



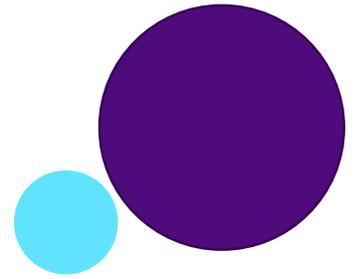
**West Central
Women's
Resource
Centre**

Reconciliation Month

2021 Report Back



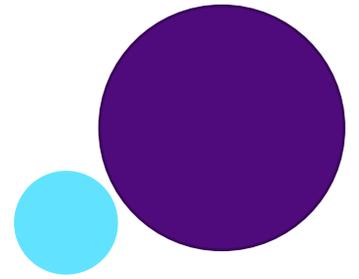
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Ways of Working Approach



We are community-led, and Indigenous participants are regularly consulted in the development of our programs and events.

We take what we learn from our Indigenous participants and staff every day and apply that knowledge and power in our interactions with other participants.

Staff are educated on intercultural competency, conflict resolution, anti-racism, and anti-oppression.

We offer tobacco and provide honorariums to Elders and Knowledge Keepers.

We commissioned an art piece from a local Indigenous artist to commemorate our 20th anniversary.

We cater and purchase from Indigenous-owned businesses as often as possible.

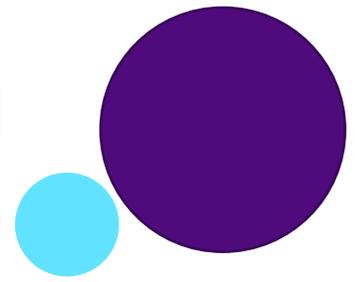
Our email signatures acknowledge the territory we work on.

Our Executive Director sits on the Steering Committee for Velma's House, a project through Kani Kanichihk to provide support.

We include Indigenous land acknowledgment, prayer, and/or drumming at the beginning of staff events and presentations.



Ways of Working Approach



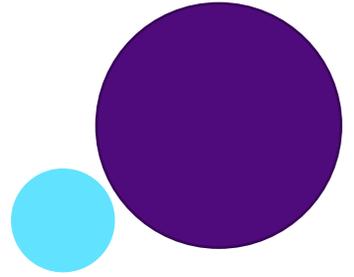
Our Executive Director is being mentored by an Indigenous Elder to do the work of uncolonizing our workplace and building better supports for Indigenous staff and community members.

We have positions on the Board of Directors reserved for Indigenous women and other marginalized identities. We currently have 3 members of our board who identify as Indigenous, including an Elder who provides teachings and guidance to the board. In total 7 of 11 board members are BIPOC.

Conducted a staff identity and inclusion survey to better understand the diversity that currently exists on our team, identify gaps and identify gap areas and set targets to diversify our staff team, and establish priorities for future hiring and assess and improve workplace culture around equity and inclusion.



Ways of Working Hiring & HR



Updated equity statement on job postings to better articulate our commitment to inclusion during the hiring process.

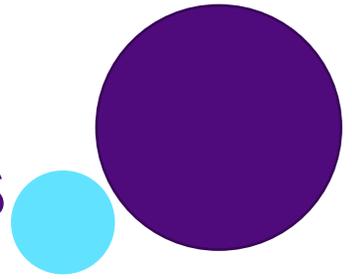
Our hiring policy prioritizes Indigenous peoples, visible and ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, persons of minority sexual orientations and gender identities.

We are developing a HR plan that is rooted in an anti-colonial, anti-oppressive framework and includes Indigenous leadership consultation.

HR strategy network to collaborate with other organizations to identify and implement inclusive HR practises.



Communication, Training & Events



COVID-19

Supported indigenous community in creative ways to get their needs met during COVID.

Throughout the pandemic, the Centre provided traditional Indigenous medicines for community member who needed them.

Ran two no-barrier vaccine pop-up clinics in our Centre which included Elder supports.

Staff Training, Committees & Events

ALL STAFF TRAINING

- Anti-racism
- 2SLGBTQ+ Awareness, Inclusion and Affirmation in the Workplace
- Treaties with Aimee Craft from the Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba
- Sex Work, Health and Rights training with Sex Workers of Winnipeg Action Coalition

Some staff are trained in First Nations Mental Health First Aid.

Our staff wellness day included a sharing circle and sweat lodge, facilitated by local Elders and Knowledge Keepers.



Communication, Training & Events

Staff participate in the Centre's participatory management committees, including the Inclusion Committee, Policy and Training, and Health, Safety & Wellness. Staff members promoted inclusivity through events and sharing information, worked to develop inclusive policies and procedures, and recommended trainings related to anti-oppression.

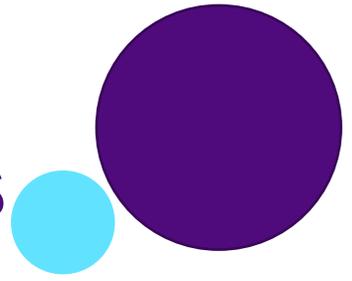
Paint night for staff facilitated by Indigenous artist Jackie Traverse



One staff's painting from Paint Night with Jackie Traverse.



Communication, Training & Events



Days of Observance

We honoured Two-Spirit people on International Gender Non-Binary Da.

Participated in Orange Shirt Day by wearing orange shirts and made tiny orange t shirt pins for Orange Shirt Day to raise awareness of Residential Schools

Celebrated Indigenous People's Day with stew and Bannock for community.

Red Dress Day: Handmade Red Dress pins that were handed out in drop-in and sent to MLAs and City Councillors with letters urging them to take action on MMIWG2S.



Red dress pins & letters for MLAs on Red Dress Day

Recognition of Recovery & Unmarked Graves at Residential Schools

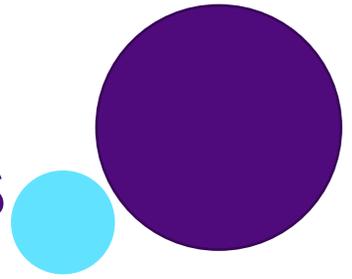
Sent financial and people support to sacred fire at the Legislature following the announcement of the Kamloops unmarked graves.

We provided financial support to the Elders making the trip to Kamloops to deliver the sacred bundle from the sacred fire that was lit at the Legislative building.

Indigenous staff were given the opportunity to take paid time off to grieve and heal following the announcement of the Kamloops unmarked graves.



Communication, Training & Events



Every Child Matters garland in drop-in

Staff created a display in drop-in to acknowledge the discovery of an unmarked grave in Kamloops, BC that held the bodies of 215 Indigenous children.

Reconciliation Month Activities in July 2021

Developed and shared a webpage of resources on how to support reconciliation on Indigenous Peoples Day and Canada Day.

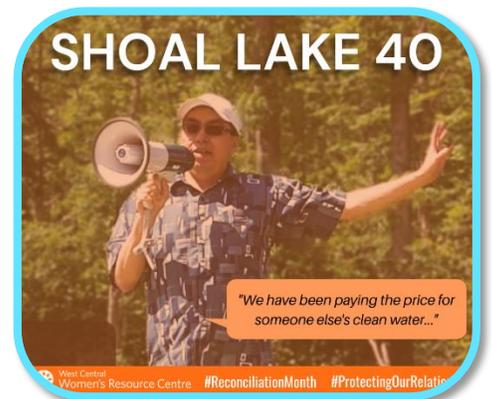
We promoted the work of Indigenous land, water, and people protectors in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, and Internationally on our social media every day in July.

Developed and disseminated Indigenous activity kits for families receiving food hampers.

Had a traditional meal of fish, wild rice, and berries at the end of July for community and had Bannock and tea and smudging every Friday afternoon in July in our community garden.

Staff reviewed and recommitted to TRC Calls to Action.

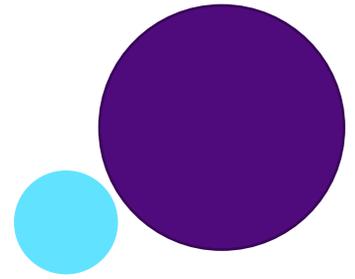
Staff watched and discussed the movie *nîpawistamâsowin: We Will Stand Up*.



*Post honouring Shoal Lake 40 as part of Reconciliation Month
#ProtectOurRelations social media*



Strengthening The Circle



Restoring the Balance Program

Our Executive Director and the Coordinator of Restoring the Balance participated in the consultation to build a provincial action plan for MMIWG2S.

Did a lot of research and talking with folks about how to do Red Road to Healing online in a good way in January.

Virtual Red Road to Healing session offered in May.

Made easy-to-grab medicine packages with instructions for the community.

Sewed 10 ribbon skirts.

167 MMIWG2S red dress kits given out to community.

Hung red dresses in all 4 directions of the city.

Had several convos with schools and other organizations about the red dresses & MMIWG2S via Zoom in October.

**RED DRESSES
FOR MMIWG**

**SEW A DRESS AND
RAISE AWARENESS**

**Make and hang red
dresses around the city
on **OCTOBER 4th**
to raise awareness of our
missing and murdered
Indigenous sisters.**

#REDDRESSWPG

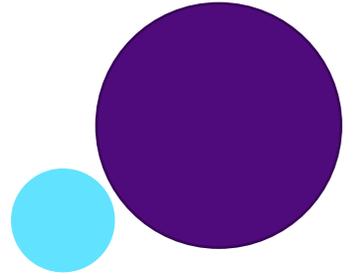
Contact Jolene at 204-774-8975
ext 221 or jojo@wcwrc.ca to pick up a
free dress-making kit or get more info.

 West Central
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Red Dresses for MMIWG initiative



Strengthening The Circle



Restoring the Balance Program (continued)

Made 500+ beaded earring & dreamcatcher kits for community in November and December.

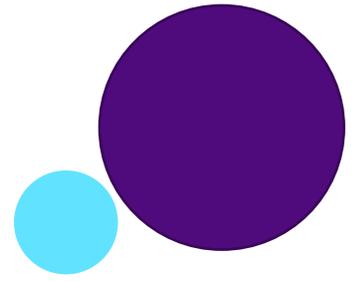
Took inventory of all Indigenous program supplies and restocked. Drum and rattle making kits, cultural beading restocked.

Ceremonies and Events

- 2** Medicine picking trips for sage & sweetgrass in August & September
- 3** Drum Groups held at Vimy Ridge Park
- 4** Seasonal Ceremonies via Facebook Live & in-person
- 13** Full Moon Ceremonies via Facebook Live & in-person
- 52** Monday Morning Prayer & Smudges via Facebook Live



Community Development



Taking Root Childminding Training

Modified and included interview questions that address inclusion and is aimed at eliminating barriers to access the Taking Root pre-employment training.

Collaborated with the Mentorship and Volunteer Coordinator to have an employment volunteer to better support all participants to open additional opportunities for Indigenous Women.

Childminding Coordinator opened all of her spring (2021) Child care Workshops with land acknowledgement.

Childminding Coordinator read the report and learned more about Jordan's Principle

Staff review and revise policies, practices, and procedures to ensure service delivery is culturally appropriate and reflect no bias or racism towards Indigenous Peoples.

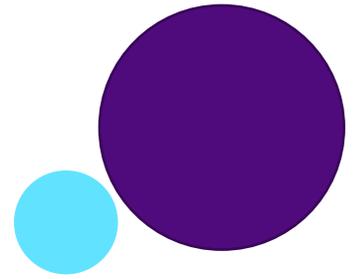


Indigenous art in our childminding room.

Taking Root is a one-year work experience program for women who want to work in childcare.



Community Development



WE WIL (Women Empowering Women Into Leadership)

Provides low-barrier pre-education and pre-employment training for Indigenous women, supporting participants to regain their agency; 80% of Spring 2021 graduates were Indigenous women.

Includes education of the history of Indigenous people, Turtle Island, and residential schools.

Curriculum focused on anti-oppression and empowerment that integrates and refers to Indigenous history throughout.

Session dedicated solely to Indigenous teachings, facilitated by an Elder from our community, and works to unpack the systemic impacts of colonization of Indigenous peoples (with a focus on women and Two-Spirit folks) past, present, and future.

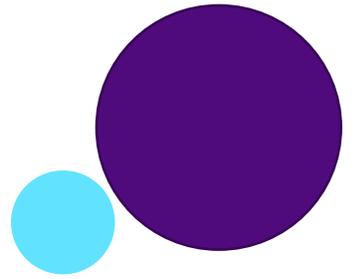
Builds relationships, common ground, and understanding between newcomer and Indigenous participants.

WE WIL is a skill and capacity-building leadership and empowerment program, designed for women who face barriers to employment and education.





Community Development



Mentorship

Provides Indigenous women with work experience and internship opportunities that value their lived experience, where they are able to work with and within the community they belong to. At its core, the Mentorship Program aims to increase the economic and social security of Indigenous women in Winnipeg; 75% of mentors active in the past year were Indigenous women.

Builds relationships, common ground, and understanding between newcomer and Indigenous participants.

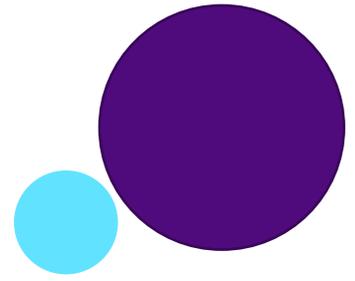
The Mentorship and Volunteer Coordinator supports mentors to further their understanding of Indigenous histories, and connects mentors to programs that enhance understanding through education and healing.

Each mentor participates in an orientation process that reviews the centre's values, ways of working, and procedures. This includes reference to the centre's reconciliation work, Indigenous programs, and provides participants with conflict resolution skills.

Staff commit to educating themselves on UNDRIP and using it as a guide for reconciliation work, including program creation and implementation.



Community Development



Volunteer Program

Builds relationships, common ground, and understanding between newcomer and Indigenous participants.

Provides low-barrier skill-building and skill-sharing opportunities for Indigenous women in an empowering setting, supporting Indigenous women to gain agency and economic independence.

Provides space for volunteers to develop and facilitate educational events, supporting Indigenous women to share their knowledge, passions, and expertise.

The Mentorship and Volunteer Coordinator supports volunteers to further their understanding of Indigenous histories, and connects volunteers to programs that enhance understanding through education and healing.

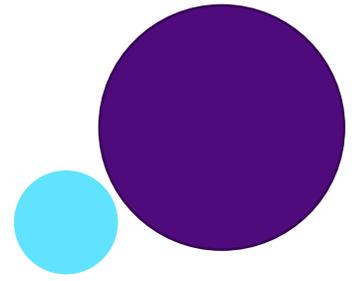
Each volunteer participates in an orientation process that reviews the centre's values, ways of working, and procedures. This includes reference to the centre's reconciliation work, Indigenous programs, and provides participants with conflict resolution skills.



One of our Volunteer Highlight posts.



Community Development



Student Placements

Each student placement participates in an orientation process that reviews the centre's values, ways of working, & procedures. This includes reference to the centre's reconciliation work, Indigenous programs, and provides participants with conflict resolution skills.

The Mentorship and Volunteer Coordinator, along with program staff and Directors, supports students to further their understanding of Indigenous histories.

Students participated in planning for Reconciliation Month 2021.

Newcomer Services



One of our newcomer participants participating in Dancing Spirit Drum Group. (pre-COVID)

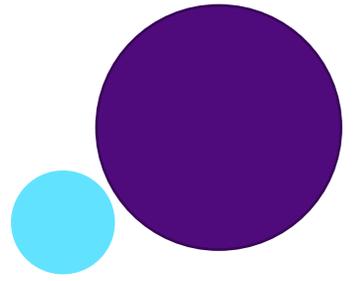
Sought feedback on incorporating Indigenous topics into conversation circles.

Held a conversation circle related to understand more about history of Indigenous people.

Settlement staff help to dispel myths and stereotypes newcomers may have heard about Indigenous peoples. Through established relationships, staff are given the opportunity to provide further information and educational opportunities.



Community Services



Drop-in

Provides a safe space for Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQ+ peoples who are experiencing poverty, food insecurity, homelessness, or housing insecurity.

Involved in a participatory research project exploring the ways in which low-barrier gender-focused drop-ins improve access to safe, stable housing for marginalized women, trans, Two-Spirit and non-binary persons. This project included an advisory committee and community survey to hear from folks with lived experience. The results will be used to develop and pilot a low-barrier gender-focused housing and support model.

Staff regularly refer Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQ+ peoples, internally and externally, who are needing help with housing, identification, navigation through the child welfare system, employment, and training opportunities.

Staff identify/locate culturally appropriate services and provide phone numbers when needed.

Indigenous art on display.

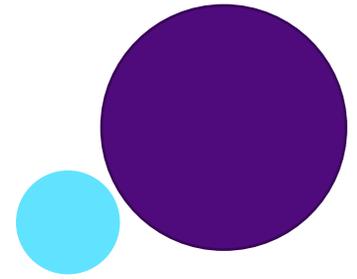
Red dress hanging in the space to represent MMIWG2S.



Red Dress on display in drop-in



Community Services



Pin board dedicated to indigenous programming within the centre and other organizations.

All Drop-In participants have access to a room for smudging and medicines.

Staff commit to improve our programs to work on addressing the growing need, especially for Indigenous women through community meetings, participant surveys, and involve participants and engage our participants in conversation in regard to what they would else they would like to see in the way of programs more as a one –on-one type discussion.

Food Security

The Garden Coordinator interviewed Audrey Logan about Indigenous gardening approaches

Food Security Staff attend workshops on Indigenous food security Food as Helper, Food as Healer: A Cree Perspective and Indigenous Foodways.

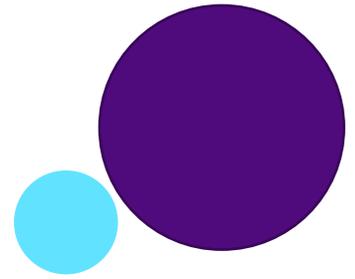
Promotion for posting interview with Audrey Logan about Indigenous Food Security and Sovereignty.

Watch it here: <https://fb.watch/71s-QRohqh/>





Housing



The housing team's (HOMES and MT4W) case management work is participant-led and rooted in a harm reduction approach. It is done “with” participants rather than “for” or “on behalf.”

The housing team supports participants to reunify with their children when they have been apprehended by Child and Family Services.

Our housing programs work to improve the economic and social conditions of our participants, in particular in the areas of homelessness, housing, and income security.

The housing team supports participants who are at risk of experiencing or who experience violence to develop safety plans and access gender-based violence shelters and our Red Road to Healing gender-based violence program.

The housing team supports participants to access the services they need to address their physical and mental health issues.

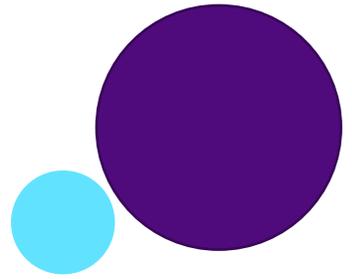
The housing team supports participants to navigate the provincial government's Employment and Income Assistance program and access the income benefits they are entitled to.



HOMES Case Coordinator Gloria working with a participant.



Housing



Staff advocate for basic rights of employment, housing, education, and safety and acknowledge that the women they work alongside are at high risk. They provide information to their supervisor to take back to public policy advocacy groups.

Staff are working to learn from the truths of coworkers and participants. They work to follow the Respect Policy as a base and attempt to come from a space of learning and humility when mistakes are made.

Staff hold respect for Elders, Grandmothers, and Knowledge Keepers and connect participants to them for relationship and teaching.

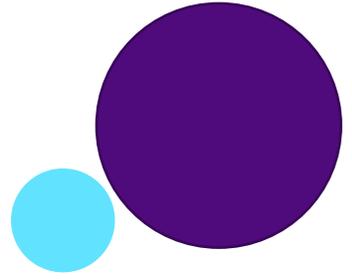
Staff work as a team to create a low-barrier safe space for all women. Staff continually learn from Elders, Knowledge Keepers, coworkers, and participants on how creating a safe space is done in a good way and how services can be supportive and appropriate.

Staff provide ongoing support for participant cultural and spiritual needs. This includes supplying participants with traditional medicines when requested and participating in smudging, walks and education with traditional teachings with their participants.

Staff work alongside women to ensure safe housing and income security so that they can provide safe, secure places for their children. Staff advocate for and work alongside women involved with CFS and support women to raise their children in a good way. Staff attempt to listen to their needs and advocate for supports related to poverty, housing, financial support, and food security. In the same way, staff work alongside 2SLGBTQ+ people to find safe housing and access to income to provide safety and security in their lives.



Housing



Staff are committed to building respectful working relationships with Justice, probation/parole officers, corrections guards, judges, bail workers, and police officers.

Staff work to denounce violence professionally and personally in all its forms against women and continue to learn the many different forms violence can take. Staff walk alongside women as they share their truths and seek support. Staff connect women to resources that will continue to support their healing from violence in a good way.

Staff have participated in traditional teachings on medicines as well as in Full Moon and other ceremonies and are committed to listening and participating in traditional storytelling and smudging. Staff have also participated in medicine picking, sweats, and sharing circles.

Staff acknowledge that the TRC & MMIWG are their responsibility and that they cannot take a back seat. Staff advocate with Indigenous women and celebrate them for their survival. Those who are experiencing homelessness are in survival mode every day until we can walk along beside them to know their self-worth and that they have rights like anybody else.

Staff refer our Two-Spirit participants to Nine Circles and Rainbow Resource Centre for programming. Staff reviewed resources and videos to educate themselves on 2SLGBTQ+ issues as well as the history of non-gender binary people in Indigenous societies.