



*NEWSLETTER*  
*JANUARY 2024*





# Message from the President

Tansi:

On behalf of the MAFC Board and Executive, I wish every reader well and hope you find information that will assist you in the following pages. And please excuse my mixing of languages as greeting and ending.

Thank you for your interest in Friendship Centres. We are Canada's largest and oldest Urban Indigenous Service delivery mechanism. In Manitoba, Friendship Centres have been around since the 1940s and have been organized and incorporated since the 1950s.

I am particularly proud of how our centres have been agents for change and reconciliation before that became fashionable. I am constantly amazed that, no matter the challenges we face, Manitoba's 11 Friendship Centres continue to deliver services to people with the highest level of professionalism and compassion.

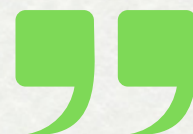


**David Gray**  
**MAFC President**

The volunteers that help with programming, act as Directors, or assist with an event are a testament to the durability and widespread support Centres have. I want to express my personal and our Board collective thank you to those volunteers. I want to thank the staff of every Centre and especially the staff at the MAFC office for all they contributed, including this newsletter.

We often say we are a hidden secret. This newsletter is one of the initiatives we hope will break that and increase how the community knows about us. I am excited to see the progress we will make over the next months and years.

Maarsii, meeqwetch







# Message from the Executive Director

As we look towards a fruitful new year, I could not be prouder of the previous year that my team has accomplished. We have made impactful strides in supporting Manitoba's eleven Friendship Centres, and I am truly inspired by the work we have accomplished. Launching a province-wide mental health initiative has always been a priority of mine, and having it come together piece by piece has been an encouraging sight.

This past year I have gained a better understanding of never underestimating the power of teamwork in a community environment. The Manitoba Association of Friendship Centres has truly come together as a team to aid in the support of Urban Indigenous issues and have done so with a great deal of diligence and care. I would like to thank all our staff, volunteers, board members, and partners for continuing to empower urban Indigenous voices; you are the beating heart of Manitoba's Friendship Centre Movement.

May the new year bring you peace, health, and happiness for you and your loved ones.

In friendship,



***Riley Webster***  
***Executive Director,***  
***MAFC.***







# Message from the Editors

“Aanii, wacheyea, boozhoo, aaniin, and hello!

Welcome to the official revival of the MAFC newsletter, being brought to you electronically for the first time ever. Each issue will provide you with exciting updates and features on the Friendship Centre movement in Manitoba. I sincerely hope you enjoy reading about what we have been up to, and the impeccable programs in our Friendship Centre Spotlight section!

As the new project coordinator, my current project is being funded by Women and Gender Equality (WAGE) Canada to implement systemic changes surrounding how the eleven Manitoba Friendship Centres treat gender-based violence against Indigenous girls, women, and 2SLGBTQ+ individuals. When I'm not working on that, I am working on the newsletter that you're reading right now! My time here at MAFC has been nothing short of spectacular so far, and I'm looking forward to what the future brings!”



*Matthew Slusky (B.A. Hons., PSYC)  
Project Coordinator,  
MAFC.*

“We are thrilled to present to you the inaugural MAFC e-Newsletter. Our intention is to inform and update our readers while acknowledging our Friendship Centres for all the services they provide. Each edition, we pledge to feature one Friendship Centre in recognition of the hard work and dedication that it takes to build healthier, thriving communities.

I've learned a lot in my short three months at MAFC, and navigating mental health at the Friendship Center level has been really enlightening. When I'm not working on the newsletter, I'm establishing a support network to assist our 11 friendship centers' staff members with their Mental Health and Well-being needs.

To gain some insight into how to handle the challenges that come with being front-line workers, I would also encourage you to read the articles on Mental Health that are included in this newsletter”.



*Rubani Kaur (B.A. PSYC)  
Mental Health Navigator,  
MAFC.*







# Youth Engagement Coordinator Workshop



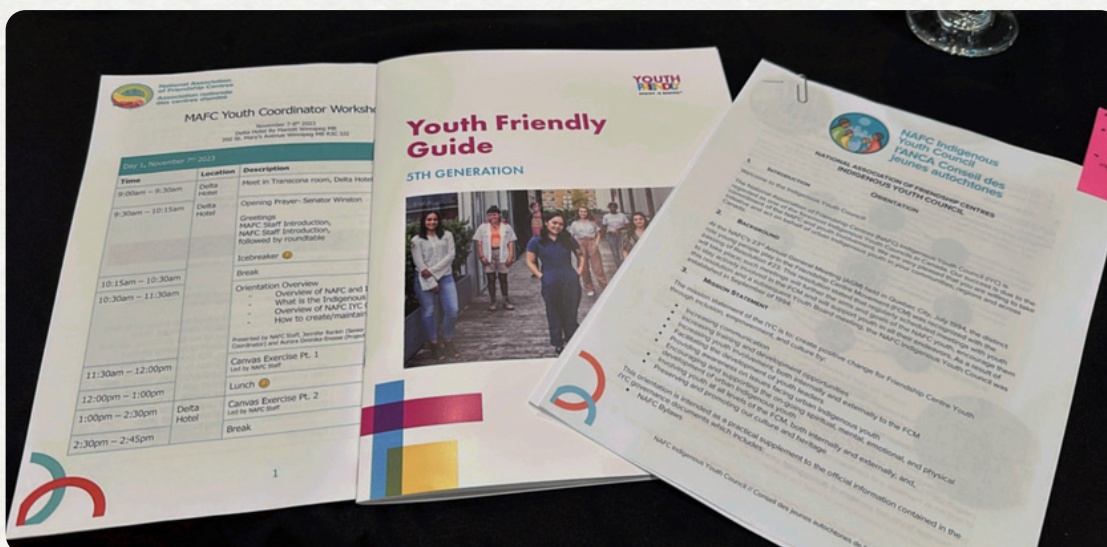
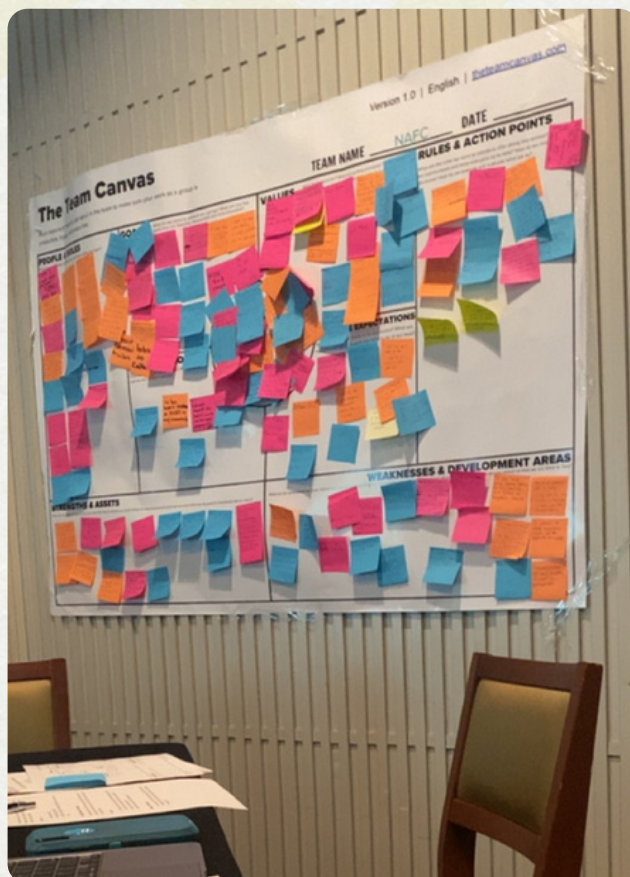
In the month of November, Manitoba Association of Friendship Centres hosted a workshop training session for Provincial Friendship Centre Youth Engagement Coordinators. This was something that had never been done in the past, and that was why it was so important to have. This training brought all the Youth Engagement Coordinators and Youth Workers together for the first time. More than half of our youth engagement coordinators had never met or connected with each other before. In this setting, all coordinators received the opportunity to meet, discuss, and give advice to one another while they heard about other Centres' youth programming. It is our hope for the future to provide more training and opportunities for our youth coordinators to come together, to foster increased youth engagement in Manitoba, we also need to equip and support our Youth Engagement Coordinators with the tools to do so.





Our second day of training was delivered by “Apathy Is Boring” (AISB), a youth led organization. AISB facilitated a workshop around social media, how to get youth at board meetings, and how to keep youth engaged. This two-day workshop was the foundation for the future of Youth Engagement Coordinators in Manitoba.

**Ursella Khan,**  
**Youth Engagement Coordinator,**  
**MAFC.**







# President & Executive Director's Meeting Dinner

The Manitoba Association of Friendship Centres (MAFC) was honored to have Premier Wab Kinew attend the National Association of Friendship Centre's (NAFC) 2023 Presidents and Executive Director's Forum dinner to extend greeting from Government of Manitoba to our guests.

Our time at the two-day forum was inspirational to the Friendship Centre Movement as members delved into discussions that strengthened connections and envisioned positive change for urban Indigenous communities across Canada.

The P&ED Meeting evening was kicked off by a Rights and Indigenous Peoples in Canada tour at the Canadian Museum of Human Rights, where our esteemed guests from Friendship Centres from coast to coast joined us for a dinner at the Stu Clarke Garden of Contemplation for a night of music from a local Métis father and daughter duo Keith Ginther & Morgan Grace.



Left to Right: David Gray (MAFC President), Wab Kinew (Manitoba Premier), Jocelyn Formsma (NAFC CEO)



Keith Ginther & Morgan Grace, Métis Duo





# New Year **New You**

## *A Guide to Goal Setting for Mental Well-Being*



The calendar has finally flipped to 2024 and with that comes a host of promises and goals we make for ourselves, the infamous New Year's resolutions. Year after year we tell ourselves that things are going to change this time around, and January 1st is the day where that change begins.

Unfortunately, that couldn't be further from the truth for so many of us. In a two-year long study by Dr. John Norcross (Ph.D.) and Dominic Vangarelli (MA, CADC) at the University of Scranton, 77% of individuals abandoned their resolutions by mid-January, and just 19% managed to maintain their pledges after 2 years. So, the question all of us should be asking is, "How can we make it easier to stay on track?"

The key to achieving this feat is to make SMART goals! SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time bound. For example, if your resolution was to prioritize your mental health this year, that's a broad statement with a lot of different components. The thought of completely changing your mindset may seem so daunting that you give up in the first few weeks. That's why making your goals specific is so important. Instead, you may choose to specify that you are going to practice self-care more frequently. However, we run into a similar problem as before. What does "more" mean? We need to make our goal measurable by, for example, choosing the number of times per week we are going to practice self-care.





We can make our goal achievable by being in total control of how we go about practicing self-care. If we rely on a hair salon, or our friend to order those face masks we love so much, our progress may be interrupted due to things outside of our control. Instead, we can choose something we have complete control over, like taking a hot bath or self-grooming at home. Next, making our goals relevant is crucial to our mental well-being. Ideally, we want our ambitions to genuinely matter to us. If practicing self-care was something you simply read in a magazine, but you have no real interest in it, then it will probably be very difficult to maintain your resolution. Finally, every goal needs a target timeframe. How do we know when we have successfully prioritized our mental health? That answer can only come from you, so check-in with yourself! Every few days, weeks, or months, reflect on your progress, just be sure to be somewhat consistent with your timeframes.

Now that you know the ins and outs of SMART goals, try to apply them to your resolutions. Remember, change can only happen when you're ready for it, so if January comes and goes and you aren't quite ready, that's okay! Your period of transformation may come in March, June, or even November. Whenever you do feel ready for change, remember to be SMART about it.

In Friendship,

Matthew Slusky, B.A. (Hons.), PSYC  
MAFC Project Coordinator







# Urban Indigenous Summit 2023

The 2nd annual Urban Indigenous Summit: “Action for the next generation” took place in Ottawa, ON from November 27-29, 2023.

MAFC’s staff enjoyed taking part in sharing circles, watching various performances, and listening to a variety of keynote speakers. Workshops were an excellent means of networking with the partners from the Friendship Centre movement and acquiring knowledge.

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Jocelyn Formsma,  
(Chief Executive Officer, NAFC.)



Left to right:  
Kristina Colmer (Policy and Research Analyst) &  
Ursella Khan (Youth Engagement Coordinator) MAFC.



Dallas Goldtooth  
(Environmental Activist and Performing Artist)





# Friendship Centre

## Spotlight



**The Dauphin Friendship Centre's, “Food for Thought Program”** provides free hot nutritious lunches to registered Mountain View School Division students twice a week during the coldest months. Dauphin Friendship Centre has been operating this program aimed at tackling food insecurity for 34 years. The volunteers prepare food on Monday and Wednesday and serve it at the schools or DFC on Tuesday and Thursday.





**Food for Thought** has been breaking barriers for children living in poverty by ensuring the program stays open to all students regardless of income levels. The community has been very generous and consistent with donations.

Through year-round fundraising, networking and grant applications the Dauphin Friendship Centre continually creates awareness about how unhealthy eating, inadequate food supplies and lack of dietary education has a strong and direct correlation to poverty/low socioeconomic status (SES) for many families in our communities. By intervening early, Food for Thought promises better nutrition, improvements towards intellectual ability, health and wellbeing, and long-term benefits that include youth evolving into valuable and contributing members of the community.

**If you would like to learn more about Food for Thought or Would like to donate to the cause, we invite you to reach out directly to the**

☎ [Dauphin Friendship Centre](#) ✉





## **“You can’t pour from an empty cup”.**

*burnout and compassion fatigue, from the frontline workers perspective*



When witnessing other people’s sufferings, humans are predisposed to experience physical, mental, or emotional effects. When working as front-line workers or agents of change, as rewarding as the profession is, it can also come with a cost of caring.

The challenges faced by experiencing trauma can often lead to compassion fatigue. When being continuously exposed to trauma, you might find yourself worrying too much about helping and changing the lives of those who are suffering. Compassion fatigue can also be seen in the forms of emotional numbness, diminished capacity for empathy, helplessness, putting yourself last and excessive worrying about other people's problems.

According to (Figley, C., 1995, 2002, & Mathieu, F., 2012), Compassion fatigue refers to absorbing information and often the suffering of others through empathy. It happens when a helping professional experiences exhaustion due to caring for someone and can lead to profound emotional and physical erosion that takes place when helpers are unable to refuel and regenerate themselves.





Being in the profession of human services, you cannot pour from an empty cup, an empty cup is a metaphor for your energy and resources. which means you can only help others in the best way possible, if you consistently replenish your own energy and resources. Here are a few ways to connect to yourself before connecting to others and to keep your cup full:

- Setting boundaries
- Seeking help
- Journaling
- Engaging in ceremonies, stories, dances, and prayers.
- Meditation
- Getting adequate sleep
- Eating well and exercising
- Connecting with nature, family, and friends
- Taking breaks and reflecting

Taking care of yourself sets the tone for a balanced mind, body, soul, and spirit connection leading to clear thinking, improved focus, and better results in your personal and professional lives. Staying connected to yourself and the ones you love gives you a sense of purpose and adds a beautiful meaning to your life. Treating yourself with kindness and self-compassion increases resilience, life-satisfaction and reduces anxiety. Setting aside some time each day to consistently participate in any of the listed activities is an excellent means of preventing compassion fatigue.

In Friendship,

Rubani Kaur (B.A. PSYC)  
Mental Health Navigator, MAFC.

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# Bell Let's Talk Day.

The Manitoba Association of Friendship Centres enthusiastically supports **Bell Let's Talk Day** and its mission. Our team came together on January 24, 2024, and engaged in activities to disconnect from the world and reconnect with themselves.

Bell Let's Talk Day serves as a wonderful reminder of the transformative power of talk, especially for individuals facing challenges around their Mental Health.

We colored Indigenous art pieces "Aki and Nibi", played games, engaged in the speech bubble exercise, using materials from the Bell Let's Talk toolkit. Mental Health Coordinator's at our Centres also encouraged open dialogue and meaningful self-care activities with their staff. Together, we can **"be the real change"**.



Top to bottom: Team Elbert Chartrand Friendship Centre and Team MAFC.





# Manitoba Association of Friendship Centres

“An Urban Indigenous Grassroots Organization”.



FLIN FLON ABORIGINAL  
FRIENDSHIP CENTRE, INC.



Bridging the Gap  
Between Cultures

BECAUSE ALL PEOPLE ARE EQUAL



Dauphin Friendship Centre



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