



Manitoba Advocate
for Children and Youth

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**Nurturing Relationships and Transformative
Change Through the Manitoba Advocate for
Children and Youth's Recommendation
Development and Monitoring**



About the Title

Each recommendation is a seed that is planted with care and intention. It represents not only our collective hopes for Manitoba's young people, but also our shared responsibilities and potential to fulfill their rights. Each seed has its own unique needs and purposes, requiring particular environments and distinct kinds of care to thrive. What each seed eventually grows into and produces depends so much on how it is nurtured and cared for. When we come together with many hands and diverse gifts to support the seed, we increase its chances of growing and flourishing.

About the Design

The design for this report is inspired by seeds, sunflowers, and dandelions to symbolize growth, resilience, and possibility. Seeds represent the potential within every child and youth, while sunflowers embody hope, strength, and the pursuit of brighter futures. Dandelion seeds drifting in the wind reflect the spreading of voices, ideas, and change, echoing MACY's role in amplifying the experiences of children and youth across Manitoba. Together, these elements create a visual narrative of renewal and empowerment, aligning with MACY's commitment to fostering environments where young people can thrive.

Acknowledgments

The development of this model has been, and remains, a journey of listening, learning, growing, and adapting. This journey has been deeply rooted in thoughtful consultation and a commitment to getting it right. We would like to thank everyone who shared their knowledge, experience, wisdom, and expertise with us along the way. These gifts have profoundly shaped this model, which will continue to grow and evolve as we continue to listen and learn while doing this important work.

We are deeply grateful to Dr. Gladys Rowe, who walked alongside MACY in the development of this new process. Dr. Rowe did more than guide us – she grounded us. Through every interaction, she embodied the very principles she spoke to, offering a model of experiential learning that transformed how we understand and approach this work. Her presence and teachings brought profound depth and authenticity to this process, allowing us to experience firsthand what it means to work in a good way. She treated each engagement not as a transaction, but as a shared experience. This way of working fostered connection, trust, and safety. It showed us that when we embody the values we speak of, we can create spaces where all voices are valued, and where the most meaningful and impactful solutions can emerge.

We thank Dr. Marlyn Bennet for her early insights, which were instrumental in shaping this model. We also acknowledge her ongoing support to MACY over the years and her deep commitment and contribution to children and youth in Manitoba.

We recognize Elder Louise Lavallee, whose wisdom and lived experiences helped shape the cultural responsiveness of this process. We extend our gratitude to Elders Yvonne Pompana, Albert McLeod, and Don Robinson – members of the Elder's Council at MACY – for sharing their teachings, stories, and thoughtful feedback, all of which served to enrich this work.

We are very grateful to the members of MACY's Youth's Ambassador Advisory Squad (YAAS) for contributing their time, perspectives, and lived experiences to this process. Their contributions have deepened our understanding of the importance of consulting with and listening to youth, as well as how this can be done in a meaningful and effective way. We look forward to their continued involvement in this process.

We acknowledge and extend our thanks to our partners in government, including the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth Recommendations Action Planning (MACY-RAP) Committee, for their support and feedback throughout the development of this new model, and for their willingness to collaborate in a more intentional and inclusive way moving forward.

Finally, we recognize and honour the foundational work that came before us, which deeply inspired and informed this model.

This is a living model, meaning that it will continue to be adapted and evolve as we listen, learn, and grow together. We will continue to make sure the right voices are at the table and that we take the time to meaningfully integrate what we hear. This approach reflects our commitment to truth and reconciliation, recognizing the importance of weaving together the broad diversity of voices, experiences, knowledges, and ways of doing that exist within Manitoba to create a model that is truly inclusive, culturally-responsive, and accountable to all those it serves.



Introduction

The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth (MACY) is mandated to advocate for and advance the rights and well-being of children, youth, young adults, and their families in Manitoba, with a specific focus on those who are receiving government services. This sacred duty encompasses a broad range of responsibilities which are legislated within *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act (ACYA)* and have been carried out by passionate, skilled, and dedicated Advocates and staff over the years. One of these responsibilities includes issuing recommendations to public bodies to improve the effectiveness and responsiveness of “designated” services for young people, and monitoring the progress of their implementation.

The original compliance-oriented model used by the office to guide this recommendation monitoring process was developed with honourable intentions, implemented with care and diligence, and generated some valuable outcomes. MACY staff and public bodies, however, were dissatisfied with the process, and MACY can now acknowledge that it unintentionally caused harm and undermined the goals of equity and self-determination by perpetuating power imbalances and overlooking Indigenous perspectives, knowledges, and values. It is now clear that we were hoping for transformational outcomes, but had not developed a transformational process.

These revelations stem from a journey of listening, reflection, and learning that MACY has been immersed in over the last few years. Meaningful community engagement

and consultation, internal processes of critical reflexivity, and extensive research have helped us to understand the critical moment and context in which we collectively find ourselves. The office now grasps the urgent need to fundamentally shift how we do things to ensure that we are not causing harm, but are rather an effective agent of transformational, anti-colonial change.

MACY is approaching this journey of change with a deep sense of accountability and humility. We acknowledge that the office is embedded within the colonial systems, structures, and practices that hold many of the complex problems faced by the young people and communities that it serves in place. We recognize that challenging and dismantling these oppressive and inequitable systems, structures, and practices will be a challenging and long-term process, but we are ready to respond to that call.

We are ready to sow seeds of change to help ensure the rights and well-being of children and the seven generations that will come after them.

Moving forward, MACY commits to ensuring that its recommendation development and monitoring process closely aligns to the needs, rights, and priorities of the young people and communities that it serves. We commit to adopting decolonizing and anti-colonial approaches, including through centring Indigenous paradigms, to disrupt the harmful power imbalances and legacies of colonialism still in place today. In so doing, we also commit to ensuring that connection, co-creation, shared benefit, and collective well-being are at the heart of this work. Finally, MACY commits to continuous learning, growth, and relational accountability.

The new approach to developing and monitoring MACY's recommendations embodies these commitments. In this document, we explore the key principles

guiding this process, how they will be put into operational practice, and what partners can expect from the process moving forward. It is MACY's most sincere hope that this new model will be a dynamic and transformative tool for collective healing and deep, systemic, sustainable changes with large-scale impacts for Manitoba's children, youth, young adults, their families and communities, and the seven generations to follow.

This is just the start of MACY's new journey of change. We are sowing the seeds and are eager to see what blooms as a result of this new model and the collective action it is inviting.



Purpose and Objectives

The overarching purpose behind MACY's new recommendation development and monitoring model is to help drive the kind of transformational changes needed to enable the full and equitable realization of children's rights across Manitoba, and ensure that no child is left behind. It is intended to help us do this by centring and deepening relationships, fostering mutual learning and benefit, and developing practices, systems, and structures that move us closer to social justice, equity, self-determination, and collective well-being.

MACY's recommendations serve many objectives. They are intended to be powerful tools for elevating and amplifying the collective voices and experiences of Manitoba's young people, along with those of the families, communities, and service providers that support them. They aim to help draw attention, momentum, and resources toward the most critical systemic issues affecting young people and to create a space for connection, dialogue, healing, and collective action in order to address those issues in a meaningful way.


Yet recommendations alone cannot sustain the momentum needed for true systemic and transformational change. This requires

bold commitments and ongoing collective action, progressive forward movement and progress tracking, and the identification of challenges and gaps along the way. This work is challenging and takes time. The process of monitoring the implementation of recommendations aims to help keep these efforts on track and to help maintain momentum. It is a tool for greater transparency and accountability, not only in terms of helping us to fulfill our shared children's rights obligations, but also for honouring our relational commitments, upholding shared values, and fostering mutual learning and benefit. In other words, this process is meant to help us do this work in a good way.

As we have learned, transformational outcomes require transformational processes. This model aims to move beyond quick-wins and short-term solutions to fundamentally change the way we work. It aims to challenge and meaningfully address the deeply rooted systemic and structural issues that underlie, drive, and hold the inequities and injustices our most vulnerable and marginalized youth experience in place.

MACY acknowledges that in Manitoba, transformational change is dependent on both truth and reconciliation. We hope that this new recommendation development and monitoring model can be a tool to help us collectively move closer to these shared goals not only by closely aligning with the object and purpose

of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's *Calls to Action*, but also by directly facilitating their implementation, particularly those focused on child welfare, education, language and culture, health, justice, and youth programming. By centring Indigenous paradigms, this model aims to foster an environment where Indigenous ways of being, knowing, and doing are not only respected and valued, but actively incorporated into our shared work. This model also supports culturally-appropriate services, cultural competency, Indigenous healing practices, Indigenous self-determination, and equity in outcomes across Manitoba's provincially-funded systems.



“There are many truths, but a recommendation is a form of a truth. It is a form of collective reasoning. It is a truth you are telling systems about how to improve themselves.”

ELDER ALBERT MCLEOD

Guiding Principles

MACY's recommendation development and monitoring process is guided by eight key principles which represent the fundamental spirit of this work. These principles provide a solid moral compass to help us collectively navigate every part of the journey and stay on a path that brings us closer to social justice, equity, self-determination, and collective well-being. While providing broad direction, this principle-based approach also allows for flexibility, adaptability, responsiveness, innovation, and mutual benefit.

RESPECT:

Honouring each other's knowledge, time, and lived experiences.

RECIPROCITY:

Ensuring that all partners benefit from the relationship in meaningful ways.

RESPONSIBILITY:

Recognizing the shared commitment to community well-being and ethical engagement.

RELATIONALITY:

Acknowledging that recommendation development and monitoring is an ongoing and evolving process that is rooted in connection.

REPRESENTATION:

Ensuring that young people, their families, and their communities have opportunities to identify and share what is important and relevant to them for and throughout the recommendation development and monitoring process.

TRANSPARENCY:

Engaging in open, honest, and continuous communication.

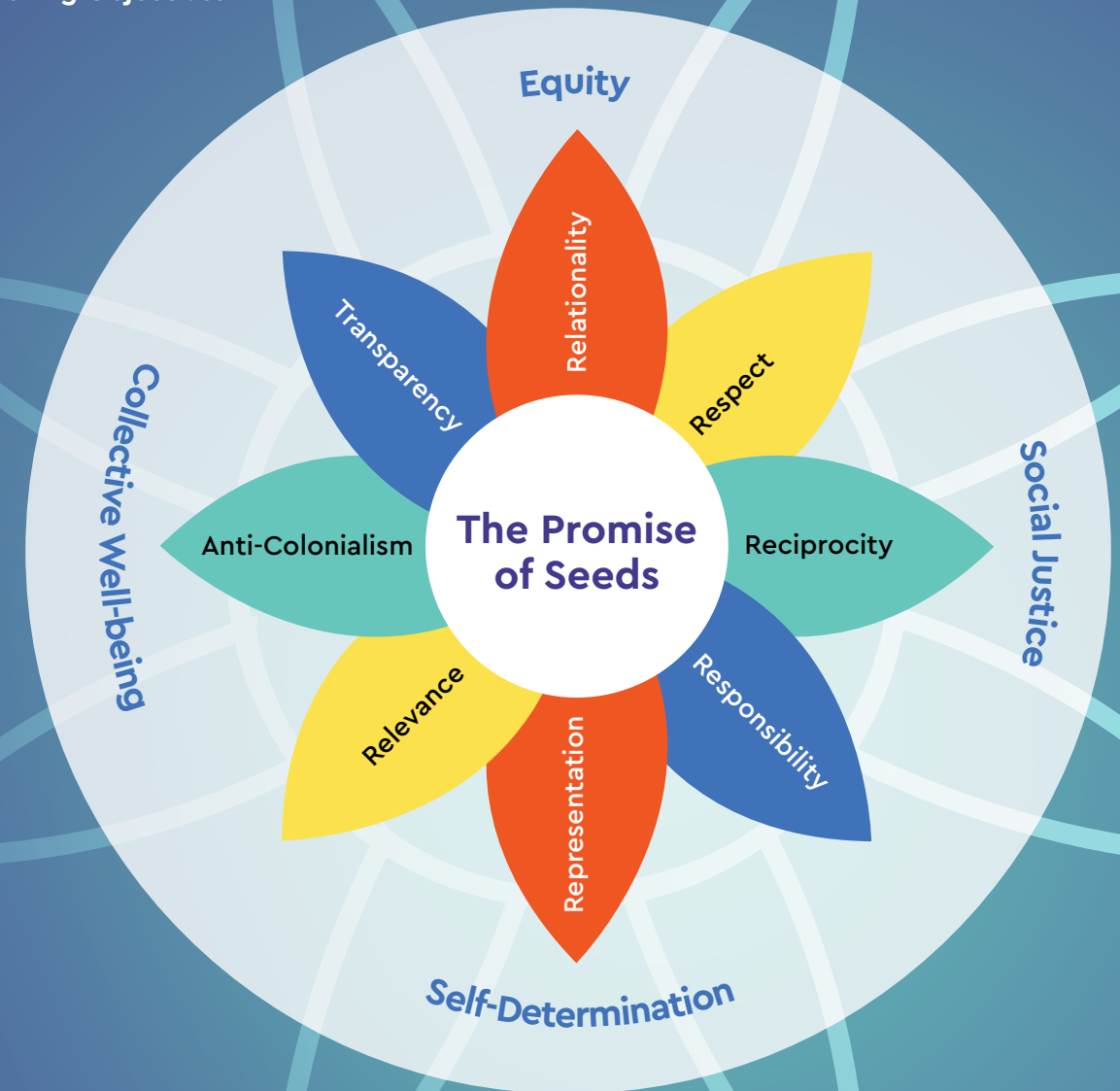
ANTI-COLONIALISM:

Actively resisting and rejecting colonial power, dominance, and ideology, and centring Indigenous knowledge systems and ways of being.

RELEVANCE:

Ensuring that every part of the recommendation development and monitoring process meaningfully contributes to the needs and priorities of the young people and communities that MACY serves.

FIGURE 1.
Guiding Principles and
Overarching Objectives



Recommendation Cycles: Following the Rhythms of the Natural World

Moving forward in a good way requires understanding and acknowledging where we came from. In previous years, MACY's recommendation development and monitoring process was focused on compliance. Recommendation development was not very collaborative, and monitoring consisted of conducting a yearly implementation assessment for each recommendation, assigning them a one-dimensional score or grade, analyzing trends, and sharing our findings annually in a public-facing special report.

Not only did we feel and hear that this process was burdensome and challenging to apply thoughtfully, consistently, holistically, and on an annual basis, but the "scores" themselves often lacked meaningful context and failed to capture the broader picture of implementation and tangible impact, particularly for recommendations requiring complex solutions or years of sustained effort. The process also failed to invite and centre youth and community voices, missing a critical opportunity to connect, listen, and learn from lived experiences.

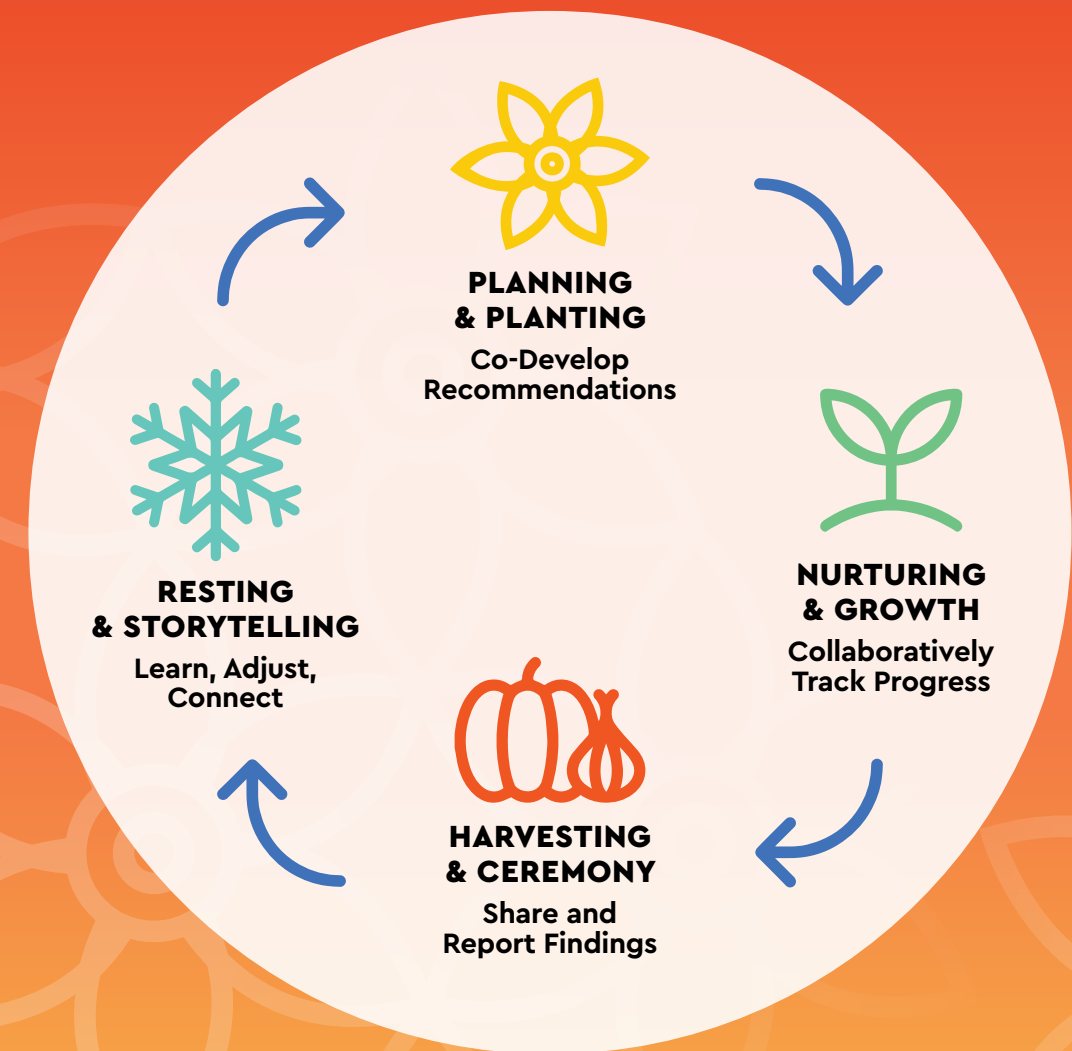
To align with the principles guiding this new model, the focus is now on process and progress, rather than compliance. Community voices and experiences will be at the heart of the process. Drawing on the human rights principle of 'progressive realization', MACY acknowledges that the full and meaningful implementation of recommendations – like full and meaningful rights realization – often takes time and requires intentionality and attention to process. Similarly, the impacts and outcomes of any progress made are rarely seen

or experienced instantly, but rather generally materialize progressively, over time. The ultimate objective is to work together to bring about a better future, to keep things moving forward, and to consistently see and experience incremental improvements as we do.

Our new recommendation development and monitoring process is rooted in Indigenous knowledges and the rhythms of the natural world, drawing inspiration from the seasonal, circular patterns of planning, nurturing, harvesting, resting, and learning (see Figure 2). In many Indigenous worldviews, each season carries distinct teachings and responsibilities. By aligning our work with these rhythms, we honour a worldview that values process, patience, and interconnectedness. This approach recognizes that MACY, government domains, public services, and the communities we all serve do not exist in isolation, but are rather part of a living, interdependent ecosystem. In this context, meaningful change requires a more holistic, responsive, and inclusive process and understanding of progress.

“ Relationship to the seasons and seasonal cycles is foundational to many Indigenous Peoples. There is a time for planning and planting. There is a time for nurturing and growth. There is a time for harvesting and ceremony. And there is a time for resting, visiting, and storytelling.”

FIGURE 2.
Seasonal Cycles of Recommendation
Development and Monitoring



The Season of Planning and Planting

Recommendation Development

The process by which formal MACY recommendations are developed is evolving to become more participatory and inclusive. In addition to grounding each recommendation in evidence and children's rights considerations, MACY will meaningfully engage those most affected by new recommendations to ensure they are informed by real-time experiences and needs (see Figure 3).

The process begins with the project team reviewing and synthesizing findings from diverse data sources, all drawn from real experiences. These findings will serve as a foundation for drafting initial recommendations. Once a first draft is created, targeted consultation will follow. The scope and form of consultation will vary based on the context and underlying issue being addressed, but it will always be central to the process.

Consultations may include: individuals and communities directly impacted by the recommendation; representatives from the public bodies involved; subject matter experts; the Elders Council at MACY; youth voices; Indigenous Governing Bodies (IGBs), communities, families, and others, as seen fit.

Consultation will ensure recommendations reflect real-world experiences and align with the principles guiding this framework. MACY acknowledges that while our staff bring expertise, they are not experts in every domain, and excluding lived and professional expertise would undermine the quality and effectiveness of the recommendations. In this work, MACY is committed to maintaining open communication with public bodies, ensuring transparency and mutual understanding throughout the process. All consultation efforts will be guided by MACY's

Consultation Guidelines (please see document for more details).

This participatory approach strengthens each recommendation, ensuring it is grounded in diverse perspectives and real-life context. MACY's role is not to speak over others, but to amplify what we hear – recognizing that lasting solutions to systemic issues require collective wisdom, not singular viewpoints.

The way recommendations have been written have evolved over the years, ranging from narrowly focused to broader, multi-step approaches. Some have been direct and easier to achieve, while others have been complex, layered, and more long-term in nature. These variations, while sometimes needed, have created challenges in both implementation and measuring progress.

To better align with this new process, recommendations will build on what has worked in the past, while also refining elements for greater clarity and effectiveness. Each recommendation will continue to identify a clear addressee – the department(s), authorities, agencies, or other public bodies responsible for its implementation. They will continue to range from broad to targeted, reflecting underlying needs that vary from specific changes – such as improved policies for smaller public bodies, to broader systemic issues like persistent communication barriers. While some recommendations may include considerations for implementation, they will now centre around a singular underlying need, with less focus on prescribing exactly how that need should be met. This shift prioritizes the intended vision over rigid pathways, allowing room for flexibility and collaborative solutions.

Recommendation Notification

Following the completion of a report or investigation, as per section 27 or section 31 of the ACYA, a final draft of each recommendation will be formally communicated to relevant departments, authorities, agencies, or other public bodies responsible for its implementation. Recommendations included in special reports will become public when the report is released.

Prior to formal communication, there will already be a shared understanding of the recommendation's shape and intent, built through ongoing and transparent dialogue with all partners. Additionally, prior to the formal communication of new recommendations, all relevant partners and key contacts will be invited to attend a virtual or in-person presentation on the report, findings, and recommendations.

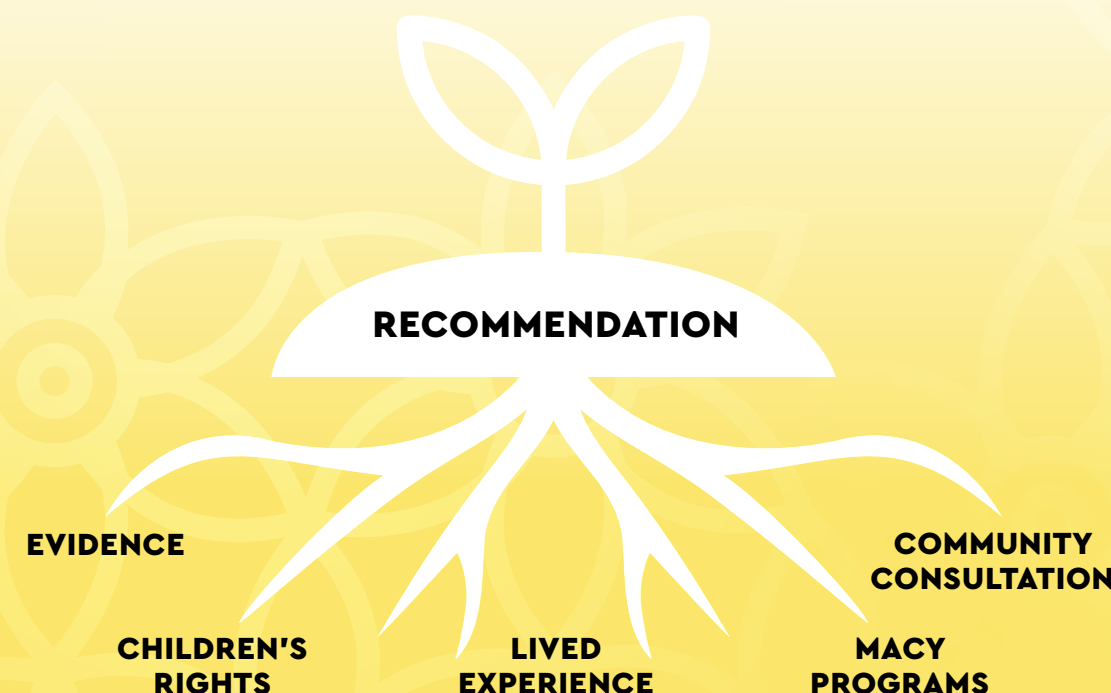
The entire recommendation development and monitoring process – including Progress Reports and this guide – will also be made available on MACY's website. This is a demonstration of MACY's commitment to transparency with all those we work for and to whom we are accountable.

Each recommendation will be formally communicated by means of a letter from the Manitoba Advocate to the Minister of the department named in the recommendation, or another leader of the identified public body. The letter will include:

- The name of the report and link to the report;
- The specific recommendation(s) made to the department or public body;
- Identification of the key contact, if known, or a request for this information if it is not yet available. This contact may be the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth Recommendations Action Planning (MACY-RAP) Committee representative for that department.

A notification email will be sent to the key contact identified with the above information, as well as a link to all required materials, including a copy of this guide and Progress Reports, and any other relevant dates and reporting requirements.

FIGURE 3.
The Roots of Recommendation Development



The Season of Nurturing and Growth

Tracking Progress, Reporting, and Self-Assessment

Moving forward, public bodies will continue to track and share their progress with MACY on a yearly basis. While helping to ensure accountability, this is also a means of collecting and keeping track of updates so details are not forgotten along the way, as well as ensuring there is an annual baseline for the purpose of comparability. This will all lend itself to fairer and more accurate progress determinations.

To assist us in collectively keeping track of and understanding the progress being made toward the full implementation of recommendations, public bodies are invited to share a completed progress report with MACY on May 31st each year. The progress reports will be reviewed by MACY and used to inform the final progress categorization, which is explained in more detail below. The progress report is comprised of six

questions that have been carefully and collaboratively crafted to enable a holistic and fair representation and understanding of progress, as well as the context within which it has or has not occurred. They ask about concrete actions taken, tangible impacts observed, enabling or hindering factors, and opportunities for collaboration. Upholding the principle of reflexivity, the progress report also includes a question inviting public bodies to self-assess their progress, using the same progress categorization tool as MACY. This self-assessment will be compared to the final progress categorization identified by MACY, with trends and patterns analyzed, collaboratively discussed, and publicly reported on as needed. The six questions are included in Appendix 1, along with clear guidance to assist public bodies in preparing their responses.

Community Engagement and Consultation

Upholding the principles guiding MACY's recommendation development and monitoring work requires centring community voices in this process. Over the course of each cycle of review, MACY will actively engage and consult with affected communities to amplify voices and lived experiences which are typically silenced or ignored, and to deepen and broaden our collective understanding of the impact and effectiveness of the implementation of specific recommendations on the ground.

Meaningful engagement and consultations will occur with young people, families, communities, and service providers as needed, and will be led by the Consultation Guide developed

alongside this recommendation development and monitoring process. The specific approach, process, and methods used for each consultation will be determined by, and customized to fit, specific needs, capacities, circumstances, and contexts. They may include gatherings, sharing circles, peer-led interviews and focus groups, ceremonies, feasts, storytelling, oral or written submissions, and surveys, to name a few. Each interaction will be treated as a gift to be honoured and an opportunity to connect, share stories, listen and learn, and create a circle of belonging and unity. Measures will be taken to always ensure inclusivity, cultural safety and support, and active participation.

Reviewing Recommendations

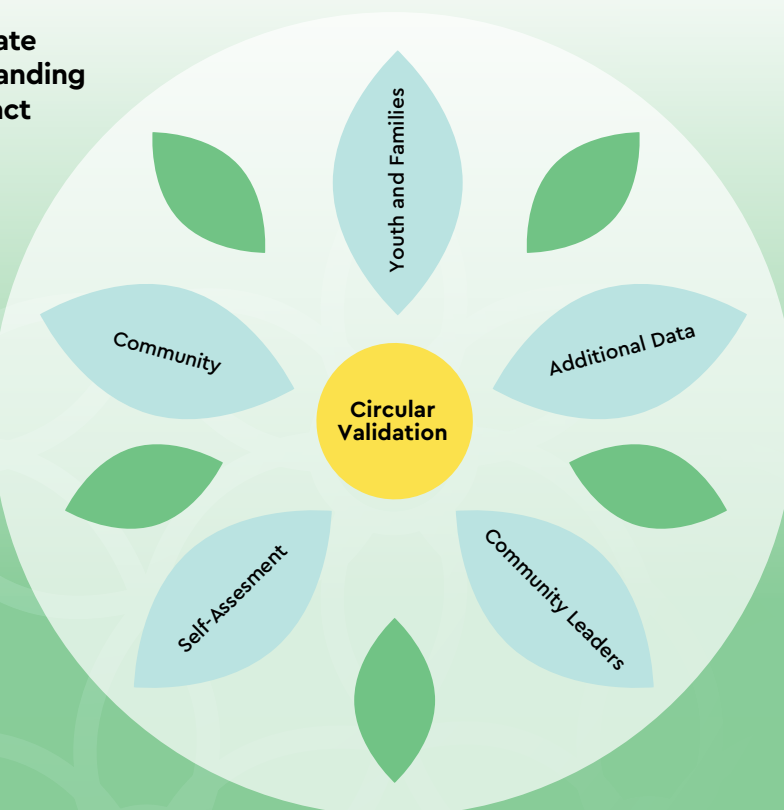
To align with the principles guiding this process, and in accordance with this new seasonal approach to reviews, recommendations will now be grouped by the systemic issue(s) they strive to address, and each group will be formally reviewed on a more cyclical basis. The decision about which group of recommendations to review in a given year will be based on careful consultation and consideration of the prevailing needs, circumstances, and context. This will enable a more responsive, flexible, and integrated approach that recognizes recommendations and the actions taken to implement them, which occur across and between different domains, are interconnected and interrelated.

These longer cycles of information gathering, reflection, and review support a more nuanced understanding that moves beyond surface-level fixes to examine the true effectiveness, reach, and depth of change. These subtle changes support the need to look at and address systemic issues in their full context, rather than one-dimensionally. Reviewing a smaller group of

recommendations at a time also allows us to be more intentional with our time, ensuring that the process continuously upholds the principles guiding it.

The process of understanding if and what progress has been made in the implementation of a specific recommendation since it was issued or last reviewed will involve a comprehensive review of the information provided by domains in their yearly progress updates and through ongoing communication, as well as the gifts shared during community engagement and consultations. When necessary, this review will be supplemented by MACY's internal program data and independent research. This aligns with Indigenous methodologies by using circular validation (see Figure 4 below), ensuring an inclusive, collaborative, holistic, and evidence-based review process, where all voices are heard, and which bridges the gap between progress achieved on the books and progress experienced and impact felt on the ground.

FIGURE 4.
Cultivating an Accurate and Holistic Understanding of Progress and Impact



The Four Categorizations of Progress

Categorizing Progress

The final categorization of progress will be a general reflection of the overall picture of progress made toward implementing the vision of the recommendation that emerges from this comprehensive review. Recommendations will receive one of the following four progress categorizations: 'regression', 'no progress', 'progress', and 'implemented'. These are explained in more detail in Figure 5. The purpose of making and publicly sharing a formal progress categorization will never be to shame or degrade, but rather to strengthen transparency, accountability, and collective awareness, and to inform ongoing discussions and next steps.

FIGURE 5.
The Four Categorizations of Progress

Regression

The actions taken and the impact felt and observed since the recommendation was issued or previously reviewed move the recommendation away from its intended vision, contradicting the principle of progressive realization and potentially harming young people and their families and communities.

Public reporting and follow up discussions will focus on impact, challenges encountered, systemic barriers, lessons learned, supports and adjustments required, and practical next steps.

No Progress

The lack of concrete action, or the actions reported, do not move the recommendation toward its implementation and intended vision, and no impact has been felt or observed on the ground.

Public reporting and follow up discussions will focus on impact, challenges encountered, systemic barriers, lessons learned, supports and adjustments required, and practical next steps.

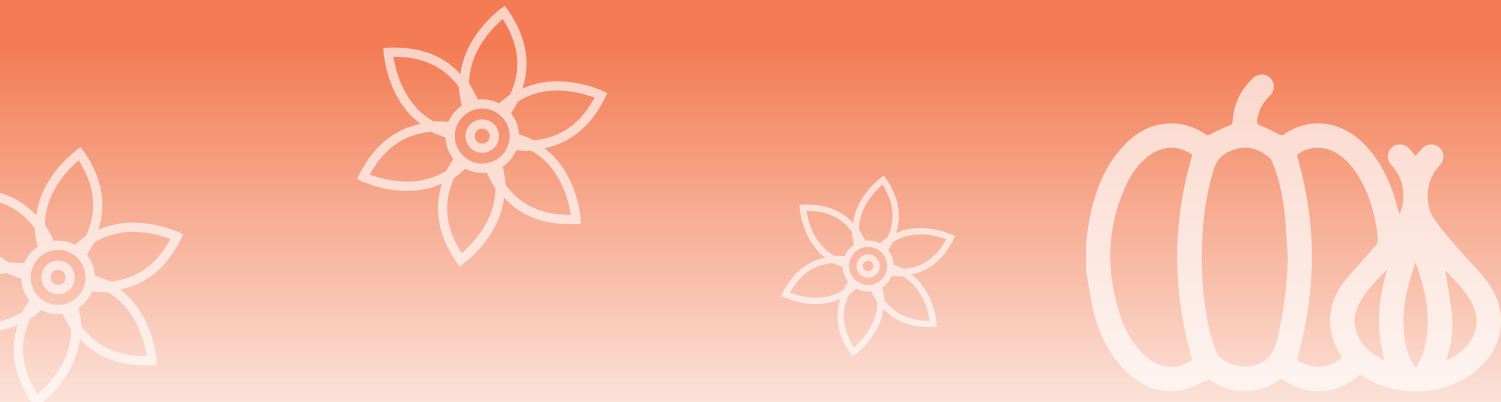
Progress

The actions taken since the recommendation was issued or previously reviewed are concrete and targeted, and have had or are expected to have tangible impacts for children and youth, moving the recommendation progressively toward its full implementation and intended vision.

Public reporting and follow up discussions will focus on progress made, impact, what is working well, lessons learned, and practical next steps.

Implemented

The recommendation has been fully implemented and the intended vision fulfilled. Public reporting will focus on impact, what went well, and lessons learned.



The Season of Harvesting and Ceremony

Sharing and Reporting Findings

Just as reviews and progress determinations are moving away from rigid grading, the way in which progress is shared and reported is also evolving within this model. Guided by the same principles, we are prioritizing meaningful and intentional communication to foster connection, critical reflection, and shared accountability across systems. This includes not only what we communicate, but how we communicate it – both with public bodies and with the broader community.

As we wrap up our cycle of review, we will compile findings, synthesize insights, and schedule time for in-person sharing and reflection. This will always include making time to report back to everyone who was consulted in earlier seasons about the findings, how their knowledge and experiences informed them, and next steps.

The cycle will close with an annual gathering with public bodies to review and reflect on what has emerged in the year. The gathering will provide a space to share findings in a way that honours the voices heard, experiences shared, commitments made, challenges encountered, and the ongoing progress achieved. This process shapes how we report back to public bodies, while also guiding how progress, challenges, and collective efforts are shared with care, context, and respect.

Public communication will include updates to MACY's online tracker every year, providing consistent and transparent access to the status of all recommendations. In addition, each year

will include one of two reporting formats: either a stand-alone thematic report or a summarized update included within MACY's Annual Report. We will also work with the members of our Youth Ambassador Advisory Squad (YAAS) to devise accessible ways to relay findings to young people in Manitoba.

As MACY's monitoring process becomes more relational and inclusive – engaging more voices, communities, and perspectives – the work will require more time and care to do well. Our goal is to release a full, stand-alone report at least once every two years. In years without a formal report, MACY will still provide a clear overview of recommendation monitoring efforts within our Annual Report – covering any ongoing report development underway. To ensure transparency, MACY will clearly communicate through our website and other public platforms whether a stand-alone report or summary update will be issued in a given year, and what to expect in terms of content, focus, and timing.

Reporting may include key themes explored, a summary of self-reported updates provided from public bodies, supplemental external data, engagement activities, consultations that took place, community insights, and youth voices. Together, these sources will help assess not only actions and commitments, but also the impacts being made across multiple spheres – structural, systemic, organizational, relational, and individual – always with the well-being of youth at the centre (Figure 6).

Shifting the Way We Work to Make Transformational Change

FIGURE 6.
Interconnected Spheres Essential for Achieving Transformational Change





The Season of Resting and Storytelling

At this point in the recommendation development and monitoring cycle, the intention is to take a step back, catch our breath, and check in with each other. This is the time in between, when the dust settles, and we can share what is going well and where we may need to adjust our process.

Process Feedback

While we welcome open and honest communication throughout the recommendation development and monitoring cycles, during this specific season, we will make a point of checking in with partners to see how the process is feeling and going.

Recommendation Renewal

During this time, we will also ensure there is space to review older recommendations for continued relevance in the current landscape. Recommendations that remain open after five years will undergo a formal review to assess their alignment with evolving policies, priorities, and community needs. Given the ever-changing nature of systems, some recommendations may no longer reflect present-day realities. In such cases, continued monitoring may become impractical or no longer meaningful. If, after a review, a recommendation is determined to no longer align with the current context, it may be formally removed from active monitoring.

Concluding Thoughts

Working to protect and ensure the rights and well-being of each and every one of Manitoba's young people, and the generations that will come after them, is a sacred and shared responsibility. While MACY has always viewed its legislative obligation to issue recommendations to public bodies and monitor their implementation as supporting this responsibility, the office has come to understand that up until now, this work has been both less effective than expected and unintentionally harmful.

Meaningful consultation and deep reflection around where MACY has come from, who we are, where we are, and where we are trying to go has led the office to recognize that this work is not just about fulfilling obligations and collecting data, but also deepening relationships, fostering shared learning and benefit, making space for and listening to all voices, and disrupting colonial dominance. In other words, it is not just what we do that is important, but how we do it.

The Promise of Seeds represents both a formal commitment and an invitation to do this work in a different, more intentional and transformative way. Just as each recommendation issued by MACY is a seed planted with collective care and intention, and instilled with our shared hopes, responsibilities, and potential for a better tomorrow, so too is this new recommendation development and monitoring process. For the promise of these seeds to flower and come to life, they not only need constant nurturing, but also to be planted in the right kind of environment.

The key principles guiding this process are our moral compass on this journey. When put into practice, they will help us ensure our seeds of change are growing in the right environment and keep us on the path of social justice, equity, self-determination, and collective well-being. And at the heart of this process are

Manitoba's young people. As Elder McLeod wisely said, they are the anchor and we are collectively moving around them as helpers, with our knowledge and our gifts. We will seek out, listen to, and amplify their voices and experiences throughout this process. The more we can nurture relationships and collaborate respectfully within our roles as we do this work, the more meaningful and effective it will be for the young people we support. We know there will be challenging conversations, difficult realities to face, and no easy solutions, but in upholding our key principles and centring youth, we hope to do this work in a way that benefits everyone involved.

In this process, MACY is repositioning itself as an equal and a partner. We stand not apart, but within the same systems and structures that we aim to support, strengthen, and improve. We believe everyone is guided by good intentions and recognize the inherent complexity and challenges of the systems and structures within which we work. Our purpose is not to name and shame when things get difficult or off track, but to create a space for shared reflection, learning, benefit, and growth. The aim is to engender a deeper understanding of the barriers and challenges holding so many problems in place and to encourage collaboration as we work collectively and progressively to improve the lives of children and youth across Manitoba.

There is an important role for us all to play in achieving this transformational change. While public bodies and service providers are doing the work on the ground, our role is to seek out and amplify youth and community experiences and voices, nurture relational accountability, help drive meaningful action, and reflect progress back to everyone so that we can see and understand where things are at, what is working or is not working, and where we might need to focus, redirect resources, or change approaches. We are all in this together.

Importantly, this recommendation development and monitoring process is living and breathing. It will continue to grow and evolve alongside this shared work, informed by each interaction, lesson learned, and the voices and experiences of those we support, work alongside, and to whom we are accountable. This living approach aligns with the symbolism woven throughout these pages: we are supporting living, breathing humans within an ever-changing ecosystem, and the model must embody that same spirit, spark, and vigour.

APPENDIX 1

Progress Report Questions and Guidance



1. Please identify the specific actions taken towards implementing this recommendation.

For this question, "actions" are understood to be the steps or effort taken toward progressively moving this recommendation forward. These should be deliberate, targeted, and concrete. They should be reasonable and adequate within the current context. They should also prioritize the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged children, and work to address existing gaps and inequities. Actions may include, but not be limited to: demonstrated intent, including public statements and commitments; changes to specific policies, programs, services, and/or resource distribution; developments in funding and budget allocations and expenditures; creation of committees or working groups; and/or public consultations and situational/impact assessments. As much detail as possible should be provided, including targets, timelines, meeting minutes, degree of public participation, and any relevant context. The information provided should speak to the progress made toward the vision of the recommendation, and build on any previously reported actions.

2. Please identify any tangible impacts these actions have had for children, youth, and young adults and their families.

This question provides space for public bodies to reflect on and demonstrate the impact and effectiveness of the actions taken to implement the recommendation. Respondents should provide updates on the availability, accessibility, acceptability, and quality of relevant services and programs (definitions provided below). Efforts should also be taken to report on any developments in the health and well-being of young people in Manitoba more generally. In order to establish a baseline and help effectively track progress, respondents should consider using the same core child health and well-being indicators every year. These indicators should be disaggregated by age, sex, ethnicity, and geographic region where possible to help reveal whether or not pervasive inequities and gaps exist and are being addressed.

Availability refers to services and programs being available in sufficient quantity to meet the needs of young people.

Accessibility is about ensuring equitable access to all young people, especially the most vulnerable, and is made up of four overlapping dimensions: non-discrimination, physical accessibility, economic accessibility, and information accessibility (the right to seek, receive, and impart information).

Acceptability refers to how well services and programs align with the values, cultures, expectations, and preferences of young people.

Quality refers to the standard of services and programs provided, ensuring they are scientifically and technically sound; delivered by trained, competent, and well-paid professionals; safe, effective, and responsive to youth needs; and continuously monitored and improved.

3. Please identify any factor(s) that have helped or hindered the implementation of this recommendation, including capacity, institutional, systemic, procedural, policy, financial, or any other considerations.

This question encourages transparency and supports a strength-based approach by inviting public bodies to discuss challenges and potential solutions, as well as factors that have hindered or helped to create an enabling environment for the implementation of this recommendation. It also provides a space for reflection on the context in which recommendation implementation is occurring. When answering this question, respondents are invited to reflect on all the factors (positive and negative, including conflicts, barriers, and gaps) that have enabled or hindered progress.

4. Please identify any opportunities for collaboration with MACY on moving this recommendation forward.

This question acknowledges that MACY shares responsibility for fulfilling children's rights in Manitoba, and has unique capabilities, networks, and a certain amount of influence – all of which may be leveraged to provide support and/or assistance to public bodies. This question upholds the principles of reciprocity and aims to strengthen trust and mutual respect, deepen relationships, and improve collaboration. All opportunities for collaboration identified that fit within MACY's mandate will be genuinely considered and discussed.

5. Is there any additional information you would like to share?

This question provides space to share any other relevant information or documents not already included.

6. How would you categorize your progress toward fully implementing this recommendation and its overarching vision since it was issued or last reviewed?

This question invites reflexivity on the part of implementing bodies. The four progress categorizations include: Regression, No Progress, Progress, and Implemented, details for which have been provided in the text. Self-assessments will be compared to MACY's final categorization of progress in order to expose any discrepancies and inform ongoing discussions.



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We would like acknowledge that this model has been deeply inspired and informed by the work of many others before us, including:

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