

FINDING OUR POWER TOGETHER

# ANNUAL REPORT



# 2024



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Through **culture**, we find  
our resilience.

In **community**, we discover  
our strength.

Together, we find our  
**power**

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# Boozhoo!



Boozhoo. Songe Wabigwanikwe niindizhinikaaz, Mamawmattawa nindonjiba, mukwa nindodem. My name is Nicole Ineese-Nash, and I am Anishinaabe-Oji Cree from Constance Lake First Nation in Treaty 9 territory. I am honored to share our 2024 year-end report with you. As we close out our fourth year in operation, I find myself reflecting on the profound changes that have shaped our world, the challenges we have faced, and the opportunities that lie ahead.

As an urban Anishinaabekwe, I have always been deeply invested in the well-being of our people. Growing up in a family where mental illness, madness, and disability were part of everyday life, I witnessed firsthand how systems often failed to support us. These experiences, lived and felt, ignited my determination to make a difference. My academic journey in early childhood development, psychology, and education was not just about acquiring knowledge—it was a commitment to stand with our people and help overcome barriers that continue to limit our collective potential.

When I began working alongside young people in our remote communities, I learned lessons that no classroom could offer. In Nibinamik First Nation, I saw young leaders mobilize their youth council to shape policy and practice amid heartache and loss. Their collaboration—sparked by the heartbreak of suicide and systemic neglect—led to the creation of a documentary in 2017, a project that united nearly 400 allies in a resounding call for change. It was a defining moment that illuminated the urgent need for community-driven initiatives addressing Indigenous youth suicide and mental health—not as a research problem or a band-aid solution, but as a systemic issue demanding a holistic response.

In 2020, as the world was reshaped by a pandemic that magnified our vulnerabilities, we registered Finding Our Power Together as a national charitable organization. We knew then that Indigenous youth and communities needed a radically different approach—one that was integrative, responsive, and rooted in lived reality. Over the past years, we have grown from that grassroots momentum into an organization that not only provides immediate mental health support through ceremonies, counselling, and skills groups but also trains our youth to become leaders and advocates.



We engage in critical research and policy advocacy to address the root conditions that necessitate mental health care in the first place. Today, our work is more needed than ever. Indigenous youth face alarming mental health challenges, as evidenced by rising suicide rates, the profound impacts of climate change, socioeconomic disparities, and systemic neglect. These data points, drawn from academic inquiry and real-world observations, compel us to act. Our approach is integrative: we offer immediate mental health support, empower young people to lead and support one another, and generate evidence-based practices that can inform policy and transform systems.

As we look forward to 2025, we are deeply grateful for the support of our funders, donors, and community partners. Their generosity has allowed us to expand our reach, build organizational capacity, and launch new initiatives that further our mission to end preventable death by suicide. Our journey is not just about surviving—it's about thriving, redefining mental health care, and reimagining a future where every Indigenous youth finds their power.

I invite you to join us in this transformative work. Together, through research, community care, and bold action, we are shaping a future where our youth can truly thrive.

Miigwetch

Nicole Ineese-Nash



# OVERVIEW

The 2024 Finding Our Power Together (FOPT) Year-End Report offers a comprehensive reflection on a year of growth, resilience, and cultural revitalization. As an Indigenous-led organization, FOPT continued to expand its holistic mental health and leadership programming, grounded in community wisdom and cultural practices.

This report explores the evolution of FOPT's strategic direction and organizational development while showcasing the impact of its core programs, including mentorship, youth leadership, culturally based counseling, and land-based healing. It highlights new infrastructure like the Bear Lodge, and ongoing initiatives such as the Circle of Wisdom, all of which center Indigenous knowledge and empower youth. It also outlines the research and systems-change work being done to address root causes of intergenerational trauma and systemic inequities.

Through the collective effort of youth, Elders, staff, volunteers, and partners, FOPT continues to cultivate a network of relational, transformative care that supports Indigenous youth in finding their power together.



**25**  
PROGRAMS

**422**  
CLIENTS  
SERVED

**13**  
CEREMONIES  
HOSTED

**\$475K**  
RAISED



# INTRODUCTION

## OUR MISSION

Our mission is to empower Indigenous people to achieve their goals and access supportive resources, fostering connections with peers and mentors within a framework of traditional Indigenous practices. We strive to enhance resilience, social connectedness, and personal growth through counseling, skills development, and cultural healing practices, celebrating Indigenous identities and lifeways.

Our ultimate goal is to prevent suicide in Indigenous communities and ensure our people not only survive but thrive.

## OUR VISION

We envision a world where:

- Indigenous people are rooted in who they are with access to cultural knowledge, language, and ceremony
- Indigenous people have a strong commitment to life through their interconnections to others, to land, and to spirit
- Indigenous people have support from their families, communities, and societies to develop the skills and gifts they would like to
- Indigenous people understand that they are valued, important, and belong
- Indigenous people know their power and use it to help others.



## ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATION

Finding Our Power Together (FOPT) is an Indigenous-led non-profit organization supporting Indigenous youth and communities to access support and relationships that enable them to thrive. FOPT offers a variety of therapeutic programs and services designed to develop community, increase capacity, and promote holistic wellbeing, particularly to save our young people from preventable death by suicide. We collectively understand the value in bringing together young people and community members from various communities to share resources and maintain connection; We know we can find our power together.



# OUR STORY

FOPT began as a youth engagement initiative in Nibinamik First Nation as a way to support youth leaders who were responding to a suicide epidemic in their community.

## OUR HISTORY

FOPT began as a community-based initiative in Nibinamik First Nation in 2016, founded in collaboration with Indigenous youth from Nibinamik and other communities in Treaty 9 territory. At this time, many young people had experienced high rates of suicide in their communities. Youth in Nibinamik sought to support their own people and worked with faculty and researchers from Toronto Metropolitan University (formerly Ryerson University) to film a documentary video, sharing their experiences of systemic discrimination and colonialism. More than that though, they shared their messages of hope and support for the young people in their community and across Turtle Island. This film premiered at a fundraising event in 2017 at Toronto Metropolitan University (formerly Ryerson) in Toronto which brought together nearly 400 Indigenous and non-Indigenous allies to share in collective solidarity. We registered as a formal nonprofit in May 2020 to meet the growing need for Indigenous mental health services in Canada.

## OUR APPROACH

As an Indigenous-led organization rooted in community, we know that real transformation happens when we meet our people where they are—acknowledging both our immediate struggles and the strengths we carry within. Our approach is not just about crisis intervention; it's about honoring our resilience, building community capacity, and dismantling the social conditions that necessitate mental health intervention in the first place.

- **Immediate Needs:** We offer strengths-based, mad-positive mental health services that honor our diverse experiences, providing urgent, compassionate support without pathologizing our unique ways of being.
- **Community Capacity:** We invest in programs that empower Indigenous youth and community members to lead and thrive, drawing on the wisdom of our ancestors and our own lived expertise.
- **Addressing Social Conditions:** We tackle the root causes of mental health challenges by centering cultural healing, ceremony, and research/systems innovation to transform the oppressive structures that impact our communities.

# OUR TEAM

At Finding Our Power Together, our team is a collective of individuals whose dedication and diverse expertise drive our mission. Our work is anchored by those who guide our strategic direction, those who carry out our programs on the front lines, and those who bring fresh energy and ideas to our daily operations.

- **Board of Directors:** Our board provides the strategic direction and accountability essential to our work. Their collective cultural insight and lived experience ensure that every decision reflects our community's needs. Many board members have evolved from our Strategic Working Group, underscoring the strength of our grassroots leadership.
- **Staff:** Our staff are the backbone of our day-to-day operations. They deliver strengths-based mental health support, cultural healing, and educational programs that directly impact Indigenous youth and communities. Their commitment is rooted in both traditional practices and contemporary expertise.
- **Interns and Volunteers:** Our interns and volunteers bring innovative ideas and unwavering commitment to our mission. They expand our capacity and help us extend our reach, ensuring that we remain adaptive and responsive to emerging needs.
- **Strategic Working Group:** In 2024, we established a voluntary Strategic Working Group to address key organizational challenges. Meeting monthly and organized into subcommittees on strategic development, mental health, and fundraising, this group provided vital guidance during our board-building process. Several members have since joined our board, highlighting their lasting impact on our direction.



# OUR TEAM

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

www.findingourpowertogether.com



### Hillory Tenute

#### Board Chair

Hillory Tenute (Gi Chi'noodinkwe Aapti Beebom N'gigikwe) (she/her/they/them) is an Indigiqueer Anishinaabekwe with settler descent from the Chippewas of Nawash First Nation in Neyaashiinigmiing, Ontario, part of the Saugeen Ojibway Nation. As the Executive Director (or "Executive Auntie") of the Canadian Roots Exchange (CRE), Hillory leads national efforts to support and uplift Indigenous youth through reconciliation-based programming, grants, and opportunities.

With extensive experience in research, evaluation, and culturally responsive engagement, Hillory is a passionate advocate for Indigenous youth self-determination. She works to ensure that young leaders have a voice in shaping the social, economic, cultural, and environmental future of this land for the next seven generations.



### Cecile Akiwenzie-Martin

#### Board Member

Cecile Akiwenzie-Martin is an Ojibway woman of the Turtle Clan, originally from Neyaashiinigmiing and now residing in Six Nations of the Grand River. As a mother, Nokomis, Lodge Conductor, Sundancer, and Aboriginal Midwife, she brings over 20 years of experience in holistic health and well-being, including roles as an RPN, Reflexologist, Aromatherapist, and Artist.

Cecile has been honoured with a Spirit name (Manitou Waabshki Mshkiniinh) and trained under the late Frank Ewart Settee to conduct the Sacred Grandmother Full Moon Lodge, for which she was gifted a Sacred Pipe. Her deep knowledge, lived experience, and spiritual training guide her work and contribute to the strength and vision of the Board.



### Arlene Hache

#### Board Member

Arlene Hache is a passionate advocate for social justice with lived experience of homelessness and childhood trauma. She holds an MA in Leadership from Royal Roads University and serves on the National Poverty Council, co-chairing the Women's National Housing and Homelessness Network.

For over 20 years, Arlene led an urban family resource centre supporting marginalized women and families, many of them Indigenous. She has worked extensively across Canada's North, shaping services that address homelessness, poverty, systemic racism, and gender-based violence. Her accomplishments have been honoured with the Order of Canada (2009), the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal (2012), and a Star Blanket Ceremony.

Arlene is a published author, contributor to numerous research projects, and has served on national and international boards addressing gender equity, mental health, and systemic discrimination. Her work has inspired culturally grounded approaches that support families impacted by violence and colonization.



### Danika Charlebois

#### Board Member

Danika Charlebois (she/they) is of mixed Algonquin and settler ancestry, born and raised in Northeastern Ontario, where she continues to live and work on Robinson-Huron Treaty Territory. Grounded in a deep respect for her heritage, Danika is dedicated to honoring the responsibilities that come with carrying both Indigenous and settler roots.

Through her lived experience, personal reflection, and work in the community, Danika strives to foster understanding and belonging across cultures. She is passionate about creating spaces that uplift voices, nurture connections, and support the well-being of future generations — ensuring that all feel seen, valued, and honoured.



# OUR TEAM

## STAFF



**Nicole Ineese-Nash**  
**Executive Director**



**Cecily Jacko**  
**Administrative Coordinator**



**Richelle Sauve**  
**Mental Health Coordinator**



**Kaitlin Rizzari**  
**Research Assistant**



**Felicia Morin**  
**Programming Coordinator**



**Tristan Peterson**  
**Research Coordinator**



**Kaitlin Wilcox**  
**Research Assistant/Mental  
Health Counsellor**



**River Valade**  
**Research Assistant/Mental  
Health Counsellor**



**Gabby Gerlach**  
**Youth Worker**



# OUR TEAM

## MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELLORS

[www.findingourpowertogether.com](http://www.findingourpowertogether.com)



Jasmine Ehret  
Counsellor



Sarah Yusufyan  
Youth Counsellor



Minoway Sinclair  
Counsellor



Jess Dewitt  
Counsellor



Brienne John  
Counsellor



Beth Jacobs  
Counsellor

## CULTURAL COUNSELLORS



James Carpenter  
Knowledge Carrier



Nyle Johnston  
Knowledge Carrier



Cecile Akiwenzie  
Knowledge Carrier

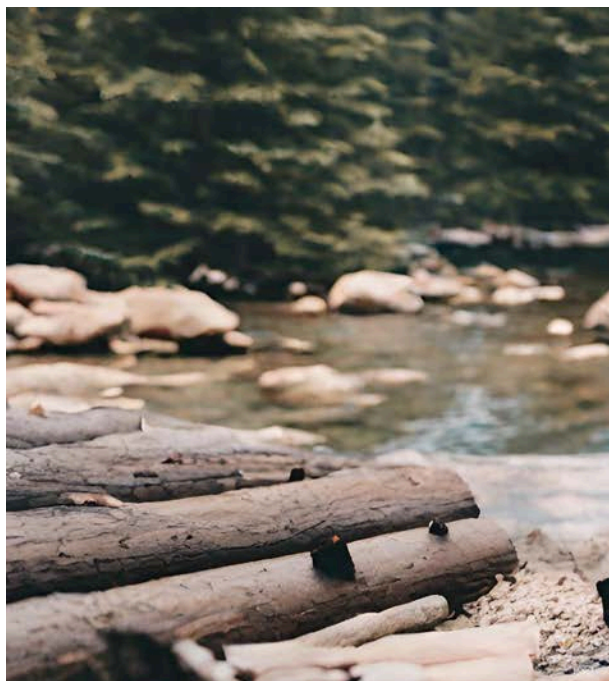
# OUR TEAM

## 2024 STAFF, STUDENTS AND VOLUNTEERS

The team here at Finding Our Power Together wants to sincerely thank all of the amazing students and volunteers that have selflessly supported us throughout 2023! It is with our students and volunteers that we are able to thrive as an organization to create meaningful programming and foster connections with Indigenous youth. Chi-miigwetch!

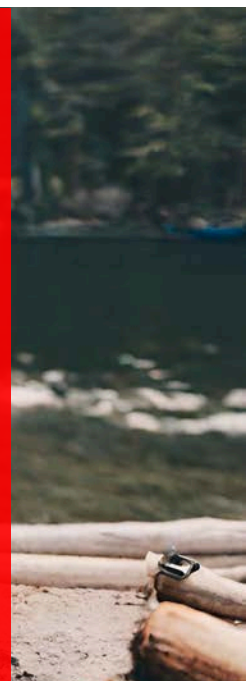
**Sarah Yusufyan**  
**Gabby Gerlach-Morales**  
**Karen Sandy**  
**Clara Doctor**  
**Daniella Bellaviti**  
**Natalie Thomas**  
**Bowie Laforme**  
**Aiysha Bhaiyat**  
**Anastasia Silverman**

**Laksija Ramkumar**  
**Shanta Hamal**  
**Savannah Morin**  
**Gabby Scafuto**  
**Soleila Pierre**  
**Natalie Russel**  
**Seema Ali**  
**Ashley Cristales**  
**Tristan Peterson**



## WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!

Fun fact: since our inception in 2020, we've had the privilege of working with 92 student interns. Each has brought unique skills and perspectives, significantly enriching our programs and helping us achieve our mission. Your contributions are invaluable, and we are incredibly grateful for the impact you've made. Together, we continue to empower and uplift Indigenous youth and communities. Thank you for being an essential part of our journey!



# OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

In 2024, Finding Our Power Together continued to build upon its mission of empowering Indigenous children, youth, and communities. Through a rich and diverse range of programs and initiatives, we created spaces where cultural connections could flourish, mental well-being was prioritized, and relationships were strengthened. Here's a snapshot of the meaningful work we shared this year:



## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Expanding Mentorship and Leadership:** Programs like the Young Leaders Circle and other mentorship opportunities have continued to guide Indigenous youth in shaping their own paths, focusing on self-determination, cultural teachings, and leadership skills.
- **Cultural and Spiritual Enrichment:** Through offerings such as Full Moon Sweat Lodges, Youth Sweat Lodges, the Circle of Wisdom, and seasonal ceremonies, we've deepened connections to traditional practices and strengthened spiritual well-being.
- **Holistic Healing and Education for Youth and Families:** Programs like Building Our Bundle, the Land-Based Medicine Camp, and the Fasting Camp combined mental health support, cultural knowledge, and land-based learning, providing spaces for youth to nurture themselves and build resilience. This year also introduced Building Our Family Bundle, a DBT-informed program designed for parents and families, offering tools and teachings to support themselves and walk alongside their loved ones.
- **Infrastructure Growth and Community Engagement:** The construction of a new youth sweat lodge has expanded our capacity for cultural and healing ceremonies, allowing more young people to access these vital spaces. Our network has also grown significantly, impacting over 400 youth across the nation and strengthening connections within the community.
- **Educational Outreach and Reconciliation:** New workshops and learning opportunities were introduced to foster understanding, support reconciliation, and create space for sharing knowledge and building relationships across communities.



# OUR PROGRAMS



# BY THE NUMBERS

## OUR PARTICIPANTS

239

Individuals supported through **mental health mentorship**

27

Youth who learned mental health skills through **Building our Bundle**

16

emerging leaders enhanced their skills through the **Young Leaders Circle**

62

Youth who participated in our **Bear Moon Teachings**

52

Women and girls who learned to connect with **Full Moon** teachings and ceremonies

32

Indigenous youth connected spiritually in **Youth Sweat Lodge** ceremonies

20

Youth and adults learned cultural skills about being a helper at **Mushkiki Aki Camp**

17

Indigenous youth learned art skills through **Fasting Camp**

27

Community members engaged with elders' wisdom through **Circle of Wisdom**

492

Individuals who found their power



# OUR PROGRAMS

FOPT offers a variety of programs that seek to meet the needs of Indigenous youth all across Turtle Island. Our programs are particularly designed to offer relational support through mentorship, social connection, psychoeducation and skills development, cultural teachings and ceremonies, and youth-centered design.

## PROGRAMS AT A GLANCE

| DESCRIPTION   | PROGRAM   | DATE   | REGISTRANTS             |
|---|---|--|-------------------------|
| Individual sessions for mental health support                   | Mental Health Mentorship                              | Ongoing  | 239                     |
| Online Group Psychoeducation program                            | Building our Bundle                                   | Feb/April<br>May/June<br>Oct/Nov               | 11<br>7<br>9            |
| Seasonal networking and professional development sessions       | Young Leaders Circle                                  | Mar 8<br>Nov 28                                | 7<br>9                  |
| Full moon sweat lodge ceremonies for Indigenous women and girls | Full Moon Women's Sweat                               | Jun 22<br>Jul 21<br>Aug 24<br>Oct 19<br>Nov 16 | 9<br>8<br>10<br>6<br>19 |
| Youth Sweat   | Traditional Sweat Lodge Ceremony for Indigenous Youth | Jul 6<br>Aug 10<br>Sep 7<br>Oct 5              | 6<br>5<br>6<br>4        |

# OUR PROGRAMS

## PROGRAMS AT A GLANCE (CONT)

| PROGRAM                                | DESCRIPTION  | DATE              | REGISTRANTS |
|--|--|-------------------|-------------|
| Youth Sweat                            | Black and Indigenous Youth Climate Action Sweat Lodge Ceremony | Jul 24            | 11          |
| Land Medicine Camp                     | Mushkiki Aki Camp  | July 22-July 26   | 15          |
| Youth Land Based Fasting Ceremony Camp | Fasting Camp   | Oct 24-October 28 | 17          |



FOPT's programs are designed to support Indigenous youth across Canada through our three programming pillars:

- Culturally based and informed programming
- Capacity building through education, skill development, and mentorship
- Well-being through supportive, safe, and healing environments

# BUILDING OUR BUNDLE

## INDIGENOUS MENTAL HEALTH SKILLS GROUP

### ABOUT

The Building Our Bundle Program is an 8-week online mental and spiritual health initiative designed to empower Indigenous youth in developing the skills and relationships needed to lead a balanced and fulfilling life. The program provides a safe, supportive virtual space for youth to connect with one another and explore essential mental health skills alongside cultural teachings.

Through both group sessions and personalized one-on-one mentoring, participants will build their "bundle" of tools for emotional regulation, healthy coping mechanisms, interpersonal effectiveness, and self-care. Guided by a team of experienced Indigenous mental health professionals, this program is rooted in culturally relevant practices and focuses on promoting overall mental and spiritual wellness.



The program is designed with the cultural understanding of a traditional "bundle"; a collection of spiritually significant tools one might carry along their journey

### PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- ✓ **Promote Mental and Spiritual Wellness**
- ✓ **Foster Peer Connections**
- ✓ **Develop Coping Mechanisms and Skills**
- ✓ **Integrate Cultural Teachings**



# BUILDING OUR BUNDLE

## INDIGENOUS MENTAL HEALTH SKILLS GROUP

### BUILDING OUR BUNDLE: 2024 OVERVIEW

#### WINTER 2024



The winter session of the Building Our Bundle program embraced the theme of new beginnings, combining Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) relational effectiveness skills with traditional cultural teachings. As participants stepped into the new year, they explored the many layers of relationship — with themselves, with others, with their community, with the land, and with the spiritual world — nurturing connections that support balance, belonging, and growth.

REGISTRANTS

11

OF 20 AVAILABLE SPOTS

#### SPRING 2024



The spring session of Building Our Bundle focused on healing our relations by weaving together DBT skills and Ojibwe cultural teachings. Through mindfulness, distress tolerance, emotion regulation, and interpersonal effectiveness, participants strengthened their mental health and deepened connections with themselves, others, and their heritage — fostering a sense of belonging and holistic well-being.

REGISTRANTS

7

OF 20 AVAILABLE SPOTS

#### FALL 2024



The fall session continued to blend DBT skills with Ojibwe cultural teachings, this time aligning with fall seasonal themes of transition and letting go. Reflecting the natural cycle of release that autumn brings, the program focused on helping participants embrace change and release behaviors and thoughts that no longer serve them. Sessions covered mindfulness, distress tolerance, emotion regulation, and interpersonal effectiveness, each infused with the wisdom of fall teachings—emphasizing the importance of preparation, reflection, and renewal.

REGISTRANTS

9

OF 15 AVAILABLE SPOTS

# MENTAL HEALTH MENTORSHIP

## ONE-ON-ONE MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

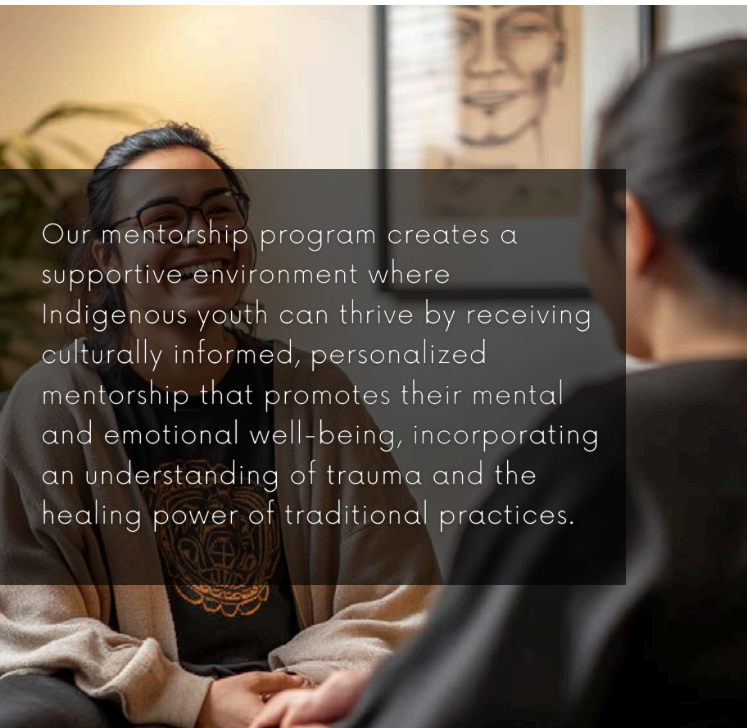
www.findingourpowertogether.com

### ABOUT

Our Mental Health Mentorship program is designed to offer one-on-one support tailored to the unique needs of Indigenous youth. This relational psychoeducation initiative pairs participants with experienced mental health mentors for regular weekly sessions conducted via telephone or video call, lasting one hour each.

Throughout the program, mentors, who come from diverse professional backgrounds including child and youth care, social work, early childhood studies, and traditional knowledge, provide personalized guidance. They help youth develop key skills, achieve specific goals, and foster a sense of consistent connection and support.

In 2024, we enhanced our support offerings by launching formal counseling services with licensed mental health therapists and counselors. This addition ensures that participants not only receive mentorship but also have access to comprehensive mental health care tailored to their cultural and individual needs, strengthening the program's impact and reach.



Our mentorship program creates a supportive environment where Indigenous youth can thrive by receiving culturally informed, personalized mentorship that promotes their mental and emotional well-being, incorporating an understanding of trauma and the healing power of traditional practices.

### PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- ✓ **Empower Through Indigenous Healing**
- ✓ **Promote holistic well-being and healing from trauma**
- ✓ **Provide Tailored Support**
- ✓ **Improve Mental Health Outcomes**
- ✓ **Enhance Personal Development**

# MENTAL HEALTH MENTORSHIP

## ONE-ON-ONE MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

### MENTORSHIP 2024 OVERVIEW

#### PEER MENTORSHIP



Our Peer-Mentorship program offers online support from trained peers with relevant lived experiences or mental health training. This free service provides empathetic guidance, helping youth navigate their challenges with someone who can relate personally to their experiences.

REGISTRANTS

16

#### MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELLING



Our Mental Health Counseling provides individual online sessions by Indigenous and allied professionals, using approaches like Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), Trauma-Informed Practices, and Indigenous healing. It offers a safe space for Indigenous youth to develop coping strategies and discuss personal issues. Sessions are available on a sliding scale.

REGISTRANTS

23

#### CULTURAL COUNSELING



Cultural Counseling connects Indigenous youth with cultural healers and counselors online, focusing on traditional healing practices and cultural ceremonies. This service aims to strengthen youths' connection to their cultural roots in a supportive environment, also available on a sliding scale.

SESSIONS

0



# YOUTH SWEAT

## SWEAT LODGE CEREMONY

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### ABOUT

This year marked a significant development in our cultural and healing practices with the construction of a new Bear Lodge at our ceremony site in Oshweken, Ontario. Under the guidance of Anishinaabe knowledge keeper Nyle Johnston, we have expanded our offerings to include Youth Sweat Lodge Ceremonies, integrating Indigenous healing methods with youth-centered practices.

The sweat lodge ceremonies are a profound form of spiritual healing, deeply rooted in Anishinaabe traditions. These ceremonies provide a space for intense healing—where physical, emotional, and spiritual cleansing occurs. Participants experience a deep connection to the land and their culture, emerging with a renewed sense of clarity and purpose.

The Youth Sweat Lodge Ceremonies serve as a powerful land-based intervention that allows young participants to immerse themselves in the practices of their ancestors. It's an opportunity to learn about traditional ways, hear stories, and engage in rituals that have been passed down through generations, fostering a strong connection with their culture.

This year, we offered 5 youth sweat lodge ceremonies for our youth. For many participants, this was the first opportunity they had to experience the ceremony and many expressed a profound shift in their understandings of self and culture.

Our Ceremonies play a vital role in our mission to end preventable deaths by suicide among Indigenous communities. Engaging in these ceremonies helps participants release emotional pain, reconnect with their cultural practices, and gain spiritual strength, all of which are essential for mental health and resilience. By providing young people with a supportive space to address personal and collective traumas, sweat lodge ceremonies are a powerful intervention in our ongoing efforts to enhance well-being and prevent suicide.

### PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- ✓ **Promote Cultural Reconnection and Education**
- ✓ **Facilitate Holistic Healing and Personal Growth**
- ✓ **Strengthen Connections to Land and Community**
- ✓ **Develop Resilience and Self-Reflection Skills**
- ✓ **Encourage somatic healing methods for trauma within the context of Indigenous traditions**

# YOUTH SWEAT

## SWEAT LODGE CEREMONY

### SESSION 2024 OVERVIEW



#### JULY 6TH:

The first session of the summer welcomed 6 young participants. This ceremony focused on renewal and cleansing, offering the youth a chance to reconnect with their cultural roots during a time of growth and renewal in nature.

REGISTRANTS

6



#### JULY 24TH: BLACK & INDIGENOUS YOUTH SWEAT

Black and Indigenous Youth Sweat brought together 11 participants, creating a space to connect with the land, deepen cultural understanding, and reflect on climate justice. The gathering inspired collective action and strengthened relationships rooted in solidarity and healing.

REGISTRANTS

11



#### AUGUST 10TH:

The following sessions joined by 5 participants. This ceremony emphasized resilience and preparation for the coming transitions of the seasons, aligning with the teachings of perseverance and strength.

REGISTRANTS

5



#### SEPTEMBER 7TH:

The first fall session welcomed 6 participants and coincided with the seasonal shift into autumn. The ceremony offered a space for reflection, introspection, and gathering inner strength in preparation for the winter months, grounded in cultural practice and community connection.

REGISTRANTS

6



#### OCTOBER 5TH:

The final session of the year brought together 4 participants for a meaningful ceremony rooted in seasonal change. As the days grew shorter, participants were invited to turn inward — reflecting on their journeys, restoring balance, and grounding themselves in preparation for the winter months ahead.

REGISTRANTS

4

REGISTRANTS

32<sup>24</sup>

# YOUNG LEADERS CIRCLE

## INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

### WINTER GATHERING 2024

## ABOUT

The Young Leaders Circle, known in Anishinaabemowin as Oskatis Nigaaniwemowin or “The Way of the Young Leader,” is a dynamic group of Indigenous youth aged 14-35 from across Turtle Island. Members are united by a common purpose to support and uplift youth within their communities. The Circle serves as a platform for young leaders to develop essential skills, address challenges, and celebrate achievements in youth life promotion efforts. It also plays a crucial role in advising Finding Our Power Together on organizational decisions and program designs.

### Each gathering is designed to provide:

- **Cultural Teachings:** Participants engage with traditional teachings that offer guidance and perspective on their personal and leadership journeys.
- **Sharing & Networking Circle:** The Circle provides a space for members to connect, share experiences, and collaborate, enhancing their collective impact.
- **Professional Development and Learning Opportunities:** These gatherings equip young leaders with the skills necessary to effectively support youth in their respective communities.
- **Opportunity to Provide Input to the Advisory Circle:** Members have the opportunity to influence Finding Our Power Together's strategies, ensuring that the organization aligns with the needs and aspirations of Indigenous youth across Canada.

## PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- ✓ **Develop and enhance leadership skills among Indigenous youth**
- ✓ **Promote Cultural Connection and Learning**
- ✓ **Equip youth with practical skills and knowledge**
- ✓ **Create a supportive network among young Indigenous leaders**
- ✓ **Influence Organizational Strategy**



The YLC was inspired by and designed in alignment with our foundational support for a group of dedicated youth in Nibinamik First Nation, who were actively involved in saving their peers. Recognizing their deep understanding of their community's needs yet seeing their desire for further support, training, and leadership development, we created the YLC to empower and elevate Indigenous youth leaders across the nation.



# YOUNG LEADERS CIRCLE

## INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

### YLC 2024 OVERVIEW

#### INDIGENOUS YOUNG LEADERS CIRCLE GATHERING WINTER 2024



The Winter Session of the Young Leaders Circle, themed "Reflecting on Our Journey," centered around the themes of healing, introspection, and cultural connection during the winter season. Participants began with a traditional opening, storytelling, and goal setting activity; setting the stage for deep reflection and learning.

REGISTRANTS

7

#### Key Outcomes:

- **Enhanced Leadership Skills:** Participants leave with greater confidence and the tools needed to lead effectively in their communities.
- **Collaboration and Support Networks:** The gathering strengthens bonds between Indigenous youth leaders, creating lasting networks of support.
- **Successful Knowledge Sharing:** Youth leaders exchange valuable insights and strategies, enhancing their collective ability to advocate for youth and address challenges.

# FULL MOON TEACHINGS & LODGE

## CULTURAL PROGRAM FOR INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS

### ABOUT

In 2024, the Full Moon Teachings & Lodge program, led by Turtle Lodge keeper Cecily Akiwenzie Martin, continued to offer a transformative space for Indigenous women and girls to connect with culture, spirituality, and one another. Rooted in Anishinaabe traditions, the program explores the deep connections between lunar cycles and feminine life cycles, weaving together teachings about menstruation, birth, and the sacred role of water.

Held at the Sacred 13 Moons Turtle Lodge in Ohsweken, Ontario, these gatherings featured Full Moon Women's Sweat ceremonies that aligned participants with the rhythms of the natural world — fostering healing, restoration, and a deeper understanding of the connections between lunar, ecological, and personal well-being.

### PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- ✓ **Provide a safe and sacred space for Indigenous women and girls to engage in healing practices**
- ✓ **Deepen understanding and appreciation of Anishinaabe moon teachings**
- ✓ **Teach the ecological aspects of the full moon and its influence on the natural world, integrating these teachings with broader environmental awareness**
- ✓ **To empower young women to take active roles in their communities as keepers of traditional knowledge and cultural practices**



# FULL MOON TEACHINGS & LODGE

## CULTURAL PROGRAM FOR INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS

### 2024 SESSION OVERVIEW

#### FULL MOON SWEAT LODGE

Located in Ohsweken, Ontario, these in-person gatherings align with the lunar cycles to facilitate physical and spiritual purification and renewal for Indigenous women and girls.

- **July 20, 2024 - Raspberry Moon Sweat Lodge**
- **August 24, 2024 - Blackberry Moon Sweat Lodge**
- **October 19, 2024 - Falling Leaves Moon Sweat Lodge**
- **November 16, 2024 - Freezing Moon Sweat Lodge**



REGISTRANTS

52



# MUSHKIKI AKI CAMP

## LAND-BASED CULTURE CAMP FOR INDIGENOUS YOUTH

### ABOUT

The Mushkiki Aki Healing Camp was a five-day overnight program held in the heart of Neyaashiinigmiiing at Cape Croker Park. Designed for Indigenous youth aged 12 to 17, this camp provided a culturally grounded space to strengthen identity, mental wellness, and community connection through land-based teachings and ceremony.

Rooted in Indigenous knowledge systems, the camp offered participants a chance to connect with the land, themselves, and one another. Activities included traditional teachings, daily wellness practices, crafts, games, and sacred ceremonies. These offerings created a healing and empowering environment, where youth could begin or continue their journey of self-discovery and cultural reconnection.

### PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- **Sweat Lodge Construction:** Participants actively contributed to the building of a community sweat lodge, gaining practical skills and a deeper understanding of the cultural significance of these sacred structures.
- **Sweat Lodge Ceremony:** The new lodge was opened with a ceremonial sweat that allowed participants to directly experience the fruits of their labor and the cleansing and unifying power of this tradition.
- **Skill Development Workshops:** Workshops focused on self-care for helpers, sustainable helping practices, and leadership within the context of Indigenous traditions, ensuring participants were well-prepared to continue their roles effectively.
- **Community Building:** The camp fostered a strong sense of community among attendees, who shared not only the physical space but also personal and cultural experiences, reinforcing their commitment to their roles as helpers.



REGISTRANTS

20



# FASTING CAMP

## LAND-BASED FASTING CAMP FOR YOUTH

## ABOUT

The 2024 Fasting Camp provided Indigenous youth and young adults with an opportunity to engage in traditional fasting practices as a means of personal growth, healing, and cultural reconnection. Held in the Ganaraska Forest, participants spent time on the land in guided preparation, undertook personal fasts, and received support from Knowledge Keeper James Carpenter. The experience culminated in a community feast on November 21, 2024, where fasters shared their journeys, honoured their commitments, and rejoined the community with ceremony and celebration.

## OBJECTIVES

- To provide a culturally safe and supportive environment for participants to engage in traditional fasting practices.
- To strengthen participants' connection to Indigenous culture, identity, and land-based teachings.
- To support personal healing, reflection, and the setting of personal and spiritual goals.
- To foster community and kinship among participants through shared ceremony and storytelling

## KEY OUTCOMES

**Participation:** 17 participants successfully completed the fasting process, demonstrating resilience, commitment, and cultural pride.

**Cultural Reconnection:** Participants deepened their connection to traditional teachings, land, and ceremony, with many expressing a renewed sense of purpose and belonging.

**Healing and Growth:** Fasters reported personal healing experiences, increased self-awareness, and strengthened mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

**Community Building:** The final feast provided an opportunity for fasters to be welcomed back into community, share their reflections, and celebrate their accomplishments with family, friends, and supporters.











# PROJECTS, EVENTS & OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

# CFCC INDIGENOUS SOVEREIGNTY WORKSHOP SERIES

## ABOUT

Indigenous Network sessions are a strategy within CFCC (Community Food Centers Canada) to support collaboration, solidarity and community advocacy within their organization. CFCC's vision is to support healthy food security, equity and inclusion, belonging, well-being, and civic engagement in their sector. Within our sessions, we invite community members in conversations and collaborative workshops to learn about Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing related to their vision and organizational goals. The participants are from many places across the so-called Canada side of Turtle Island.

### Objectives:

- Bring insight into how colonial harm and systemic inequities have impacted Indigenous sovereignty, resilience and experiences.
- Increasing practical strategies to engage in communities of change with Indigenous kin.
- Facilitate conversations where community members are able to connect, share and co-create steps towards transformative change in CFCC.
- Support pathways to acknowledge Indigenous futurity and resilience.

### Session 1 : March 12, 2024

- Introduction to Indigenous Sovereignty

We opened this session with a content warning and reminder for participants to prioritize their well-being. The session offered insight into the impacts of colonialism. This included awareness of the historical contents of colonial harm as well as the cultural, land and ongoing violence and discrimination resulting because of colonialism. The session continued to offer insight towards understanding Indigenous sovereignty. The conversations around sovereignty included topics such as: nation-building, policies and economic measures, and the influence on land and resources. We moved into the conversations of tenants and dimensions of Indigenous sovereignty and pathways of Indigenous resistance. We center Indigenous resilience and focus on the importance of reinstating sovereignty and nation building. We concluded with key takeaways and offered time for discussion and questions to end in a good way.

# BUILDING OUR FAMILY BUNDLE

## ABOUT

Finding Our Power Together (FOPT) was honored to deliver the Building Our Family Bundle program in partnership with the City of Toronto Indigenous EarlyON. This culturally grounded mental health psychoeducation program was designed to support Indigenous caregivers by integrating traditional Indigenous knowledge with contemporary mental health practices. Through a series of interconnected workshops, participants engaged in a wholistic learning experience aimed at fostering personal well-being and strengthening family and community connections.

Facilitated by professionals with expertise in both Indigenous cultural practices and modern mental health strategies, the program provided a safe and supportive environment for caregivers to explore and enhance their mental wellness.

## PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- ✓ **Enhance Mental Health Literacy**
- ✓ **Equip Participants with Practical Skills**
- ✓ **Foster a Sense of Community and Mutual Support**
- ✓ **Integrate Traditional Indigenous Healing Practices**

## KEY OUTCOMES

- Significant Reduction in Stress → Participants reported a 28.89% decrease in stress levels ( $p = 0.041$ ), with a large effect size ( $d = -0.96$ ), demonstrating the program's success in enhancing stress management.
- Positive Trends in DBT Skills → Scores increased by 12.47%, nearing statistical significance ( $p = 0.052$ ,  $d = 0.67$ ), indicating moderate improvement in emotional regulation and coping strategies.
- Limited Change in Parenting Self-Efficacy & Attunement → No statistically significant shifts were observed, suggesting a need for additional support and reinforcement in parenting-related outcomes.
- Strong Appreciation for Cultural Integration → Participants valued the program's cultural teachings, storytelling, and traditional healing practices, which enhanced their connection to Indigenous identity and community support.

For many years, Indigenous artistic expressions were not just undervalued but actively repressed by laws that sought to erase Indigenous cultures. The Guiding Our Gifts program empowers Indigenous youth by reconnecting them with these vital cultural practices, ensuring that each participant can explore and develop their unique 'gifts' in a supportive environment.

## CHALLENGES

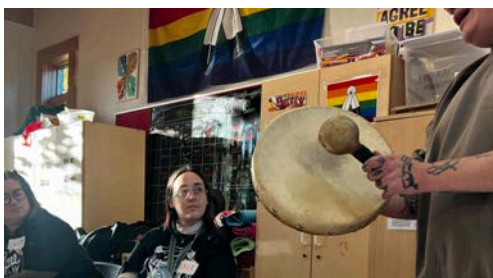
- Time Constraints → Many participants felt the two-day format was too condensed, limiting opportunities for skill reinforcement.
- Transportation Barriers → Accessibility issues, including transportation costs and scheduling conflicts, impacted participation.
- Need for More Applied Parenting Strategies → While emotional regulation improved, caregivers expressed a desire for more practical, culturally relevant parenting tools.



# BUILDING OUR FAMILY BUNDLE

## 2024 SESSION OVERVIEW

NATIVE CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES OF TORONTO  
November 9 - 10, 2024



REGISTRANTS

4

OJIBIIKAANS

November 23 - 24, 2024



REGISTRANTS

4

ENAGB

November 1 - 2, 2024



REGISTRANTS

5

NATIVE CANADIAN CENTRE OF TORONTO

December 4 - 5, 2024



REGISTRANTS

5

Total caregiver participants: 18  
Total children: 17

# CIRCLE OF WISDOM

## ELDER STORYTELLING SERIES

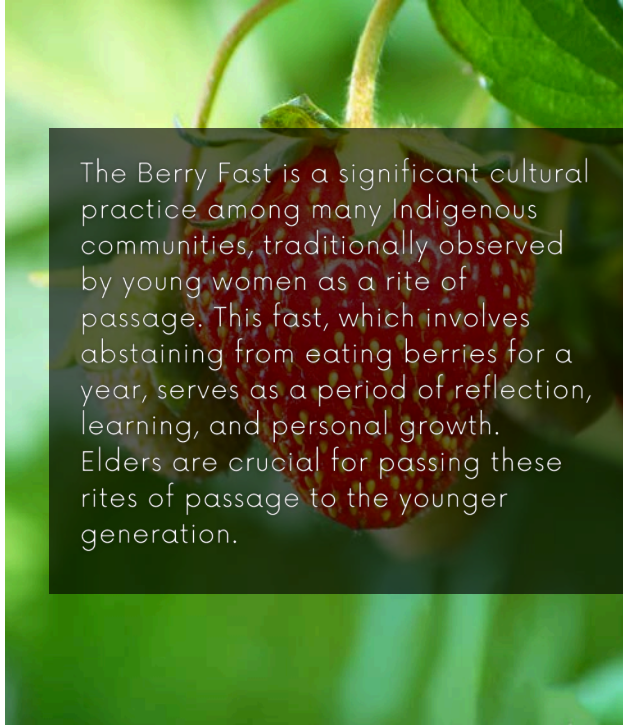
### ABOUT

The Circle of Wisdom project is a vital initiative aimed at bridging the gap between generations within Indigenous communities through the sharing of knowledge and wisdom. Funded by the New Horizons for Seniors Grant, this program facilitates the transmission of cultural knowledge from respected Elders to Indigenous youth and community members, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of Indigenous heritage.

The Circle of Wisdom series includes both live online workshops and pre-recorded video sessions. These formats are designed to make the teachings accessible to a broader audience, allowing participants to engage with the material at their convenience and foster dialogue across different mediums.

### 2024 PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

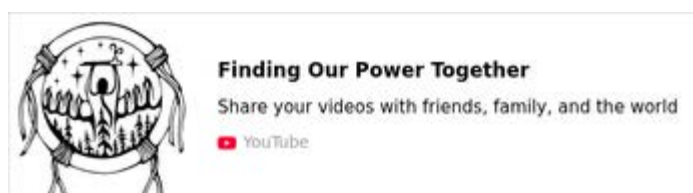
- Launched in 2023 with a live online session led by Cecile Akiwenzie Martin focusing on Berry Fast teachings, the program was designed to foster intergenerational connections and create space for the sharing of traditional knowledge and practices. Its strong reception demonstrated a deep interest and need within the community for culturally rooted learning and conversation.
- In 2024, we featured journeys of: Mary Pheasant (Jacko), Ramona Sutherland, Jimmy Dick, Kelly Snache, Tracy Sauve, and Roberta Oshkabewisens.
- Shared lessons rooted in the Seven Grandfather Teachings, traditional knowledge, and lived experience.
- Videos released on YouTube, allowing the community to learn, connect, and be inspired.
- Created a space for intergenerational learning, belonging, and cultural revitalization.



The Berry Fast is a significant cultural practice among many Indigenous communities, traditionally observed by young women as a rite of passage. This fast, which involves abstaining from eating berries for a year, serves as a period of reflection, learning, and personal growth. Elders are crucial for passing these rites of passage to the younger generation.

Circle of Wisdom is a powerful storytelling series that honours Indigenous resilience, healing, and cultural knowledge through the lived experiences of community members. In 2024, we shared the journeys of Mary Pheasant (Jacko), Ramona Sutherland, Jimmy Dick, Kelly Snache, Tracy Sauve, and Roberta Oshkabewisens, each offering personal reflections on healing, leadership, self-discovery, and cultural connection. Through art, self-talk, education, traditional teachings, and ancestral knowledge, each storyteller emphasized the importance of community, the Seven Grandfather Teachings, and the strength found in embracing Indigenous identity. All videos were released on our YouTube channel, allowing our community to tune in virtually and engage with these inspiring teachings and stories. Their voices serve as a testament to intergenerational healing, cultural revitalization, and the enduring spirit of Indigenous Peoples.

### **WATCH THE CIRCLE OF WISDOM ON OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL!**



#### **Objective:**

The Circle of Wisdom series was designed to create a space for Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and community members to share teachings, personal stories, and cultural insights. By releasing the series on our YouTube channel rather than hosting in-person sessions, our goal was to broaden accessibility, reach a wider audience—including those living outside of our immediate community—and ensure that these teachings could be accessed anytime, anywhere.

#### **What We Learned:**

**Accessibility is essential:** Releasing the videos online allowed us to engage not only local community members but also viewers across Ontario and Canada, including Indigenous youth and families in remote areas.

**Digital storytelling can be deeply relational:** Even through a virtual format, the authenticity and vulnerability of the storytellers created meaningful connections with viewers, demonstrating that healing, cultural transmission, and inspiration can happen through digital platforms.

#### **The importance of preserving voices:**

By recording and sharing these stories, we contributed to a growing archive of Indigenous wisdom and personal histories that can continue to inspire future generations.

#### **Community craves ongoing learning:**

Viewers responded with requests for more teachings, longer interviews, and deeper dives into specific cultural practices, showing a hunger for continued connection to traditional knowledge.

#### **Virtual sharing complements in-person gatherings:**

While in-person cultural events remain vital, offering virtual programming provides an important layer of accessibility and sustainability for knowledge-sharing in today's context.





# BRIDGING THE GAP

## SYSTEMS INNOVATION PROJECT

## ABOUT

Bridging the Gap is a transformative five-year collaborative research study launched in 2023, in partnership with Bereaved Families Ontario and funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation Systems Innovation Project. This initiative is dedicated to understanding and strengthening the mental health support systems available to Indigenous youth in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

In 2024, the project entered its main data collection phase, focusing on storytelling interviews and institutional ethnography to capture the lived experiences of Indigenous youth navigating the mental health system. Through journey mapping, we analyzed key touchpoints, identified systemic barriers, and explored the role of kinship networks and institutional supports in shaping youth experiences. This phase was critical in gathering firsthand insights into both the strengths and shortcomings of existing mental health services, providing a strong foundation for future recommendations and system improvements.

## PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- **Understand Indigenous Youth Experiences:** Conduct in-depth storytelling interviews to map the personal journeys of Indigenous youth through the mental health system, identifying key touchpoints, challenges, and moments of support.
- **Analyze Institutional Impact:** Investigate how mental health institutions currently serve Indigenous youth, spotlighting both the positive influences and areas where needs are unmet.
- **Develop Recommendations:** Based on the collected data, identify strengths and weaknesses within the existing system and propose targeted strategies for improvement to better serve the Indigenous youth population.

In 2025, the project will shift into data analysis and the development of a Community Education Model (CEM) aimed at providing training and educational opportunities to organizations within the GTA. This next phase will focus on synthesizing findings, co-developing culturally responsive resources, and equipping service providers with the knowledge and tools necessary to improve support for Indigenous youth.

Indigenous youth face significantly higher rates of mental health challenges compared to their non-Indigenous counterparts. Studies show that Indigenous youth under the age of 25 are up to six times more likely to die by suicide than non-Indigenous youth. This stark disparity underscores the urgent need for culturally appropriate and accessible mental health services that are informed by and adapted to the unique needs and circumstances of Indigenous communities. "Bridging the Gap" aims to address these critical issues by tailoring mental health systems to better support Indigenous youth in the GTA.



# NISHNAWBE ASKI NATION: EMBRACING OUR CHILDREN OUR WAY

## QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN PROJECT

### ABOUT

As part of a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) Project running from January 2024 to March 2026, Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU), Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN), and Finding Our Power Together (FOPT) have partnered to strengthen Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care (IELCC) systems. This initiative is focused on developing a culturally responsive IELCC framework tailored to the unique needs of Indigenous communities.

Throughout 2024, the TMU x FOPT Research Lab advanced its work on strengthening IELCC systems through targeted research and analysis. Key activities included the NAN Data Synthesis (May–Sept 2024), which identified gaps in existing data, and a Landscape Analysis (Sept 2024–Jan 2025) that examined early childhood education training, models of care, and licensing policies. Additionally, an International Models of Care Scan provided insights into global best practices, while a Systematic Literature Review on Indigenous Early Learning (Jan 2024–March 2025) contributed to knowledge-sharing and policy development. These efforts are laying the foundation for a culturally responsive IELCC framework that integrates Indigenous knowledge and best practices.

### PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- Strengthen Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Systems – Develop a culturally responsive IELCC framework that reflects the needs, traditions, and knowledge of Indigenous communities, ensuring high-quality and sustainable early learning opportunities.
- Support Community-Led Solutions – Engage Indigenous communities, caregivers, and early childhood educators in co-developing and piloting models that prioritize Indigenous knowledge, language, and family-centered care.
- Inform Policy and Systems Change – Conduct research, data analysis, and knowledge-sharing initiatives to guide policy development, enhance training and workforce capacity, and improve access to quality early learning and child care for Indigenous families.

As the project progresses into 2025, we will transition into a pilot project case study phase, working directly with NAN communities to test and refine various IELCC models. This phase will focus on implementation, evaluation, and community collaboration, ensuring the framework is practical, culturally responsive, and sustainable.

Indigenous families in Ontario face significant barriers to accessing high-quality, culturally responsive early learning and child care. Many communities experience a shortage of child care spaces, a lack of Indigenous-led programming, and systemic challenges in integrating traditional knowledge and language into early learning frameworks. Research has shown that culturally grounded early childhood education plays a crucial role in strengthening identity, fostering resilience, and improving long-term educational outcomes for Indigenous children. This project aims to address these critical gaps by developing and implementing community-driven IELCC models that reflect the needs, values, and traditions of Indigenous families across Ontario.



# FINANCIAL REPORT



# FINDING OUR POWER TOGETHER

## Balance Sheet

As of December 31, 2024

|  | TOTAL                |
|--|----------------------|
| <b>Assets</b>                            |                      |
| Current Assets                           |                      |
| Cash and Cash Equivalent                 |                      |
| 1020 BUSINESS DEPOSIT ACCOUNT CAD (7416) | 194,378.83           |
| Shopify Store                            | 0.00                 |
| <b>Total Cash and Cash Equivalent</b>    | <b>\$194,378.83</b>  |
| Accounts Receivable (A/R)                |                      |
| Accounts Receivable (A/R)                | 36,378.20            |
| <b>Total Accounts Receivable (A/R)</b>   | <b>\$36,378.20</b>   |
| Accrued Revenue                          | 21,520.41            |
| GST/HST Receivable                       | 2,646.20             |
| Prepaid expenses                         | 3,390.00             |
| Uncategorized Asset                      | 0.00                 |
| <b>Total CurrentAssets</b>               | <b>\$258,313.64</b>  |
| <b>Total Assets</b>                      | <b>\$258,313.64</b>  |
| <b>Liabilities and Equity</b>            |                      |
| Liabilities                              |                      |
| Current Liabilities                      |                      |
| Accounts Payable (A/P)                   |                      |
| 2000 Accounts Payable (A/P)              | 27,979.66            |
| 2700 Deferred income                     | 0.00                 |
| <b>Total Accounts Payable (A/P)</b>      | <b>\$27,979.66</b>   |
| 2350 2022 Payroll Arrears                | -14,510.77           |
| 2355 2023 Payroll Arrears                | -6,427.99            |
| 2400 Payroll Liabilities                 | 0.00                 |
| 2405 Federal Taxes                       | 74,529.32            |
| 2407 Vacation Pay                        | 72.80                |
| <b>Total 2400 Payroll Liabilities</b>    | <b>74,602.12</b>     |
| 2500 Direct Deposit Payable              | 0.00                 |
| Accrued Expenses Accrued                 | 2,618.92             |
| Liabilities (Year-end) Deferred          | 246,338.93           |
| Revenue GST/HST Payable                  | 0.00                 |
| <b>Total CurrentLiabilities</b>          | <b>\$330,600.87</b>  |
| <b>Total Liabilities</b>                 | <b>\$330,600.87</b>  |
| Equity                                   |                      |
| Opening Balance Equity                   | 0.00                 |
| Retained Earnings                        | -106,376.18          |
| Profit for the year                      | 34,088.95            |
| <b>Total Equity</b>                      | <b>\$ -72,287.23</b> |
| <b>Total Liabilities and Equity</b>      | <b>\$258,313.64</b>  |

# FINDING OUR POWER TOGETHER

## Profit and Loss

January - December 2024

|   | TOTAL               |
|---|---------------------|
| <b>INCOME</b>   |                     |
| 4000 Grants   | 295,489.71          |
| 4005 Fundraising & Donations                                | 25,732.72           |
| Service/Fee Income  | 202,363.87          |
| <b>TotalIncome</b>  | <b>\$523,586.30</b> |
| <b>GROSS PROFIT</b>   | <b>\$523,586.30</b> |
| <b>EXPENSES</b>   |                     |
| CFC Canada Indigenous Sovereignty - Expenses                | 9,600.00            |
| City of Toronto (Climate Action I & 2) - Expenses           | 7,000.00            |
| City of Toronto (EarlyON) - Expenses                        | 83,583.67           |
| Fees for services (General Expenses)                        | 4,051.83            |
| FGF Healing our Youth (HoY) - Expenses                      | 37,548.14           |
| General & Admin Expenses                                    | 30,011.89           |
| Indigenous Institutes Consortium (IIC) - Expenses           | 15,800.00           |
| Indigenous Youth Roots (IYR)-Building Our Bundle - Expenses | 10,550.00           |
| Indigenous Youth Roots (IYR)-Land Medicine - Expenses       | 5,000.00            |
| Laidlaw 2023 - Expenses                                     | 3,000.00            |
| Laidlaw 2024 (IYCFF) - Expenses                             | 22,733.93           |
| Laidlaw RFOR - Expenses                                     | 18,661.80           |
| NHSP-Knowledge Keepers (Circle of Wisdom) - Expenses        | 8,800.00            |
| OFIFC-Restorying Indigenous Autism - Expenses               | 34,547.00           |
| OTF Capacity Building (CB) - Expenses                       | 5,215.00            |
| OTF YOF-BTG - Expenses                                      | 140,844.25          |
| Professional Fees   | 6,499.97            |
| Rising from our Roots (Bear Moon) - Expenses                | 990.00              |
| YorkU-RISE Program - Expenses                               | 17,250.00           |
| Youth Harbour Action (YHA) - Expenses                       | 27,897.47           |
| Youth Harbour Assembly - Expenses                           | 3,412.40            |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>                                       | <b>\$492,997.35</b> |
| <b>OTHER INCOME</b>   |                     |
| Other Ordinary Income                                       | 3,500.00            |
| <b>TotalOther Income</b>                                    | <b>\$3,500.00</b>   |
| <b>PROFIT</b>   | <b>\$34,088.95</b>  |

# Grants Received in 2024

| Grant Name   | Funder                        | Amount received |
|--|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| IYR Small Projects Stream                              | Indigenous Youth Roots        | 10,500          |
| Honoring Survivors Fund                                | Future Generations Foundation | 51,000          |
| Indigenous Artists in Communities and Schools Projects | Ontario Arts Council          | 15,000          |
| McConnell Foundation                                   | McConnell Foundation          | 50,000          |
| Telus Friendly Futures Foundation                      | Telus                         | 20,000          |
| New Horizons for Seniors Program                       | Government of Canada          | 22,134          |
| Indigenous Youth & Community Futures Fund              | Laidlaw Foundation            | 30,000          |
| The Youth Harbour (Mushkiki Aki) Action Grant          | The Youth Harbour             | 30,000          |
| The Youth Harbour Assembly Grant                       | The Youth Harbour             | 5,000           |
| Indigenous Youth and Community Futures Fund (OM)       | Rising From Our Roots         | 28,000          |
| Indigenous Climate Action Grant                        | City of Toronto               | 14,000          |
| Downie Wenjack Reconciliation Action Grant             | Downie Wenjack                | 15,000          |



# Grants Received in 2024

| Grant Name  | Funder                        | Amount received |
|---|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| Systems Innovation Program Fund                   | Ontario Trillium Foundation   | 131,413.70      |
| Future Generations Foundation (Healing our Youth) | Future Generations Foundation | 25,500          |

Total: \$447,547.70

# Fees for Service in 2024

| Service Name   | Funder                           | Amount received |
|--|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Bear Moon Teachings and Feast                          | Rising From Our Roots            | 990             |
| ESDC Program Evaluation                                | ESDC /York Univeristy            | 17,250          |
| Indigenous Grantees Trauma Informed Workshop Series    | Ontario Trillium Foundation      | 5,215           |
| Indigenous Institutes Wellness Project                 | Indigenous Institutes Consortium | 15,800          |
| OFIFC Indigenous Autism Project                        | Restorying Autism                | 20,547          |
| Community Food Centres Canada                          | Community Food Centres Canada    | 9,600           |
| City of Toronto - Indigenous Early On Service Contract | City of Toronto                  | 100,000         |

Total: 169,402

# FOPT Acknowledges

## 2024 Funders

ESDC /York Univeristy  
Ontario Trillium Foundation  
Rising From our Roots (RFOR)  
Indigenous Youth Roots (IYR)  
Indigenous Institutes Consortium (IIC)  
Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF)  
Restorying Autism  
Future Generations Foundation  
Community Food Centres Canada (CFCC)  
Durham Region  
Ontario Arts Council  
McConnel Foundation  
Telus  
Government of Canada  
The Youth Harbour  
Laidlaw Foundation  
City of Toronto  
Canada Post  
The Gord Downie and Chanie Wenjack Fund

## Partners

Bawaadan Collective  
City of Toronto  
Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU)  
Center for Grief and Healing



# FOPT Acknowledges

## Donors

Adriana Mendieta- Flores  
Kristle Calisto-Tavares  
Jaime Klein  
Arnie Guha  
Isabela Gorgonio  
Nadia Rosemond  
Hanna Wagner  
Lawrence Johnston (in memory of Meagan Johnston)  
Toronto Foundation  
Janine Manning  
Hanna Wagner  
Taylor Macmillan  
Amanda Malone  
Christina Preston  
Nataliya Rutylo  
Vicki Boland  
Saeideh Khazaei  
Helping Hands Doula  
Ashley Wicks  
Kim Sharpe  
Vera Khudysheva  
Justin Alizadeh  
Todd Gaglietta  
Tamara Lucas  
Katharine Harris  
Chris Geady  
Claudia Calabro  
Electricity Distributors Association  
Bonita Varga  
Karina Clendenning  
Sherry Beluse  
Tasfia Preeti  
Sean Toohey  
Nathan Schut  
Shawna Michelle Williamson  
Noel Pratt

# Conclusion and Next Steps

As we close out 2024, Finding Our Power Together stands deeply rooted in our values—community, culture, and collective healing. This year has been a powerful testament to what is possible when we honor traditional knowledge, uplift Indigenous youth, and work in solidarity across generations and nations. From new sweat lodge ceremonies and mental health supports to leadership circles and intergenerational storytelling, each initiative has served as a pathway for connection, empowerment, and renewal.

Our impact is not measured only in numbers but in the transformative experiences shared by the youth, caregivers, and communities we walk with. We are humbled by the strength and commitment of our team, the wisdom of our Elders, and the continued trust placed in us by our partners and funders.

## Next Steps

Looking ahead, our work is far from over. In 2025, FOPT will:

- **Expand Our Reach:** Bring our mental health and leadership programs to new regions, especially underserved communities, through both in-person and digital platforms.
- **Strengthen Our Infrastructure:** Invest in systems and staffing to support organizational resilience and ensure we continue to meet the growing needs of our communities.
- **Deepen Youth Leadership:** Further empower Indigenous youth by expanding the Young Leaders Circle, increasing mentorship opportunities, and supporting youth-led advocacy and programming.
- **Advance Systemic Change:** Continue our research and policy work, including the Bridging the Gap study and the Indigenous Early Learning Framework, to influence how institutions support Indigenous well-being.
- **Prioritize Sustainability:** Strengthen long-term partnerships, diversify funding streams, and evaluate our practices to ensure we remain rooted, responsive, and regenerative.

As we enter this new chapter, we invite all those reading this report—youth, funders, partners, and allies—to continue this journey with us. Together, we are not only preventing harm but actively building a future where Indigenous youth can thrive in their full power.

# MIIGWETCH!

2024

# FINDING OUR POWER TOGETHER

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