



# CFS Matters!

Fall 2018 Newsletter



Hi friends of the Agency,

Much is happening in child welfare these days. The provincial government has recently completed its community consultations for legislative reform and has released its report outlining many of the recommended changes. These recommendations are designed to bring the child welfare legislation up to date and to facilitate changes in how families and communities are engaged by the system in keeping children safe. The overall goal of the transformation is to decrease the number of children in care.

Many of the practice innovations implemented by the Agency and the General Authority (GA) over the past several years are starting to demonstrate a reduction in children coming into care and a decrease in the length of time in care. The GA Practice Model combined with the Safe and Together framework (for Domestic Violence), Family Engagement Practices and Intensive Permanency Services have resulted in a 12% reduction in children in care last year.

This year, the Agency continues to experience a decrease in days care as part of the Block funding pilot project. An important component of this project is that the Agency will re-invest any surpluses into new prevention programs and services. Stay tuned for further announcements regarding these initiatives.

As the busy and exciting holiday season arrives, we understand that this time of year can be a challenge for many of the families and individuals we work with. It is also a generous time, when the community comes together to offer extra support to those in need. Peace be with you!

Seasons Greetings!

Dave McGregor, MSW, RSW  
Chief Executive Officer

Kris Tufts  
President, Board of Directors

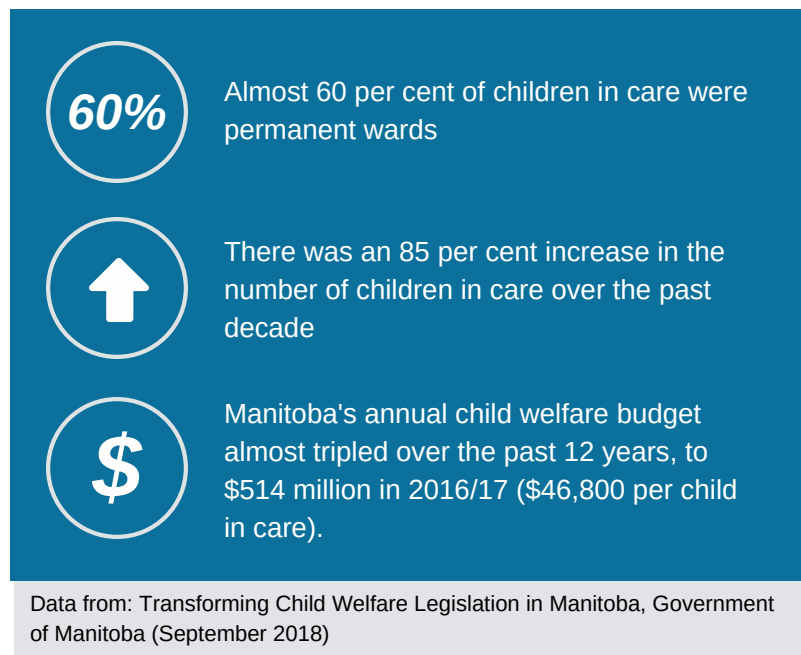
*Child and Family Services of Western Manitoba exists so that children are safe and nurtured in strong, loving families within a community of caring people.*

# 2018 Legislation Reform



The Provincial government has recently released the report of its community consultations process regarding legislative reform. The report, Transforming Child Welfare in Manitoba can be found here if people are interested:

[https://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/child\\_welfare\\_reform/pubs/final\\_report.pdf](https://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/child_welfare_reform/pubs/final_report.pdf)



## Drivers for Change

The report outlines the challenges the system is facing, including too many children in care, significant over representation of indigenous children in care, and an unsustainable system that needs to change. The figure to the left shows current statistics on these drivers for change.

## Transformation

The goals of transformation are to decrease the number of children in care and decrease the length of time in care.

The recommendations in the report seek to modernize the legislation allowing for other, more culturally safe ways of ensuring child safety and to increase the involvement of the community in providing prevention supports and services.

## Transforming Services



# The 'DEC'

Breanna Dick, Youth Engagement Specialist & AYA Social Worker



The Development and Engagement Centre is now up and running! The DEC is a locked facility for workers to use when meeting with their youth in care and is equipped with games, crafts, a blue-tooth speaker, a kitchenette, a youth office, and give-away Thrift Store. The purpose of this space is to provide our youth in care with a safe, confidential, youth-friendly space that they can feel comfortable in when meeting with their worker and discussing difficult life topics.

The idea of The DEC came from asking current and former youth in care what is working well, what is not working, and what is needed to help them heal and have more meaningful interactions with their worker. It became apparent that youth in our care were longing for a youth-friendly space that emphasizes confidentiality and comfort.

The DEC also serves to engage our youth and strengthen their skills, development and well-being. The youth-office is a space designed to support youth as they build their independence skills through: applying for post-secondary schooling, applying for jobs, working on resumes, apartment/housing searches, furniture searches, Young Adult Agreement applications, and more. The downstairs has two rooms transformed into the 'Give-Away Thrift Store' area, where youth in need can get clothing and household items. The DEC also offers a work-experience program for youth to gain job-readiness skills, build up their resume and obtain 'CFS Free' references.

The DEC was officially opened on August 23, 2018 and youth are loving it! We have been receiving very positive feedback from youth stating they enjoy the centre, they feel comfortable there, and that they like all the opportunities it offers. We will continue to seek youth's feedback and have the space evolve and develop around our youth's voices and experiences.



Our Agency was a recipient of a 2018 Canada Post Community Foundation grant. This grant of \$10,000 will directly support ongoing costs of The DEC. We are very grateful to the Canada Post Community Foundation for supporting us to continue making a positive impact on the lives of youth in our community!

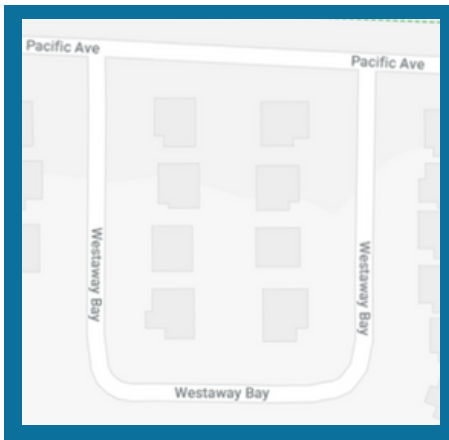


# Westaway Bay



On September 27th, the General Authority held their Annual General Meeting. Our Agency was fortunate to have a platform to discuss Westaway Bay, our philosophy behind the project, and some of our successes. Our very own Lisa Ramsay delivered a powerful speech about the project.

"The main message I wanted to convey was all about our shared and collective responsibility as a community to one another. Thinking outside the box, being determined to deliver supports in different ways, and relentless effort is what it takes to do community development work. Child welfare has a critical role to play in tightening the knit of the safety net for all our children. The best way to do our work, in my opinion, is to provide parents with what they need to feel confident and capable and they in turn will meet their children's needs. We have amazing collective potential - we need not work in silos. Our community has some very serious real problems that require all of us to work together!"



The Westaway Bay project is a joint venture with Healthy Family Brandon, the Brandon Friendship Centre, Manitoba Housing, Brandon Police Services, Brandon School Division, Public Health, and others. Together they created a mini resource centre in a Manitoba Housing development community to provide accessible supports and services to a vulnerable population.



## Child and Family Services of Western Manitoba

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# Safe and Together Conference



On October 4th, Jolene Reimer, along with individuals from the General Authority, Rural and Northern Services, and the All Nations Coordinated Response Network, came together to present at the Safe and Together 6th Annual Conference in San Antonio, Texas. Our group talked about how we went from a Domestic Violence Destructive Practice to becoming DV-Informed. They described the importance of organizational design, leadership, policy, relationships with the courts, and law enforcement. They also told first-hand accounts of the impact this model has made.



Our group also offered tangible resources to help those interested to make a similar shift in their organizations. According to Jolene, “The opportunity to share our practice with other professionals was profound. Learning, growing, and networking are all ways we continue to improve our practice with children and families”.



Based on feedback from the event, individuals found that it was great to see how other agencies function and how they improved in addressing domestic violence, they appreciated the resources to use in their own practice, and felt inspired to make similar changes in their work.

Great job, team!



Following our staff meeting on October 5th, several of our staff gathered outside the ERFRC to take a group photo in support of NoMoreSecrets204. NoMoreSecrets204 is an advocacy group committed to changing the narrative on domestic violence and how we work with perpetrators and survivors.

# What's New at the ERFRC

Lisa Ramsay, Coordinator



A number of FRC staff attended the Creating a New Legacy conference recently in Brandon. It was all about supporting the mental health and wellness of our whole community. The reviews were very positive in that the conference offered much food for thought about how we will come to understand the history of our country and its colonizing history and the current implications.



The conference called upon each of us to know the Truth and Reconciliation recommendations. Furthermore, the conference gave us an opportunity to learn how we can each respond to the Calls To Action and create a new and different legacy. It was inspirational and a privilege to be part of in partnership with the Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Centre in Brandon.



Summer Program was a great success! We had an excellent Summer student this year, Brittney Fortier. In total, 97 different families participated in our Summer Program. We had many beach days, crafting time, pool visits, and playgroups – all to create beautiful memories between parents and their children and strengthen that most precious bond.



Santa is coming the Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre! Come and have a picture taken with Santa and we'll provide a free copy of the photo or just swing by for a free snack! Santa will be at the ERFRC on Friday, December 7th from 10am until 12pm. We are also busy planning to help many families again this Christmas. We are matching our donors and families in needs. The spirit of the season is truly in full swing!

The ERFRC would like to welcome Brittany Kalmakoff and Michelle Keech to the Child Care team.

Darlene Antonation has retired from the FRC after four years of great work! Good luck with all your future endeavors, Darlene.



**United Way**  
Brandon & District



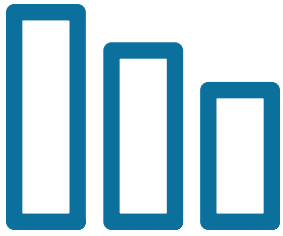
# Recent Stories



We are very pleased to announce that CFS Western has received \$10,000 from the Canada Post Community Foundation. This grant will directly support ongoing costs the the Development and Engagement Centre (or DEC for short).



We would also like to thank the TELUS . Support from this grant will directly support the Sun Fund for Kids and will increase our capacity to help children from financially disadvantaged families enjoy a summer camp experience.



Our commitment to assessing the quality and efficacy of the Safe and Together Model is ongoing. Through a partnership with the Brandon University Nursing department, we are trying to learn about the experiences of staff as they incorporate the Safe and Together Model in their work. Outcomes from this 'quality assurance' will help inform our practice moving forward!

Lastly, we are currently working on updates to our website. Changes will likely include: upgraded functionality on the back end of the site, improving access for mobile users, and improving the visibility and accessibility of certain pages on the site (e.g., ERFRC, Adoption Services, etc.). Stay tuned for more information!



**Elsbeth Reid Family Resource Centre**  
255 - 9th Street  
Brandon MB R7A 6X1  
204-726-6280  
*Open 9 am - 5 pm weekdays*



**Family and 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

# The Foundation Forum

Joe Ball, Chairperson Foundation Board

I was at work late the other night, preparing to speak at one of our local Churches. They had called to ask if there was any need at CFS that they could meet. As it turns out... They are providing some winter wear for kids who come through the doors at Elspeth Reid – graciously offered, and gratefully received.

In my preparation for speaking, I found myself once again running down the rabbit hole, digging into the meaning of a particular Hebrew word that lies behind the more familiar English. I won't bore you with the research (and I'll try not to bore them, either, come Sunday).

But it was fun to delve into what the words really mean – fun, and instructive. Which is why I'd invite you to think about what it means to be a Foundation. It's a borrowed word from the building trade. A foundation is the solid support upon which the structure is built. It's important, but often and appropriately invisible.

Our CFS Western Foundation exists to support the visible work of the CFS Western MB Agency. That work is the building of "strong, loving families – within a community of caring people." The Foundation motto is 'Together, we are stronger.' With the support of a caring community, we will continue to provide a foundation for the work that really matters – the work that is being done to strengthen families, that they might best meet the needs of children for nurture and love.

Thank you for being part of this work.



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