



The Link

Youth and Family Supports

(Formerly Macdonald Youth Services)

OUR JOURNEY: *Connections Commitment Community*

ANNUAL REPORT
APRIL 1, 2021, TO MARCH 31, 2022



Land Acknowledgement: The Link: Youth and Family Supports 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 Métis 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.



MISSION

We walk alongside children, youth and families as an inclusive community, strengthening and empowering a sense of belonging, pride and purpose.



VISION

To become a community that shapes and creates opportunities for belonging, pride and purpose.



VALUES

- **Compassion** through inclusivity, respect and humility
- **Community** through engagement, reciprocity and responsibility
- **Well-being** through connectedness, growth and balance



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Our Brand Journey

On June 10, 2021, the Board of Directors unanimously passed a motion to rename the organization. Our decision to change the name from Macdonald Youth Services acknowledges the harms perpetrated by the residential school system and the call to take action toward reconciliation.

A diverse working group of board members and staff established a process and sparked a series of in-depth community consultations with Knowledge Keepers, community organizations, youth, families, funders and staff. The goal of our name change and new brand was to become more reflective of the diverse cultures and communities we currently engage with.

Over 225 people participated to define and guide the creative ideation and design of the new brand. The logo's icon represents connection, unity, and compassion; we are a supportive network and are all interconnected.

Our connection to the earth is represented in the colours of the icon: two shades of green represent growth and the earth, gold signifies the sun and blue symbolizes both sky and water.

On January 12, 2022 the organization announced the new name and brand...

The Link: Youth and Family Supports

Although we have a new look, the valuable work being done to support over 10,000 families in Manitoba continues to be a priority.

Our dedicated team continues to provide wrap-around services and community-based programs to:

- Connect individuals to their culture, identity and community
- Enhance physical, mental and emotional wellness
- Strengthen safe, caring, collaborative and respectful relationships with families, peers and people in our community
- Equip youth with skills for lifelong independence, including job training and school supports

History

In 1929, the Sir Hugh John Macdonald Memorial Hostel was founded. The organization was named after Sir Hugh John Macdonald, a police magistrate and son of John A. Macdonald, who advocated for disadvantaged youth and set an example by providing shelter and guidance to those in need.

The hostel was officially incorporated as a charity in 1931 and moved to its current location at 175 Mayfair Avenue and in 1959, Sir Hugh John Macdonald Memorial Hostel took ownership of the adjacent 2½ story building at 159 Mayfair Avenue.

The organization officially became Macdonald Youth Services in 1993 and grew into an entire community of wraparound supports and services for youth and families throughout Manitoba.





Message from the Board Chair and Chief Executive Officer

We are proud to present the 2021-22 Annual Report on behalf of The Link: Youth and Family Supports (formerly Macdonald Youth Services). This report reflects the admirable work of our valued team members and Board of Directors who are all committed individuals serving families and youth across Manitoba.

We continued to navigate the pandemic as COVID-19 was still prevalent; the health and well-being of the staff, youth and families remained a priority of the organization. During the peaks of cases and community shutdowns, the leadership team developed a staffing rotation to ensure The Link's programs continued without disruption. Our organization hosted community vaccination clinics with the support of the Department of Families and the Pandemic Nurses, who provided phenomenal support to ensure employees and youth remained safe.

As a non-Indigenous organization, it is our responsibility to work towards decolonizing our own practices, and challenging the systems that continue to disproportionately impact Indigenous peoples. We've included some updates in this report related to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's 94 Calls to Action.

Our Mobile Crisis Teams were as busy as ever and received an increase in calls related to mental health concerns and substance use resulting in harm. The Clinical Supports department expanded to include resources for families and youth, including individual and group services. We also welcomed 20 undergraduate and graduate students who supported group therapy, offered drop-in counselling and enhanced our capacity to provide services.

Several new partnerships formed in 2021-22 to advance our work in the community. We've established and built relationships with the University of Manitoba's Nurse Practitioner Program, The Southern Network of Care, Child and Family All Nations Coordinated Response Network, as well as research partnerships with the University of Winnipeg and Wilfrid Laurier University.

In the coming year, The Link will continue to collaborate and share resources and capacity with Indigenous partners, complete a new two-year strategic plan, implement the Southern Chiefs' Organization Memorandum of Understanding, evaluate our organizational programming and persevere with our response to the TRC's 94 Calls to Action.

Thank you to everyone in our community. We walk with you forward to a collaborative, bright future for all youth and families in Manitoba.




Kerri Irvin-Ross
Chief Executive Officer




Shane Storie
Board Chair and President

Thank You, Shane

Our Board Chair, Shane Storie, has served on the Board of The Link since March 2015. We would like to thank him for his contributions and dedication as his term as President comes to a close. Shane will always be a part of The Link's family.

| Board of Directors

Shane Storie
President of the Board and Chair

Candace Olson
Vice-President

Sarah Corley
Secretary and Treasurer

Alec MacIsaac
Director

Cathy Cook
Director

Jennifer Guiboche
Director

Jim Krovats
Director

Kate Tucovic
Director

Mandeep Rai
Director

Mike Hempel
Director

Serena Ehrmantraut
Director (Departed February 4, 2022)

Sudhir Sandhu
Director

Thai Lam
Director

TRC Call to Action - 4

We call upon the federal government to enact Aboriginal child-welfare legislation that establishes national standards for Aboriginal child apprehension and custody cases and includes principles that:

- i. Affirm the right of Aboriginal governments to establish and maintain their own child-welfare agencies.
- ii. Require all child-welfare agencies and courts to take the residential school legacy into account in their decision making.
- iii. Establish, as an important priority, a requirement that placements of Aboriginal children into temporary and permanent care be culturally appropriate.

The Link's Commitment and Work

The Link will continue to invest in partnership with the Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO) and work to develop ongoing relationships with other Indigenous community-based organizations.

| North Wind Thunderbirds Peer Council

The North Wind Thunderbird Peer Council was founded in 2020 by youth in both northern and southern Manitoba. The Council is engaged and helps to inform and improve The Link's policies, services and programs.

Our organization appreciates the youth and their perspectives as we plan for the future.

Council Members

Khristian Young – *he/him*

Chelsea Kiz – *she/her*

Jasmin Mclean – *she/her*

Ren Cameron – *they/them*

Orchid Dye – *they/them*





Youth Engagement Survey and Report

Our Youth Engagement Survey is entirely voluntary and enables caregivers to engage in therapeutic conversations with children and youth between the ages of 5-21. The survey provides The Link with a variety of opportunities to:

- Demonstrate strength-based and recovery-oriented practice by valuing youth feedback regarding the care they receive
- Assist with youth involvement in their own care plan and goal setting

- Ensure concerns are addressed and positive changes are celebrated
- Build and maintain the positive engagement of youth with family and community
- Improve youth experiences and the effectiveness of our services
- Honour the rights of the youth people we serve

This tool ensures that youth receive regular opportunities to provide feedback on the quality of care they are receiving.



2022 Youth Engagement Survey Report

100 surveys completed - results include voluntary responses from youth in our Healing Homes, Heart to Home Foster Homes and Independent Living with Supports (ILS) programs between April 1, 2021, and March 31, 2022.

Of Youth who Completed the Feedback Questions

98% Feel safe in their homes	
98% Have at least one safe adult they feel comfortable talking to	
98% Feel they have a voice in their own planning and goal setting	
98% View themselves as a good friend	
93% Feel hopeful about their future	
93% Are involved in activities that interest them	
88% Feel safe at work or school	
81% Practice or explore spiritual and cultural traditions and customs that are important to them	
74% Feel connected to their cultures and traditions	

Diversity Survey and Report

Each year, we distribute a survey to all employees, volunteers, Board members and foster care providers.

This survey captures important information about the diversity of staff teams and allows us to evaluate our progress toward creating an environment where the children, families and youth who access our support and services feel well represented. Further, it allows us to understand and communicate how we are

responding to calls for organizational transformation and change, including the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action.

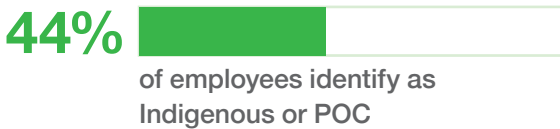
The following is some key information about the diversity of ethnicity, gender, age, ability and 2SLGBTQ+ identity that are represented across employees, volunteers and foster providers within The Link.



2022 Diversity Survey Report

176 Team Members

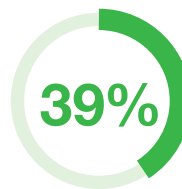
Took part in the 2022 Diversity Survey. This represents approximately 75% of the full time employees and approximately 45% of our part time or casual employees



Out of all Indigenous employees:

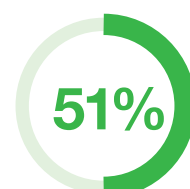


POC in leadership and Management



of employees in leadership or management roles identify as POC

POC in direct service roles



of employees in direct service roles identify as POC

2SLGBTQ+ employees:

Many youth who access supports at The Link identify as members of the 2SLGBTQ+ community.



*POC is Person/s of Colour



Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada: Calls to Action

In the spring of 2021, The Link took the first step in an ongoing process to respond to the harms resulting from Canada's legacy of the Indian Residential School System, colonization, and the ongoing oppression experienced by Indigenous peoples in Canada.

The work started with an organizational development process, originally designed by the Manitoba Harm Reduction Network and Ka Ni Kanichihk. This was designed specifically for non-Indigenous organizations and adapted for The Link.

Every department within the organization committed to focus on the 94 Calls to Action to improve operations and support the delivery of more culturally appropriate and safe services for Indigenous youth and families.

Throughout 2021-22 there were three main activities related to our work on the 94 Calls to Action:

1. Intention Activities
2. Reflection Activities
3. Implementing the Calls

It is crucial we increase employee knowledge and understanding and build the capacity of our team to challenge and dismantle oppressive systems. Highlighted throughout the report are some of our work related to the Calls to Action.

Initial activities The Link's employees participated in include:

- Read the 'Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action'
- Watch 'Every Child Matters: Reconciliation through Education' videos

TRC Call to Action - 1

We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to commit to reducing the number of Aboriginal children in care by:

- i. Monitoring and assessing neglect investigations.
- ii. Providing adequate resources to enable Aboriginal communities and child-welfare organizations to keep Aboriginal families together where it is safe to do so, and to keep children in culturally appropriate environments, regardless of where they reside.
- iii. Ensuring that social workers and others who conduct child-welfare investigations are properly educated and trained about the history and impacts of residential schools.
- iv. Ensuring that social workers and others who conduct child-welfare investigations are properly educated and trained about the potential for Aboriginal communities and families to provide more appropriate solutions to family healing.
- v. Requiring that all child-welfare decision makers consider the impact of the residential school experience on children and their caregivers.

The Link's Commitment and Work

During onboarding, all new staff members are provided with hard copies of the 94 Calls to Action [resourced] and are encouraged to connect with others in our organization to gain a better understanding of Indigenous cultures. Annually, new employees are provided opportunities to take part in ongoing workshops focused on making personal commitments to support the 94 Calls to Action in their work.

Indigenous Initiatives

The Indigenous Initiatives team works across the organization connecting youth, families, staff and community members to the skills, knowledge, traditional languages, experiences and land-based practices central to the healing journey for Indigenous families and critical to shaping a child's identity and sense of belonging.

In the 94 Calls to Action, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada calls for all Indigenous children and youth to receive culturally appropriate, community-grounded placements and support.

Although we are a non-Indigenous organization, over 80% of the youth we serve are Indigenous. It is our responsibility to ensure we facilitate culturally appropriate healing practices for those impacted by ongoing colonial trauma. Research and literature demonstrate healing for Indigenous youth must be culturally specific and cultural restorative practice is the foundation for breaking cultural stress. We acknowledge this is an essential part of their healing journey.



The Link's youth and staff at a fire on the riverbank at 175 Mayfair Avenue.



Cultural Activities

Our cultural programming includes a powwow circle, tipi circle, Learning Lodges in The Pas and Thompson, Full Moon ceremonies, Sacred Fires, medicine picking, water ceremonies, pipe ceremonies, fire keeping, medicine teachings, Sundance ceremony and solstice ceremonies.

My Bundle

My Bundle is a program created for the children and youth in our care who are coming to know and understand their kinship connections, which extend beyond human relationships and encompass relationships with all of creation. The goal of My Bundle is to remove the barriers to creation and expression to truly give space for mastery and independence where the children and youth can be the drivers of their own experiences. By incorporating arts-based and other creative activities, children and youth are given the agency to share and learn about themselves and their relationships in a way that is non-invasive and non-judgmental. This gives them freedom to identify, discover and share their experiences without mediation from staff or caregivers.

Several Indigenous Initiatives programs took place in 2021-22. Our youth and families, staff and community members were all welcome and encouraged to participate in the following:

- Michif Mondays
- Fire Keeping Fridays
- Tea with our Knowledge Keeper
- Beading and Language
- Spring Break and Summer Programming
- Educational Supports
- My Bundle



Miigwetch and thank you to The Winnipeg Foundation for a generous \$8500 grant, which supported land-based learning activities and our Niibin summer camp for youth ages 10-21. Campers had tons of fun as they reclaimed their relationship to land and water, ceremony and language, traditional skills and knowledge, culture and community.



Quinn Saretsky, My Bundle Coordinator, making bannock in the Youth Hub.



Jocelyn and Norway prepare a deer hide so spring break attendees can learn about the process.



Jaime Grasby, Knowledge Keeper at The Link, performs Full Moon ceremonies and teachings to youth and families, staff and community members.



Ojibway language cards help participants learn counting, common words and how to introduce themselves during interactive games at the Beading and Language Workshops.



Indigenous Initiatives hosted Beading and Language Workshops throughout the winter and spring where attendees learned the basics of loom beading and had fun being introduced to some Ojibway words.

| Heart to Home

The Heart to Home program provides safe and loving homes for short or long-term care where kids 18 and under are nurtured and wrapped in critical supports to help them thrive and stay connected to their families, communities and culture.

Foster Parents are evaluated regularly through a therapeutic competencies-based tool and are encouraged to connect with the child’s family. When possible, the care team works with the child’s family and extended family to facilitate reconnection and reunification.



Kendra and Derek Drisdale met in 2000 while working in the Healing Homes. The love of their work grew and they became Foster Parents in 2006. “Being able to build a deeper, stronger, more lasting relationship is what we were striving for and now we’re able to do that with the kids that we have in our family.”



Princess Auto donated boxes of socks and thoughtful gift packages just in time for Christmas.

2021-22 Heart to Home Program



146

children supported by
The Link



47

families in the Winnipeg
and surrounding area



21

Heart to Homes operate
in the North both in
Thompson and The Pas



Healing Homes

The Link’s Healing Homes are a network of community homes offering youth ages 10-18, who require high levels of support, supervision and intervention, safe spaces, one-on-one support and specialized therapy to help with emotional, behavioral, social and/or medical needs.

In 2021-22, we continued to review and implement international best practices in child and youth care and focused on strategies to optimize the recruitment and retention of employees within the Healing Homes such as:

- Partnering with Red River College Polytechnic to promote employment and education opportunities in the Child and Youth Care Worker Program
- Providing professional development and enriched training for all employees in:
 - Therapeutic Crisis Solutions
 - Daily Life Events
 - Anti-Opressive Harm Reduction



The Link’s team includes almost 180 Child and Youth Care Workers (YCWs), representing almost half our entire workforce. They work in our healing homes, resource centres, shelters and programs, caring for youth throughout Manitoba from centres in Thompson, The Pas, Winnipeg and St. Pierre.

TRC Call to Action - 5

We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to develop culturally appropriate parenting programs for Aboriginal families.

The Link’s Commitment and Work

Ensure all Healing Homes team members are facilitating connections for Indigenous youth with their families, home communities and kinship circles.

Always have Indigenous resources available for youth including medicines and ceremonial items.

In 2021-22 The Link operated 10 Healing Homes

- | | | |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| • Edgewood/Polcyn | • Willow | • Transition House – North |
| • Kent Road | • Aspen | • Transition House – South |
| • St. Pierre | • Kookum’s House | |
| • Bannerman | • Wuskwatim | |

| Mobile Crisis

Mobile Crisis Teams (MCT) support youth and families with safety and mental health concerns, parent/child conflict and behaviour management wherever a crisis is occurring.



MCT at Work

An MCT consists of two clinicians who work together to provide services to youth and families in their community. The team assists in stabilizing crises and providing on-site service to ensure the youth's emotional and physical safety. We have four Mobile Crisis Teams working 24/7.

Meet Dan, a Mobile Crisis Teams member. Callers to our 24/7 crisis line will speak to Dan as part of The Link's team of intake clinicians. He helps youth, families and caregivers experiencing mental health concerns, conflict and other challenges. If you or someone you know is in crisis, call 204-949-4777 or 1-888-383-2776.

Our crisis workers, clinicians and therapists responded to a record number of calls in 2021-22



9446

calls received by The Link's intake clinicians from April 1, 2021, to March 31, 2022



2337

calls related to mental health issues



1319

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



351

families benefited from intensive therapy from our Brief Therapy Team



644

youth remained safe and supported in crisis stabilization units for an average of 3.3 days



204

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



Mental Health and Addictions Supports

The Link offers a range of free crisis supports to ensure emotional, physical and cultural safety and wellness for everyone in the home.

Momentum Program

The Momentum program launched in 2021-22. The program supports individuals, couples or families who are navigating a variety of life challenges including: grief/loss, anxiety, depression, life transitions, issues related to gender and sexuality, divorce, communication, trauma and stress.

Other programs offered:

- **Connect Program** - a free community-based therapy program accessible to youth as well as adults and families. The program is facilitated by students from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds such as: social work, psychology and clinical psychology and education at the University of Manitoba, Yorkville University and Dalhousie University.
- **Addictions Foundation Manitoba (AFM) Drop-In Addictions Counselling** - an onsite AFM youth counsellor is available at 175 Mayfair Avenue in Winnipeg to support youth ages 12+ and their families and caregivers.



Family Supports offered at The Link

Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) was developed by Marcia Linehan in the 1980s to help people who were experiencing Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. It is grounded in four foundations skills: mindfulness, distress tolerance, emotional regulation and interpersonal skills.

Social Emotional Learning Group has three goals. To develop:

- emotional literacy (increase emotional vocabulary, and increase self-awareness of physiological responses to emotions)
- social skills (connecting to others), and develop verbal and non-verbal communication skills
- perspective taking and problem-solving (within a cultural, social and emotional context)

TRC Call to Action - 3

We call upon all levels of government to fully implement Jordan's Principle.

The Link's Commitment and Work

Employees commit to learning about the resources available to communities through Jordan's Principle and connecting youth and families to available resources.

Youth Resource Centres (YRCs) and Emergency Shelters

The Link has two Youth Resource Centres (YRCs) and emergency shelters, one in Winnipeg and one in Thompson, Manitoba. The shelters operate 24/7 for youth ages 12-21.

The YRCs are a free, safe place for youth to stay overnight or short-term, where a warm bed awaits them. The centres are a crisis and basic needs resource accessible 24/7 in person or by phone. Support is provided to youth who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, vulnerable of coming into contact with child welfare, criminal involvement/re-involvement and/or are at risk of sexual exploitation.

All youth accessing shelter services were provided food, clothing, hygiene needs, showers, laundry, first aid, and emergency transportation and bus tickets. When needed the YRC staff ensure that youth have the information, encouragement and support they need such as:

- Indigenous Initiatives
- System Navigation
- Referrals, advocacy, resource information
- Mental health and addictions counselling
- Crisis intervention counselling

Parents and members of the community also use the YRC for support and information.



The YRC in Winnipeg hosted a self-care community barbecue for neighbours and friends of all ages where some received a free buzz cut. Thank you and Miigwetch to volunteers like Telshy Flett for ensuring our community's most vulnerable people stay healthy and connected to vital resources.



YRC Winnipeg at 159 Mayfair Avenue.



YRC Thompson at 116 Hemlock Crescent.



YRC Winnipeg



1324

individual youth were provided basic needs and supports a total of 8273 times

This includes overnight shelter stays, walk-in and call-in services



285

individual youth provided with

1604

overnight shelter stays

48% ↑

increase in percentage from 2020-21 of youth referring themselves for shelter stay

COVID-19 pandemic caused many services and resources to close their doors while the YRC in Winnipeg remained open 24/7

YRC Thompson

The Youth Resource Center in Thompson, Manitoba is a central hub where participants can access a safe place and build strong healthy relationships



119

youth supported by YRC Thompson. Staff worked with the schools to obtain homework packages to support the youth in their education

The YRC team routinely advocates for youth who are requiring additional community-based supports

In Thompson, StreetReach plays an important role within the facility by assisting youth who access the YRC

StreetReach

StreetReach is part of Tracia's Trust, the Manitoba government's strategy to prevent sexual exploitation and sex trafficking of children and youth. The StreetReach program currently includes a Winnipeg team and northern team.

TRC Call to Action - 66

We call upon the federal government to establish multi-year funding for community-based youth organizations to deliver programs on reconciliation, and establish a national network to share information and best practices.

The Link's Commitment and Work

Build and maintain reciprocal relationships with Indigenous-led organizations to create a cohesive network of care, facilitating the exchange of resources and best practices in supporting Indigenous youth and families.

The Link has six Skills4Life programs, which provide an opportunity for youth leaving care with a period of inter-dependence and help to navigate the realities of adult life with some of the supports typically available to youth in the general population. The aim is to help youth and young adults achieve goals for school, work and life.

1. Skills4Success
2. Ready2Work
3. LifeTrain
4. Positive Alternatives for Youth (PAY)
5. Independent Living with Supports (ILS)
6. Housing First

Skills4Success

Funded by the Government of Canada's Youth Employment Skills Strategy, Skills4Success is a skills development program for youth ages 15-30 who are eager to work, but just need a little extra support, training and knowledge to be successful. Youth are paid for 18 weeks to participate in six weeks of classroom training plus 12 weeks of on-the-job training.

Ready2Work

A tailored work placement program, funded by the Government of Canada's Youth Employment Skills Strategy, for youth ages 15-30 who have work experience and are work-ready, but whose employment situation has been impacted by COVID-19.



Our ILS teams created Christmas decorating kits for youth to celebrate the spirit of the season.



The Skills4Life classroom has space for youth to work on their resumes, learn interview tips and participate in group activities.

Skills4Life Program Participants and Employer Partners

41

Skills4Success and Ready2Work participants

96

LifeTrain participants

32

Independent Living with Supports participants

21

Employee Partners

Elmwood Daycare
W.H. Escott
Build
Teeka's Boutique
St. Matthews
Thrive Thrift Shop
Feast Café Bistro
Splash Daycare
McKenzie
BIRD Construction

Graffiti Art Programming
Pizza Hut Portage
The Hive Climbing & Fitness Winnipeg
Southeast Child and Family Services
Value Village Pembina
Tru North Supply
RnR Restaurant
Regent

Winnipeg Trading Post
Mat Master
Petro Canada Madison
Homewood Inn
IKEA
Canadian Goodwill Pembina
West Broadway Youth Outreach

167

Positive Alternatives for Youth (PAY) participants

17

Housing First participants



Coach Program

The Coach program is a partnership between The Link, Child and Family Services Authorities and the Winnipeg School Division with funding from the Province of Manitoba's Department of Families. The program is divided in two groups:

Coach 1
grades 1-6

Coach 2
grades 7-9

in 2021-22 there were

32
participants

"I became a part of the Coach family and they treated me with respect and dignity and understood me and my child. I didn't feel judged. I was so relieved when I saw that this school was different. My son has grown up now but I still check in with Kerri (Koblun), it's like calling an old, trusted friend."

-Parent

The goal is to provide a wrap-around comprehensive program consisting of academics and after-school/evening programming.

Coaches are employees of The Link and their relationships go beyond the student and involve parents and families. Coaches provide transportation and care to the students in the off-campus classrooms and encourage youth to engage in community activities.

Who is involved in the Coach Program?

- Children, parents, families, guardians
- Coaches
- Teachers and Resource Teachers
- Psychologists
- Speech and Language Clinicians
- Coach Steering Committee

TRC Call to Action - 63

We call upon the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada to maintain an annual commitment to Aboriginal education issues, including:

- Developing and implementing Kindergarten to Grade Twelve curriculum and learning resources on Aboriginal peoples in Canadian history, and the history and legacy of residential schools.
- Sharing information and best practices on teaching curriculum related to residential schools and Aboriginal history.
- Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect.
- Identifying teacher-training needs relating to the above.

The Link's Commitment and Work

Work in collaboration with elders and knowledge keepers to promote land-based learning and create relevant resources and educational programming for youth.

| The Youth Hub

The Youth Hub is a safe, casual space where youth ages 12-29 can hang out and access a range of resources such as: mental health supports, food, showers and important skills for life.

We adapted programming and provided a safe space so the Hub's activities could continue throughout the pandemic. Our System Navigators and team members supported youth with housing, employment and income services. We hosted bingo and board game days, birth certificate and ID workshops, arts and crafts sessions. There were many opportunities to drop in for fry bread or a delicious meal cooked by staff.



Uncle Greg cooks for youth in the Hub – there is always something delicious and nutritious available.



Feather Talia and Chelsea visiting outside the Hub after the Drag Bingo community event. Bingo cards were printed with Ojibway words and bannock dogs were served. A great time for all in attendance!

TRC Call to Action - 7

We call upon the federal government to develop with Aboriginal groups a joint strategy to eliminate educational and employment gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.

The Link's Commitment and Work

Prioritize hiring Indigenous staff with lived experience for roles supporting Indigenous youth.



| Social Enterprises



A social enterprise is a community-based business that sells goods or services to achieve a social, cultural or environmental purpose. Some of the possible and positive community outcomes generated by social enterprises include: the creation of jobs for people facing barriers to employment, environmental sustainability, improved health outcomes, and inclusive, sustainable local economies.

Mayfair Innovations

Mayfair Innovations provides friendly and reliable year-round yard services throughout Winnipeg including lawn cutting, spring and fall clean-up, snow removal, scrap pickup, shed and fence building, courier work, inter-office jobs and internal move jobs.

The program provides youth 16-25 years of age with mentorship, paid training and the opportunity to learn industry and life skills as they work alongside the team.

Velotecha

On October 8, 2021, The Link launched Velotecha!

Velotecha’s mission is to provide meaningful experience and education to youth while offering bike sales, service, repair and storage. The first season of operation offered four packages, which included autumn pickup for winter storage and spring delivery with a choice of maintenance right up to a full rebuild.

Youth apprenticed with a lead bike mechanic and gained valuable hands-on work experience over the course of their employment.

Velotecha is a joint initiative between The Link and the WRENCH who provided programming, space, mentorship, and logistical and equipment support.



“I love coming to work each day. Being active and working with my hands is really rewarding. Sometimes I come to work 15 to 20 minutes early because I’m so excited!”
- Savannah Lewsey, Mayfair Innovations team member



Spring 2021, a site visit with Public City Architecture Inc, Folksbuild Co. and Mayfair Innovations to see progress on the refurbished shipping container soon to become the Velotecha Bike Lab.

Velotecha by the Numbers

<p>10 youth employed in the first season</p>	<p>7 youth completed their “earn a bike” training period and were able to fix, build and bring their own bikes home</p>
<p>115 bikes stored during the inaugural winter storage season</p>	<p>97.7% customer satisfaction rate</p>



Velotecha’s Holiday Elves hard at work in the WRENCH workshop repairing bikes for spring.

| Life at The Link

There is so much that goes on at The Link outside of our regular programming and Youth Hub activities. Here are a few snapshots from some of our events.



The Link's team celebrated Pride during COVID-19 restrictions with an organization-wide decorating contest.



The Link offers a variety of activities and prizes throughout the annual United Way Campaign! In the winter of 2021 we hosted trivia games, an auction, jelly bean guess game and a selfie-emoji contest.



Elder and educator Belinda VandenBroeck shares teachings for grounding oneself and helping our youth move toward healing and wellness through enhanced knowledge of Indigenous history and identity.



Hoop dancing with Anika in Thompson.



Staff at the Edgewood Healing Home supporting Pink Shirt Day to raise awareness for anti-bullying initiatives.



The team works together to wrap donated toys and gifts for Christmas for children and youth in our programs.



Kerri Irvin-Ross and Shane Storie acknowledge staff and foster families at The Link's Staff Appreciation event, which was held at Celebrations Dinner Theatre in November 2021.

February 2022 Wellness Challenge

To help encourage, support, and inspire each other our Mobile Crisis Team hosted a "Wellness Challenge" in February 2022.

Throughout the month-long event The Link's team challenged each other to complete self-care activities related to physical, emotional, and mental health. The "Wellness Challenge" engaged our frontline crisis staff, but the team also had participants from other programs and partnering front line agencies in Winnipeg. Each week in February, participants entered to win prize packages with items related to a healthy, balanced lifestyle.



1130
wellness activities
completed



198
entries



6
amazing prize
packs



4
weekly bingo
games

I Donors, Donations and Drives

A heartfelt thank you to our funders and donors for the ongoing support. We are grateful to have you walk alongside us as we provide healing and hope for our children, youth and families.



The Winnipeg YRC received a very special visit and donation. Paisley makes beaded bracelets in exchange for hygiene products, which she then donates to community organizations like The Link.



The Winnipeg Trading Post helped youth learn to bead with their generous donation of looms, beads and needles.



Dr. Norm Silver and his family delivered 194 McDonald's burgers to our YRC, Healing Homes, Life Skills and Independent Living programs.



The team at Old Navy in Winnipeg answered our call for donations with a generous combination of personal and retail items.



Members of the Rogers team filled 300 backpacks with all the essential tools for back-to-school and also collected \$450 in donations for additional supplies.



Ce Soir Lingerie generously donated bras to address the short supply of undergarments at our YRC and Youth Hub.



Thanks to Tech Manitoba for their donation of computers. Youth starting out on their own with limited resources will be able to stay connected and keep moving forward toward their goals.



Clear Concepts hosted a donation drive and provided food and hygiene items to the YRC and the Youth Hub.



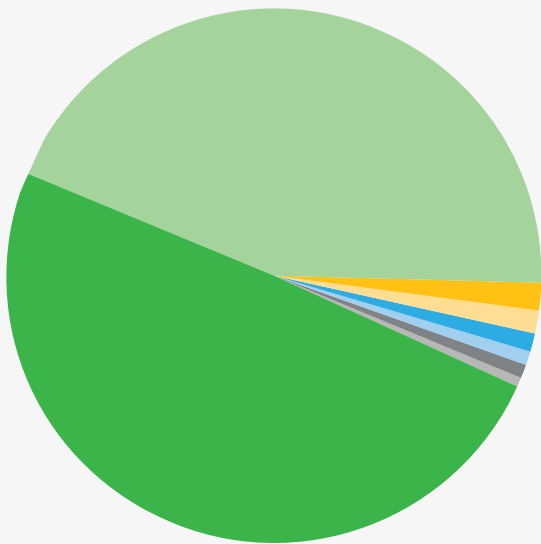
Jenna Rae Cakes surprised our team at 175 Mayfair Avenue with 3 dozen cupcakes! So thoughtful and delicious - they take the cake when it comes to kindness.



The Body Shop helped vulnerable youth through their #SelfLoveUprising campaign! \$2500 worth of body butter, body wash and other hygiene and period products were donated.

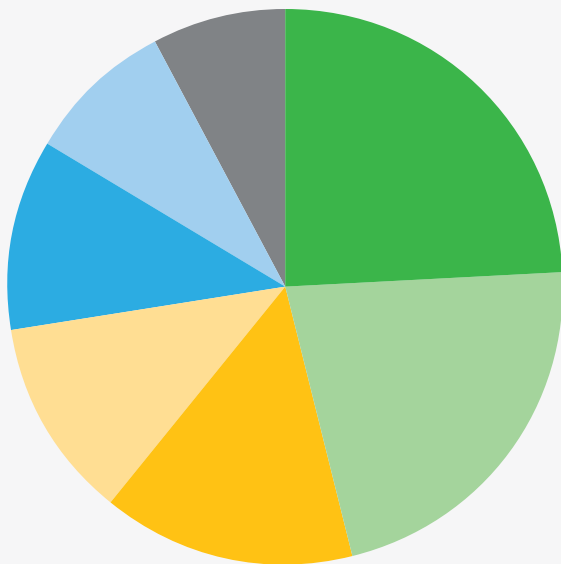
Financial Information

Fiscal Year: April 1, 2021, to March 31, 2022



Revenues by Source

● Province of Manitoba	49.65%	\$12,709,315
● Child and Family Services Agencies	43.97%	\$11,254,273
● End Homelessness Winnipeg	1.86%	\$475,962
● Government of Canada	1.29%	\$331,363
● Grants and Donations	1.08%	\$276,686
● United Way Winnipeg	0.87%	\$222,693
● Other	0.87%	\$223,595
● The Winnipeg Foundation	0.40%	\$102,890



Expenses by Program

● Healing Homes South	24.32%	\$6,512,286
● The Link North	22.04%	\$5,901,468
● Heart to Homes South	14.54%	\$3,893,200
● Community Services	11.60%	\$3,107,659
● Education, Training, Mentoring	11.14%	\$2,984,269
● Administration and Operations	8.83%	\$2,363,964
● Skills4Life	7.53%	\$2,016,561

The Link: Youth and Family Supports is grateful to the following funders without whom our work would not be possible:





The Link

Youth and Family Supports

(Formerly Macdonald Youth Services)

Winnipeg

175 Mayfair Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3L 0A1
204-477-1722

Thompson

102-83 Churchill Drive
Thompson, MB R8N 0L6
204-677-7870

The Pas

Box 958
The Pas, MB R9A 1K9
204-627-1460

Charitable Registration Number:

131215196RR0001

thelinkmb.ca

