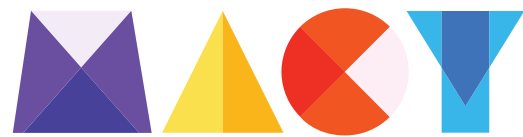


Annual Report & SERVICE PLAN 2022-23



Manitoba Advocate
for Children and Youth





Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth

Behind our new design

This report is the first produced material with our new brand and logo, created in collaboration with Vincent Design Inc.

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth (MACY) recognizes that not all children are the same. Each child, youth, and young adult that we have the privilege to serve is unique and special, with a range of gifts and support needs across public systems. The child advocacy we do, to ensure young people receive the supports and protection they need and are entitled to, can be akin to solving a complex puzzle. Communities, family members, friends, and service providers across our beautiful province serve as essential pieces of this puzzle, which is unique for each child. With time, dedication, collaboration, and patience, the pieces of the puzzle come together, ensuring the needs of each child are met.

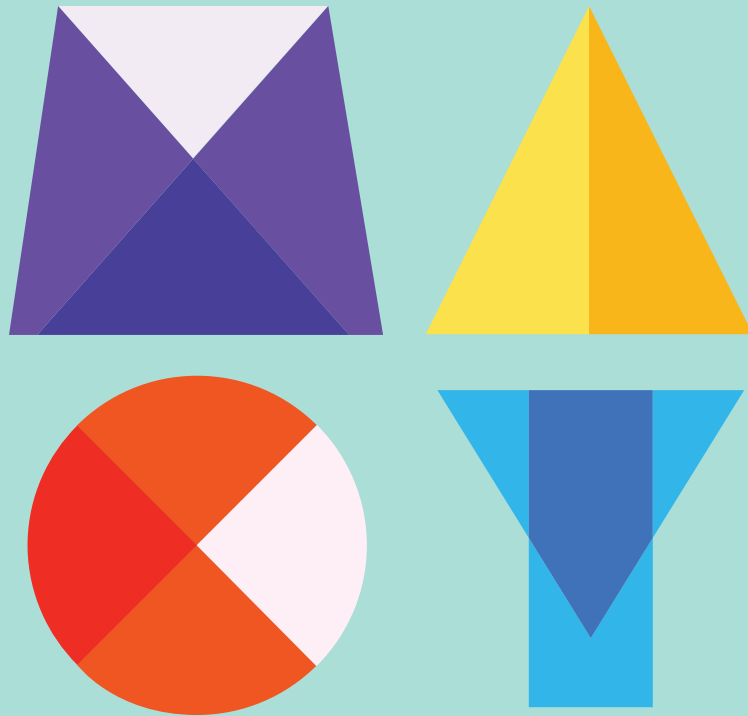
This sentiment is visible in MACY's new logo, and throughout our branding. The playfulness and vibrancy of the colours and elements are to communicate to young people, and the community across Manitoba, that we are here for you. The renewed brightness and energy align with the evolving identity of the Advocate office in undertaking vital children right's work, steadfastly amplifying the voices of children, youth, and young adults in our province.

The basic shapes used in the new MACY identity are timeless, including dynamic depth, complexity, and inclusivity. When brought together, the elements of MACY's brand represent a collective, shared environment, that provides the office with endless possibilities for years to come.

“

As an organization, we came together and mobilized to advocate for children's rights. Now more than ever, it is crucial that children have equitable access to the essential services they need to grow up safe, healthy, and happy.”

— SHERRY GOTT, MANITOBA ADVOCATE
FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH



Contact Us

Winnipeg Office

204-988-7440

8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Monday through Friday
346 Portage Avenue, Unit 100
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0C3

Thompson Office


204-677-7270

9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Monday through Friday
300 Mystery Lake Road
Thompson, MB R8N 0M2
(inside the City Centre Mall)

Toll free

from anywhere in Manitoba
1-800-263-7146

 info@manitobaadvocate.ca

 ManitobaAdvocate.ca

 facebook.com/ManitobaAdvocate

 twitter.com/MB_Advocate

 instagram.com/manitobaadvocate

 youtube.com/@ManitobaAdvocate

 linkedin.com/company/mbadvocate

Our Commitment to Reconciliation

The Manitoba Advocate operates throughout the province of Manitoba, on the ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene peoples. We acknowledge that our primary office is located on Treaty 1 territory and on the homeland of the Red River Métis. Our work extends throughout Treaty areas 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 10. We recognize the historical and ongoing injustices Indigenous Peoples face, including the loss of land, culture, and identity through colonization and the residential school system.

We acknowledge that our water is sourced from Shoal Lake 40 First Nation. We extend our gratitude to the people of Shoal Lake who work tirelessly to protect our water systems. We respect the spirit and intent of the treaties made and remain committed to working in partnership with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people in the spirit of truth, reconciliation, and collaboration.

With a steadfast commitment to social justice and equity, our office operates through a human rights-based lens, weaving the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of*

the Child, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) *Calls to Action*, and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) Inquiry's *Calls for Justice* into our daily practice. Our hope is that by doing so, we can amplify the voices of those who have been historically silenced and marginalized and foster tangible improvements in the lives and experiences of children, youth, young adults, and their families. We believe that by working in partnership with Indigenous Peoples and centring their knowledge and expertise, we can create meaningful and lasting change.

In expressing our reconciliation statement, we commit to honouring and supporting movements led by Indigenous leaders, stewards, and protectors of the land. This responsibility includes engaging with Indigenous knowledge systems and amplifying the voices of Indigenous Peoples in Manitoba. We recognize that reconciliation is a journey, and we are committed to walking this path with humility, respect, and openness.



 A photo of MACY staff participating in a Blanket Exercise.

As part of MACY's dedication to reconciliation and in recognition of Indigenous History Month, the MACY team participated in a Blanket Exercise on June 8, 2022. Led by Janelle Delorme, a 2022 Champion of Indigenous Education award winner, and Jason Cegayle, the experience proved to be a profound afternoon that propelled us further along our collective journey of comprehending our intertwined histories as Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples.

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About Our Office

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth (MACY) is an independent and non-partisan office of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba. Empowered and governed by *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act (ACYA)*, our role is to represent the rights, and amplify the voices and opinions of all children, youth, and young adults in Manitoba.

The Manitoba Advocate receives its mandate through the ACYA.

The mandate includes:

Advocacy Services – to support, assist, inform, and advise children, youth, young adults, and their families on designated services.

Serious Injury and Child Death Reviews and Investigations – to review, investigate, and report on the serious injuries and deaths of children, youth, and young adults.

Research – to conduct research on designated services to improve the effectiveness and responsiveness of those services.

Monitoring – to monitor the implementation of recommendations made in investigations or special reports.

Public Education and Youth Engagement – to raise awareness and understanding of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)*. To assist and inform children, youth, young adults, and their families in accessing

designated services and to promote the best interests of young people in Manitoba.

Advice to Ministers – to advise the ministers who are responsible for designated services in Manitoba. Designated services are the child- and youth-serving systems that the Manitoba Advocate has a responsibility to monitor. These include the provincial systems of child welfare, adoption, disabilities, education, mental health, addictions, victim supports, and youth justice.



OUR MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES



Mission

We amplify the voices and champion the rights of children, youth, and young adults.



Vision

A safe and healthy society that hears, includes, values, and protects all children, youth, and young adults.



Values

Child-centredness, equity, respect, accountability, independence.

Message from the Manitoba Advocate

📍 Manitoba Advocate Sherry Gott.

I am honoured to be writing to you today as the Manitoba Advocate, and to hold the distinction of being the first Cree woman to serve in this role. While acknowledging the challenging work ahead, I consider it a great honour to undertake this position and to be an advocate for the human rights of children, youth, and young adults in Manitoba. I am deeply appreciative of the Elders who have provided me with their guidance and have supported me in my journey to this position.

I would like to commend everyone at the Manitoba Advocate office for their unwavering dedication last fiscal and beyond. As an organization, we came together and mobilized to advocate for children's rights. Now more than ever, it is crucial that children have equitable access to the essential services they need to grow up safe, healthy, and happy.

During my time here, I have had the unique opportunity to reflect on how our office operates, and the way we work within our community. In the spirit of reconciliation, we are shifting our emphasis to relationship building and collaboration with communities and First Nations across Manitoba. I have had the honour of meeting with Sapotawayak Cree Nation Health Authority (SCNHA), Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, and many more. I have also been actively attending community events such as the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs' Women's Gathering and the Prairie Child Welfare Consortium. I look forward to making meaningful connections with communities, organizations, and advocates to better serve children, youth, and their families in Manitoba. It is through these relationships that we can create positive change for the future of Manitoba.

We are committed to Elders and Knowledge Keepers guiding our processes at the Manitoba Advocate office, and we are also looking to community members for their expertise when issuing recommendations. Their teachings and contributions help us ensure that our work is informed, meaningful, respectful, and aligned with the needs and aspirations of the communities we serve.

One significant change we have begun is to our approach when working directly with provincial public systems and community organizations. In addition to adopting Indigenous methodologies, we are now approaching our work from a strengths-based standpoint that is trauma-informed. We believe that this approach will enable us to work more closely with communities and to gain deeper insight into their needs so that we can better advocate for young people.

With appreciation for the diverse and vibrant tapestry of Manitoba, we remain steadfast in our commitment to fostering unity. We aspire to continue gathering together in a way that honours and respects the roots that have nurtured us for generations.

Looking Forward

As we leave another fiscal year behind us, we look to the future and to everything we hope to accomplish in the years to come. The upcoming year will be a very important one for the office as we gear up for the legislative review of *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act* (ACYA) and the proclamation of additional reporting provisions under the *Serious Injury Reporting Regulation*. These two pieces of legislation are crucial

for enhancing the quality of public services offered to children, youth, and young adults in Manitoba.

The Manitoba Advocate will continue to provide essential support to communities in developing their own legislation under the frameworks of *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families* (Act C-24), and *An Act respecting Child and Family Services (Indigenous Jurisdiction and Related Amendments)* (Bill 32). Act C-24 and Bill 32 are significant legislative measures aimed at empowering Indigenous communities to develop their own child welfare systems. These new pieces of legislation serve as important references when discussing the support provided to communities in their pursuit of self-governance and legal autonomy. By leveraging these pieces of legislation, Indigenous governments and organizations are facilitating the process of community legislation, ensuring that local communities have the necessary tools to shape their own futures to better support young people.

We will continue to prioritize the needs and rights of young people as we strive to move Manitoba forward to a place where public policy and provincial services prioritize the safety and growth of all young people. I extend my sincerest gratitude to all of you for your continued support and partnership.

Sherry Gott, BSW, MSW, RSW
MANITOBA ADVOCATE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Message de la Protectrice des enfants et des jeunes du Manitoba

French

Je suis honorée de vous écrire aujourd'hui en tant que protectrice des droits des enfants et des jeunes du Manitoba et d'avoir la distinction d'être la première femme crie à occuper ce poste. Tout en reconnaissant le travail difficile qui nous attend, je considère comme un grand honneur d'assumer ce poste et de défendre les droits de la personne des enfants, des adolescents et des jeunes adultes au Manitoba. Je suis profondément reconnaissante envers les Aînés qui m'ont prodigué leurs conseils et leur soutien tout au long de mon cheminement vers ce poste.

J'aimerais remercier toutes les personnes du Bureau du protecteur des enfants pour leur dévouement indéfectible au cours du dernier exercice financier et au-delà. En tant qu'organisme, nous nous sommes mobilisés pour défendre les droits des enfants. Maintenant et plus que jamais, il est crucial que les enfants aient un accès équitable aux services essentiels dont ils ont besoin pour grandir en toute sécurité, en santé et heureux.

Lors de mon séjour ici, j'ai eu la chance unique de réfléchir à la façon de fonctionner de notre bureau, et à notre façon de travailler au sein de notre communauté. Dans l'esprit de la réconciliation, nous concentrons nos efforts en vue de tisser des liens et de collaborer avec les communautés et les Premières Nations d'un bout à l'autre du Manitoba. J'ai eu l'honneur de rencontrer les autorités de santé de la Nation crie de Sapotawayak (SCNHA), la Nation crie de Nisichawayasihk et bien d'autres encore. J'ai également participé activement à des événements communautaires tels que le rassemblement des femmes de l'Assemblée des chefs du Manitoba et le Prairie Child Welfare Consortium. Il me tarde de tisser des liens significatifs avec les communautés, les organisations et les défenseurs des droits des enfants pour offrir de meilleurs services aux enfants, aux jeunes et à leurs familles au Manitoba. C'est grâce à ces relations que nous pouvons créer un changement positif pour l'avenir du Manitoba.

Nous nous engageons à ce que les Aînés et les gardiens du savoir guident nos processus au Bureau du protecteur des enfants, et nous comptons également sur les membres de la communauté pour leur expertise lors de la formulation de recommandations. Leurs enseignements et leurs contributions nous aideront à faire en sorte que notre travail soit éclairé, significatif, respectueux et aligné sur les besoins et les aspirations des communautés que nous servons.

Une modification importante que nous avons amorcée dans ce rapport concerne notre approche lorsque nous travaillons directement avec les systèmes publics provinciaux et les organismes communautaires. En plus d'adopter des méthodes autochtones, nous abordons maintenant notre travail d'un point de vue fondé sur les forces et tenant compte des traumatismes. Nous pensons que cette approche nous permettra de travailler plus étroitement avec les communautés et de mieux comprendre leurs besoins afin de mieux défendre les jeunes.

Tout en appréciant la mosaïque vibrante et diversifiée du Manitoba, nous demeurons déterminés à favoriser l'unité. Nous aspirons à continuer de nous rassembler d'une manière qui honore et respecte les racines qui nous ont soutenus et guidés pendant des générations.

Tourné vers l'avenir

Alors que nous tournons la page sur un autre exercice financier, nous regardons vers l'avenir et envisageons tout ce que nous espérons accomplir dans les années à venir. L'année qui s'annonce sera très importante pour le Bureau, alors que nous nous préparons à la révision législative de la *Loi sur le protecteur des enfants et des jeunes* (LPEJ) et la proclamation de dispositions supplémentaires sur les rapports en vertu du *Règlement sur la communication de renseignements concernant les cas de blessures graves*. Ces deux textes législatifs sont cruciaux pour améliorer la qualité des services publics offerts aux enfants, aux jeunes et aux jeunes adultes au Manitoba.

La protectrice des enfants et des jeunes du Manitoba continuera de fournir un soutien essentiel aux communautés pour leur permettre d'élaborer leur propre législation en vertu des cadres de la Loi concernant les enfants, les jeunes et les familles des Premières Nations, des Inuits et des Métis (Loi C-24), et de la Loi concernant les services à l'enfant et à la famille (*Champ de compétence autochtone et modifications connexes*) (Projet de loi 32). La Loi C-24 et le Projet de loi 32 sont des mesures législatives importantes qui visent à doter les communautés autochtones des moyens nécessaires pour mettre au point leurs propres systèmes de protection de l'enfance. Ces nouveaux textes de loi agissent comme références importantes lors de discussions sur le soutien fourni aux communautés dans leur quête d'autogouvernance et d'autonomie juridique. En tirant parti de ces textes de loi, les gouvernements et les organisations autochtones peuvent faciliter le processus de législation communautaire, en veillant à ce que les communautés locales disposent des outils nécessaires pour façonner leur propre avenir afin de mieux appuyer les jeunes.

Nous allons continuer d'accorder la priorité aux besoins et aux droits des jeunes alors que nous nous efforçons de faire avancer le Manitoba pour qu'il devienne un endroit où la politique publique et les services provinciaux priorisent la sécurité et la croissance de tous les jeunes. Je souhaite exprimer à chacun de vous ma sincère gratitude pour votre soutien et votre partenariat continus.

Sherry Gott, BSW, MSW, RSW
TRAVAILLEUSE SOCIALE AUTORISÉE
PROTECTRICE DES ENFANTS ET DES
JEUNES DU MANITOBA

Executive Summary

This annual report highlights the results achieved by our office between April 1, 2022 and March 31, 2023. It provides an overview of our activities and initiatives, including:



Events we participated in throughout the year, including I Love to Read Month and various public engagement activities;



Program updates from Advocacy Services, Youth Engagement, Public Education, Investigations and Child Death Reviews, Quality Assurance, and Research;



An overview of the *Every Two Hours* special report released during the 2022-23 fiscal; and



Formal recommendations issued to improve provincial child-serving systems.

This report also contains an annual financial report, lists our team members, and shares results from our work over the past year.

2,555

requests for advocacy services

7

formal recommendations issued to public bodies, based on systemic research on children's rights issues

1,012

children, youth, and young adults supported through ongoing advocacy

19

responses to new systemic advocacy referrals

265

formal Manitoba child death notifications received

153

outreach activities across all departments

73

child death reviews completed

1,652

children and youth who participated in a rights-based lesson plan for National Child Day

1

report card on government compliance with recommendations

34,785

Thrive Kits™ delivered to students in partnership with the Canadian Mental Health Association – Manitoba and Winnipeg

1

special report based on children and youth who were exposed to intimate partner violence in Manitoba

Résumé

French

Le présent rapport annuel met en évidence les résultats obtenus par notre bureau entre le 1^{er} avril 2022 et le 31 mars 2023. Il présente un aperçu de nos activités et de nos initiatives, y compris :



Les événements auxquels nous avons participé tout au long de l'année, dont le Mois de la lecture et diverses activités d'engagement du public;



Des mises à jour sur les programmes des services de protection des enfants et des jeunes, de participation des jeunes, d'éducation auprès de la population, d'enquêtes et d'exams sur les décès des enfants, assurance de la qualité et de recherche;



Un aperçu du rapport spécial *Toutes les deux heures* diffusé pendant l'exercice financier de 2022-2023;



Des recommandations officielles publiées pour améliorer les systèmes provinciaux de protection des enfants.

Ce rapport comprend également un rapport financier annuel, dresse la liste des membres de notre équipe et communique les résultats de nos travaux au cours de l'année dernière.

2,555

demandes de services de protection des enfants et des jeunes

7

recommandations officielles émises aux organismes publics, reposant sur des recherches systémiques sur les questions de droits des enfants

1,012

enfants, jeunes et jeunes adultes appuyés par l'entremise des activités continues de protection

19

réponses aux nouveaux aiguillages de défense systémique des droits des enfants et des jeunes

265

avis de décès officiels d'enfants au Manitoba reçus

153

activités de sensibilisation dans l'ensemble des ministères

73

examens réalisés sur des décès d'enfants

1,652

enfants et jeunes qui ont participé à un plan de leçons sur leurs droits pour la Journée nationale de l'enfance

1

fiche de rendement sur la conformité du gouvernement avec des recommandations officielles

34,785

1

rapport spécial fondé sur les enfants et les jeunes qui ont été exposés à la violence conjugale au Manitoba

trousses Thrive offertes aux étudiants en partenariat avec l'Association canadienne pour la santé mentale – Manitoba et Winnipeg

ONÍKÁNAKISO Mamawá cimowina

Cree

Óma tanto askíy ácinówasinahikan wítam tániwéya anihí kékwa ná kákí kaskítáyák ta itótamák óma kákí pé akimicik písím April 1, 2022 isko March 31, 2023. Ékota masinahikátéwa kakinaw kékwa ná tánté kákí pé nócitáyák éko kákí mácitáyák, éko ékota óhi:



Ité kákí natawi wícihiwéyák kápé anóhc kákí askiyak, I Love to Read Month éko nanátok ité ki natawi wícihiwánán;



Ta tápitawi oskácimonaniwan táni óhi Advocacy Services, Youth Engagement, Public Education, Ká Sokasinahikátékítéki, Investigations wéká Child Death Reviews éko Research;



Ká kítwámi kinawápacikáték anima ká cikásté nókopanik ácimowin Every Two Hours kákí nistom nókotániwak 2022/23 kákí askíwak; éko



Kici okimáwiwin pískwéstamátowina kákí wanasowátakik kita níkáni kawisk paminakik anihí awásis-owícihikowisiwina paminikéwina.

Óma ácinówasinahikan mina takwasanihikátéwa tánikok sóniyáw, anima kákí pé wítatoskémikoyák, éko kímámawácimonániwan kakinaw óhi kékwa ná kákí pé nócitáyák anóhc kákí pé póni askíwak.

2,555

natotéstamákona

1,012

awásisak, oskátisak éko anóhc kákí kisi opikicik oskátisak kákí pé natotéstamawáyákok

265

Manitoba awásisak nántaw éki isi pisci nipocik ácinókéwina ékí pé isitisayamákawiyák

73

awásisak nántaw kákí isi nipocik éki kítwámi kinawápacikátéki

1

Péyak ácinówasinahikan kici okimáwiwin itasowéwin pimitisahikéwin

1

Péyak ácimowin éki wá wanitótá cik ókik awásisak éko oskátisak awiyaka oci kákí kiskénimá cik óta Manitoba

7

Tépakop pískwéstamátowina kákí ocímakaki ta wápatinícik okimáwi níkánistamwak, éki ápacitácik anihí kákí natonikéhi miskakik kiskénitamona anihí oci ókik awásisak otasotamáwiniwáw tasitamowina

19

naskwásikókémona anihí oci oski pískwéstamákéwina isitisahikéwina

153

nanátok éki natawi nátáyákok kita nántaw isi wícihiwéyák

1,652

awásisak éko oskátisak kákí natawi má mawi wícihiwécik óma kawisk-kikiciwámákéwina asotamátowino oci óma National Child Day kákí ayámák

34,785

Thrival Kits éki natawi má minicik awásisak anté oci Canadian Mental Health Association-Manitoba éko Winnipeg

Kaa Takwaak Aacimowin

Oji-Cree

Ohowe taso aki tipaacimowin otongi paapankii tipaatotaan kaakii tootank nintanokiiwikamiko naan onci April 1, minikok March 31, 2023. Onci taatipaatotewan ishickewinan miina maacicikewi nan, kaye:



Ihiweniwan kaakii totamaank kaa pimi akiwak, kaye Ni saakiton Ehayamicike yaan Kiisis miina paapakaan ishickewi nan;



Kanociketamaakewin ishickewinan onci waawiincikewinan, Oshkaatisak Nakish kaakewin, Kakina Awiya Okikinwahamaa kowin, Mamaaniwi Nanaantonikewin mii na Apinonciishish Nipowin Naakacicike winan, Kecinaac ci minonaakwak, miina Kekon kaa macisek Nanaan tawencikewin;



Kaa takwaak aacimowin Taso Niishowaa kaase kici tipaacimowin kaakii pakitinin kaatek mekwaac 2022-23 shoonyaawaki; miina



Okimaawinink kaa pakitinikaatekin kano cikewinan kewinci minosenik akiwikimaa otapinonciishishi piimiwicikewinan.

Ohowe tipaacimowin kaye kikisin taso aki shooni yaa tipaacimowin, akine piihikaasowak anokiinaa kanak, miina nintanokiiwi kashkihowininaan kaa pimi akiwak.

2,555

kanociketamaakewin kakwe twewinan

1,012

apinonciishishak, oshkaatisak, miina kaani kiishikiwaac oshkaatisak kiyaapi kaa pimi kanociketamawin twaa

265

okimaawinink Manitoba apinonciishish onipowipepan kaa takosenik

73

apinonciishish onipowinaanaakata wenimikowin kaa kiishickaatenik

1

tipaacimikowi pepan okimaawin oti nacikewin ekii piminishahikaatenik

1

tipaacimowin apinonciishish mii na oshkaatis ekii inapishink oniikihi kon emiikaatinic piinci Manitoba

7

kanocikewinan kii miina oki maan kaakii onasikoc, ekii sakaki naa naakatawencikaatek apinonciishish omashkawisiwi macisewinan

19

aashitencikewinan kaakii ishinisha hikaatek kanociketamaakewin kaa macisek

153

naasikaakewinan ishi paapakana yek kakina anokiwinink

1,652

apinonciishishak miina oshkaati sak kaakii wiicitowaac mashkawisiwi kikinwahamaakewin mekwaac kaa Kici Apinonciishish Kiishikaanik

34,785

Omaanitonencikanink kewinci mino ayaac otishkonii aapacitaakan kiimiinawak otishkonii ewitanokii maawac Omaamitonencikani anokii naakanak - Manitoba miina Winnipeg

MACY in the Community

- 1. MACY's Youth Ambassador Advisory Squad (YAAS) at a public awareness event.
- 2. MACY staff and YAAS members at the First Nations Caring Society Gala.
- 3. Youth Engagement team tabling at a public event.
- 4. Investigator Kelsey VanOsch, Manitoba Advocate Sherry Gott, Indigenous Deputy Advocate Kelly Gossfeld, and Deputy Advocate Dr. Karlee Sapoznik Evans at the Manitoba Trafficking Awareness Day event at the CMHR. Photo by Nardella Photography Inc.



1



2



3



4

- 5. MACY staff visiting the Thompson office, ahead of a talking circle with youth.
- 6. Two members from MACY's Youth Ambassador Advisory Squad, attending No Child Alone Dinner.
- 7. Deputy Advocate Dr. Karlee Sapoznik Evans at a community event with Janelle Delorme.
- 8. Deputy Advocate Dr. Karlee Sapoznik Evans with a group of students from Université de Saint-Boniface.



5



6



7



8

MACY in the Community

9



13



9. Manitoba Advocate Sherry Gott with Indigenous Deputy Advocate Kelly Gossfeld in York Landing.

10. Manitoba Advocate Sherry Gott with Elder Gertrude Ballantyne and Elder Louise Lavallee from the Elders Council.

11. Manitoba Advocate Sherry Gott and Deputy Advocate Dr. Karlee Sapoznik Evans with community members from Sapotawayak Cree Nation.

12. MACY staff with Chief Angela Levasseur at Nelson House, Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation.

13. MACY staff and YAAS at a public awareness event.

14. Manitoba Advocate Sherry Gott with Indigenous Deputy Advocate Kelly Gossfeld on International Women's Day.

15. MACY staff at the Indigenous Youth Gala.

16. Members of the MACY team celebrating Ribbon Skirt Day.

17. Advocacy Officers Kim Wuirch and Margherita Gagliardi at a tabling event.

10



14



15



11



12



16



17





“
We are committed to Elders and Knowledge Keepers guiding our processes at the Manitoba Advocate office, and we are also looking to community members for their expertise when issuing recommendations.”

— SHERRY GOTT, MANITOBA ADVOCATE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Elders Council

At the heart of the Manitoba Advocate's endeavours lies the Elders Council, a group of Elders who provides invaluable consultations and contributions to the office. Through its guidance on activities and cultural protocols, the Elders Council supports the office in conducting its work with sensitivity and respect for all Nations.

The Elders' contributions encompass various practices such as smudging, pipe ceremonies, water ceremonies, cloth offerings, feasting, and offering prayers for children, youth, and their families. Guided by the Seven Teachings – love, respect, truth, courage, wisdom, honesty, and humility – the Elders are held in high regard within their communities and share knowledge required to ensure the services provided by the office are delivered in a manner that is respectful, culturally informed, and representative of the Nations we serve.

Supported by the Knowledge Keeper, the Elders Council meets with the Advocate and the two Deputy Advocates throughout the year. During these meetings, members of the Elders Council are briefed on all ongoing investigations, research, and systemic advocacy issues and offer their wisdom and insight to the office. The Elder's Council met four times in the 2022-23 fiscal year.

Input from the Elders Council is integrated into the development and launch of the office's special reports. Members also provide feedback that helps guide the content, presentation, and recommendations in our reports.

The Elders Council consists of members from Indigenous communities and Nations that are representative of the children and youth that we serve. Currently, we have representation on the Elders Council from Métis, Cree, Ojibway, and Dakota Nations.

NAME	COMMUNITY
Elder Albert McLeod	Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation and Norway House
Elder Bill Ballantyne	Brokenhead Ojibway Nation
Elder Ed Azure*	Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation
Elder Fred Stevens*	Sapotewayak Cree Nation
Elder Gertrude Ballantyne	Brokenhead Ojibway Nation
Elder Louise Lavallee	St. Laurent, Manitoba

* Elder Ed Azure and Elder Fred Stevens' term ended with MACY in October 2022.





Knowledge Keeper

The Indigenous Knowledge Keeper plays a crucial role in providing cultural guidance and support across all program areas at MACY. With offices in three locations, their contributions extend to delivering cultural supports to the youth and families we serve. An integral part of their responsibilities is co-chairing the ReconciliACTION Committee alongside the Indigenous Deputy Advocate, as well as facilitating the implementation of MACY's ReconciliACTION Framework.

The Knowledge Keeper at MACY brings a wealth of traditional Indigenous knowledge to our office. Their diverse range of roles includes opening and closing meetings and events with prayers, engaging with staff and young people to support the work of

the office, facilitating land-based ceremonies and teachings, and fostering relationships with various communities and organizations. They also play an active role in collaborating with organizations to secure guest speakers for MACY's ReconciliACTION initiatives. Additionally, they represent the office at numerous community events, reinforcing our commitment to community engagement.

In addition to their extensive involvement with the Elders Council and the cultural activities provided to staff and YAAS members, the Knowledge Keeper provides teachings through the organization of solstice ceremonies and feasts for both staff and YAAS. These events serve as powerful opportunities for cultural exchange and understanding within MACY.

The presence of the Knowledge Keeper has allowed MACY to foster a culturally inclusive environment

embodying the principles of reconciliation and to promote a profound understanding of Indigenous knowledge and traditions. Their contributions are instrumental in strengthening the organization's commitment to cultural responsiveness and nurturing meaningful relationships with Indigenous communities.

Looking Ahead

Moving forward, we are thrilled to announce that we are in the planning stages of establishing a dedicated cultural space at MACY. This addition will bring tremendous value and will continue the integral role of a Knowledge Keeper at the Manitoba Advocate office. We embrace the chance to further strengthen our dedication to fostering a supportive and inclusive environment within our organization, ensuring that we are attuned and responsive to diverse cultural perspectives.

ACYA Legislative Review

Pursuant to subsection 40(1) of The Advocate for Children and Youth Act (ACYA), a committee of the Legislative Assembly must conduct a comprehensive review of the ACYA within five years of it coming into force, and must submit a report to the assembly with recommended amendments.

On March 15, 2023, the ACYA had been in force for five years. As such, our legislated review was scheduled to begin and a committee was to be struck. In light of the upcoming provincial election in October 2023, the Assembly made the decision to postpone the formation of a committee until after the election takes place.

During the winter of 2022, an internal committee comprised of MACY staff members came together to support the legislative review.

Throughout the winter and spring of 2023, the internal committee organized program area

meetings and distributed a survey to collect input from all MACY staff on what kind of amendments to propose to the Assembly to reduce barriers to serving young people in Manitoba.

During this time, the internal committee also conducted extensive jurisdictional scans and legal research of similar legislation in other provinces. Further, members of MACY's executive team also held meetings with various provincial child advocates and representatives to better understand their experiences with their legislative reviews.

MACY's internal committee continues to meet, diligently preparing for the start of the Assembly's one-year period allocated for reviewing the ACYA.

Stay tuned for community and stakeholder consultations, an interim report about MACY's legislative review recommendations, and information about how you and your organization can make a formal submission.



© Sage bundle resting on sweetgrass.

Offices and Program Areas

The Manitoba Advocate has two offices in Winnipeg and one in Thompson. In total, we have eight program areas: Advocacy Services, Investigations and Child Death Reviews, Serious Injury Reviews and Investigations, Youth Engagement, Public Education, Research, Quality Assurance, and Finance and Administration. All program areas work collaboratively to respond to individual and systemic issues that challenge the rights of children, youth, and young adults in Manitoba. This includes the work, insight, and inspiration of MACY's Youth Ambassador Advisory Squad (YAAS).



© The Finance and Administration team at MACY's Winnipeg office.

Finance and Administration

The Finance and Administration team at the Manitoba Advocate office plays a pivotal role in supporting all of MACY's programs. They serve as the initial point of contact for children, youth, their families, service providers, and members of the public who call or visit any of our three office locations. One of their key responsibilities is to represent the office professionally and respectfully, setting the tone for positive interactions. They triage all incoming calls and information requests, directing them to the appropriate programs at MACY.

Additionally, the Finance and Administration team manages essential administrative procedures. In doing so, they collaborate closely with facility management to maintain safe and functional office spaces across all locations. Upholding strict confidentiality and data security standards, they handle sensitive information with the utmost care and diligence, ensuring that transparency and accountability are upheld in all financial transactions and expenditures.



© Intake Assessment Officer Loretta Ouskun at MACY's Thompson office.

Thompson Office

In 2019, the Manitoba Advocate opened its first northern office in Thompson, with the aim of enhancing accessibility to MACY's services in the north. The Thompson office is a collaborative pilot project in conjunction with the Manitoba Ombudsman. It's staffed with two dedicated positions: an intake assessment officer and an administrative assistant. To ensure adequate support for the residents of Thompson and surrounding communities, staff from Winnipeg make regular trips to the office to offer additional assistance. The establishment of the Thompson office has helped MACY expand its in-person advocacy services in the northern region, establish stronger ties with community resources and stakeholders, and cultivate crucial connections with northern communities in Manitoba.

Program Areas

Advocacy Services

Investigations and Child Death Reviews

Serious Injury Reviews and Investigations

Youth Engagement

Public Education

Research

Quality Assurance

Finance and Administration

Advocacy Services



The Advocacy Services program was established in 1993, and has undergone significant growth and transformation over the past three decades, adapting to meet the evolving needs of young people in Manitoba. Its primary objective is to offer direct assistance to children, youth, young adults, and families residing in Manitoba. Referrals are received through various channels, including phone, email, walk-ins, mail, and social media.

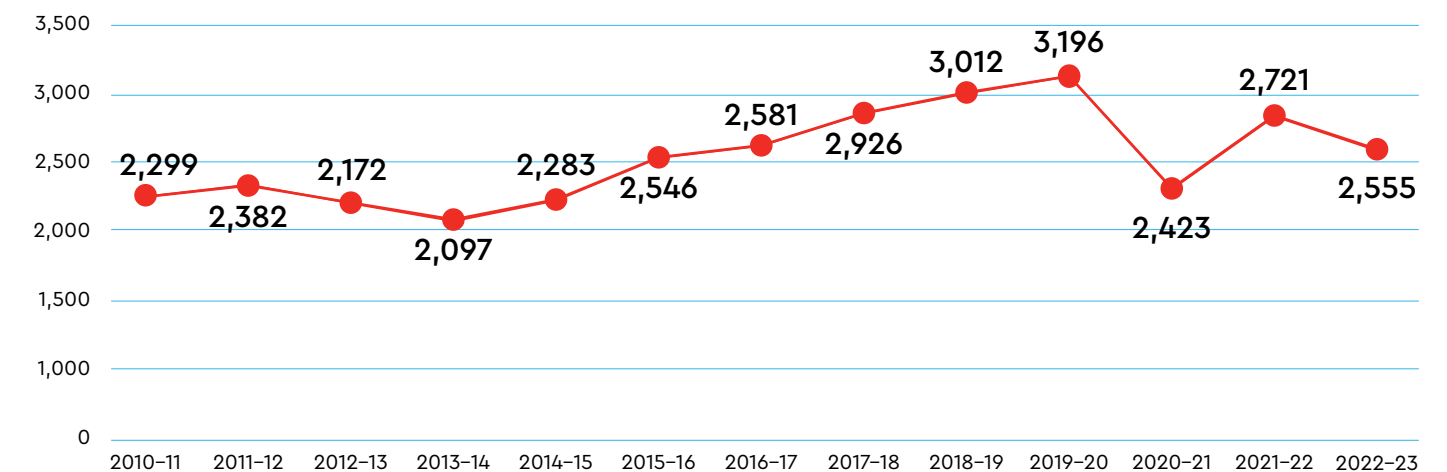
The Manitoba Advocate's team of advocacy officers engages in active listening to address concerns and fosters collaboration with children, youth, parents, service providers, and other community members, to tackle issues related to the provision of public services.

The Advocacy Process

Requests for Service: a source of referral (SOR) contacts or visits our office with an inquiry	2,555
General Inquiries: general information is requested and provided	118
Intake Service: the SOR speaks to an advocacy officer	2,437

Requests for Advocacy Services

At 81%, the majority of requests for Advocacy Services are received by phone, with in-person interactions accounting for 8% of requests, email accounting for 7%, and the other 4% split between website, fax, and mail inquiries.



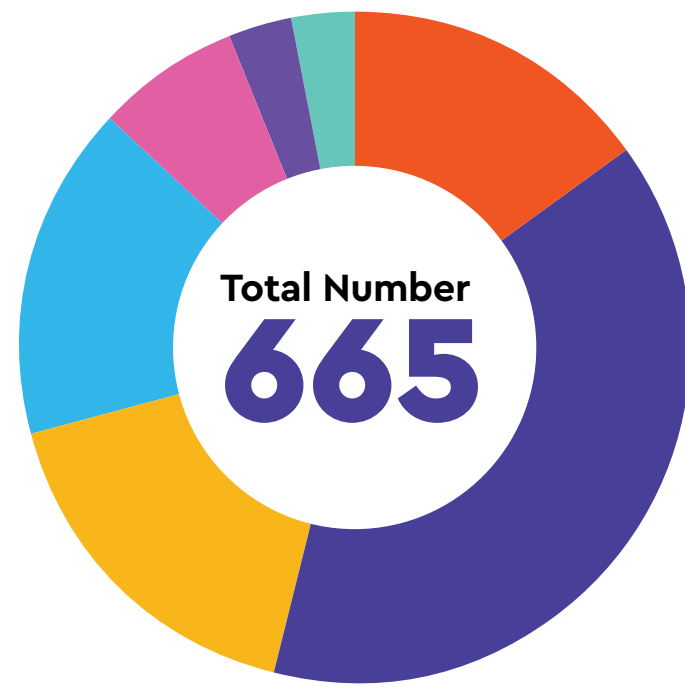
If you have any concerns regarding services offered to children and youth, we encourage you to contact our office. Our team is dedicated to providing assistance. While we continue to provide advocacy for children and youth within the child and family services and adoption systems, our mandate has expanded to encompass additional areas. This includes advocating for children, youth, young adults, and their families in the realms of disability, education, mental health, addictions, victim supports (including sexual exploitation and domestic violence), and youth justice services.

The Children and Youth Served through Advocacy Services

We opened 665 ongoing advocacy cases in 2022-23 where the source of referral's inquiry required long-term supports, or more complex interventions.

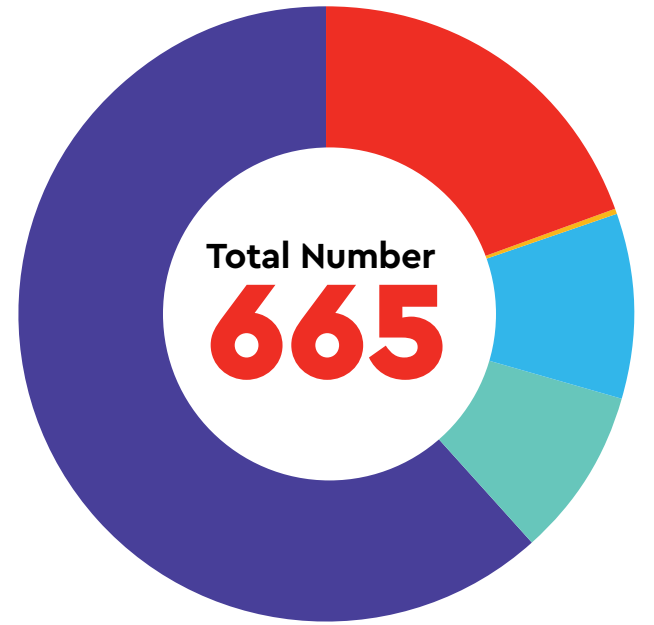
Who Calls Us?

<u>Child/Youth</u>	<u>Professional</u>
15%	39%
<u>Extended Family Member</u>	<u>Parent (Birth/Adoptive)</u>
17%	16%
<u>Foster Parent/Legal Guardian</u>	<u>Community Member</u>
7%	3%
<u>Other/Unknown</u>	
3%	



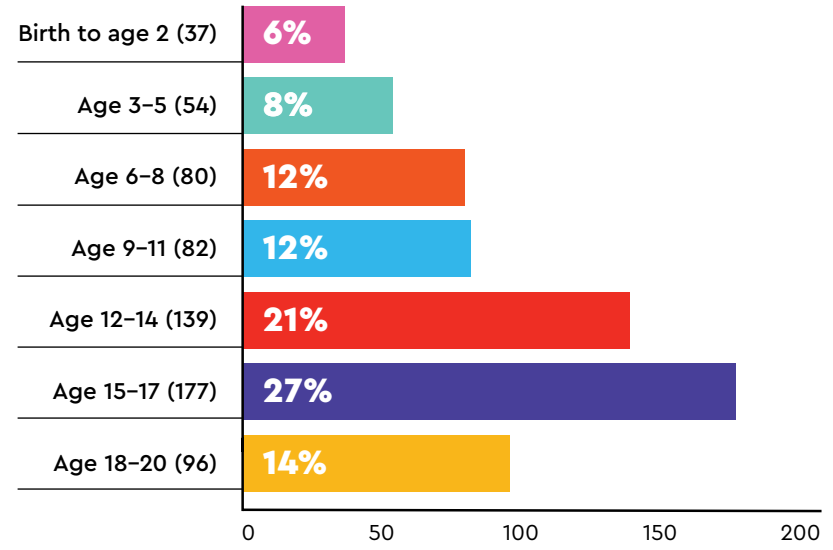
Indigenous Status

<u>Non-Indigenous/Unknown</u>	<u>Inuit/Dene</u>
20%	0.3%
<u>Métis</u>	<u>Non-status First Nation</u>
10%	8%
<u>Status First Nation</u>	
62%	



535 (80%) OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH WE WORKED WITH WERE INDIGENOUS.

Ages



Advocacy Case Examples

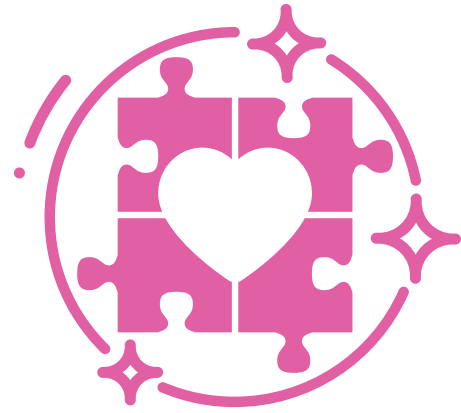
This past year, the complexity of advocacy cases was on the rise, as children, youth, and young adults often required services from multiple systems. This underscores the intricate nature of the case work undertaken by our dedicated advocacy officers. Co-occurring challenges young people face also reveal the critical need to ensure the services provided to children, youth, and young adults are working together collaboratively to effectively address their needs.

On average, advocacy cases remain open to an advocacy officer for approximately 182 days, equivalent to roughly six months in duration. The following stories involving children and youth (pseudonyms provided), illustrate some of the challenges they face when interacting with provincial services and the work of Advocacy Services to ensure their rights are protected.

UNCRC ARTICLE

18

The care of children is a shared responsibility of both parents, and the government should help parents by providing services.



1 DISABILITY ADVOCACY: Leah's Story

Leah came to the attention of MACY when it was reported that her school division had not provided the proper supports for her autism. Leah went years without a diagnosis but now receives support through Manitoba Adolescent Treatment Centre. It was recommended that Leah should transfer to a school that could better support her needs, but, when the inquiry was made, her parents were advised by a school representative to not get their hopes up.

MACY communicated with the school representative to stress the importance of a transfer not only for Leah, but for Leah's sibling as well. Leah's needs would be better supported at a smaller school with supports in place, and the family would be able to thrive together as a whole. MACY was able to facilitate the advocacy process for Leah and her family, helping her transfer to their school of choice.

Following the transfer, MACY encouraged the family to request a meeting with the superintendent to discuss school policies around disabilities, and additional support was provided by MACY's systemic advocacy specialist.

MACY's advocacy involvement highlighted UNCRC Articles 3, 23, 28, and 29.



2 YOUTH CUSTODY AND FAMILY REUNIFICATION ADVOCACY: Liam's Story

Liam was at the Manitoba Youth Centre (MYC) when he contacted MACY. Originally from a community in Northern Manitoba, he had been placed in a group home in Winnipeg prior to entering custody. Upon his release, Liam wanted to return home to his family and community where he had adequate resources and supports, and where he felt he thrived the most. Liam was frustrated that child and family services (CFS) were not informing him of plans, or hearing his views. Although CFS staff were speaking with his lawyer, they were not talking with him directly. He worried that if he was released to a placement in Winnipeg he would continue down a path that led him to problems.

Through MACY involvement, we were able to amplify Liam's voice to the CFS agency and MYC. We were able to provide suggestions to the CFS agency regarding case planning and reunification to ensure that Liam had input into his case plan. Ultimately, we were able to advocate for a successful reunification for Liam with his family, and for Liam's family to receive the support they needed.

MACY's advocacy involvement highlighted UNCRC Articles 3, 9, 12, 18, and 40.



3 CHILD WELFARE ADVOCACY: Jessie's Story

Jessie contacted our office feeling she had nowhere else to turn. She had been in care since she was quite young, and had been placed in many different foster homes. In some homes she experienced abuse and neglect, and suffers trauma as a result. Now, at nearly 17, she wanted to move out on her own into independent living. The CFS agency believed Jessie was not ready for this next step given the challenges she was facing. Jessie, on the other hand, felt that moving on her own would help her move forward.

After meeting with Jessie and the agency, Jessie's voice was amplified to transition her to an independent living program and to consider an Agreement with Young Adults, so she could continue to receive support after she turned 18. As Jessie would be turning 18 soon, the agency was otherwise doing a disservice by not preparing her for adulthood. The agency agreed and independent living plans are underway.

MACY's advocacy involvement highlighted UNCRC Articles 3, 12, 25, and 26.

Investigations and Child Death Reviews

When a child, youth, or young adult under the age of 21 passes away in Manitoba, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) informs the Manitoba Advocate office about the death. If the child or their family had any contact with child welfare services, mental health, addiction services, or the youth justice system within a year prior to the child's death, the Manitoba Advocate may review and investigate any of those public services that were delivered to the child or their family. The objective of these investigations is to provide recommendations aimed at enhancing the effectiveness and responsiveness of child-serving services in Manitoba.

Program by the Numbers

73 comprehensive child death reviews completed

Program Statistics:

MACY received a total of 265 official Manitoba child death notifications from the OCME in 2022-23. This number increased by 35% from the year previous when the Manitoba Advocate received 196 child death notifications.

UNCRC ARTICLE **3**

Adults should make good decisions for you, especially for your protection and safety.

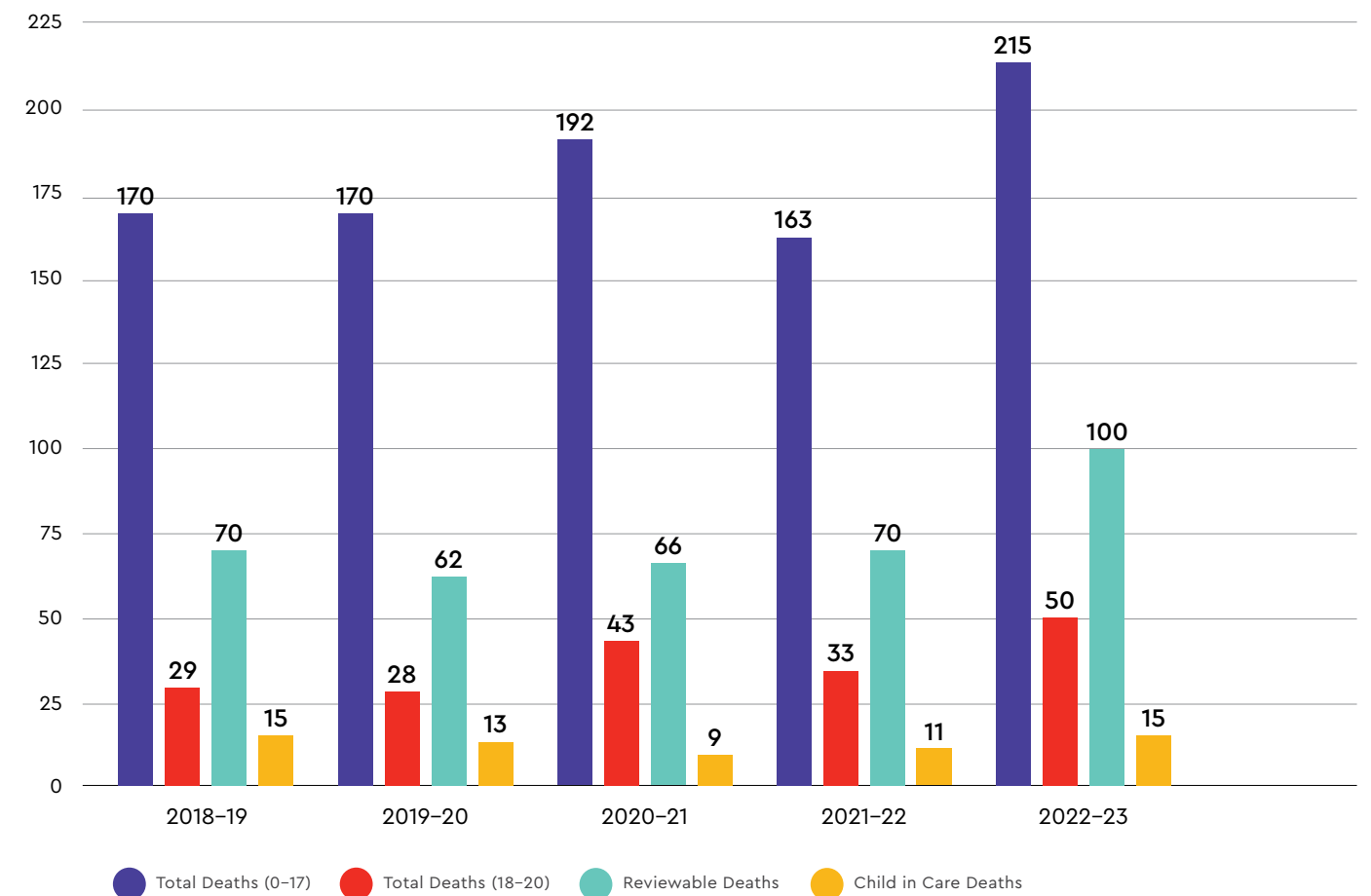
215 notifications for children/youth aged 0-17

50 notifications for young adults aged 18-20

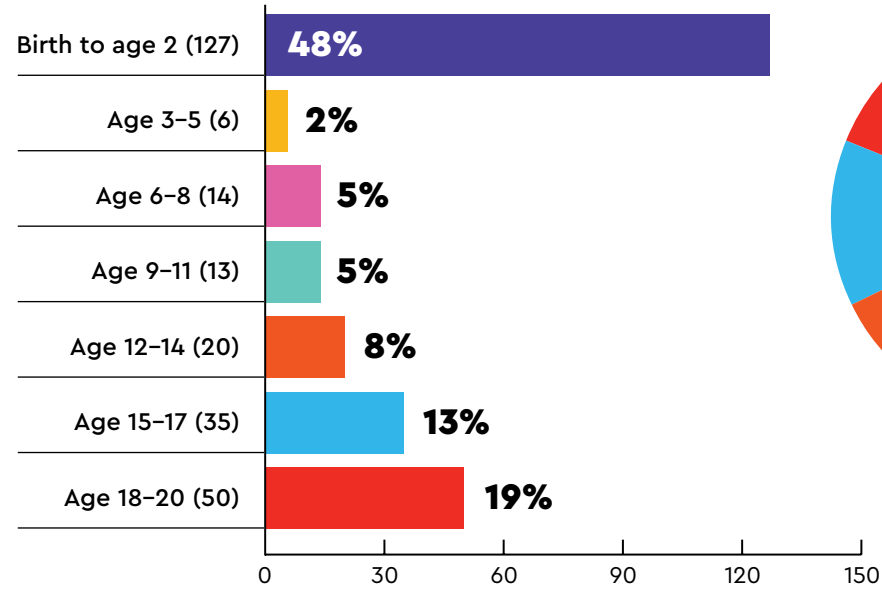
100 notifications were in scope for a review*

* The 100 children, youth, and young adults were receiving services from a reviewable service per *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act* at the time of death or in the year prior to the death. Of those 100 deaths reviewable by the Advocate, 15 notifications were for a child in care under the age of 18, and six notifications were for young adults aged 18-20 who were transitioning out of care.

Annual Manitoba Child, Youth, or Young Adult Deaths by Fiscal Year



Manitoba Deaths by Age of Child, Youth, or Young Adult from 2022-23

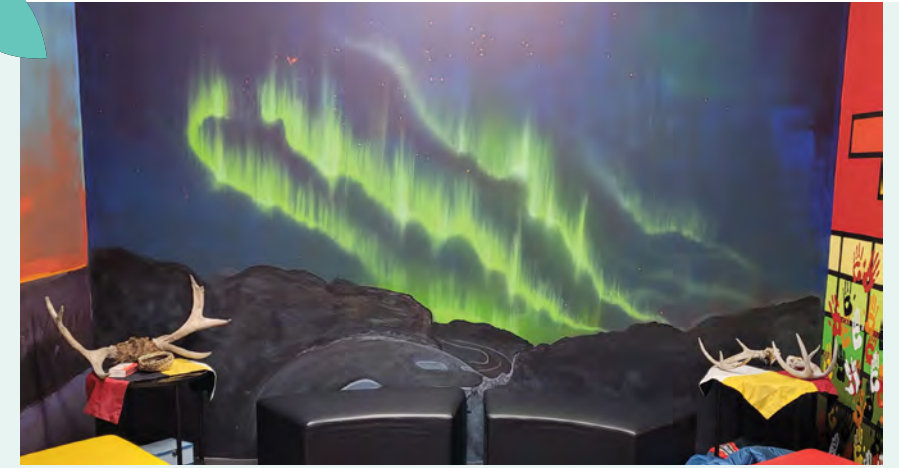


Manner of Death

The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) reports child deaths to the Manitoba Advocate within hours or days of a child's or youth's death. It is the responsibility of the Chief Medical Examiner to assign a manner of death. Manners of death can change once final autopsies and medical examiners' reports are completed. Hence, some of the information in this table remains preliminary.

Preliminary Matter of Death (Assigned by the Chief Medical Examiner)	Total Manitoba Deaths	Total Percentage	Reviewable Deaths	Non-Reviewable Deaths
Natural	121	46%	32	89
Accidental	29	11%	12	17
Suicide	37	14%	19	18
Homicide	5	2%	2	3
Undetermined*	73	27%	35	38
TOTALS	265	100%	100	165

*Undetermined is the label the Chief Medical Examiner gives when they cannot conclusively determine how the death occurred, even if the physical cause may be known. This category includes sudden unexpected infant death (SUID) and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). This category additionally includes suspected overdose deaths.



© CMHA Youth Huddle Mural, created in collaboration with Huddle Broadway and MACY's Youth Engagement program.

Trends in Child Death Reviews

73

child death reviews completed

82%

(60/73) of completed reviews were for an Indigenous child, youth, or young adult

Reviewable services in completed reviews:

93%

CFS

15%

Mental Health

3%

Addictions

3%

Youth Justice

One of the purposes of child death reviews is to identify and analyze recurring circumstances or trends in order to improve the effectiveness and responsiveness of reviewable services, or to inform improvements to public policies. Throughout the 2022-23 year, there were 73 reviews completed with the following recurring circumstances that the Manitoba Advocate is currently monitoring.

Suicide deaths: Suicide deaths of Manitoba's young people continue to be a concern of the Advocate. Deaths by suicide remain the leading manner of death for youth ages 10-17 in Manitoba. **Last fiscal year, we tragically lost 37 young people under the age of 21 to suicide.** It is imperative, now more than ever, that our province establishes a comprehensive youth mental health strategy, encompassing a range of evidence-based, culturally-sensitive, trauma-informed, and easily accessible mental health and addiction services specifically designed for young people. These essential supports must be available when and where they are needed most.

37 is the highest number of deaths by suicide ever reported to our office, and represents a 42% increase from the 26 deaths by suicide from 2021-22.

*Percentages do not total 100% as children and youth were involved in more than one reviewable service.



Overdose deaths: Over the last few years, the Advocate has seen an increase in deaths due to overdose. Overdoses among young people in Manitoba pose a significant and concerning problem. **In the 2022-23 fiscal year, we lost 18 young lives to drug overdose.** The alarming rise in overdose incidents has placed a heavy burden on communities and families across the province. The rise in addictions, coupled with limited access to proper education, prevention, and addiction treatment resources, contribute to the vulnerability of young individuals to these life-threatening situations. Urgent attention is needed to address this crisis, including enhanced support services, targeted education initiatives, and collaborative efforts to

The alarming rise in overdose incidents has placed a heavy burden on communities and families across the province. The rise in addictions, coupled with limited access to proper education, prevention, and treatment resources, contribute to the vulnerability of young individuals to these life-threatening situations.

reduce harm and save lives. It is with unwavering resolve and determination that MACY is addressing the urgent issue of youth drug overdose deaths in Manitoba by investigating exactly how these services are currently operating and how they can be improved from a children's rights perspective. Each life lost is a beacon

urging us to unite, strengthen our efforts, and cultivate a society where the promise of every young individual is not overshadowed by the devastating consequences of addictions. MACY hopes that our efforts will serve as a catalyst for renewed dedication and innovative strategies, forging a path towards a future where our youth thrive in a community built on support, understanding, and empowerment. Together, we can rise above this challenge, empowering young people to flourish and realize their immense potential.

Sleep-related infant deaths: Despite a number of recommendations made in the 2020 special report, *Safe and Sound: A Special Report on the Unexpected Sleep-Related Deaths of 145 Manitoba Infants*, we continue to see a high number of sleep-related infant deaths. **Based on preliminary and often limited information received by our office, it appears there were as many as 17 sleep-related infant deaths last fiscal.** These include infants (0-24 months) who died while sleeping or in a sleeping environment, had noted unsafe sleep factors present, and/or had 'Sudden Unexpected Infant Death' recorded on the child death notification we received. The number of sleep-related infant deaths from the 2022-23 fiscal year is subject to change, as autopsy reports remain outstanding for all but one of these cases. Sudden and unexplained infant deaths in Manitoba cannot be fully understood in isolation from the social conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and raise families. When examined closely, it is clear the clustering and intersection of risk factors are primarily driven by social disadvantage, exclusion, and discrimination, which is particularly apparent within Indigenous communities and families. Preventing sleep-related infant deaths in Manitoba requires urgent and sustained whole of government action on the social determinants of health, with the aim of improving the underlying conditions in which families live and raise their babies.



© Serious Injury Reviews and Investigations team at MACY.

Serious Injury Reviews and Investigations



The Manitoba Advocate is excited to announce the addition of the Serious Injury Reviews and Investigations program. As of July 1, 2023, the *Serious Injury Reporting Regulation*, alongside section 21 of *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act (ACYA)*, came into force in Manitoba. This regulation mandates the reporting of serious injuries to the Manitoba Advocate office. It encompasses children, youth, young adults, and their families who have received or are currently receiving child and family services, youth justice, mental health, and addictions services in Manitoba at the time, or one year prior to when the injury occurred. The program marks a significant milestone as the first of its kind in our province, providing a centralized tracking system for serious injuries sustained by children, youth, and young adults receiving these publicly-funded reviewable services.

UNCRC
ARTICLE
19

Children have the right to be protected from abuse or neglect, mentally and/or physically.

The *Serious Injury Reporting Regulation*, in conjunction with section 21 of the ACYA, signifies a proactive step towards creating a comprehensive system that prioritizes the protection and support of young people in Manitoba. Investigators work to ensure that the rights of individuals in crisis are upheld, to respond promptly to their needs, and to monitor the provision of adequate care to young people. Through comprehensive data collection and analysis, we will identify recurring trends and themes across our province. This invaluable information will enable us to make evidence-based recommendations to the government to improve public services and the well-being of young people in Manitoba.

Youth Engagement

Inspired by the articles in the UNCRC, the Youth Engagement program advocates for children's rights and strives to empower every young person to participate in decisions that directly affect their lives. The 2022–23 fiscal year marked the fourth year for the Youth Engagement program and the Youth Ambassador Advisory Squad (YAAS).

This past year, the youth engagement coordinators and YAAS, supported by the Knowledge Keeper, carried out a diverse range of public education, engagement, and outreach initiatives throughout the province.

Program by the Numbers

609 connections with child- and youth-serving organizations

3 murals were created across Manitoba, focusing on UNCRC rights

734 youth reached through engagement workshops

47 outreach activities where the primary audience was youth



© Youth Engagement team at MACY.

Highlights from 2022–23

Development of a Rights-Based Lesson Plan

In collaboration with the Public Education program and YAAS, the Youth Engagement team created a rights-based lesson plan for educators and facilitators called *Activate Your Learning: National Child Day Toolkit*.

In the *Activate Your Learning Toolkit*, children and youth learn how to engage and share their experiences with human rights in a thoughtful way. Through exercises and games, the toolkit promotes engagement with human rights and bonds between youth. The toolkit focuses on engaging children in Grades 3–9 with their human rights through experiential learning methods.



© A preview of the Activate your Learning: National Child Day Toolkit.

After conducting two months of workshops for newcomer youth during the summer of 2022, the Youth Engagement team was inspired to create a multi-day lesson plan. These workshops consisted of two sessions, each spanning three days and were filled with various rights-based activities.

The primary goal of these workshops was to ensure that newcomer children were actively engaged in learning about their rights, as outlined in the UNCRC. To support this objective, the workshops were carefully designed to provide a culturally sensitive and safe space for participants.

Creation of the rights-based lesson plans began in September 2022 and was completed in October 2022.



© The Activate your Learning: National Child Day Toolkit.

THE TOOLKIT INCORPORATES THE FOLLOWING BEST PRACTICES:

- **Experiential Learning:** The toolkit emphasizes experiential learning, providing hands-on activities and real-life experiences that enable participants to actively engage with the material. By immersing themselves in practical experiences, youth can deepen their understanding of the subject matter.
- **Collaboration with Peers:** The toolkit promotes collaboration among participants, fostering a peer-to-peer learning environment. Through group work, discussions, and interactive exercises, youth have the opportunity to learn from one another, share ideas, and develop teamwork skills.
- **Culturally Sensitive Activities:** The toolkit includes culturally sensitive activities that respect and reflect the diversity of participants. By incorporating materials, examples, and discussions that are relevant and inclusive, the toolkit ensures that all participants feel seen, heard, and valued.

These best practices aim to enhance the learning experience and create an inclusive and engaging environment for youth. The toolkit can be requested by emailing info@manitobaadvocate.ca.

Re-Right Project: UNCRC Murals



CMHA Youth Hub Mural, created in collaboration with Huddle Broadway and MACY.

The **Re-Right Project** was initiated through a collaborative effort between the Youth Engagement program and YAAS. Drawing inspiration from the rights articulated in the UNCRC, the team embarked on a mission to create murals in collaboration with youth throughout Manitoba. These murals play a vital role in educating children, youth, and all Manitobans about the fundamental significance of children's rights.

UNCRC ARTICLE 6 | You have the right to not only live, but thrive!

During the 2022-23 fiscal year, three murals were created, with each mural highlighting a different article from the UNCRC.

- CMHA Youth Huddle Partnership:** This was a collaborative project between MACY and Huddle Broadway, an organization affiliated with the Canadian Mental Health Association – Manitoba and Winnipeg (CMHA). In April 2022, a mural was painted inside the cultural room space at 533 Broadway, depicting UNCRC Article 6. This mural serves as a meaningful artistic expression of children's rights.

To learn more about the Re-Right project, check out our YouTube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OduhPH23xgw>

- YAAS Bear Clan Mural Partnership:** During the spring of 2022, Bear Clan youth met with YAAS to create a mural concept. This mural, representing UNCRC Article 27, was painted in August 2022 and can be viewed on the side of the Bear Clan building at 563 Selkirk Avenue, in Winnipeg.

UNCRC ARTICLE 27 | You have the right to food, clothing, and a safe place to live in a caring environment.

- Marymound Partnership:** Marymound approached MACY with the idea of creating a mural as part of the Re-Right Project. In June 2022, the mural highlighting UNCRC Article 29 was painted on the side of Marymound at 442 Scotia Street in Winnipeg. The mural provides an engaging visual representation of rights-based learning.

UNCRC ARTICLE 29 | Your education should help you develop your talents and abilities, and respect your identity, language, and values.



CMHA Youth Hub Mural.



Marymound Mural, created in collaboration with Marymound and MACY's Youth Engagement program.

Huddle Broadway mural.





© Some members of the Youth Ambassador Advisory Squad.

Youth Ambassador Advisory Squad

MACY's Youth Ambassador Advisory Squad (YAAS) is one of the key initiatives of the office's Youth Engagement program. The squad consists of a dozen members between the ages of 14 and 25 from across the province. YAAS members meet regularly and are engaged in activities at the Manitoba Advocate office, including but not limited to, providing consultation on special reports, and leading and collaborating on internal and external projects to engage youth with their human rights, as noted in the UNCRC.

YAAS MEMBERS ARE FROM THESE COMMUNITIES ACROSS MANITOBA:

- Bloodvein First Nation
- Fox Lake Cree Nation
- Sagkeeng First Nation
- Pine Falls
- Dauphin
- Steinbach
- Peguis First Nation
- Thompson
- Winnipeg

Program by the Numbers

- 7** YAAS training opportunities on leadership and advocacy were conducted throughout the year
- 18** YAAS meetings took place, held bi-weekly and attended by both MACY staff and YAAS members
- 7** YAAS events, where members participated in cultural outings, or attended community events with MACY staff
- 5** research consultations were provided to YAAS, including internal MACY consultations as well as collaborations with external research partners

Highlights from 2022-23: Peer-to-Peer Research Project

Facilitated by Marie Christensen and based on guidance from Dr. Marlyn Bennett, the Peer-to-Peer Research Project aimed to empower young people in Manitoba who have transitioned out of the child welfare system. The project provided them with a platform to share their experiences, while also focusing on gathering the viewpoints of young individuals who have recently transitioned or are currently in the process of transitioning from care.

The ultimate objective of this project is to reduce the number of young people who face homelessness, exploitation, and other negative outcomes, and to inform a future MACY project on this issue.

Through listening to the stories of their peers, members of the YAAS team gained insights that will help them develop informed recommendations to enhance the services available to youth in care. The ultimate objective of this project is to reduce the number of young people who face homelessness, exploitation, and other negative outcomes, and to inform a future MACY project on this issue.

To carry out the research in a good way, members of the YAAS team underwent training that equipped them with the necessary skills to conduct peer-to-peer research using Indigenous research methods. The Youth Engagement team provided support to YAAS in its mission to gather personal stories through conversational interviews with young people who are currently or recently transitioning from care.

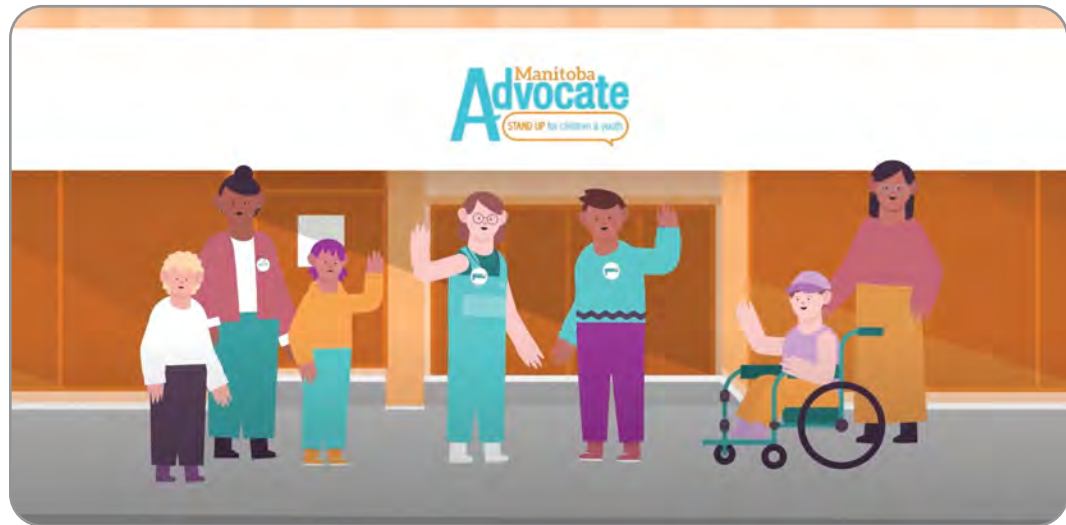
The final stage of this project will include analysis of the interviews and the formulation of recommendations in collaboration with MACY's Research team as part of an upcoming project.



© Some members of the Youth Ambassador Advisory Squad.



Still from video: An Introduction to MACY.



Still from video: An Introduction to MACY.

Article 39, UNCRC

to help if you've been hurt,
neglected or badly treated.

Still from video: Every Two Hours: children exposed to intimate partner violence in Manitoba

Introduction to MACY Video with Enjoy Creative and a YAAS video with JustTV

During the 2022-23 fiscal year, YAAS participated in the creation of two videos.

An Introduction to MACY (August 2022)

Created in partnership with Enjoy Creative and MACY's public education program, the YAAS team provided voiceovers for MACY's new introduction video. Narrated for a youth audience, the video provides a brief introduction to MACY and the programs and services offered by our office.

Watch the video here: youtube.com/watch?v=Xdefg4Dpnec

UNCRC ARTICLE

12

You have the right to express your opinion and to be heard by adults.

An Introduction to the Youth Ambassador Advisory Squad (February 2023)

In collaboration with JustTV, the YAAS team spearheaded the creation of a video showcasing the roles and responsibilities of YAAS within the Manitoba Advocate office. Since the inception of the project, the YAAS team has worked together to contribute their insights and expertise. The team provided valuable feedback throughout the production process, ensuring that each draft was reviewed and refined until reaching the final cut.

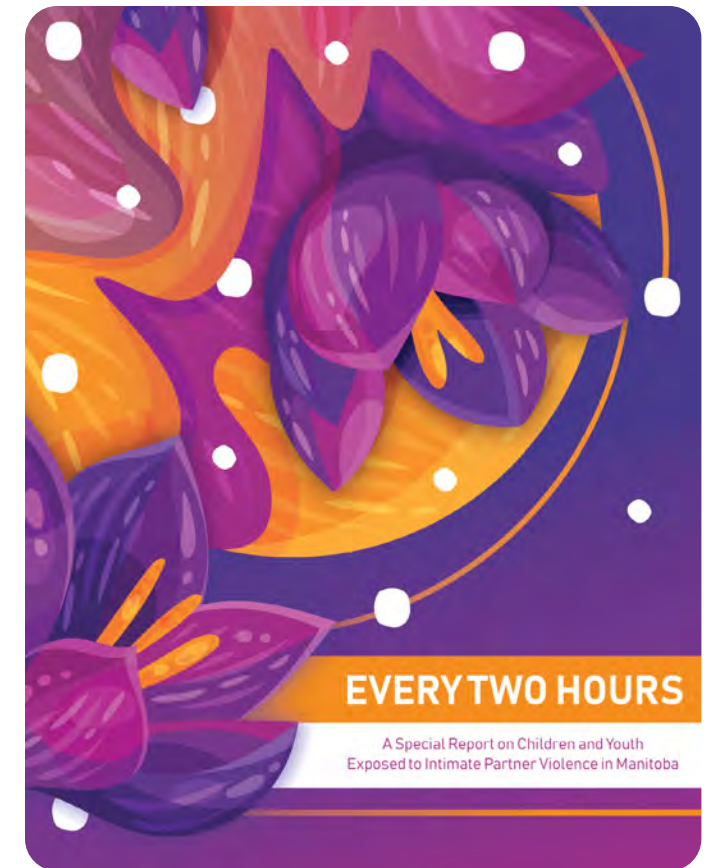
The consultation phase of the project began in spring 2022, and the filming occurred during the subsequent summer. By September 2022, the initial draft of the video was complete, and the final version was ready by February 2023.

The video is now regularly showcased at youth presentations and engagement workshops throughout the province.

UNCRC ARTICLE

23

If you live with a disability you have the right to special care, support and to be included in the community.



The title page of the *Every Two Hours* special report.

SPECIAL REPORT:

Every Two Hours: A Special Report on Children and Youth Exposed to Intimate Partner Violence in Manitoba (June 2022)

Throughout the development of the report, YAAS played an active role in the consultation process. Members attended four consultation sessions, contributed statements, and provided guiding questions to the MACY project team and Advocate. Moreover, members of YAAS provided voiceovers for the video accompanying the launch, delivered a speech, and spoke to the media.

Watch the video here: youtube.com/watch?v=F5eWsKx0rSg&t=175s

Public Education

The Public Education program's objective is to amplify the public's awareness of the rights and experiences of children, youth, and young adults in Manitoba, while being guided by the articles set forth in the UNCRC. This involves bringing knowledge into action through engaging multi-media projects, fostering connections with organizations, the media, and community members to amplify the narratives of young people. The Public Education team orchestrates launches for special reports, maintains MACY's website and various social media platforms, and coordinates presentations and community outreach efforts.



Program by the Numbers

138 public education presentations, of which 94 were to children and youth

312 children reached through Have a Heart Day initiatives

1,680 children reached through National Child Day lesson plans and an open house

67 classroom presentations in English and French for I Love to Read Month

34,785 Thrival Kits™ delivered to students and 2,068 kits delivered to facilitators

1 original webinar produced on children and youth exposed to intimate partner violence in Manitoba

Have a Heart Day

On February 14, in commemoration of Have a Heart Day, our office connected with children, youth, and young adults throughout the province, conveying our thoughts and care through personalized cards and treats. Have a Heart Day originated from a reconciliation event driven by children and youth, and was initially established by the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society. The annual event brings people across Canada together to help ensure First Nations children have the services they need.

Supported by the Advocacy and Administration programs, the Public Education program reached 312 young people through Have a Heart Day initiatives. Of the 312 children and youth reached:

85 were children and youth in care

124 have connected with MACY through Advocacy Services

12 youth and young adults were on our Youth Ambassador Advisory Squad

91 children and youth were in an emergency placement resource shelter

As we reflect on the impact of Have a Heart Day, we remain committed to raising awareness about the rights children have to essential services, regardless of location or identity.

Video Partnerships

Last fiscal, the Public Education department produced two videos with the production company, Enjoy Creative. The videos were titled, "Every Two Hours: children exposed to intimate partner violence in Manitoba" and "An Introduction to MACY." The "Every Two Hours" video was published on June 23, 2022 to support the report, *Every Two Hours: A Special Report on Children Exposed to Intimate Partner Violence in Manitoba*. The "An Introduction to MACY" video was published on August 23, 2022, to help familiarize youth audiences with the services and programs at MACY.

Both videos can be found on our YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/@ManitobaAdvocate

“

Brittany is an incredible facilitator! She was able to capture my kinders attention for an entire hour! She did such a wonderful job explaining human rights in a way that they could understand while always keeping it fun and engaging.”

—SAMANTHA BURKART, ÉCOLE CENTRALE

National Child Day Outreach and Open House

National Child Day is marked each year on November 20 and is an important day for our office to celebrate. November 20 marks the United Nations' adoption of two documents centred on children's rights: the United Nations *Declaration of the Rights of the Child* on November 20, 1959, and the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UNCRC) on November 20, 1989, both of which Canada has signed.

In partnership with the Youth Engagement program, a free toolkit was created and distributed to educators and facilitators titled, *Activate your Learning: National Child Day Toolkit*. The toolkit focused on engaging children in Grades 3–9 with their human rights through experiential learning methods. The public education team engaged with facilitators to distribute the toolkits and materials, while also building relationships across the province.

32 schools and organizations received the lesson plan, including 11 rural schools

On the Monday following National Child Day, the Manitoba Advocate held an open house and welcomed community members to come learn about the services and programs offered at the office through UNCRC-focused exercises and activities.

I Love to Read Month

In February 2022, MACY offered free reading sessions to classrooms across the province for I Love to Read Month. We featured nine books about children's rights and staff facilitated the readings in both English and French, traveling across Winnipeg, as well as various rural communities, to connect with children and youth about their rights.

1,591 children and youth were read to for I Love to Read Month.

67 presentations were done in total, 11 of these being at a rural school

The considerable number of requests we received from across the province is a testament to the widespread popularity of I Love to Read Month. Our ongoing plans involve maintaining relationships with schools to ensure this event's annual availability in February, while also continuing to build and foster connections with educators.

UNCRC ARTICLE
28

Children have the right to the same quality of education that every child in Canada has, regardless of their school's location.





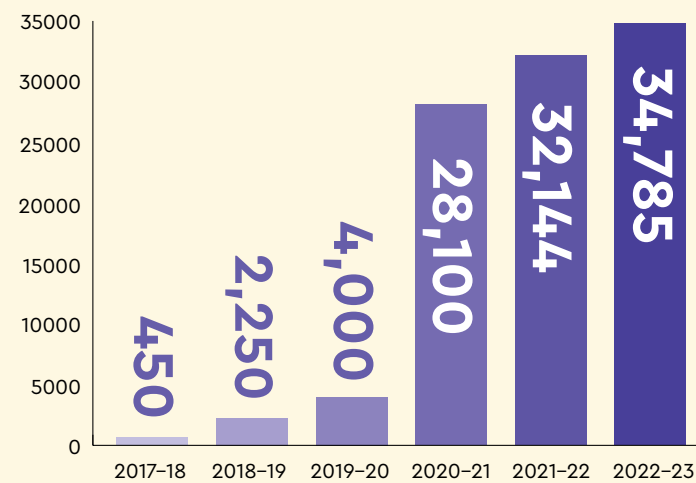
Thrival Kits™

In partnership with the Canadian Mental Health Association – Manitoba and Winnipeg, the Public Education program was responsible for helping with outreach for Thrival Kits™ to Grades 4–6 classrooms across the province. This year marked the largest roll-out and delivery of Thrival Kits™ ever, thanks to the continued support from educators across the province.

Thrival Kits™ are shoebox sized kits that students fill with small, meaningful items as they complete classroom challenges and activities throughout the school year. Activities are classroom-based, and encourage conversation around mental health. Thrival Kits™ were developed using evidence-informed strategies that are easy for teachers to facilitate in the classroom.

Learn more about Thrival Kits™ here:
<https://thrivalkits.ca/>

Number of Students Participating in the Thrival Kits™ Project



Do you want to hear more from us?

Please contact us through the links below for a MACY or UNCRC-focused presentation. We also offer youth engagement workshops.

info@manitobaadvocate.ca

ManitobaAdvocate.ca

Follow MACY on social media

facebook.com/ManitobaAdvocate

twitter.com/MB_Advocate

instagram.com/manitobaadvocate

youtube.com/@ManitobaAdvocate

linkedin.com/company/mbadvocate



Research Hub program at MACY.

The Research Hub

The Research Hub facilitates, collaborates, and conducts high-quality research projects – including reports, briefings, submissions, and statements of concern – in order to inform policy decisions and improve the effectiveness and responsiveness of designated services provided to children and youth in Manitoba. Research projects are used to inform work on systemic issues, including child death investigations and special reports. Research and any resulting special reports released by the Manitoba Advocate may include recommendations for government departments, provincial ministers responsible for the provision of a designated service, and/or any public body or other person providing a designated service that the Advocate considers appropriate.

Research Program by the Numbers:

- 1 special report on children and youth exposed to intimate partner violence in Manitoba
- 1 submission to Canada's Standing Committee on Health's for their children's health study
- 1 keynote presentation about MACY research for the Court of King's Bench of Manitoba
- 1 webinar delivered regarding the *Every Two Hours* special report

SPECIAL REPORT:

Every Two Hours: A Special Report on Children and Youth Exposed to Intimate Partner Violence in Manitoba (June 2022)

In Manitoba, a child is exposed to a police-reported incident of intimate partner violence (IPV) every two hours. Exposure to IPV in childhood can be deeply traumatic for young people, shattering feelings of safety, leading to lifelong mental health challenges, and sometimes reinforcing cycles of intergenerational violence. This special report, the first of its kind, follows 671 Manitoba children and youth exposed to IPV in April 2019, in order to understand their pathways through service responses from police, victim services, and child and family services. The report repositions children exposed to IPV as centrally-impacted victims with rights to services. Informed by the voices of young people, the Elders Council, and service providers, the special report contains seven recommendations to improve the effectiveness and responsiveness of services for children, youth, and families in Manitoba who are exposed to IPV.

Read the report: <https://manitobaadvocate.ca/wp-content/uploads/MACY-Special-Report-Every-Two-Hours.pdf>

Watch the webinar here: [youtube.com/watch?v=C5ol4vifk8E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C5ol4vifk8E)



© Dr. Matt Maher, Manager of Research and Quality Assurance, with Deputy Manitoba Advocate Dr. Karlee Sapoznik Evans, holding the *Every Two Hours* special report at the Court of the King's Bench presentation.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH'S CHILDREN'S HEALTH STUDY SUBMISSION:

In August 2022, the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth made a submission on MACY's recent child-centred research to Canada's Standing Committee on Health to inform its children's health study. The submission focused on youth suicide and infant mortality in Manitoba and how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted children's health and access to support services in our province. This submission is aligned with the principles of the UNCRC, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People* (UNDRIP) and the *Calls to Action* of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. This submission reinforces Article 21 of UNDRIP, which asserts Canada's responsibility to improve the health of Indigenous children and *Call to Action* 19, which calls for the reduction in health gaps, including infant mortality, between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

In Manitoba, a child is exposed to a police-reported incident of intimate partner violence (IPV) every two hours. Exposure to IPV in childhood can be deeply traumatic for young people, shattering feelings of safety, leading to lifelong mental health challenges, and sometimes reinforcing cycles of intergenerational violence.

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION ABOUT MACY RESEARCH FOR THE COURT OF KING'S BENCH OF MANITOBA

On October 13, 2022, Dr. Matt Maher and Dr. Karlee Sapoznik Evans delivered a keynote presentation to the Court of King's Bench of Manitoba about MACY's research on intimate partner violence. The audience included dozens of judges as well as subject matter experts in the area of domestic violence, community leaders, legal scholars, practitioners, and academics from across Canada.

UNCRC
ARTICLE
40

You have the right to legal help and fair treatment in the justice system.



© Team members from MACY at the release of the *Every Two Hours* special report.

Research Partnerships:

The Manitoba Advocate collaborates with experts and researchers who are dedicated to addressing children's rights issues in Manitoba, including:

1. First Nations Health and Social Secretariat of Manitoba
2. Centre for Human Rights Research, University of Manitoba
3. Manitoba Centre for Health Policy (includes SPECTRUM – Social Policy Evaluation Collaborative Team at Universities in Manitoba)
4. Dr. Roberta Woodgate, University of Manitoba, Tier 1 Canada Research Chair Award in Child and Family Engagement in Health Research and Healthcare
5. Dr. Kendra Nixon and the Research and Education for Solutions to Violence and Abuse Network (RESOLVE)
6. Supporting the Health of Survivors of Family Violence in Family Law Proceedings, Winnipeg and Area Community of Practice
7. Centre for Healthcare Innovation, Rady Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Manitoba
8. Master of Human Rights Program, Faculty of Law, University of Manitoba
9. Dr. Ziba Vaghri, GlobalChild and University of New Brunswick

Systemic Advocacy

The systemic advocacy specialist at MACY is responsible for monitoring systemic issues and developing strategic response plans. Working in collaboration with programs across our office, they identify and evaluate issues that affect young people and their families.

This year, the Systemic Advocacy program focused on response planning and stakeholder engagement in areas such as addiction services for youth, support for children and youth with learning disabilities, and prevention of youth homelessness. MACY's distinctive approach lies in its collaborative nature, drawing on the insights and experiences of children and youth.

The systemic advocacy specialist actively engaged with various systems to provide proactive feedback on advocacy trends, including quarterly meetings with the Manitoba Youth Centre (MYC) and with representatives from Children's disABILITY Services. Positive advancements have resulted from partnering with MYC's representatives to enhance coordination of services with Manitoba Keewatinowik Okimakanak Inc. (MKO). The primary objective of this initiative is to guarantee support and assistance for justice-involved youth upon their return home, starting from when they arrive at the airport to their home community, to facilitate a smooth transition.

Another important aspect of MACY's Systemic Advocacy program involves outreach to organizations across Manitoba to identify systemic issues, deliver presentations, and raise awareness about MACY's mandate within designated service areas. Currently, an outreach strategy is underway to engage community and inform them about MACY's work, to identify systemic issues, and to explore opportunities for future collaborations.



Quality Assurance team at MACY.

Quality Assurance

The Quality Assurance (QA) program focuses on the development and maintenance of internal quality assurance processes and protocols, including the development of tools and resources used to support and strengthen programs. It works to ensure effective and efficient service delivery of public systems serving children and youth in Manitoba, including the services provided by the Manitoba Advocate office. The program also conducts and provides policy analysis on provincial, territorial, and federal issues that have implications for Manitoba children and youth. Finally, the QA program monitors the government's compliance with recommendations made by the Manitoba Advocate in investigations or special reports.

QA Program by the Numbers

- 40+** internal information requests for program support and continuous improvement
- 1** special report where recommendation development support was provided
- 1** special report analyzing government compliance with MACY recommendations
- 83** recommendations from special reports and investigations reviewed and analyzed for compliance

QA Program Highlights

- The QA team continued to provide support to MACY programs by conducting reviews of policies and procedures, developing new internal procedures, and fulfilling information requests related to program data.
- The team provided support in developing recommendations for the *Every Two Hours* special report, which involved attending meetings with external stakeholders and collaborating about the creation and final wording of recommendations.
- In June 2022, members of the QA team delivered a presentation at the Canadian Evaluation Society National Conference about MACY's Recommendation Compliance Model.
- With a focus on internal improvement, the QA team began analysis of the compliance monitoring process, aiming to build relationships, enhance collaboration, ensure transparency, and achieve overall success in monitoring.

Compliance Monitoring

In accordance with subsection 11(1)(d) of *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act (ACYA)*, the Manitoba Advocate has the legal responsibility to monitor the implementation of recommendations issued by the Advocate in investigations or special reports. The Advocate may include information on the levels of compliance with previous recommendations made by the Advocate, per subsection 30(4) of the ACYA.

View our Recommendation Tracker here:

<https://manitobaadvocate.ca/reports-publications/recommendation-tracking/>

UNCRC ARTICLE

25

If you live in care, you have the right to have regular contact with your social worker.



2022 Compliance Report

Rights delayed are rights denied: Summary assessment of government compliance with recommendations made under The Advocate for Children and Youth Act (January 2023)

The government compliance report acts as a report card, summarizing progress made by the province toward meeting the intents of the Advocate's public recommendations made between 2018 and 2022 under the ACYA. This special report provides analysis of actions taken by the provincial government in response to the 67 recommendations that the Manitoba Advocate has issued in 10 special reports to the Governments of Manitoba and Canada. More specifically, the audit focuses on the progress reported by the provincial Departments of Families, Justice, Education and Early Childhood Learning, Health, and Mental Health and Community Wellness. *Rights Delayed Are Rights Denied* outlines individual assessments for each of the recommendations, as well as trends observed in compliance by special report, systemic issue, and by primary government department. The QA team continues to track government compliance with all MACY recommendations and the Manitoba Advocate publishes this report card annually to ensure public transparency.

Read the report: <http://manitobaadvocate.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/MACY-Compliance-Report-2022-Final-Print.pdf>

Compliance Highlights: 2022

88%

of recommendations have demonstrated actions towards implementation

93%

compliance rate for Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning

16

new recommendations from 2021 were assessed by MACY in 2022

8

more MACY recommendations have been deemed fully compliant – one via an alternative solution

RECOMMENDATIONS DEEMED FULLY COMPLIANT:

ANGEL'S STORY REC. 3:

Denounce sexual exploitation of children and youth and raise awareness through a public education campaign.

BOYS REPORT REC. 2:

Continue work on an Indigenous Inclusion Strategy in schools, in collaboration with school divisions.

CIRCLING STAR REC. 2:

Conduct a review and develop a province-wide strategy to limit exclusionary practices.

MATTHEW REC. 2:

Develop a province-wide strategy to limit, reduce, and phase out exclusionary practices.

SAFE SLEEP REC. 12:

Update child and family service standards to ensure the safety of infant sleep arrangements, the sharing of safe sleep resources, and support families in locating safe sleep surfaces.

SUICIDE AGGREGATE REC. 5:

Develop a provincial plan for a scale-up of the youth hub model.

TINA FONTAINE REC. 1:

Review the measurement of absenteeism, suspensions, and expulsions, and create a province-wide strategy to address these issues.

SUICIDE AGGREGATE REC. 3 (ALTERNATIVE SOLUTION):

Train government workers on trauma and its effects.

18% (12) of MACY recommendations have been fully implemented.

To improve progress, MACY recommends prioritizing action to:



Address capacity inequalities among Indigenous child welfare authorities and outstanding recommendations from the Phoenix Sinclair Inquiry;



Implement safe sleep-related infant death recommendations; and



Implement mental health and addictions recommendations.

Service Plan and Strategic Priorities

1. Engaging and Empowering Youth Voices

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth (MACY) actively seeks out the perspectives and opinions of young people, amplifying their voices and striving to ensure that our programs and services effectively cater to their evolving needs.

KPI	22/23 TARGET	ACTUAL OUTPUT
Number of outreach activities where the primary audience is youth	40	47
Number of online or in-person presentations on children's rights for youth and youth organizations in the community	30	81
Percentage of children and youth who report knowing more about children's rights following a presentation	90%	83%
Number of reports (internal and external), research projects and/or proposals where the voices of youth with lived experience were consulted and included	2	8

2. Accelerating Responsiveness to Advocacy Services

MACY provides advocacy support to children, youth, young adults, and their families across various service systems, with the goal of ensuring our activities reflect our commitment to child-centred service. Responsiveness of advocacy services requires both timeliness and effectiveness, and was measured by the following indicators.

KPI	22/23 TARGET	ACTUAL OUTPUT
Percentage of new intakes requesting advocacy services that receive a response/callback on the same day*	90%	92%
Percentage of children and youth who indicate that they received respectful services**	90%	81%
Percentage of children and/or youth that would recommend MACY to a friend**	90%	92%

* All walk-in intakes are responded to immediately. Sometimes calls are received after hours and responded to the next business day.

** We are always seeking to learn and grow. While we know that sometimes the outcomes or options people may desire might not be possible in a particular situation due to the limits of our mandate, we strive to ensure people feel respected and heard by our team. Due to small sample sizes, the responses from children, youth, and adults were combined to calculate percentages. If you have any feedback about any interaction with MACY, you can email us at complaints@manitobaadvocate.ca.

3. Increasing Transparency and System Change through Investigations

With the objective of enhancing systems and services for children, youth, and young adults, MACY conducts comprehensive reviews of public services from a child's perspective, aiming to identify gaps and to issue informed recommendations.

KPI	22/23 TARGET	ACTUAL OUTPUT
Percentage of comprehensive child death reviews completed within 12 months of the child death	80%	90%
Publish a year-end analysis of reviews that identifies systemic trends	1	1
Publish special reports that make recommendations	1	*

* Under the direction of incoming Manitoba Advocate Sherry Gott, the office made a strategic decision to reduce the number of special reports produced each fiscal year. This approach allows us to prioritize intentionality, collaboration, and meaningful engagement with community, while also harnessing the wealth of knowledge of systems available to us. We believe that this approach will enable us to work more closely with communities and to gain deeper insight into their needs so that we can better advocate for young people. Their teachings and contributions will help us ensure that our work is meaningful, respectful, and aligned with the needs and aspirations of the communities we serve.

To this end, instead of a special report conducted by the Investigations program, MACY released an op-ed for the general public, a statement of concern about sexual exploitation, and conducted an additional talking circle to inform the Eishia Hudson special report released in June 2023.

4. Advancing Research and Public Education

MACY examines provincial service systems and emerging best practices from a child's rights lens so we can advocate for what young people need to live to their best potential.

KPI	22/23 TARGET	ACTUAL OUTPUT
Number of public education activities, presentations, and events both in-person and online	65	138
Number of people reached via public education presentations/knowledge translation activities	750	4,747
Publish special report with original research and respective public education materials that make recommendations	1	1
Growth in social media (videos, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram) through social media indicators	30%	12.2%

5. Strengthening Cultural Proficiency in Practice

Acknowledging MACY's status as a publicly-funded independent organization, we strive towards Indigenous allyship through our ongoing commitment to aligning our organizational practices to achieve equity and social justice for all children, youth, and young adults.

KPI	22/23 TARGET	ACTUAL OUTPUT
Number of yearly ceremonies for children, youth, young adults and families funded and resourced	4	29
Number of one-to-one cultural supports and resources to children, youth, young adults, and their families	75	*
Include a preference for hiring Indigenous Peoples in all new employment postings	100%	100%
Number of learning events for staff focused on reconciliation, anti-racism, and/or anti-oppression to strengthen cultural proficiency	7	21

* Due to the absence of a Knowledge Keeper throughout several months of the 2022-23 fiscal year, MACY has incomplete data of the cultural supports that were provided.

6. Promoting Accountability in Child-Serving Systems

To ensure child-serving systems are responding to the changing needs of young people, MACY promotes accountability by listening to and amplifying the voices and experiences of children, youth, and young adults. We also recommend evidence-informed system changes, monitor government compliance with recommendations we've made, and speak publicly and honestly about provincial services.

KPI	22/23 TARGET	ACTUAL OUTPUT
Report publicly on government compliance with recommendations made by the Manitoba Advocate	1	1
Reviews of policies, procedures, and logic models for each program annually	1	1

Strategic Plan

to Inform our Strategic Directions Moving Forward

Principles

Values

Priorities

“

Sweetgrass is a sacred medicine that represents kindness. Each braid is comprised of seven single strands of grass. Each strand represents a human being, while the braid's three sections embody the trinity of body, mind, and spirit. Much like a strand of hair, every sweetgrass strand possesses beauty, a delightful aroma, and individuality. However, like hair, each strand is more fragile on its own. Yet, when woven together, those same strands gain strength and unity.”

— TEACHING SHARED BY
ELDER LOUISE LAVALLEE

Just like a braid of sweetgrass, each team member at MACY has different gifts and strengths, and each program has its unique strategic goals and objectives. But, like a braid, there is one primary path up the middle. This is where all the strands intersect, making us strong and unified.

MACY is embarking on a journey to develop a strategic plan, in line with the Advocate's commitment to relationship building and collaboration to adopt Indigenous methodologies and approach our work from a trauma-informed, strength-based standpoint. Through a process of meaningful engagement, deep listening, and co-learning, our goal is to develop a strategic plan

that will guide us forward and reflect the needs and aspirations of the communities we serve across Manitoba. We are committed to practicing decolonization by integrating Indigenous ways of knowing and being, and engaging in critical reflexivity.

The quality of the support we provide to the young people we serve depends on our strong operational foundations and strategic priorities. The following principles, values, and priorities will guide us on this important journey of change with rights holders and duty bearers. We hope that through bold, transformative, and collaborative action we can achieve a Manitoba where the rights of all children, youth, and young adults are respected, protected, and fulfilled.

Principles

Our approach to strategic planning engagement will be based on the following principles:

1. Decolonization
2. Anti-oppression
3. Trauma-informed practices
4. Human rights
5. Intersectionality

Throughout this engagement process, we are dedicated to ensuring that our actions and approach are guided by the *Calls to Action* set forth by the National Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Articles in the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*, as well as the *Calls for Justice* from the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls National Inquiry.

Values

Our process of engagement will be guided by the Seven Sacred Teachings and the following values:

1. Reconciliation
2. Collaboration
3. Transparency
4. Relationality
5. Accountability

Priorities

Our strategic planning engagement will prioritize:

1. Centring and amplifying the voices of children, youth, and young adults
2. Creating a safe space for open and honest dialogue
3. Integrating a diversity of voices and knowledge systems
4. Listening with respect and humility
5. Promoting social justice and substantive equality

2022-23 Financial Report

\$1,180,000 Operating
\$4,619,000 Salaries and Benefits
\$5,799,000 Total

All numbers include the Thompson office.

Our Team

As of October 1, 2023

© Staff at the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth, taken in June 2023.



EXECUTIVE TEAM

Sherry Gott
Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth

Dr. Karlee Sapoznik Evans
Deputy Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth, responsible for Investigations, Research, Quality Assurance, and Public Education

Kelly Gossfeld
Indigenous Deputy Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth, responsible for Advocacy Services, Youth Engagement, and Finance and Administration

Pooja Sigauke
Executive Coordinator

MANAGEMENT

Cyndi Menke
Manager, Finance and Administration

Dr. Matthew Maher
Manager, Research and Quality Assurance

Jamie Robinson
Manager, Serious Injury Reviews and Investigations

Joanne Lysak
Manager, Advocacy Services

Kirstin Magnusson
Manager, Advocacy Services and Youth Engagement

Tanis Hudson
Manager, Investigations and Child Death Reviews Program

LEGAL COUNSEL

Paula Ethans
General Counsel

KNOWLEDGE KEEPER

Gladys Marinko
Knowledge Keeper

ADMINISTRATION

Ila Miles
Administrative Assistant

Joan Machendagoos
Administrative Assistant

Kristen Douglas
Senior Clerk

Reji Thomas
Senior Clerk

ADVOCACY SERVICES

Brittney Mikolayanko
Advocacy Officer

Chelsea Jarosiewicz
Advocacy Officer

Dawn Gair
Advocacy Officer

Debra De Silva
Advocacy Officer

Gerald Krosney
Advocacy Officer

Kim Wuirch
Advocacy Officer

Krista Rey
Advocacy Officer

Mae Choo-Mah
Advocacy Officer

Margherita Gagliardi
Advocacy Officer

Mia Faircloth
Advocacy Officer

Loretta Ouskun
Intake Assessment Officer (Thompson)

Sonia Babyak
Advocacy Officer

Stacy Moore
Advocacy Officer

INVESTIGATIONS AND CHILD DEATH REVIEWS

Anna Los
Investigator

Kayla Marcq
Investigator

Leigh Enns
Investigator

Melanie Johnson
Investigator

Sara Yager
Investigator

Whitney Moore
Investigator

SERIOUS INJURY REVIEWS AND INVESTIGATIONS

Benji Greenberg
Serious Injury Investigator

Jennifer Weger
Serious Injury Investigator

Sarah Benson
Serious Injury Investigator

PUBLIC EDUCATION:

Brittany Valcourt
Public Education Coordinator

QUALITY ASSURANCE

Alison Carrey Bilous
Senior Policy Analyst

Johsa Manzanilla
Senior Policy Analyst

THE RESEARCH HUB

Alexandra Guemili
Systemic Advocacy Specialist

Gen Sander
Researcher

Samantha Hanson
Researcher

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

Emmanuel Allieu
Youth Engagement Coordinator

Jon Skrypnik
Youth Engagement Coordinator



“

We will continue to prioritize the needs and rights of young people as we strive to move Manitoba forward to a place where public policy and provincial services prioritize the safety and growth of all young people. I extend my sincerest gratitude to all of you for your continued support and partnership.”

**— SHERRY GOTT, MANITOBA ADVOCATE
FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

1-800-263-7146

info@manitobaadvocate.ca
ManitobaAdvocate.ca

346 Portage Avenue, Unit 100
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0C3



**Manitoba Advocate
for Children and Youth**

