

2020-2021

Community Report



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As an organization and community, MYS was devastated by the discoveries of hundreds of unmarked graves at former Indian residential school sites across Canada.

We stand in solidarity and grief with all Indigenous people and communities. We are committed to honouring the lives lost, supporting the warriors who survived, learning the truth about Canada's history and working together to advance reconciliation.

Art therapy was one of the ways the MYS family expressed and processed our grief. **ON THE COVER** is a painting by a youth in northern Manitoba.

If you or someone you know is experiencing distress related to Indian residential schools, please call the national survivors and families hotline at 1-866-925-4419.

MYS is honoured to be situated on Indigenous lands where we work with Indigenous and non-Indigenous families, staff and communities.

Our offices and homes are located on Inineew, Anishinaabe, Dene, Oji-Cree and Dakota land and in the homeland of the Metis Nation. Our head office is located on Treaty 1 territory and our homes and sub offices are located throughout Treaty 2 and Treaty 5 territories.

We acknowledge the harms that our work, rooted in colonial systems, has caused and we are dedicated to correcting our mistakes by listening, learning from and cooperating with Indigenous communities and families in a spirit of truth, respect, collaboration and reconciliation.





As part of an ongoing commitment to reconciliation, MYS offers land-based and culturally appropriate programs and activities like our Niiabin 2020 Summer Camp where youth participated in a series of workshops, including building these mini tipis.



A Joint Message from our Board Chair & CEO

Shane Storie
Board Chair

It's hard to fathom this report encompasses a full year of life in a pandemic. We've all been tested like never before. For MYS, it meant finding new ways to support vulnerable children and youth while keeping everyone safe - including volunteers, families and staff at the heart of every MYS relationship. We are profoundly grateful to the entire MYS community for your courage, imagination and dedication over the past year. Because of you, we've been able to continue the momentum that began before we ever heard of COVID-19.

Our mobile crisis team responded to a record number of calls as a record number of Canadians reported mental health concerns. Our Skills4Life teams stayed connected to young adults learning to live independently after leaving care by preparing and delivering hundreds of meals and hampers. As well, a new community outreach team now operates out of our youth resource centre (YRC) in Winnipeg to support young adults desperately in need of resources to prevent homelessness.

In Thompson, we opened a second YRC and home base for StreetReach. The partnership provides lifesaving interventions and safe spaces for youth, along with deeper connections to land-based culture and ceremony.

As teams across the organization came together to find new ways to deliver programs, we were able to offer virtual opportunities with great success, making the distance between Winnipeg and Thompson feel much shorter.

The MYS youth hub became an important resource for youth and young adults across the province. We were also able to share the space with the SOURCE educational program, whose students are now active participants in hub activities like drop-in counselling and employment initiatives.

New partnerships like the Community Helpers Initiative with Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata, St. Amant and Fearless R2W created opportunities to help people in the city's most vulnerable neighbourhood.

Our partnership with Southern Chiefs' Organization also continued to grow as we transform and adapt to changes to the child welfare system. At a flag raising ceremony in June, the two organizations reaffirmed our commitment to the partnership and look forward to opportunities to share knowledge and resources to achieve our shared goal of keeping all children where they belong: with their communities and families.

We have also offered support and assistance to Indigenous leaders exploring program development and delivery. We receive our own support to improve MYS services and inform policies from members of our North Wind Thunderbird Peer Council, founded by youth in northern and southern Manitoba.

We are filled with gratitude and appreciation for financial support from the province as well as the generosity of private donors and foundations. Special thanks to the entire team at the Department of Families, whose guidance, support, innovation and calm approach made all the difference as we adapted to changing needs and protocols.

Now, as we slowly move away from the turmoil of the pandemic, we turn our focus to helping reconcile the harms of colonization and oppression. MYS has embarked on a name change to acknowledge the intergenerational trauma of Indian residential schools. The entire MYS community is committed to learning more about Indigenous history, culture, diversity and the importance of being allies on this journey to reconciliation.

Thank you for walking with us on this journey!



Kerri Irvin-Ross
CEO



Regular workshops and presentations like the one led by Shauna Fontaine and Christy Anderson on colonization and oppression are helping enhance our cultural competency as well as our effectiveness.

Training to do better

In January 2021, all MYS staff and foster parents began a journey to create a common language and understanding of our work as it aligns with our vision, values and mission through a **new employee orientation** series of readings and follow-up questions. Insights from completed modules also help inform professional development plans.

Though we had to temporarily suspend in-person training due to COVID, MYS youth care practitioners (YCPs) continued enhancing their skills through a partnership with TransformAction Inc. to successfully pilot online training in *The Purposeful Use of Daily Life Events™* (DLE) – an innovation that will continue, even as we move beyond the pandemic.

Through DLE, YCPs learn proactive approaches to interventions that strengthen relationships and make every moment with youth and families a meaningful step toward achieving their goals.

Virtual Circle of Courage® training delivered by Dr. Thom Garfat also provided a deeper understanding of why this model is an essential tool in healing, cultural and educational plans for children and youth.

MYS YCPs participated in a fall session of Therapeutic Crisis Solutions to better understand how childhood and intergenerational trauma impacts brain development, stress responses, self-regulation and whole-person wellness.

Operational teams are also reviewing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's 94 calls to action to see how they can apply to and inform our day to day work.



CANADIAN CENTRE for CHILD PROTECTION®
Helping families. Protecting children.

Commit to Kids training and certification through the Canadian Centre for Child Protection is now mandatory for all MYS staff and foster parents to help reduce the risk of child sexual abuse and exploitation.



Indigenous-led Land-based Learning

Enhanced wellness through strengthened and renewed connections to the world around us

Guided by calls to action from Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and the United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, MYS offers a range of Indigenous-led land-based learning opportunities throughout Manitoba.

Through activities that share Indigenous history, culture, traditional medicines, ceremonies, languages and stories, Indigenous youth and families can reconnect to ways of knowing and being that holistically nurture resilience, healing, identity and belonging.

There are also opportunities for non-Indigenous people in the MYS community and beyond to help advance reconciliation by learning the truth about Canada's history, and the legacy of colonization and Indian residential schools.

When it comes to the environment, land-based learning teaches everyone the importance of protecting Mother Earth and all her precious gifts and resources.

At MYS, our Indigenous-led cultural team prefers to be called aunts, uncles or kookum instead of spiritual care providers, knowledge keepers or cultural advisors. "It's about building better relationships by positioning ourselves as extended family and not simply facilitators," says Auntie Cheyenne.



**Niibin
Summer
Camp**

In 2020, MYS introduced our new Niibin (Ojibwe for *It is summer*) calendar and in a time of relatively relaxed COVID restrictions, it was good to get outside with youth to learn things like how to put up a tipi using poles. There was also a trip to see the petroforms at Bannock Point, mini-rattle making, bow making, sage picking, and even a Sundance ceremony! The program wrapped at the end of August with a feast, fire, music and celebration.



**Winter
Wilderness
Days**

As COVID restrictions tightened, getting outside became one of the only ways we could get together in person. It was also a great opportunity for MYS youth to learn and practice winter wilderness survival skills with Sherman Kong. We built quinzhees and learned how to start fires without matches and keep them burning with properly stacked wood. Plus we went ice fishing! This was during some of the coldest temperatures of the season. Great lessons for resilience and resourcefulness in any conditions.



Ziigwan Spring Break Camp

The fun and learning continued through spring break when children and youth painted flowerpots and prepared plants for our food and medicine gardens. They also made dreamcatchers and soap, and packed lunches for vulnerable community members with messages and drawings related to the sacred gifts of truth, humility, respect, love, honesty, courage and wisdom.

Cooking with Kookum



In March, Myrna joined the team as our MYS kookum, with plans to lead a summer program that inspires youth to prepare and share meals made from Indigenous recipes using traditional ingredients.

Monthly Full Moon Ceremonies

This traditional gathering honours Grandmother Moon, who shares the same cycle as a woman's menstrual cycle and has much to teach and offer. It is a time to heal, visit, share wisdom and learn. Though teachings are geared towards women, all are welcome to participate. Most months we were able to hold small gatherings outside. During lockdowns and at maximum capacity, Aunties encouraged small, personal ceremonies at home.

Rec 'n Read

Every Tuesday and Thursday throughout the school year, our Rec 'n Read partnership with University of Manitoba provided regular arts programming together with opportunities to raise awareness around Pride, Earth Day, MMIWG and other important issues and events.

In Manitoba, Red Dress Day is typically marked February 14 with a memorial march. Since the pandemic put a halt to this year's march, MYS instead honoured missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls by hanging red dresses in the windows and trees outside our buildings and homes. A sacred fire, pipe ceremony, drumming, songs and offerings of tobacco were also made to send love and prayers to the women and girls lost and loved ones left behind.

Virtual Paint Nights & Lego Challenges



In periods of lockdown, virtual activities had the lock on physically-distanced fun. Led by Metis artist Kisa MacIsaac, groups of up to 100 participants painted birch trees, sunsets, red dresses and more. From Thompson, Auntie Cheryce led a virtual Lego Challenge that encouraged brick-lovers province-wide to build inuksuks, canoes, turtles, tipis and other items related to Indigenous culture.



The Kirkness family is part of a network of MYS Heart to Home foster families. "We've always provided a loving and safe home," says mom Loretta (standing third from right, with husband Tom, far left, and their biological kids and grandkids). "Many still keep in contact, and still call us 'mom and dad,' and my own kids their 'sisters and brother.'"

HEART TO HOME

One Big Home + Two Big Hearts = A Family with Love to Spare

“*The best part about fostering is when a child comes to you and says ‘I love you mommy.’ That’s a sweet thing. Knowing they feel comfortable and safe and secure around you. Watching them achieve their goals, knowing you were there to support them through it.*”

Loretta and Tom have always been surrounded by lots of kin. She was raised in a family of seven, and he in a family of nine.

For almost 32 years, the couple has also been Mom and Dad, to three of their own children and dozens of foster, and now grand-foster children.

“We had the room and a friend asked if I wanted to look after a child,” says Loretta. I love children and said yes right away!”

Originally from The Pas, the family moved to Winnipeg with their oldest daughter when she began university. When they learned there was a desperate need for foster homes in the city, the couple bought a bigger house with more rooms and became licensed to care for up to four children.

There have been many milestones over the years. “One of my foster daughters just graduated and on social media she mentioned she would have never made it through without the love and support of her Kirkness family.”

There have also been challenges. In 2017, the couple’s daughter Cari had three limbs amputated to save her life after a rare flu. Now Cari and her two sons also live with Loretta and Tom. “We’ve adjusted. We all went through something very traumatic. Helping Cari raise the boys brings so much comfort.”

Once again, the couple upgraded to a bigger house that would accommodate everyone, including two children, 14 and 8, in their care for the past two years. “It is always my intent to look after them right up until they’re adults. And even when they’re adults, when they move away, I tell them my door is always open. Come and see me anytime.”

Even when placements end early, the Kirknesses remain in contact. “Recently, we returned two boys to their biological family. It was sad to see them go, but nice to know their mom was getting them back. We helped her move their stuff. She told us she was grateful to us for taking such great care of her boys.”

Thank you and Miigwech Loretta and Tom for being part of our Heart to Home family and making a difference in the lives of so many children.



Heart to Home

Specialized foster care delivered by very special families

MYS amalgamated and renamed our Alternative Parent Home and Purple Martin programs in 2020 to make room for improved services. Today, Heart to Home families with specialized skills provide safe, supportive spaces for children and youth with behavioural, emotional and medical needs.

There’s huge emphasis on ensuring biological and extended families are actively involved as much as possible. Permanency, reunification and reconnection are all priorities in a child’s care plan.

Last year, 90 of 153 Heart to Home children and youth stayed connected to their biological families – either in person or virtually.

In a year of lockdowns and restrictions, MYS teams formed the Mino Ayaawin Wellness Committee to help families stay active and engaged.

Families followed along virtually and participated in activities from home. Topics ranged from managing stress, staying positive and reframing negative thoughts, to self-care and mental wellness, the importance of routines and how to practice daily mindfulness.

CRISIS INTERVENTION AND STABILIZATION

MYS crisis workers, clinicians and therapists responded to a record number of calls last year.

8642 calls received by MYS intake clinicians from April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021:

2217 calls related to mental health issues, a 15% increase over last year.

1170 times crisis teams were dispatched into the community to ensure emotional and physical safety for youth at home, school or elsewhere.

5120 families benefited from intensive therapy from our brief therapy team, who also provided 103 referrals to longer-term services.

589 youth remained safe and supported in crisis stabilization units for average stays of 3.3 days.

115 youth in crisis received educational supports to ensure they stay in school and on track to achieve their goals.

HEALING HOMES

Last year, 95 youth ages 10 – 17 received 24-hour care and support while living in one of 12 MYS healing homes in Winnipeg, St. Pierre and Thompson. Youth were able connect with land-based ceremony and culture, achieve success in school, build healthy relationships, and chart a positive path forward with help from our amazing teams.

In response to changes in child welfare and changing needs in our community, we created a new three-phase plan for healing homes that will transition two former sites in Winnipeg into homes that support independent living and mental health and addictions (scheduled to open in late 2021).



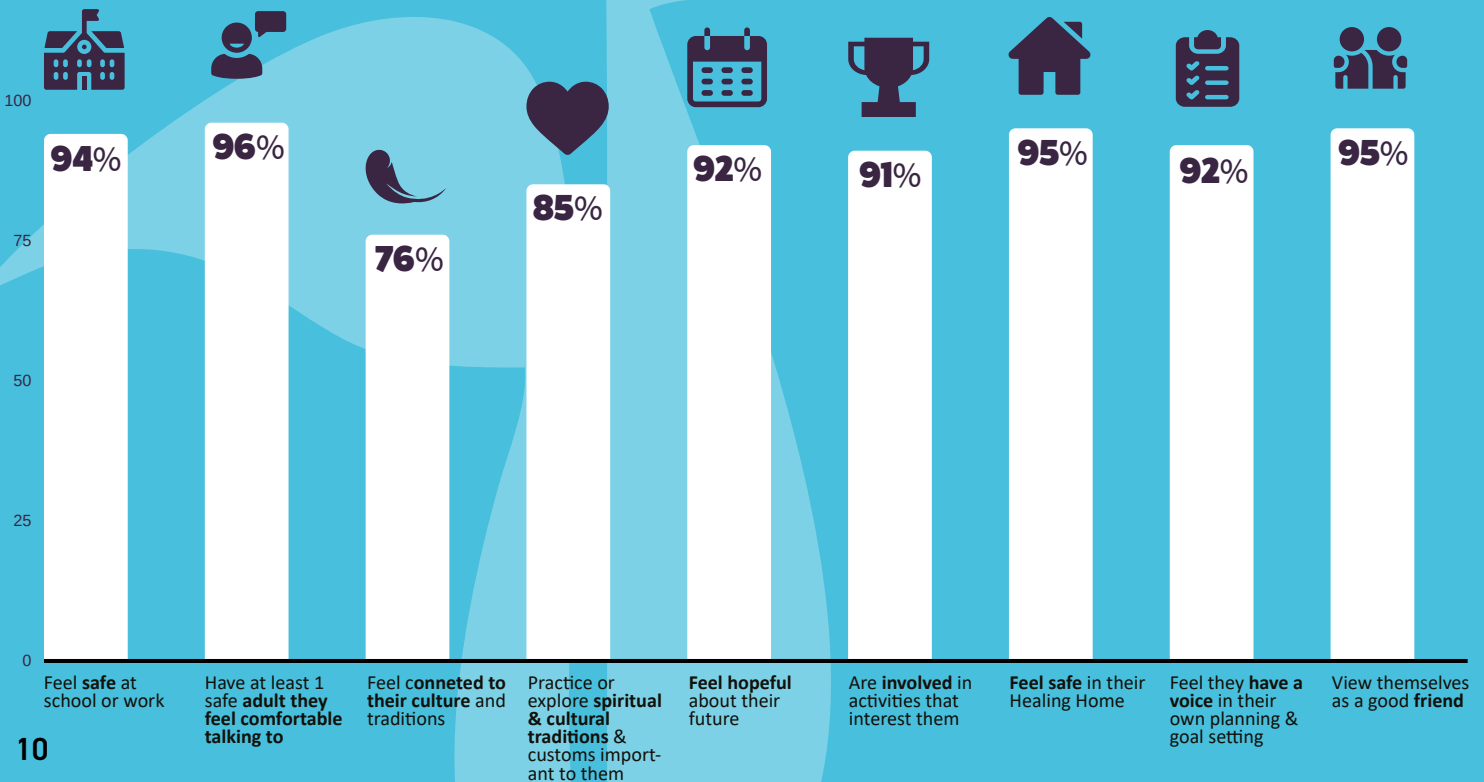
Pink Shirt Day 2021


2021 ANNUAL YOUTH ENGAGEMENT SURVEY REPORT



Survey results include responses from 208 youth who accessed MYS programs from April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021. Participation in the annual survey is voluntary.

208





“
*The fact that I can
make an impact in a
youth’s life makes it
all worthwhile.*”

YCP SPOTLIGHT

Programs are critical but people make the difference

Our MYS family includes almost 180 youth care practitioners (YCPs), representing more than half our entire workforce! YCPs are our direct connection to our youth: a shoulder to cry on; an ear to listen; a voice of encouragement; a caring heart.

"I've always loved helping people - especially youth," says Ardell Monias, a YCP at our Wuskwatim healing home in Thompson. "I was in a similar situation at their age, so I feel I can relate to them a lot. I like that I get to be the person I needed when I was younger."

We know the past year has been especially tough for YCPs because it's been especially tough for children and youth. More than ever, we appreciate your patience, flexibility and remarkable work to keep youth safe, active, engaged, connected and well.



**116 Hemlock
204-778-5382**



Warm beds & private rooms provide safe spaces & short-term emergency stays for youth 18 & under.



Facilities include showers, laundry & spaces where youth can feel safe & comfortable.



A large kitchen provides meals for youth who are staying as well as bagged lunches for community members of all ages.

THOMPSON YRC

North Star

Since opening in September 2020, the YRC north has helped 28 youth meet their basic needs and access important community resources through advocacy and referrals to specialized supports for mental health, addictions and more.

In Thompson, our new Youth Resource Center (YRC) and emergency shelter is helping youth under 21 who are struggling with homelessness or family conflict, and especially vulnerable to involvement with sexual exploitation, child welfare or the criminal justice system. The YRC is also home base for the community's new StreetReach program, which is working with MYS to co-chair the city's Youth Safety Committee and help strengthen the safety net for youth in the community.

Unfortunately, COVID hampered both our grand opening celebrations and our capacity to help even more youth when an exposure led to a month-long closure for intense cleaning and disinfection. But having managed and overcome unprecedented challenges in our first year, we are ready to make a real difference for vulnerable youth in Thompson moving forward.

WINNIPEG YRC

New Emergency Food & Outreach Program

159 Mayfair
1-888-477-1804



A new emergency food and outreach program operating from our YRC in Winnipeg has transformed our ability to help prevent homelessness and involvement with the adult shelter system among youth 18+ who are aging out of care and at risk of falling into service gaps. Since launching in January 2021, the team has already helped 103 people with a range of supports.

- Medical care: 34 times
- Acquiring personal ID: 48 times
- Housing supports: 53 times
- Employment Income Assistance: 30 times
- Harm reduction: 25 times
- Mental health support: 20 times
- Help attending appointments: 84 times
- Referrals to other supports & programs: 101 times

The YRC outreach team delivered 494 food and hygiene hampers to people throughout the community.



1477

youth supported by our resource centre at 159 Mayfair including things like overnight stays, walk-ins, and call-in supports.

1600

strong working relationships cultivated between staff, parents, guardians, caregivers, and a network of youth serving agencies.

788

youth accessed walk-in resources. A further 349 called in for help.

1816

nights that 310 youth stayed in the shelter. 106 were self-referrals – a 39% increase over last year likely because of the pandemic and subsequent closure of so many other community resources.

Helping Ivy Grow

13 year-old Ivy was forced to grow up all too fast.

“I was under my grandma’s care but she passed away,” says Ivy, now 25. “My uncle cared for me best he could but I started acting out, missing school, and so eventually I got kicked out.”

Ivy survived by couch surfing, but realized it was neither sustainable nor safe. At 15, she enrolled herself in CFS.

Ivy was referred to the YRC at 159 Mayfair until she found stable housing at a group home. She returned to school and built relationships with staff and other residents. Just as she was settling in, she received a surprise visit by two police detectives.

“Breach of curfew. This was before my CFS days. I didn’t even know I had a curfew.”

Ivy was taken into custody and spent three months in a juvenile detention centre, but a CFS caseworker advocated for a suspension of sentence and a lifted curfew.

Unfortunately, those three months cost Ivy her placement in the group home, but she was referred to a full range of resources like help finding a job at HMV through a partnership with Downtown Winnipeg Biz and the Independent Living with Supports program.

Things were looking up, but just as her third holiday season with the record store was winding down, the struggling music retailer closed all its locations across Canada. Ivy was out of a job.

“That put me in a very difficult situation, and I wasn’t able to afford my place anymore.”

Ivy moved in with her boyfriend and his parents, but when the relationship ended, she once again faced the prospect of living on the streets.

Once again Ivy was able to turn to MYS, this time for our Housing First program which helps youth 18-30 who are homeless or aging out of care find permanent housing and provide ongoing support as they make their way in the world as independent adults.

Ivy was introduced to Cora Nadeau who had just moved into the position.

“I knew Cora from before so it was really nice to have her as my new worker. She actually got me right into a temporary place.”

Beyond help with housing, Cora also took Ivy to appointments, helped her access furniture donations, a food bank program (run through 159 Mayfair), provided moral support, and general navigation through adult life.

Ivy is at last turning her attentions to the future: work and school. “I want to get into software engineering. I was always really good with computers so we’re going to get that sorted out next.”

Independent Living with Supports 2020-21 stats:

49

Current and former youth supported in 2020-2021

20

Youth currently in preparatory life skills groups with presentations from former youth like Ivy who have lived experience

\$50,000

Amount in benefits received by ILS participants who had help filing tax returns.

150

Prepared/delivered holiday meals to go





“

I was in a really bad place at the start of the year: emotionally and financially. Cora helped me so much. I couldn't have done anything without her.

”



A Shared Space for Connection & Care

There's a reason the MYS Youth Hub is nicknamed the Living Room. It's a fun, friendly space where youth 13-21 can hang out, play games, work out or chill. But it's also a place to connect with other young people as well as important resources.

"We want youth to feel welcome, heard and respected in our space," says Hub coordinator Katrina (pictured left). "We are their personal cheerleaders, encouraging them to pursue their goals, meeting them where they are at and helping take down barriers along the way." That help could be anything from emergency food, rides to appointments, activities, or connections to other MYS programs. Basically, whatever they need.

Although pandemic restrictions limited youth from visiting the Living Room, it didn't stop the Hub team going out to visit youth, connecting with youth virtually and even traveling as far as Thompson to help MYS youth in northern Manitoba stay active and engaged. In total, the team was able to support more than 80 youth last year.

We were also able to share the space with the SOURCE educational program, whose students are now active participants in hub activities like drop-in counselling and employment initiatives.

“
We operate with the mentality ‘youth know best’ when it comes to meeting their needs and program planning.
”

A New Name for the Youth Council

Founded by youth in northern and southern Manitoba to help inform and improve MYS policies and services, the council was gifted its official name at a ceremony with Uncle Chris Harper in February 2021.



Traditional teachings explain that the North wind is the strongest and fiercest wind. The council also believe that as youth, they possess a strong and fierce energy that allows their voices to resonate with others. Like the winds, they also have the capacity to be gentle when necessary.

Uncle Chris also had a vision for a medallion and logo that contains four main elements: the Thunderbird, representing the youth's power and strength; the North wind (the red lines above the Thunderbird) which signifies the balance between being fierce and gentle; the four rings surrounding the Thunderbird, representing the four directions; and the braided sweetgrass surrounding the logo - an important medicine that signifies healing, peace and an offering.

We are incredibly thankful to Chris and proud of the youth and their work towards this moment.

MYS youth voice concerns for clean water



In February, MYS youth Liam, Colten and Thomas took to the world stage to premiere their powerful Voices for Change spoken word poem and video "Water is Life."

Produced in collaboration with the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation, and written, illustrated and voiced by the trio, the video intends to raise awareness about the lack of access to safe water for Indigenous communities on Shoal Lake - the source of Winnipeg's drinking water.

The result was a powerful video highlighting the frustrations, dangers and desires of those who don't feel safe at their own kitchen sink. Visit the MYS YouTube channel to see the finished piece.



We built a new lodge with help from our friends in the community.



Kids in a northern Heart to Home family wear orange shirts to honour generations of children and families impacted by residential schools.



MYS staff show their true colours by celebrating Pride and inclusion.



International Women's Day

Learning to Thrive

“Recently, Travis joined our team. His peers are happy with his work skills, ethic and contributions to the project.”

Mark Brzuskiwicz,
Operations Manager
Bird Construction



Our Skills4Life teams help youth leaving care negotiate the realities of adulthood as they make the transition to independence and pursue their goals for school, work and life.

Skills4Success

2020 saw the start of a new three-year program to help young people 15-30 who are eager to work but just need a little extra support, training and knowledge.

With funding from the Government of Canada's Youth Employment Skills Strategy, youth are paid a wage to participate in six weeks classroom training and another 12 weeks on-the-job training.

Of the 16 participants, five have secured permanent employment or transitioned to other learning opportunities, while seven remain in their work placements.

We are grateful to local businesses like Bird Construction who provide quality employment opportunities.

Positive Alternatives for Youth (PAY)

With programming suspended in March 2020 due to the pandemic, PAY resumed in June with limited volunteer shifts at community partners who stayed open to provide essential supplies for community members struggling with food insecurity. A total of 184 youth and young adults worked in teams with MYS staff and mentors to successfully complete community service and make positive contributions to our community, while learning important skills for work and life.

Special thanks to Harvest Manitoba, Agape Table and Fort Whyte Farms for helping youth learn job and life skills and making positive contributions in our community.



Life Train on track to personal growth

Last year, 95 young adults 18-29 received one-on-one help to boost their personal and professional growth, along with their ability to advocate for themselves when it comes to things like employment and income assistance, housing rights, and medical, legal or CFS issues.

Teams worked hard to meet the increased challenges and needs created by COVID. We provided visitors with personal protective equipment, food and other essentials. We also created a small thrift area with donated clothing and other items youth can peruse and choose for free. That's on top of existing resources including access to email, computers, internet, fax machine and photocopier as well as message services.

“I finally have a resume I'm truly proud of and the confidence to start applying for jobs.”

- Life Train participant

Coach mentors cheer on youth and families in Winnipeg School Division

The learning continued last year for 29 students aged 7-15 who worked with Coach mentors at schools in the Winnipeg Division. Through lockdowns, school closures and other novel challenges, coaches went the extra mile to dream up new ways to engage youth and families safely through outdoor activities like ice fishing, geocaching, Pokémon Go, cross country skiing and skating. Youth also learned to fix bikes and about Indigenous ceremonies and teachings like the Seven Gifts. Some even read to shelter dogs to improve their literacy skills! Mentors also helped youth and families with meals and food hampers, transportation, crisis services, medical emergencies, housing issues and more.

Mayfair Innovations

A social purpose enterprise supported by MYS, Mayfair Innovations provides quality, all season care for residential and commercial properties throughout Winnipeg.

Working alongside tradespeople Allan and Kyle, crews provide the same professional services as other property maintenance companies while giving youth in our community meaningful, paid work and mentorship as they develop long term skills for permanent employment.

Seek them out on social and like and follow their page to help spread the word about their good work.

www.Facebook.com/MayfairInnovations

New Angles for School Success



Even without the added challenges of remote learning, there are MYS youth who need a little extra help with learning and schoolwork. Sometimes, they just need an ear to listen as they explore their feelings about school, or a voice to help advocate for their needs. That's where our educator Kathryn can make a big difference by helping youth like Oliver shine with their gifts.

Oliver made huge progress with math skills last year through woodworking projects that required measurements, angles and calculations. The result of his hard work is a welcoming bench in our ceremony room where people now sit together and learn from one another.

Oliver's drive and desire for mastery in the project were evident all the way through, says Kathryn. "Using an in-depth, hands-on project provided a deep and sustained connection to practical math and allowed him to explore math and science vocabulary in his day to day life."



Connecting to community through traditional language and art



“ I found I could use my beading skills and language knowledge to help others build their confidence. ”

Charlotte shares her love of beading, knowledge of Indigenous language and personal life experience to walk alongside youth who need help finding a stable home and support network, while navigating systems like child welfare and employment and income assistance.

"I grew up in Berens River (Meemeewesipi). My first language was French, which I learned at Ninette Hospital, where I was taken by the Catholic Mission and placed without the consent of my parents. I was later returned to my family and learned Saulteaux and Ojibwe, then English in school.

I came to Winnipeg as a teenager. My mom and I were homeless. We struggled around the city for a time but I eventually turned 18 and was able to get support from EIA and started attending school. It took me quite some time to navigate and understand what the world could be for me.

I've worked as a pastor, addictions counsellor and employment counsellor for inner city organizations and groups. In this way I am a community helper, a connector and a good listener.

I enjoy teaching others to bead, and sharing in conversation while we bead together. I teach my language through beading or fun projects like Anishinaabe Bingo, which we organized for the MYS community earlier this year. I enjoy teaching Ojibwe and Saulteaux to whoever desires to learn."



"My passion is working with people who find themselves living outside with no home," says Charlotte, a systems support worker with our YRC outreach team. "I love seeing how they move from homeless to homefull!" Here Charlotte hands Effie (left) the keys to her new apartment after a history of homelessness.

Pandemic Recovery Report



After an entire year living and working with COVID-19, the MYS community has learned a great deal about delivering vital supports in extraordinary conditions while keeping everyone safe. Those lessons and the recommendations that followed were captured in a recovery plan developed by a diverse team representing a cross-section of MYS programs and services in northern and southern Manitoba. Here are some highlights:

- From the beginning, MYS adopted and promoted all Shared Health universal safety protocols like physical distancing, frequent hand washing and cleaning/sanitizing of all workspaces.
- Under Code Red, we began a remote work rotation at our head office. At any given time, only 50 per cent of staff were in the building, reducing potential contacts in the workplace.
- To minimize the risk of disruption to internal controls and ensure we continued to pay staff and bills on time (while also meeting our regulatory and reporting requirements). MYS finance and payroll teams were not part of the remote work strategy and remained onsite during regular office hours. Our Information Technology team also remained on site to meet the added demand for technical supports like remote access, and to ensure MYS data remained secure.
- Doors at all MYS offices were locked and visitors admitted by our reception team to carefully control the number of guests entering our buildings. Similar restrictions were enforced in Healing Homes, ensuring only staff who work there and those directed by supervisors were permitted to enter.
- Office seating plans were reconfigured to optimize physical distancing between staff.
- An amended budget was drafted to incorporate the added costs of COVID-19 and contingencies for lockdowns, sick leaves and emergency payouts. Payroll codes were created to accurately capture COVID-19-related costs.

- Emergency grants helped alleviate the costs to maintain adequate staffing levels and mitigate the impact of COVID-related absence.
- MYS equipped all staff with appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). Cloth masks were distributed in September 2020 to staff who do not work directly with youth and families. Indoor mask use became mandatory shortly after. The Manitoba government continues to provide MYS with medical PPE required by staff who work directly with community members.
- Our 24-hour crisis line began screening all callers for isolation directives and symptoms prior to dispatching teams. Non-essential calls with no immediate safety concerns were managed by phone, with home visits prioritized for families with immediate safety concerns who had not been directed to self-isolate.
- Mino Ayaawin grew out of the pandemic as a way to continue supporting MYS youth and families during quarantine. Made up of MYS family therapists, our educator, knowledge keeper, youth hub coordinator and group facilitators in northern and southern Manitoba, the team provides online resources to support mental health, emotional and cultural wellness, physical activity, a sense of connection and love of learning.
- Pharmacist Casey Lai administered flu shots at 175 Mayfair in October in a further attempt to keep staff healthy and limit the added impact of seasonal influenza.
- MYS announced a COVID Recognition Day in 2020: a day off with pay to thank full and part-time staff.

Individual & Corporate Donations

We would like to thank and acknowledge the support of the following agencies, organizations, corporations and private citizens for support above and beyond our core sustained funding:

- The WRENCH
- Gerald Butler
- Cardinal Capital Management
- Emergency Community Support Fund (distributed by Community Foundations)
- Emergency Community Support Fund (distributed by United Way Centraide Canada)
- The Winnipeg Foundation Stabilization Grant
- Federal government Emergency Covid Funding (via United Way)
- Thompson Community Foundation Grant
- Kinsmen Club of Winnipeg
- Individual & Anonymous Donations

United Way Campaign



A huge and heartfelt thanks to everyone who supported our campaign this year. We had the largest number of participants ever helping raise a total of \$10,414 for our community.

Collection Drives & Donations



TELUS provided MYS with 17 cellphones and 25 tablets along with data plans.



Dynamite Clothing donated 300 pairs of jeans with a value of \$13,485.



Manitoba Aboriginal Sport donated new skates and hockey equipment for Coach courtesy of the NHLPA.



FoodRescue donates a steady supply of surplus food to MYS from government and restaurants.



Canadian Red Cross donated PPE and training with a value of \$77,580.



Thank you and Miigwech to all the people and organizations who generously support our work at MYS through donations and collection drives. Last year, thousands of MYS youth and families throughout Manitoba benefited from your community spirit.

Whether you donated food, collected or knitted clothing, gave PPE, cell phones, tablets, books, housewares, sports equipment, hygiene products, school supplies – and so much more – you made a difference in the lives of so many.

Follow or like us on social media (@MYSmanitoba) where we regularly share good news about your contributions and commitment to helping youth thrive!

Financial Report

Fiscal Year:
April 1 2020 to
March 31, 2021

Revenue

| | |
|----------------------------------|------------|
| Child & Family Service Agenices | 16,054,978 |
| Government of Manitoba | 7,790,262 |
| MB Family Service & Housing | 7,465,267 |
| MB Justice | 174,500 |
| MB Urban Green Team | 6,705 |
| MB Healthy Living Youth & Senior | 143,790 |

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Government of Canada | 97,995 |
| United Way Winnipeg | 202,802 |
| The Winnipeg Foundation | 63,449 |
| Winnipeg Housing & Homelessness | 602,793 |
| Private Donations | 90,203 |
| Miscellaneous Grants | 172,817 |
| Other | 367,178 |
| Total Revenue | 25,442,478 |

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Total Operating Fund | 25,442,478 |
| Captial Fund | 1,294,652 |
| Total Agency Revenue | 26,737,130 |

Expenditures

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Salaries & Benefits | 16,529,630 |
| Living & Care Costs | 5,185,882 |
| Operating Costs | 2,834,033 |
| Travel & Transportation Costs | 473,058 |
| Programming Costs | 1,085,676 |
| Capital & Facilities Costs | 596,366 |
| Total Expenditures | 26,704,644 |

Excess Revenue over Expenditures 32,486

THANK YOU!

Thank you to the entire MYS family for your superhuman efforts to help Manitoba youth and caregivers stay safe and supported. Heroes one and all!



MYS is grateful to the following funders without whom our work would not be possible:



Thompson

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