

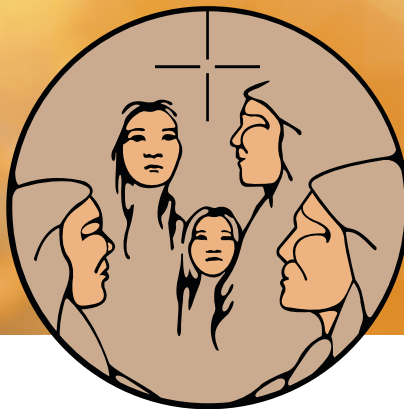
A child is sitting on a light blue surface, playing a small, round, light-colored drum with a red and blue geometric pattern. The child is holding two wooden mallets with yellow tips. Surrounding the drum are several colorful plastic blocks in blue, green, and red, and a red bachi. The background is a warm, yellowish-orange gradient.

# *Caring for Our Relatives Program Guide 2021*

**For more information please contact:**

**204-925-6819**

**[caring-for-our-relatives@mamawi.com](mailto:caring-for-our-relatives@mamawi.com)**



# Caring for Our Relatives

(formerly "Children In Care Programs")

The Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre cares for our families, our community, and each other by honouring traditional Indigenous knowledge and building our programs and services on a strong foundation of Indigenous values and practices. **Indigenous Knowledge Keepers** emphasize returning to our Seven Sacred Teachings: Love, Respect, Courage, Honesty, Wisdom, Humility and Truth to restore the balance within our families and our communities.

The goal of Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre's *Caring for Our Relatives* program is to protect and strengthen families. Our **Buffalo Teachings** instill a sense of responsibility to protect the vulnerable, as we place them at the center of the circle, surrounded by the stronger who are facing outwards to protect them from danger and only opening the circle when it is safe to do so. Our **Turtle Teachings** remind us of the past, present and future; restoring the sacred bond within families means we need to understand where we learned to become parents and how this affects us today. Most importantly, we must be aware of how we embrace our role as caregivers in our family and community. The **Starblanket** theme represents our teachings about interconnectedness, remembering that at the centre of the star is Creator's eye, making sacred everything it covers and forever keeps safe. Each program within *Caring for our Relatives* does this in a unique way.



## **Indigenous Care Homes** (foster care)

### **3 Care Home Programs** (foster care)

- ❖ CLOUT (EPR): 22 emergency beds for children age 0–8 and older siblings
- ❖ Eagle Horse Society (EPR): 25 emergency beds for children under 10 years of age
- ❖ Ozosunon: 80 on-going beds for children and youth to 21

### **5 Youth Care Homes** (group care)

- ❖ Luke's Place: 6 beds for boys age 11–14
- ❖ Isobel's Place: 12 on-going beds for pregnant girls age 14–17
- ❖ Circle of Care: 10 short-term beds for girls and transgender teens age 13–17
- ❖ Honoring the Spirit of our Little Sisters: 6 bed specialized home for sexually exploited girls and transgender age 13–17
- ❖ Hands of Mother Earth: 6 bed rural healing lodge for sexually exploited girls and transgender age 13–17



## **Honouring The Sacred Bond** (family reunification)

### **Family Group Conferencing:**

Indigenous-led evidence-based family group decision making for the care and protection of children



## **Youth Housing** (youth aging out)

**Yellow Shawl:** mentorship housing for youth age 16–21

**Wi Che Win:** Housing First Program for those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness

**Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre  
develops resources directly  
with CFS Agencies to meet  
specific agency needs.**

**For more information please contact:**

**Phone:** 204-925-6819

**Email:** [caring-for-our-relatives@mamawi.com](mailto:caring-for-our-relatives@mamawi.com)

**Website:** [www.mamawi.com](http://www.mamawi.com)







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# *Executive Summary*

The Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre was established as an advocacy-based agency in Winnipeg in 1984. Since then, it has evolved into an organization that works to empower families and community members. We believe strengthening families is a worthy investment in our collective future. By building on strengths, Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre helps families move forward to nurture and provide secure environments for themselves and their children.

The name Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata translates from Ojibway into the phrase “we all work together to help one another”. Today, Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre delivers community-based programs and services within the philosophy that is embodied in our name. For us, this means working together with our families, communities, partners, funders and governments to create community-based solutions that build local capacity for self-care.

The Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre has more than 50 programs and 12 sites.

We are now expanding our services to offer development of supportive family services, predominately in the Child and Family Services area. These services are currently being offered by a few private organizations in Winnipeg, but they are not Indigenous-based and employ very few Indigenous people.

Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre currently has a number of alternative care resources utilized throughout the child welfare system by various Child and Family Services agencies to enhance their own resources. While these resources are shared among the entire system, **Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre has the ability to create agency specific resources based on the needs of individual agencies.**

This includes various types of alternative care placements, family reunification support programming and in-home support services. We have created an overview of resources that can be developed and managed by the Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre on an agency's behalf.



# Our Service Philosophy

## Supporting Children and Families



### *Caring for Our Relatives*

At the Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre, we work to build a circle of care around children and their families. This means looking at ways to support children in familiar environments. Wherever possible, we ensure that children stay in neighbourhoods and schools where they have existing relationships and connections, with meaningful supports that are responsive to their needs.

In keeping with our vision of a child welfare system that is responsive to and capable of supporting the needs and aspirations of Indigenous children, youth and families, the Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre has developed a wide array of innovative, culturally appropriate, community-based programs and resources.

All of the Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre's programs and services are connected and interwoven in our community care model of service delivery, based on prevention, intervention, healing, growth and renewal. We respond to any identified need and work with the community to create appropriate supports and solutions – drawing from the collective wisdom, talents, skills and experiences of our children and families in building healthy networks and communities.

All *Caring for Our Relatives* programs subscribe to a community care approach that supports the needs and aspirations of our Indigenous families.

Staff work together with mandated agencies and community supports to ensure a coordinated approach to planning and issue resolution. This requires an active role by our staff in the areas of assessment, prevention, and working through problems at the community level. The aim is to make connections as soon as possible to break down isolation and disconnection which often occurs when a child is removed.

We have learned that improving the life outcomes and well-being of individuals and families requires a coordinated effort and long-term commitment to community building and family support solutions. While programs established under the umbrella of *Caring for Our Relatives* may have different criteria and program goals, the following are shared goals:

- ❖ To support children at risk in receiving safe, relevant and the least intrusive interventions which maximize their immediate and long-term well-being
- ❖ To support parents/caregivers in making informed choices about their relationship with their children
- ❖ To support communities at risk in implementing sustainable solutions for Indigenous children and families

Similarly, in an effort to ensure that our families have the best possible supports and programming available, *Caring for Our Relatives* programs also include the following components:

- ❖ Indigenous care providers that provide caring, loving homes
- ❖ Assigned mentors/helpers to each home who provide ongoing support, including biweekly visits and weekly check ins
- ❖ Resource workers to assist in training and licensing
- ❖ Program coordinator to oversee the program
- ❖ Family Group Conference assessment/ Advocacy and support at all levels
- ❖ On site training and education with external organizations as required
- ❖ Focus on reunifications and maintaining family connections
- ❖ Community involvement and support
- ❖ Direct connections to additional Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre resources and programming

Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre believes in and supports the importance of training and education for our care providers and for our families and staff. We offer a number of on-site mandatory training opportunities as well as optional instruction in skill development.

### ***Mandatory Care Provider Training:***

- ✓ *Foster Parent Orientation*
- ✓ *Vicarious Trauma*
- ✓ *Trauma Informed Care*
- ✓ *CPR/First Aid*
- ✓ *Non-Violent Crisis Intervention*
- ✓ *Assist (suicide intervention training)*

### ***Optional Skill Development Training Available to Care Providers and Families:***

- ✓ *Tattered Teddies*
- ✓ *Treaty Relations: Historical and contemporary issues*
- ✓ *Realities of Sexual Exploitation*
- ✓ *Attachment*
- ✓ *Child Development*
- ✓ *Family Group Conferencing*
- ✓ *Observing and Reporting*
- ✓ *Gang Awareness*
- ✓ *Traditional Parenting*
- ✓ *Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder*
- ✓ *Mental Health*
- ✓ *Medicine Bag Making*
- ✓ *Beading and Drumming*
- ✓ *Sweat Lodge Ceremony*
- ✓ *Skirt/Skirt Making*
- ✓ *Sharing Circles*







# *Indigenous Care Homes*

## **Community-Led Organizations United Together (CLOUT) Program**

CLOUT is a short-term care program that is part of a comprehensive continuum of care which emphasizes service coordination, front end prevention, family participation and neighbourhood-based services/resources. The program provides a neighbourhood, to the shift-staffed model of receiving and assessment, helping to reduce hotel stays and lengthy placements for young children in shift-staffed facilities.

The emergency placement resource program (EPR) uses the Indigenous-led Family Group Conferencing model to work with children in care, birth families, care provider families, Child and Family Services mandated agencies and sister organizations to maintain strong connections with birth families and reunification where possible. The family group conference process empowers families and their support networks to participate in meaningful long-term planning for their children.

The Centre has identified and developed a number of neighbourhood short-term care homes in the community, providing 22 licensed short-term care home beds (foster care beds) for children at risk in Winnipeg. Highly trained, licensed Indigenous care providers (foster parents) care for children ranging in age from newborns to eight years old, as well as older siblings. Family group conference workers in the program play a vital role in supporting and advocating for the families of children in care. CLOUT staff provide in-home monitoring and support to care provider families and children (minimum bi-weekly), and outreach to support birth families.

Families also receive the benefit of accessing more than 50 Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre programs including community care centres, youth leadership development programs and Indigenous knowledge services in Winnipeg.

### **HISTORY**

CLOUT was established in November 2003 by a coalition of community-based sister organizations in Winnipeg that have a long history of working together and share the same values, principles and approaches to supporting urban Indigenous children and family well-being.

We often work with the same families and share resources to maximize the impact at the local level. We believe the strengths and assets of the community are essential in supporting families to care for and protect their own children, and that the Family Group Conferencing model creates a unique opportunity for this network of community-based wrap around support services to be involved in meaningful ways in the lives of families.

## PROGRAM GOAL

It is common practice in Indigenous communities for extended families and/or community members to share in the care and protection of children when their birth parents cannot or need support to do so. Our Indigenous Care Home Programs ensure these families are respected, honoured and cared for through Indigenous values, ceremonies, programming and approaches, encouraging individual and family empowerment, healing and wellness. Each placement is a working collaboration and involves open communication between the CLOUT team and children, their families (*we adopt a broad definition of family*), CFS mandated agencies or other identified supports. Working collaboratively assists in the achievement of short and long-term goals and supports the aspirations of children and their families.

## REFERRAL AND ADMISSIONS – CFS mandated agencies only to EPR Unit:

1. CFS mandated agencies can contact Emergency Placement Resource (EPR) Unit at 204-944-4238 to discuss if CLOUT is the best option for children and their family(ies). EPR will consult with the CLOUT team on availability and the best match for placement.
2. If all parties agree, a Placement Request Form is completed and sent to the CLOUT team who may schedule a phone consultation with the CFS mandated agency representative and care provider. At this time a date and time is set for placement. All costs including supplementary costs such as clothing, education, bus tickets/passes, etc. are determined and added to Placement Request form. This process regularly occurs within hours or on the same business day.
3. A Care Plan (case management plan) is completed within 10 days and consideration for a Family Group Conference is decided. Care Plans are developed and driven by child(ren)/youth *with their families when possible* in collaboration with a CFS mandated agency and the CLOUT team. A Care Plan will include components on setting goals for restoring/developing/sustaining healthy family relationships; programming in areas of life skills; culture and recreation activities; education and employment training; mental health assessments; respite plan and in-house chores and responsibilities.
4. Regular meetings, communication and care planning occur between children and *their families when possible*, a CFS mandated agency representative and the CLOUT team to support the short and long-term goals of the Care Plan. Reunification and connection to birth families is built into every Care Plan.

Email: [caring-for-our-relatives@mamawi.com](mailto:caring-for-our-relatives@mamawi.com) to request to be added to our weekly list of empty beds.







# *Indigenous Care Homes*

## **Eagle Horse Society Program**

Eagle Horse Society (EHS) is a family-based, emergency care home program for children under the age of 10. The emergency placement resource program (EPR) works with children and youth in care, birth families, care provider families, CFS mandated agencies and sister organizations to maintain strong connections with birth families and promote reunification where possible. The Eagle Horse Society team provides in-home monitoring and support to care provider families and children/youth (bi-weekly at minimum) and outreach support to birth families.

Eagle Horse Society offers 25 licensed short-term care home beds (foster care beds) in Winnipeg. Children are cared for by highly trained Indigenous care providers for up to 90 days with the option of a longer-term placement when reunification is over 90 days.

Families also receive the benefit of accessing more than 50 Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre programs including community care centres, youth leadership development programs and Indigenous knowledge services in Winnipeg.

### **HISTORY**

Eagle Horse Society was established in August 2014 as part of the hotel reduction strategy to provide an alternative to hotel and shelter placements for young children in care. The name Eagle Horse Society was given by a Sundance Elder with a vision that children in the program would fly high and run fast if given the opportunity to be supported and wrapped in culture, language and the Indigenous values of caring for one another. A child's first contact with the child welfare system is traumatic and this trauma can be significantly reduced by providing highly trained Indigenous care providers in culturally appropriate Indigenous homes where children and their families are valued and respected.

## PROGRAM GOAL

It is common practice in Indigenous communities for extended families and/or community members to share in the care and protection of children when their birth parents cannot or need support to do so. Our Indigenous care home programs ensure these families are respected, honoured and cared for through Indigenous values, ceremonies, programming and approaches that support individual and family empowerment, healing and wellness. Each placement is a working collaboration and involves open communication between the Eagle Horse Society team and youth, their families (*we adopt a broad definition of family*), CFS mandated agencies and other identified supports, encouraging achievement of short and long-term goals and aspirations of children, youth and their families.

## REFERRALS AND ADMISSION – CFS mandated agencies only to EPR Unit:

1. CFS mandated agencies can contact Emergency Placement Resource (EPR) Unit at 204-944-4238 to discuss if Eagle Horse Society is the best option for children and their family(ies). EPR will consult with the Eagle Horse Society team on availability and the best match for placement.
2. If all parties agree, a Placement Request Form is completed and sent to the Eagle Horse Society team who may schedule a phone consultation between the Eagle Horse Society team, a CFS mandated agency representative and a care provider. At this time a date and time is set for placement. All costs including supplementary costs such as clothing, education, bus tickets/ passes, etc. are determined and added to the Placement Request form. This process regularly occurs within hours or on the same business day.
3. A Care Plan (case management plan) is completed within 10 days. Care Plans are developed and driven by child(ren)/youth *with their families when possible* in collaboration with a CFS mandated agency and the Eagle Horse Society team. Care Plan components include setting goals for restoring/developing/sustaining healthy family relationships; programming in areas of life skills; culture and recreation activities; education and employment training; mental health assessments; respite plan and in-house chores and responsibilities.
4. Regular meetings, communication and care planning occurs between children and *their families when possible*, a CFS mandated agency representative and the Eagle Horse Society team to support the short and long-term goals of the Care Plan. Reunification and connection to birth families is built into every Care Plan.

Email: [caring-for-our-relatives@mamawi.com](mailto:caring-for-our-relatives@mamawi.com) to request to be added to our weekly list of empty beds.







# *Indigenous Care Homes*

**Ozosunon Program** from Ojibway ‘nest—where little ones are kept safe’

Ozosunon is a family-based, ongoing care home program that works with children and youth in care, birth families, care provider families, CFS mandated agencies and sister organizations to maintain strong connections with birth families and reunification where possible. Ozosunon staff provide in-home monitoring and support to care provider families and children/youth (bi-weekly at minimum) and outreach support to birth families in order to achieve meaningful outcomes for children and youth in care.

Ozosunon offers 80 licensed, on-going care home beds (foster care beds) in Winnipeg with Indigenous care providers (foster parents) who are highly trained and supported to care for children and youth in care up to 21 years of age.

Families also receive the benefit of accessing more than 50 Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre programs including community care centres, youth leadership development programs and Indigenous knowledge services in Winnipeg.

## **HISTORY**

Ozosunon was established in September 1989 to respond to the high number of Indigenous children in care in the CFS system and lack of specific Indigenous foster parents to ensure culture, language and ceremonies were practiced and shared. A group of Indigenous leaders recognized the value of maintaining the connection between birth families and their children and youth in care, while promoting reunification and restoration of the family. They also recognized the importance of reclaiming the inherent role and responsibility of caregivers for Indigenous children and families, and how essential this is to healing, rebuilding, and restoring the balance within our communities.

## **PROGRAM GOAL**

It is common practice in Indigenous communities for extended families and/or community members to share in the care and protection of children when their birth parents cannot or need support to do so. Our Indigenous Care Home programs ensure these families are respected, honoured and cared for through Indigenous values, ceremonies, programming and approaches that support individual and family empowerment, healing and wellness. Each placement is a working collaboration and involves open communication between the Ozosunon team and youth, their families (*we adopt a broad definition of family*), CFS mandated agencies and other identified supports, encouraging achievement of short and long-term goals and aspirations of children, youth and their families.

## REFERRALS AND ADMISSION – CFS mandated agencies only

1. CFS mandated agencies can contact Ozosunon at: (204)-925-0367 or email: **caring-for-our-relatives@mamawi.com** to discuss if Ozosunon is the best care option and to review and discuss an updated social history report in order to identify the best match for placement.
2. If all parties agree, Ozosunon will arrange a pre-placement meeting in the care provider home with a CFS mandated agency representative and youth to confirm this is the best match for placement.
3. If placement is agreed upon by all parties, a Payment Placement Agreement (PPA) and Placement Agreement are signed by the CFS mandated agency and Ozosunon and a move in date is set. The PPA outlines all costs including supplementary costs such as clothing, education, bus tickets/passes, etc. These forms must be completed prior to child/youth placement.
4. A Care Plan (case management plan) is developed and driven by child(ren)/youth *with their families when possible* in collaboration with a CFS mandated agency and Ozosunon team and will include components on setting goals for restoring/developing/sustaining healthy family relationships; programming in areas of life skills; culture and recreation activities; education and employment training; mental health assessments; respite plan and in-house chores and responsibilities. Consideration will be given to include a family group conference (FGC) to support reunification planning.
5. Regular meetings, communication and care planning occurs between youth and *their families* short and long-term goals of the care plan. Reunification and connection to birth families are built into every Care Plan.

Email: **caring-for-our-relatives@mamawi.com** to request to be added to our weekly list of empty beds.







# *Indigenous Care Homes*

## **Luke's Place**

Luke's Place is a residential youth group care initiative for boys who require culturally appropriate care and long-term planning to return to family or referral to on-going placement. Luke's Place works with birth families, CFS mandated agencies and sister organizations to provide wrap around support, assessment, care planning and skill development in areas including violence prevention, healthy relationships, and education and leadership development by using Indigenous culture and language.

Luke's Place is linked to our on-going care (foster care) program when required.

Luke's Place is a Level 4, 6-bed provincially licensed, residential care facility for boys 11-14 years of age.

Residents and their families also receive the benefit of accessing more than 50 Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre programs including community care centres, youth leadership development programs and Indigenous knowledge services in Winnipeg.

### **HISTORY**

Luke's Place was established in July 2007 in response to a gap in services for Indigenous boys with complex needs who are entering child welfare. The program is named after Luke Arcouette who after 30 years as a foster parent became the first live-in house father at Luke's Place. He filled the home with the Seven Sacred Teachings and ceremonies until his journey into the spirit world in 2014. His legacy lives on in this welcoming environment that honours his commitment to education and living the good life, and his generosity as a leader of sacred healing ceremonies, which continues with four traditional feasts a year.

### **PROGRAM GOAL**

Luke's Place provides a safe, nurturing environment where residents are valued, respected, honoured and cared for through Indigenous values, ceremonies, programming and approaches that support individual and family empowerment, healing and wellness. Each placement is a working collaboration and involves open communication between the Luke's Place team and youth, their families (*we adopt a broad definition of family*), CFS mandated agencies and other identified supports, encouraging the achievement of short and long-term goals and the aspirations of children, youth and their families.

## REFERRALS AND ADMISSION – Provincial placement desk with CFS mandated agencies only

1. CFS mandated agencies can contact Child Protection Branch - Provincial Placement Desk (PPD) at: 204-330-2701 to discuss if Luke's Place is best the option for boys and their family(ies) and to complete a referral package. PPD will consult with the Luke's Place team on availability and the best match for placement.
2. Once a referral package is received, Luke's Place will review and consult directly with a CFS mandated agency and each boy *with their families when possible* to make the final decision on placement. Luke's Place reserves the right to refuse a placement and will provide full disclosure of reasons for refusal and acceptance. If a referral package is accepted, Luke's Place will arrange a tour and pre-placement meeting to discuss with a CFS mandated agency representative and youth *with their families when possible* if the Luke's Place program is the best match to meet their needs.
3. If placement is agreed upon by all parties, a Placement Agreement is signed by the CFS mandated agency and Luke's Place and a move in date set. This Placement Agreement outlines all the costs including supplementary costs such as clothing, education, bus tickets/passes, etc.
4. A Care Plan (case management plan) is driven by youth in collaboration with a CFS mandated agency and Luke's Place team and will include components on setting goals for restoring/developing/sustaining healthy family relationships; programming in areas of life skills; culture and recreation activities; education and employment training; mental health assessments; and in-house chores and responsibilities.
5. Regular meetings, communication and care planning occurs between youth and *their families when possible*, a CFS mandated agency social worker and Luke's Place team to support the short and long-term goals of the care plan.

For detailed information on Provincial Licensing Standards to operate Residential Care Facilities visit: [www.gov.mb.ca/fs/cfsmanual/pubs/cclm/full\\_cclm.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/cfsmanual/pubs/cclm/full_cclm.pdf)

Email: [caring-for-our-relatives@mamawi.com](mailto:caring-for-our-relatives@mamawi.com) to request to be added to our weekly list of empty beds.





# *Indigenous Care Homes*

## **Isobel's Place**

Isobel's Place is a residential learning youth group care home for pre and postnatal teen mothers that uses an Indigenous-led Family Group Conferencing model to work with maternal and paternal families, CFS mandated agencies and sister organizations to support teen mothers to parent. As well as developing parenting skills, teens learn and prepare to live independently in individual, self-contained apartments.

Isobel's Place is a Level 3, 12-bed provincially licensed residential care facility for girls 14-17

years of age who are pregnant, for a minimum of three months to a maximum of six months. The facility offers an on-site, 20-space licensed child care centre (daycare) for infants up to two years of age and a Father's Learning and Mentorship Program.

Residents and their families also receive the benefit of accessing more than 50 Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre programs including community care centres, youth leadership development programs and Indigenous knowledge services in Winnipeg.

### **HISTORY**

Isobel's Place was established July 2000 in response to the high rates of adolescent pregnancy in Manitoba and lack of Indigenous led culturally appropriate services for young Indigenous teens and their families. The program is named after Isobel Monkman, the first live-in house mother who filled the home with love and kindness until her journey into the spirit world in 2007. Her legacy is creating a safe place for young mothers and their families and building their confidence as they prepare for the parenting journey. Isobel's Place exemplifies how the Indigenous community comes together to honor the sacred bond within families.

### **PROGRAM GOAL**

Isobel's Place provides a safe, nurturing environment where residents are valued, respected, honoured and cared for through Indigenous values, ceremonies, programming and approaches that support individual and family empowerment, healing and wellness. Each placement is a working collaboration and involves open communication between the Isobel's Place team and youth, their families (*we adopt a broad definition of family*), CFS mandated agencies and other identified supports, encouraging achievement of short and long-term goals and aspirations of youth and their families.



Residents who successfully complete and graduate from our five-stage comprehensive independent living program will keep the furniture from their suite on completing the program (discharge). We are proud that several former residents of Circle of Care are now employees of Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre.

### **REFERRALS AND ADMISSION – CFS mandated agencies only**

1. CFS mandated agencies can contact Isobel's Place at: 204-925-0320 to discuss if Isobel's Place is the best option for youth and their family(ies) and to receive a referral package.
2. Once a referral package is completed and submitted, Isobel's Place will arrange a pre-placement tour and meeting to discuss with a CFS mandated agency representative and youth *with their families when possible* if the Isobel's Place program is the best match to meet their needs.
3. If placement is agreed upon by all parties, then a Placement Agreement is signed by the CFS mandated agency and Isobel's Place. A move in date is set and the Family Group Conference process begins. The Placement Agreement outlines all the costs including supplementary costs such as clothing, education, bus tickets/passes, etc.
4. A Care Plan (case management plan) is completed through a Family Group Conference model that is driven by youth in collaboration with a CFS mandated agency and Isobel's Place team and will include components on setting goals for restoring/developing/ sustaining healthy family relationships; programming in areas of life skills; culture and recreation activities; education and employment training; mental health assessments; and in-house chores and short and long-term goals of the care plan.
5. For detailed information on Provincial Licensing Standards to operate Residential Care Facilities visit: [www.gov.mb.ca/fs/cfsmanual/pubs/cclm/full\\_cclm.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/cfsmanual/pubs/cclm/full_cclm.pdf)

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# *Indigenous Care Homes*

## **Circle of Care Program**

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Circle of Care is a level 3 licensed youth care home program (residential care facility) for girls and transgendered youth aged 10-14 who require short term care (maximum of 45 days) due to parent-child conflict. Circle of Care offers 6 licensed short-term beds with culturally appropriate, family focused programming. Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre utilizes a holistic approach with youth, their families and networks to foster growth in

relationships, skill development to meet the goal of reunification. Specifically, the program works with birth families, CFS mandated agencies and sister organizations to provide wrap around support, assessment, care planning and skill development in areas including violence prevention, healthy relationships, education and leadership development by using Indigenous culture and language.

### **HISTORY**

Circle of Care was established in 2003 in response to the high number of Indigenous girls and transgendered girls experiencing parent-teen conflict with a limited number of safe places to enter and exit the child welfare system. At that time, there were a high number of girls who were deemed runaways from homes and placements. It was then that we were learning about the dangers of Winnipeg streets and how vulnerable girls are to sexual exploitation and all forms of sexual, physical and physiological violence. The name Circle of Care comes from the wrap round nature of services and response systems that meet the girls immediate need for safety and protection.

Following a flood in late 2019, Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre took the opportunity to assess the needs of the community. It was determined that a large number of youth coming into our homes were experiencing parent child conflict and that those youth were not being reunified quickly with family, but rather, remaining within the child welfare system. Given this, it was decided to shift the focus of Circle of Care from an emergency placement to a program focused on reunifying families through mentoring to provide long-term tools and resources for families to continue building healthy relationships and skills together in order to transition youth home quickly and remain home with family.

## PROGRAM GOAL

The Circle of Care Program delivers family programming based on a holistic model that builds on the values and strengths of the Indigenous community and culture. Our goal is to unite families within a culturally appropriate setting through holistic supports and family focused programming so that youth may return home in a timely manner.

The Circle of Care Program provides the opportunity for young women and their families to experience caring, support and encouragement in a safe and nurturing environment, while building capacity to achieve their short-term goals.

## REFERRAL PROCESS

Circle of Care will accept referrals of all youth including those not in care. Referrals will be accepted from child and family services agencies and community-based organizations. The primary focus of all referrals must be Family Reunification. Pre-placement visits are required, and youth cannot simply be dropped off by an agency worker. In the case of emergency placements, a tour and time for the youth to settle is required before agency workers can leave. Placements are always based on a youth engaged decision.

1. CFS mandated agencies can contact Circle of Care at: 204-925-4475 to discuss if Circle of Care is the best option for youth and their family(ies), and to receive a referral package.
2. Once a referral package is completed and submitted, Circle of Care will arrange a pre-placement meeting and facility tour. The meeting is a preliminary discussion with a CFS mandated agency representative and youth with their families when possible to explore if the program is the best match to meet their needs.
3. If placement is agreed upon by all parties, a Placement Agreement is signed by the CFS mandated agency and Circle of Care and a move in date is set. The Placement Agreement outlines all costs including supplementary costs such as clothing, education, bus tickets/passes, etc.
4. A Care Plan (case management plan) is driven by youth in collaboration with the CFS mandated agency and Circle of Care team and will include components on setting goals for restoring / developing / sustaining healthy family relationships, programming in areas of life skills; culture and recreation activities; education and employment training; mental health assessments; and in-house chores and responsibilities.
5. Regular meetings, communication and care planning occurs between youth and their families when possible, a CFS mandated agency social worker and Circle of Care Team to support the short and long-term goals of the care plan.
6. For detailed information on Provincial Licensing Standards to operate Residential Care Facilities visit: [www.gov.mb.ca/fs/cfsmanual/pubs/cclm/full\\_cclm.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/cfsmanual/pubs/cclm/full_cclm.pdf)

Email: [caring-for-our-relatives@mamawi.com](mailto:caring-for-our-relatives@mamawi.com) to request to be added to our weekly list of empty beds.





# *Indigenous Care Homes*

## **Honouring the Spirit of Our Little Sisters**

Little Sisters is a residential youth group care home for female/transgender teens who require on-going specialized care to begin their healing journey from sexual exploitation/sex trafficking. Little Sisters is a safe home and operates as part of Tracia's Trust:

Manitoba's Sexual Exploitation/Trafficking Strategy. We work with birth families, CFS mandated agencies and sister organizations to provide wrap around support, assessment, care planning and skill development in areas including violence prevention, healthy relationships, and education and leadership

development by using Indigenous culture and language.

Little Sisters is a Level 5, 6-bed provincially licensed residential care facility for female/transgender youth 13-17 years of age.

Residents and their families also receive the benefit of accessing more than 50 Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre programs including community care centres, youth leadership development programs and Indigenous knowledge services in Winnipeg.

### **HISTORY**

Little Sisters was established in October 2003 to meet the unique and specialized needs of girls/transgender who are at risk or currently victimized by sexual exploitation/trafficking. This most extreme form of violence requires a collaborative response from community, government, CFS agencies, Indigenous leaders and experiential persons. The program was initiated at the direction and through the support of the Sexually Exploited Youth Community Coalition (SEYCC) to develop an urban Indigenous-led safe home.

SEYCC named this program Honouring the Spirit of Our Little Sisters to reflect the strength and value base, trauma informed and harm reduction approach that is culturally appropriate and fully engages female/transgender teens.

### **PROGRAM GOAL**

Little Sisters provides a safe, nurturing environment where residents are valued, respected, honoured and cared for through Indigenous values, ceremonies, programming and approaches that support individual and family empowerment, healing and wellness.

Each placement is a working collaboration and involves open communication between the Little Sisters team and youth, their families (*we adopt a broad definition of family*), CFS mandated agencies, other identified supports, encouraging achievement of short and long-term goals and aspirations of youth and their families. We are proud that several former residents of Little Sisters are now employees of Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre.

## **REFERRALS AND ADMISSION – Provincial placement desk with CFS mandated agencies only**

CFS mandated agencies can contact Child Protection Branch - Provincial Placement Desk (PPD) at: 204-330-2701 to discuss if Little Sisters is the best option for sexually exploited youth and their family(ies) and to complete a referral package. PPD will consult with the Little Sisters team on availability and the best match for placement.

1. Once a referral package is received, Little Sisters will review and consult directly with a CFS mandated agency and sexually exploited youth *with their families when possible* to make the final decision on placement. Little Sisters reserves the right to refuse a placement and will provide full disclosure of reasons for refusal and acceptance. If a referral package is accepted, Little Sisters will arrange a pre-placement tour and meeting to discuss with a CFS mandated agency representative and youth *with their families when possible* if the Little Sisters Program is the best match to meet their needs.
2. If placement is agreed upon by all parties, then a Placement Agreement is signed by the CFS mandated agency and Little Sisters and a move in date set. This Placement Agreement outlines all the costs including supplementary costs such as clothing, education, bus tickets/passes, etc.
3. A Care Plan (case management plan) is driven by youth in collaboration with a CFS mandated agency and Little Sisters team and will include components on setting goals for restoring/developing/sustaining healthy family relationships; programming in areas of life skills; culture and recreation activities; education and employment training; mental health assessments; and in-house chores and responsibilities.
4. Regular meetings, communication and care planning occurs between youth and *their families when possible*, a CFS mandated agency social worker and Little Sisters team to support the short and long-term goals of the care plan.
5. For detailed information on Provincial Licensing Standards to operate Residential Care Facilities visit: [www.gov.mb.ca/fs/cfsmanual/pubs/cclm/full\\_cclm.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/cfsmanual/pubs/cclm/full_cclm.pdf)

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# *Indigenous Care Homes*

## **Hands of Mother Earth (HOME) Rural Healing Lodge**

HOME is a residential youth group care home for female/transgender teens who require on-going specialized care to support their healing journey from sexual exploitation/sex trafficking. HOME operates as part of Tracia's Trust: Manitoba's Sexual Exploitation/ Trafficking Strategy and works with birth families, CFS mandated agencies and sister organizations. The initiative provides wrap around support, assessment, care planning and skill development in areas including violence prevention, realities of sexual exploitation, on-site education,

and leadership development by using Indigenous culture and language.

HOME is a Level 5, 6-bed provincially licensed residential care facility for female/transgender teens 13-17 years of age and is the only one in Canada.

Residents and their families also receive the benefit of accessing more than 50 Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre programs including community care centres, youth leadership development programs and Indigenous knowledge services in Winnipeg.

### **HISTORY**

HOME was established in September 2011 to develop an Indigenous-led rural healing lodge to meet the unique and specialized needs of girls/transgender who are at risk or currently victimized by sexual exploitation/trafficking. The program was initiated at the direction and through the support of the Sexually Exploited Youth Community Coalition (SEYCC). Our Elders insisted that we must return our children to the land to heal and secure a location to provide full protection from predators. SEYCC named this program Hands of Mother Earth to reflect the strength and value base, trauma informed and harm reduction approach that is culturally appropriate and fully engages girls/transgender.

### **PROGRAM GOAL**

HOME provides a safe, nurturing environment where residents are valued, respected, honoured and cared for through Indigenous values, ceremonies, programming and approaches that support individual and family empowerment, healing and wellness.



Each placement is a working collaboration and involves open communication between the HOME team and youth, their families (*we adopt a broad definition of family*), CFS mandated agencies or other supports identified, encouraging achievement of short and long-term goals and aspirations of youth and their families.

We are proud that several former residents of HOME are now employees of Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre.

### **REFERRALS AND ADMISSION – Provincial Placement Desk with CFS mandated agencies only**

1. CFS mandated agencies can contact Child Protection Branch - Provincial Placement Desk (PPD) at: 204-330-2701 to discuss if HOME is the best option for sexually exploited youth and their family(ies) and to complete a referral package. PPD will consult with the HOME team on availability and the best match for placement.
2. Once a referral package is received, HOME will review and consult directly with a CFS mandated agency and sexually exploited youth *with their families when possible* to make the final decision on placement. HOME reserves the right to refuse a placement and will provide full disclosure of reasons for refusal and acceptance. If a referral package is accepted, HOME will arrange a pre-placement tour and meeting to discuss with a CFS mandated agency representative and youth *with their families when possible* if the HOME program is the best match to meet their needs.
3. If placement is agreed upon by all parties, then a Placement Agreement is signed by the CFS mandated agency and HOME and a move in date set. The Placement Agreement outlines all the costs including supplementary costs such as clothing, education, bus tickets/passes, etc.
4. A Care Plan (case management plan) is driven by youth in collaboration with a CFS mandated agency and HOME team and will include components on setting goals for restoring/developing /sustaining healthy family relationships; programming in areas of life skills; culture and recreation activities; education and employment training; mental health assessments; and in-house chores and responsibilities.
5. Regular meetings, communication and care planning occur between youth and *their families when possible*, a CFS mandated agency social worker and the HOME team to support the short and long-term goals of the care plan.
6. For detailed information on Provincial Licensing Standards to operate Residential Care Facilities visit: [www.gov.mb.ca/fs/cfsmanual/pubs/cclm/full\\_cclm.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/cfsmanual/pubs/cclm/full_cclm.pdf)

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# *Honouring The Sacred Bond*

## **Family Group Conference**

Family Group Conference (FGC) is an Indigenous-led evidence-based model that assists families involved with CFS mandated agencies become the decision makers in reunifying their families. All members of a family meet to discuss what is needed to ensure their child(ren) will be cared for and safe, supported by a FGC mentor and a broad range of Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata wrap around supports and services. FGC acknowledges that families have the capacity and expertise to address family concerns and develop their own care plans with success and accountability, provided they have adequate and support their decisions.

### **HISTORY**

The FGC model is based on an Indigenous-led process where Indigenous communities worked together to keep their children safe. In 2000, the Maori people of New Zealand gifted Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre with the Indigenous model and the responsibility of being the caretakers of the FGC model, maintaining its integrity and restoring the sacred bond within families.

### **PROGRAM GOAL**

The FGC model protects cultural integrity and Indigenous knowledge to empower family reconciliation and restore the sacred bond within families. It is common practice in Indigenous communities for extended families and/or community members to share in the care and protection of children when their birth parents cannot or need support to do so. FGC builds on this natural instinct to want to participate in the care of immediate family members, especially when it involves the care and protection of children.

FGC has consistently high prevention and reunification rates, through access to Indigenous teachings and ceremony and by using resources effectively. FGC is a highly successful way to maintain and reunify Indigenous families and strengthen Indigenous communities through relationships, support, guidance, challenge and advocacy. In a recent external evaluation of FGC, the program was successful in preventing 141 children from coming into care and in reunifying 258 children with their parent(s).

Families also receive the benefit of accessing more than 50 of Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre programs including community care centres, youth leadership development programs and Indigenous knowledge services in Winnipeg.

FGC families are respected, honoured and cared for through Indigenous values, ceremonies, programming and approaches that support individual and family empowerment, healing and wellness. Each FGC is a working collaboration and involves open communication between the FGC team and youth, their families (*we adopt a broad definition of family*), CFS mandated agencies and other identified supports, encouraging achievement of short and long-term goals and aspirations of children, youth and their families.

### **REFERRALS AND ADMISSION – Self-referrals and CFS mandated agency referrals**

1. Self-referrals or CFS mandated agencies can ONLY be referred through the following Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre Programs:
  - a. Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre Caring for Our Relatives Programs: Youth Group Care (residential care facilities) and Care Homes (foster care programs);
  - b. Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre Community Care Centres located at 443 Spence Street, 363 McGregor Street and 575 Larsen Avenue in Winnipeg. Families can come individually to prevent their children from going into care and/or attend with staff from a CFS mandated agency.
  - c. Or email for more information: **[caring-for-our-relatives@mamawi.com](mailto:caring-for-our-relatives@mamawi.com)**.  
Currently FGC is not set up to take direct referrals from CFS mandated agencies.
2. If families meet the criteria of the programs above, an FGC mentor will assist with completing several forms to provide basic information about the family and child(ren). This information will be reviewed by the FGC team and a decision will be made if FGC is the best option for the family; the team may recommend other options to the family and/or CFS mandated agency.
3. If all parties agree, an FGC family mentor is assigned, and the FGC process begins. There are three steps involved in FGC: Preparation, the Family Meeting and Care Plan, as well as monitoring, review and evaluation.
4. CFS mandated agency staff and family members must be committed to the success of the FGC Care Plan and to working with the FGC mentor and CFS mandated agency staff as needed. The focus of each and every FGC Care Plan is the child(ren) and their relationship with both sides of their immediate and extended family.
5. Regular meetings, communication and care planning occur between children and their families, a CFS mandated agency representative and the FGC team to support the short and long-term goals of the Care Plan. Supporting reunification is the main goal of the FGC Care Plan.







# *Youth Housing*

## **Yellow Shawl Youth Mentorship Housing Program**

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Yellow Shawl is an Indigenous-led youth housing initiative designed to support youth 16-21 years of age who would benefit from a safe and supportive independent living program. Gender specific homes are support helper. This innovative program nurtures youth and helps them to set and achieve short and long-term holistic goals for their personal and professional development, education, training and/or employment and experiential life skills program. Yellow Shawl operates a total of five homes for six males and nine females who are low to medium risk youth,

are in school, training or employed, and are committed to building on their independent living skills. Each resident has a self-contained bedroom and is required to share all other communal spaces and participate in the independent living program.

Residents and their families also receive the benefit of accessing more than 50 Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre programs including community care centres, youth leadership development programs and Indigenous knowledge services in Winnipeg.

### **HISTORY**

Yellow Shawl was established in January 2016 to respond to the high number of homeless and/or couch surfing Indigenous youth who are committed to their education and employment goals but do not have a safe place to live. The initiative is inspired by our sister organization Egadz in Saskatoon (also called MY Homes) and the success of its Downtown Youth Centre Mentorship Program. The name Yellow Shawl was given by an Elder through ceremony to represent the east - a new beginning every day, a fresh start and the warm and protective covering of a shawl. This model is designed to celebrate Indigenous knowledge by living in a communal home environment supported by positive role models, mentors and other residents.

### **PROGRAM GOAL**

Yellow Shawl offers a safe, nurturing, supportive environment where youth are valued, respected, honoured and cared for through ceremonies, programming and approaches that promote individual and family empowerment, healing and wellness. The program's youth-centered model addresses the needs of individuals in order to achieve the short and long-term goals and the aspirations of youth and their families.

We encourage collaboration and open communication between youth and those who they identify as their natural and formal support system, their families (*we adopt a broad definition of family*), and the Yellow Shawl team. We are proud that several former residents of Yellow Shawl have pursued and completed various university programs and employment opportunities. Some have moved from being a resident to a live-in mentor or youth support helper or are now employees of Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre.

## **REFERRALS AND ADMISSION – Self-referral and / or sister organization referral**

1. Self-referrals can be made by calling Yellow Shawl at: 204-925-0329 or emailing [ysyouth@mamawi.com](mailto:ysyouth@mamawi.com) or through the following sister organizations: CEDA, R.B. Russell High School, St. John's High School, Wayfinders-Seven Oaks School Division, Ka Ni Kanichihk, Resources Assistance for Youth-RAY Inc. and Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre programs.
2. A Yellow Shawl helper will meet with youth to discuss if Yellow Shawl is the best option to support short and long-term goals. This may include a tour of a home where the best match is located.
3. If all parties agree, a referral package will be completed that includes an Independent Living Care Plan and rental tenant agreement for a self-contained bedroom and shared communal areas. The care planning is 100 per cent driven by youth; Yellow Shawl plays a mentorship role in supporting this Care Plan. Care Plans are reviewed regularly between youth and the assigned Youth Support Helper.
4. *PLEASE NOTE: Yellow Shawl is not a placement resource or foster care program or licensed residential care facility through the Child Protection Branch nor is it designed to report to CFS mandated agencies.*
5. Regular meetings, communication and care planning occurs between youth, their support system and the Yellow Shawl program team. Independent Living Skills are constantly assessed, and new plans developed to further enhance and increase independent living skills to support the short and long-term goals and aspirations for the participant's future.

Email: [caring-for-our-relatives@mamawi.com](mailto:caring-for-our-relatives@mamawi.com) to request to be added to our weekly list of empty beds.





# Youth Housing

## Wi Che Win Housing First Program

Wi Che Win is an Indigenous-led initiative for housing, offering a “Housing First” program that provides housing and wrap around services to help youth find and keep a home.

The program works intensively with participants to transition from being homeless to having homes. Youth are required to participate in an intake assessment prior to joining the program. Each youth receives support for permanent housing and is required to participate in wrap around services that include skill building,

cultural programming and mentorship. Each youth is assigned a youth helper to assist with housing and Indigenous-led programming that promotes social and community integration and provides support in setting short- and long-term goals.

Residents and their families also receive the benefit of accessing more than 50 Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre programs including community care centres, youth leadership development programs and Indigenous knowledge services in Winnipeg.

### HISTORY

Wi Che Win was established in 2015 following the success of our adult Housing First Programs. We identified a need for higher risk youth who would benefit from one to one mentorship support to find, secure and keep housing. This model is designed to celebrate Indigenous knowledge by offering wrap around support through a harm reduction and trauma informed approach rooted in Medicine Wheel Teachings.

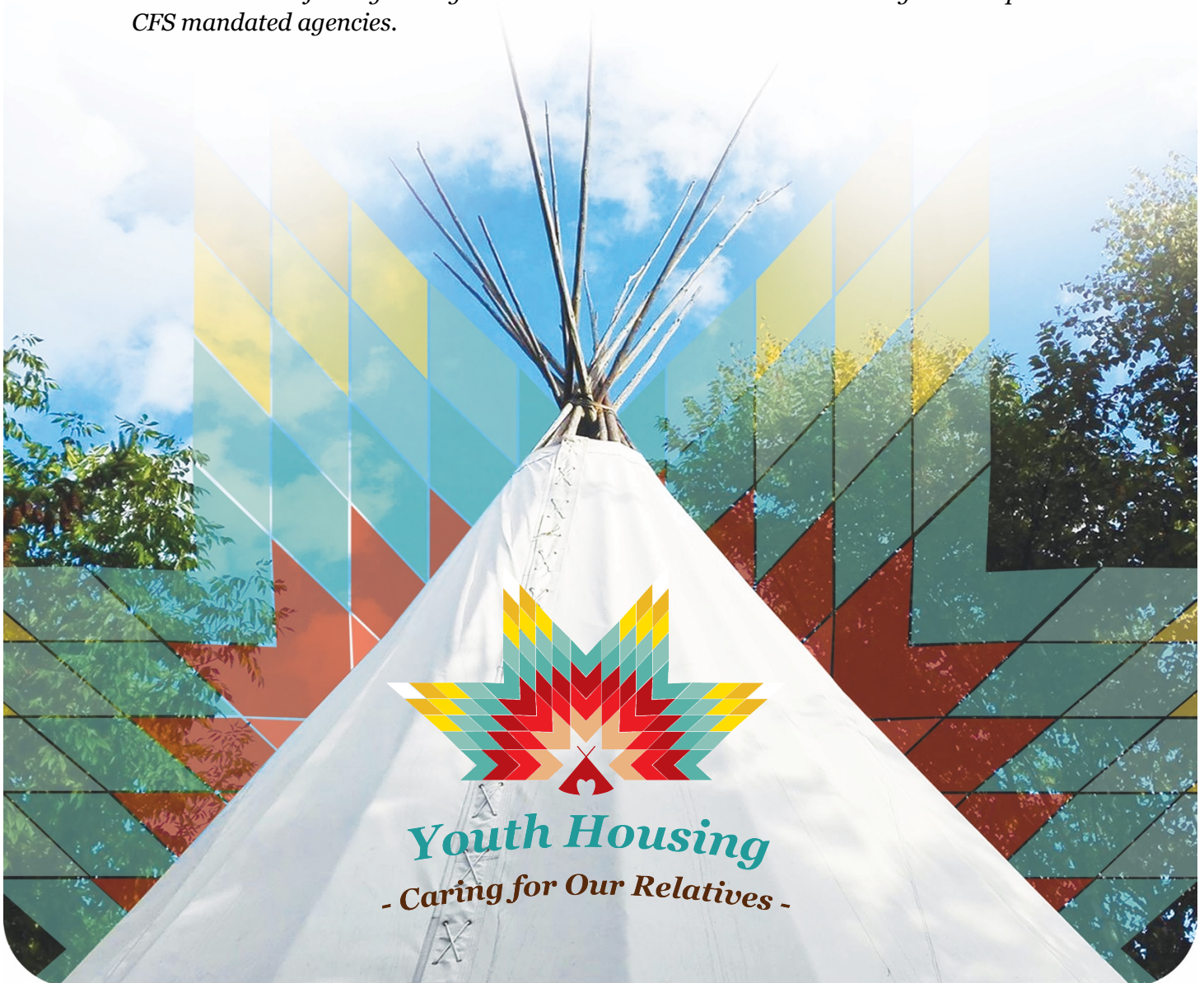
### PROGRAM GOAL

Wi Che Win provides a safe, nurturing environment where youth are valued, respected, honoured and cared for through Indigenous values, ceremonies, programming and approaches that support individual and family empowerment, healing and wellness. The working collaboration involves open communication between the team, youth and those who they identify as their natural and formal support system, and their families (*we adopt a broad definition of family*), encouraging achievement of short and long-term goals and aspirations of youth and their families.



## REFERRALS AND ADMISSION – Self-referral only

1. Self-referrals can call: 204-925-0501 located at 800 Selkirk Avenue in Winnipeg.
2. A helper will meet with youth to discuss if Wi Che Win is the best option to support the candidate's short and long-term goals.
3. Once accepted, youth will be assigned a youth helper and a Care Plan will be developed to highlight the short and long-term goals and required support. The care planning is 100 per cent driven by youth; Wi Che Win plays a mentorship role in supporting the Care Plan which is reviewed regularly by youth in conjunction with their youth helper.
4. Regular meetings, communication and care planning occurs between youth, their support system and the Wi Che Win Program. Independent Living Skills are constantly assessed, and new plans developed to further enhance and expand independent living skills.
5. *PLEASE NOTE: Wi Che Win is not a placement resource, foster care program or licensed residential care facility through the Child Protection Branch nor is designed to report to CFS mandated agencies.*



***Notes:***

## ***Notes:***



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