were provided by the University of Manitoba Research Ethics Board and Manitoba's Health Information Privacy Committee.

The evaluation was completed in Spring 2023.

Findings

Did participation lead to a reduced number of days in care?

- Children born to mothers enrolled in Restoring the Sacred Bond had a lower chance of being taken into care in their first year than those in the control group.
- 25% of children in the program group were brought into care in the first year of life, compared to 33% of children among control group members.
- Statistical modeling showed 39.7 fewer days in care among the program group than the control group.
- In interviews, participants said the program provided a positive and supportive experience that was responsive to family needs.
- Participants enhanced well-being through connections to Indigenous culture and identity, health services, addiction treatment, school and work opportunities, and basic needs (housing, nutrition).

Restoring the Sacred Bond successfully achieved its goal of reducing days in care by preventing apprehension and reducing time spent in care. **Children in the program spent an average of 39.7 fewer days in care than children in a matched control group.**

Despite challenges presented by COVID-19, participants felt well supported, sharing examples of connections made to support services, work, and employment and strengthen social networks and cultural identity.

The Restoring the Sacred Bond initiative proved to be an important step in supporting families and reducing the likelihood of a family requiring Child and Family Service intervention.

Special thanks and gratitude to the Government of Manitoba, MaRS, and the Restoring the Sacred Bond Investors:

- Anonymous Investor
- Balsam Foundation
- Children's Aid Foundation of Canada
- C.P. Loewen Family Foundation
- Inspirit Foundation
- Lawson Foundation
- McConnell Foundation
- The Winnipeg Foundation

Data Reporting & Compliance

Agencies are expected to use recordkeeping systems and processes that facilitate compliance with legislation and regulations. SFNNC's responsibilities for ensuring this best practice include:

- Monitoring agency record management practices that facilitate the case management process
- Compliance with confidentiality and access requirements in section 76 of the CFSA
- Ensuring agencies input data in the Child and Family Services Application (CFSIS) according to minimum standards.
- Ensuring agencies complete monthly compliance reports.
- Compliance with year-end reporting. This is crucial in ensuring proper case numbers, legal status, placements, and demographic information are up to date.

2023/2024 Quality Assurance Team Members

Christian Torfason – Quality Assurance Manager

Jade Chymy – Quality Assurance Vision Keeper

Cub Spring – Quality Assurance Vision Keeper

Clarissa Fontaine – Quality Assurance Administrative Assistant

Joint Training Team 2023 / 2024 Annual Report

The Joint Training Team (JTT) is a permanent subcommittee of the provincial Child and Family Services Standing Committee. The JTT originated in 2007 under the name Joint Training Unit (JTU) and though it changed its name in 2009, the committee has continued to collaboratively explore and address the training needs of the child and family services (CFS) workforce in Manitoba successfully for the last 15 years.

The purpose of the JTT is to develop a professional, qualified, culturally competent workforce in the CFS system. Through inter-Authority partnership, the JTT is responsible for developing, coordinating, implementing, and evaluating education and training activities and curricula for staff and caregivers in the child and family services system.

Following an interruption of training services during the 2020-2021 COVID-19 pandemic, the focus of the JTT has been to address the priority needs of the staff and agencies, while looking towards future goals of shifting and deepening practice across the province.

Membership

The composition of the JTT includes an education and training representative from each of the four Child and Family Services Authorities as well as the Child and Family Services Branch. The core members of the JTT during April 1, 2021 – March 31, 2022 include:

Selena Linski (to November 2021)
Quality Assurance Specialist
Southern First Nations Network of Care

Jade Chymy
Quality Assurance Specialist
Southern First Nations Network of Care

Kirra Noble
Service Specialist
Metis Child and Family Services Authority

Colleen Robinson (to January 2022)
Education and Training Coordinator / Trainer
First Nations of Northern Manitoba Child and Family Services Authority

Pam Logan (March 2022)
Special Rates and AYA Coordinator
First Nations of Northern Manitoba Child and Family Services Authority

Lisa Schmidt
Program Specialist
The General Child and Family Services Authority

Amber Vialette
Provincial Training Coordinator
Child and Family Services Branch
Manitoba Families
Additional members:

Laura Friesen – three-month membership and chair position fill-in (October to December 2021)
Special Operations Specialist
Child and Family Services Branch
Manitoba Families

The JTT reports to the Child and Family Services Standing Committee and is working on behalf of the four Child and Family Services Authorities and the Child and Family Services Branch.

The following joint training initiatives emerged through JTT communication and were prioritized in this reporting period.

- **Abuse Training**

  Child abuse investigations is an integral responsibility in the role of a child protection worker, and one that requires specialized knowledge and experience to effectively investigate and assess risk related to child physical and sexual abuse.

  a. **Introduction to Abuse Investigations:** The Introduction to Child Abuse Investigations training is a two-day virtual course for Child and Family Services workers new to conducting child abuse investigations. The program includes an overview of guiding legislation, abuse investigation process as identified in CFS Standards of Practice and research pertaining to best practice models. The training also briefly touches on basic interview skills and analysis/assessment. and assess risk related to child physical and sexual abuse.

     Total: 8 Attendees.

b. **Abuse Investigations Training Pilot:** The training focuses on continuous development of skill and knowledge in abuse investigations by taking the participant through a series of core training modules in addition to several information sessions on specialised abuse topics. The pilot was divided into three training cohorts based on investigative function (CAC Coordinators and Supervisors, Abuse Investigators, and general intake workers who conduct investigations).

   *A comprehensive evaluation is occurring which will be utilized to determine the future state of the abuse training program. As of March 31, 2022, Cohort 3 is still in the stages of evaluation.

   Cohort 1 total = 10 Attendees

   Cohort 2 total = 15 Attendees

c. **StepWise 360:** Interviewing Children and Youth: A basic course that provides participants with the knowledge and skills necessary to conduct effective interviews of children and adolescents.

   Cohort 1 Total = 10 Attendees

   Cohort 2 Total = 12 Attendees

d. **The Investigative Interviewing Course:** This course provides best practice interviewing instruction to investigators for suspects, witness and victim interviews. The suspect interview training is based upon a non-accusatorial, non-confrontational, research supported philosophy which responds to case law and focuses on professional and respectful conversation management.

   Cohort 1 Total: 8

   Cohort 2 Total (June 22): N/A

e. **Assessing Risk for Violence/Assessing Risk for Sexual Offenders:** Part 1 of the course providers learners with foundational knowledge and skills on violence risk prediction and risk management, and teachers them to conduct reliable and defensible risk assessment. Part 2 is a workshop that provides learns with foundation knowledge on the assessment and management of individuals who commit sexual offences.

   Cohort 1 Total = 10 Attendees

   Cohort 2 Total (Apr 22): N/A

- **Additional Seminars/Learning**

1. **Physical/Medical indicators and assessment of Child Abuse:**

   Cohort 1 Total = 10

   Cohort 2 Total = 14

2. **Investigating Sexual Exploitation of Youth- including on-line sexual exploitation and child pornography:**

   Cohort 1 Total = 10

   Cohort 2 Total = 14

3. **Sexual Behaviour of Children:**

   Cohort 1 Total = 9

   Cohort 2 Total = 13

4. **Child Abuse Committees:**

   Cohort 1 Total = 2

   Cohort 2 Total (May 22) = N/A

- **Annual Child Abuse Committee Coordinator Conference:**

The annual Child Abuse Committee Coordinator Conference is an opportunity for all Child Abuse Committee Coordinators and their three invited guests (CAC members) to gain further knowledge and expertise in their roles as coordinators and members, as well as in the area of child abuse.

As the 13th annual conference was not able to take place in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, JTT took the opportunity to consider the recommendation to host the event on a semi-annual basis. The 2023 event is scheduled to resume in the Spring of 2023.

- **Child and Family Services Application (CFSA) Training:**

The Child and Family Services Applications (CFSA) are the electronic record keeping systems used by CFS organizations to collect and manage information on cases and services provided to families. The CFSA consists of the Intake Module and the Child and Family Services Information System (CFSIS). The Child and Family Services Branch, in communication with the JTT, continued to provide CFSA training for CFS staff from April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022.

In addition to formal training, there were 270 consults conducted by trainers with individuals from agencies, Authorities, and other CFS entities.

Authority	In Person	Online	Total Trained	Consults
SFNNC	15	202	217	270

Work in Development

- **Standards modernization training:**

Case Management Standards training has been identified as a priority need of the four authorities; however, given the significant changes being made in the current Standards Modernization project, the development of new curricula in this area was paused while finalization of the Standards rewrite occurs.

Once the Standards modernization project is complete, a new self-guided Case Management Standards training will be launched.

- **Clinical Supervision Training:**

The Clinical Supervision training is being adapted from an existing curriculum currently being used by the Ministry of Children and Family Development in British Columbia, to meet the identified supervisory training needs of CFS agencies in Manitoba. Intended to be a broad overview of clinical supervision practices, this training is offered to supplement agency-specific supervisor training on supervision policies and case review practices.

The clinical supervision training is being developed solely as an online self-guided training module, which will be launched in the 2022-23 year.

- **Safe Sleep**

Manitoba's Advocate for Children and Youth has long recommended that more education be provided around safe sleep for Manitoba's infants. JTT, in coordination with Manitoba Health has distributed newly developed resource materials to Agencies in the province and is working to create a self-guided online learning that will assist in completing a safe sleep assessment for families with infants in their care.

- **Adverse Childhood Experience**

  The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommended that training be developed to educate service providers on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's). JTT is working with Red River Polytech, led by Dr. Rob Santos, to create a learning module.

- **Youth and Substance Abuse Training**

  JTT has been working with the YASU/YACI/CPB working group who has developed a presentation on Youth and Substance Abuse. Training in this area is under development.

Looking Forward

As indicated above, the JTT has instituted a process of receiving feedback and direction from Standing Committee in regard to the training priorities for the upcoming 2022-2023 training calendar. As a result of these discussions, the following trainings have been identified as the JTTs primary considerations for the year to come. The following items were presented and approved as priorities on February 16th, 2022.

- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's)
- Residential Schools Training
- Safe Sleep
- Protecting and Supporting Children's Act
- Youth and Substance Abuse Training
- Child Abuse Committee Conference

Finance Unit

The Finance Unit is responsible for managing the core financial functions of the Southern Network. Our team collaborates closely with member agencies to provide support in financial accountability and reporting, ensuring effective and responsible financial management.

Our Team

- Zhenyu Wu - Chief Financial Officer
- Eunice Roulette - Finance Officer
- Judy Rumple - Single Envelope Funding Implementation Officer
- Kitt Boken - Accounting Clerk
- Kyle Newton - Financial Consultant Special Projects
- Samuel Paulos - Financial Analyst

Goals and Objectives

The primary goals and objectives of the Finance Unit include:

- Addressing federal and provincial child welfare reforms.
- Developing a comprehensive financial reporting and accountability framework.
- Creating policies and procedures for the implementation of Single Envelope Funding.
- Securing appropriate funding for the Southern Network and its member agencies to fulfill their responsibilities effectively.

Key Activities in 2023-2024

Throughout the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the Finance Unit has engaged in the following key activities:

- Implementing outcome-based funding initiatives, such as Single Envelope Funding, to align financial incentives with positive outcomes rather than increasing caseloads and extended care durations.
- Actively participating in the ongoing implementation of Customary Care.
- Developing budgets and providing financial guidance for the Restoring the Sacred Bond Initiative.
- Implementing recommendations from the Strategic Plan Review and financial review conducted by Internal Audit and Consulting Services, including the development of a comprehensive financial policies manual.
- Establishing financial accountability and reporting frameworks for member agencies.
- Continuing efforts to secure adequate funding for the Southern Network and its member agencies to effectively carry out their responsibilities.

Southern First Nations Network of Care

Annual Report

2023-2024

Standing Strong

Zongi Kabawii (Ojibway)

Washaked nazin (Dakota)

Kamaskwikapawi (Cree)

www.SouthernNetwork.org