



Child and Family Services
of Western Manitoba

CFS Matters!

Fall 2022 Newsletter

The change of seasons means saying goodbye to another summer and a welcome to back to school, pre-school and other programs, like the many supportive and educational ones at the Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre.

September also sees Truth and Reconciliation week, with the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on September 30th. A day to remember the children lost, to honour survivors and reaffirm personal and professional commitments to reconciliation. This week is recognized in September because it marked the return to school, and for many Indigenous children and youth it meant the return to a residential school system designed to rid them of their culture, language, traditions, and family.

As a child and family services agency, our path to reconciliation starts with understanding the continuing effects of colonization including the residential school system and the "60's scoop", both of which saw children removed from their families and identities.

As you'll see in the highlights from our AGM, we are committed to the priority of keeping children safely with and connected to their families. Whenever possible we gather a network of support around families to provide for safety and security for the children. Parenting is hard and made harder when trauma and its symptoms are consuming. Children need parents and caregivers whose healing is supported to break multi generational effects.

We thank-you for spending time with us in reading this fall newsletter and your interest in the programs we offer in conjunction with the many other helping agencies who work for the health and well-being of children and families

Arlene Stewart
Chief Executive Officer

Joe Ball
President, Board of Directors



Truth & Reconciliation Week Community Panel: Will Goodon, Mathew Gustafson, Scott McDonald, Arlene Stewart, Jason Gobeil.



ELSPETH REID FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE

Where community meets children & families

The ERFRC Summer Program was great! Thank you to Takeisha, Angela, Terry and Darla for pulling off another great summer program for our families. Many craft days, field trips and adventures were had by 80+ different families at the centre.

We started a new initiative this summer. Check out the new free give and take library at the Centre - "Little Reiders Library". Come grab a book or leave one, let's enjoy reading at all ages. Our Drop In area of the Centre as well as our yard are open to parents and children to visit. Pop in Monday to Friday 9 - 5 to enjoy a play at the centre.

The Westaway Bay Family Centre had a great summer too! We had many days together to craft, play games, share some food with a BBQ, connect over a yard sale, do make-and-take-activities as well as some social skills groups. We are always grateful for the partnerships we have to support the Westaway neighborhood.

SHIFT (Supporting and Honouring Indigenous Families Together) also hosted great family programs this summer. We had an amazing Family Culture Camp Day where we played games, heard Teachings and learned about archery. SHIFT also hosted a day to sew ribbon skirts, make dreamcatchers and learn about beading. We also did a field trip to pick medicines and see the buffalo.

Wijiwan was particularly busy this summer as we supported two different communities while they were evacuated to Brandon. Thankfully, they are now all home. We are pleased to be able to offer our supports while in this community.

Our Store at the ERFRC remains very busy. We thank you and the community for the support. This fall we plan to have the Store open Mondays and Tuesdays from 11 - 12:00 and then Wednesdays and Thursdays from 1:30 - 3:00. Best deals in town!

Looking for a volunteer opportunity? Please call the Centre and speak with Shawna, we have a multitude of opportunities available.

Not sure, what is happening at our centre? Check us out on Facebook or see our new Fall calendar of programs! We have parenting education classes, parent and child family programs and support groups most weekdays throughout September to December.

The Road Rebels were at the ERFRC on Wednesday September 21 where all were welcomed to join us to experience cool cars! Free BBQ, games and fun had by all! It was a great opportunity to learn about car maintenance.

Lisa Ramsay



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Little Reiders Library at the Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre



Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre
255 - 9th Street
Brandon MB R7A 6X1
204-726-6280



Family & Community Development Centre
Unit 4, 613 - 10th Street
Brandon MB R7A 4G6
204-726-7033



Preschool Enrichment Program
2nd Floor, 2227 Brandon Avenue
Brandon MB R7B 0S9
204-727-6650



Victoria Day Care Centre
1st Floor, 2227 Brandon Avenue
Brandon MB R7B 0S9
204-728-9845



SAFECARE

In January 2022 our agency started implementation of the SafeCare program. The goals of SafeCare are to reduce child neglect and maltreatment through a prevention and early intervention approach. As part of a partnership with the University of Ottawa, four agency staff were trained in this evidence based, skills training program for caregivers of children under the age of 5. Our in-home support staff delivering this program work with caregivers to strengthen their skills in three main areas:

- **Parent-child interaction**-to provide daily structure, increase positive interactions to prevent challenging behaviours, and engage in stimulating activities. The program aims to promote a safe, stable, nurturing relationship and encourage social and emotional health in children. It also targets risk factors associated with neglect and physical abuse.
- **Safety**-household safety and health hazards are identified and eliminated and age appropriate supervision is discussed.
- **Health**-common childhood illnesses and injuries and common risk factors are identified with caregivers to determine how to prevent injury and deal with illness.

The 18 session SafeCare modules are delivered weekly in families' homes. Staff work with caregivers until they meet a set of skill-based criteria established for each of the three areas. Progress is measured with regular evaluations with program participants by the SafeCare providers.

Evaluations of SafeCare show a positive impact with high risk families. Caregivers who participate in SafeCare have significant reductions in child maltreatment. SafeCare has been evaluated to have a positive impact on three main goals of child welfare services:

- **Safety**-children are protected from abuse and neglect. There is reduced child maltreatment recidivism among families who completed SafeCare
- **Permanency**-families who have completed SafeCare have lower levels of out of home placements.
- **Family and Child Well-being**-families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.

Our agency's 4 trained facilitators are also taking elements of the program that fit for other families (such as the health information or childproofing information) and adapting their in home support work to include these.

We are grateful for the support of the University of Ottawa and Dr. Elise Romano who has service and research interests in child maltreatment, child psychology and child behavioural and social-emotional development.



YOUTHWORKS

Supporting youth aging out of care

As many young people “age out” of the child welfare system, the supports they receive change. For many, the odds are stacked against them as they face challenges most of their peers do not. With the Children’s Aid Foundation Youth Works Program, we provide youth in or from care between the ages 16 and 29 with pre-employment skills, help to reduce barriers to employability and improve the likelihood of successful independence.

Over the last year our program grew with a partnership with the Huddle in Brandon. We ran a 7-week employment services workshop for our kids while “Huddle provided access to different supports like mental health and access to a nurse practitioner,” says Taylor Reimer, Youth Employment Mentor at the Agency. The Huddle is a social services organization for youth ages 12–29, offering free, trauma-informed and culturally safe health services.

The national impact of the YW program, measured from 2017 to March 2021, shows both the diverse experiences and needs of the youth served. This study conducted by the Children’s Aid Foundation measured the impact on the youth’s employment readiness, confidence, and skills.

The majority of youth (75% or more) agreed or strongly agreed that as a result of the program, they felt:

- More knowledgeable about resources and supports available
- More prepared to enter the work force

- More motivated to achieve their career or educational goals
- More optimistic about the future

The referrals for our Youth Works Program in Brandon grew as our Youth Employment Mentor connected with other community social service organizations, high schools, and supports like the Huddle, Samaritan House, John Howard, Women’s Resource Centre, and Youth for Christ.

Our process involves a get to know you period where our Youth Employment Mentor meets with the youth. “We figure out a plan, what they need help with, what are their goals, future plans, what is their background story or what they struggle with and then we jump into whatever they are needing assistance with,” says Taylor. If employment assistance is a priority then we provide a take-home booklet that is a fill-in-the-blank resume to help us gauge where the youth is at for employability skills. We review the importance of resume writing and assist in creating the best resume highlighting their skills.

Once the youth has achieved what they set out to with the program then we close their file with an emphasis on continued connection if additional support is required. “I have some kids who keep me updated on their lives and reach out to me often,” says Taylor. According to the study completed by the Children’s Aid Foundation, 92% of the youth exiting the program felt that they achieved what they wanted to achieve from the program.



COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

POLICE RAISING MONEY FOR KIDS: BPS JERSEY CAMPAIGN

We received \$1,475 from the Brandon Police Association through the BPS Jersey Campaign to go towards the Opportunities Fund to support children in their early years of education, sports and other extra-curricular activities. Thank you for your part in making a difference in the lives of our youth in Westman.

TELUS SUPPORTS KIDS SUMMER CAMP

Thank you TELUS and Friendly Future Foundation for generously donating \$10,000 to support Sun Fund for Kids. We appreciate your contributions to our program, helping to create healthier and stronger communities.

SUN FUND GOLF TOURNAMENT

We held our 16th annual Sun Fund for Kids charity golf tournament at the Shilo Golf Club with the Manitoba division of the AIA. We raised \$5900 for the Sun Fund for Kids summer camp program. It exists to send Westman children to summer camps around the region who come from situations that otherwise would prevent their participation. Thank you to all the golfers that came out in June.



Sun Fund for Kids Charity Golf Tournament cheque presentation

TUNDRA OIL & GAS SUPPORTS KIDS CAMP

Tundra Oil & Gas presented CFS with an \$8000 donation in support of The Sun Fund for Kids. It exists to send Westman children to summer camps around the region who come from situations that otherwise would prevent their participation.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

We are finalizing speakers to explore the topics of looking for solutions and shifting mindsets regarding Addictions and Harm Reduction



OUR AGM HIGHLIGHTS

Our Annual General Meeting was held on June 7th, 2022. Along with the agency's Board of Directors business meeting, it was an opportunity to reconnect in person with agency members, staff, collaterals and community supporters.

Over the past year our Agency continued to deliver services as safely as possible. This is due to the commitment and determination of our staff as well as the Agency's long history of providing needed services and programs. Our staff learned what donning and doffing was, and navigated their essential roles to continue to support families and help keep children safe and cared for. The displays of rallying and resiliency have been remarkable in the light of the rippling affects of the pandemic, where issues facing kids and their families intensified.

In our yearly video, we highlighted certain program areas, namely SafeCare, Expectant Parent Services, and Family Finding. We heard from a former youth in care on their Agreements with Young Adults (AYA) experience and we heard from a resource family serving children in care for over fifteen years. What this video showed was how blessed we are as an Agency to have people who embrace changes and best practices that benefit kids, youth and families. "It takes grit and intense work to keep kids safe at home, help kids work through their traumas, keep them connected to their first families, or help launch them into independence", says Arlene Stewart, CEO of CFS Western.

It was highlighted that certain shifts within the child and family services system influenced it greatly this past year. January 2022 marked the enactment of the Honouring our Children, Families and Nation Act, federal legislation which sees Peguis Child and Family Services supporting their own community members regardless of where they are living. This is historic legislation that acknowledges the inherent right of First Nations, Inuit and Metis people to devise and deliver their own child welfare legislation and practices.

The General Authority launched its Supported Guardianship Policy, which creates permanency for children with extended family, or those who a child would consider as family. We embrace the philosophies and practices of the Family Finding Model which helps find important connections for children, heal these connections where required, and keep children on a trajectory of improved life outcomes.



Phil Sherman, Joe Ball, Arlene Stewart at our AGM this past June.



VICTORIA DAY CARE CENTRE TURNS 50!

Victoria Day Care Centre has been providing high quality care to children since 1972. They were the first group day care organized in Brandon by Child and Family Services of Western Manitoba when leaders at the time identified a need in the community for a daycare to be accessible to all families. We are proud of the vision that the leaders had that recognized early intervention before it was a 'thing'.

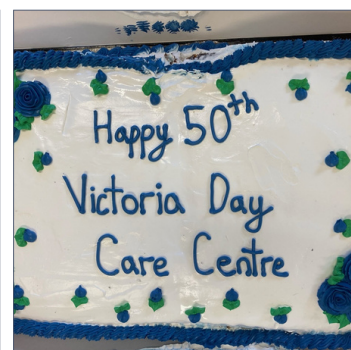
The day care was first established at Brandon University as a response to the need for students and faculty members that wanted a day care facility close to where they were studying and working that provided a nurturing and stimulating environment. In 1980 the Victoria Day Care Centre moved to its' current location on Brandon Ave. This location provided bigger indoor and outdoor spaces, which enabled the centre to increase the number of children served each year. In 2010, our current building underwent a huge renovation from a generous bequeathment from William H McCutcheon, for whom the building is now named.

Our highly skilled and experienced staff encourages our children to take part in a wide variety of activities including art, sand and water play, dress-up, stories, music, games, puzzles, blocks, outdoor play and field trips. "Parents are essential members of the team in providing quality care for their children," says Eileen Czerkawski, Victoria Day Care Centre Director. Parents are given supports, education, resources and tools to help them help their children learn and grow. Together, parents and staff discover, share, and contribute to the child's growth and development.

We are proud to provide the opportunity for extra supports for our children. Recognizing the need to connect our children to a community of support, we collaborate with community resources to provide a space for service delivery like speech support, occupational therapy, and child development. This provides services within our centre for the children who need it.

"The centre has evolved over the last fifty years and we look forward to serving the community for many years to come," says Eileen.

We celebrated Victoria's Day Care Centre's 50th anniversary with a back yard birthday party with a bbq, some games for the children and lots of laughter in mid-September. It was a come and go event at our centre where we welcomed current and former staff and families of the Victoria Day Care Centre.



Victoria Day Care celebrates half a century of operation this year.



THE FOUNDATION FORUM

Joe Ball, On behalf of the Foundation

I want to take a moment to reflect on the relationship that has developed between the Road Rebels Car Club and the Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre. For a number of years, the Road Rebels have been steadfast supports of the Centre. That support started off as something material – a cheque dropped off after a social, or some ‘Tins for the Bin’ after a Car Club Cruise.

But the relationship has grown from one of ‘support’ to one of ‘partnership.’ This year, for a second summer, the Road Rebels invited our Foundation to run the BBQ stand at their Cruise Nights Downtown. With the help of Heather Manuliak from the club, we not only raised dollars for the Foundation – we raised awareness of our work at the Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre.

In September, the Road Rebels came to Elspeth Reid to host “All About Cool Cars”. It’s an opportunity for families who rely on the Centre to learn more about the maintenance and upkeep of their vehicles. It’s a fun event, with food and fellowship brought right into the heart of our community. With Heather and Katrina Manuliak again working the BBQ, and Lindsay - a mechanic - showing folks what’s happening under the hood, it’s the kind of learning that anyone can enjoy, and some of us will put to good use.

Our partnership with the Road Rebels illustrates something that we know to be true, that relationships have value that can’t be measured in money. The Road Rebels are investing time, skills, and care in our community through their partnership with the Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre. Their investment in this relationship says something about the value of that Centre, and the families we serve in the heart of our small city.

Community comes into being when we recognize our relations, and acknowledge the bonds between us. Our CFS Western MB Foundation exists to nurture those relationships, and strengthen those bonds, so that children are nurtured, and families made stronger, right here in Westman. We are grateful for the care and commitment of our partners around the region, who help to support this work.

From the Foundation, with thanks

Joe Ball, Chair



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**CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES
OF WESTERN MANITOBA
FOUNDATION INC.**