



Willow Place

WHERE HEALING BEGINS

Annual Report
2020-2021

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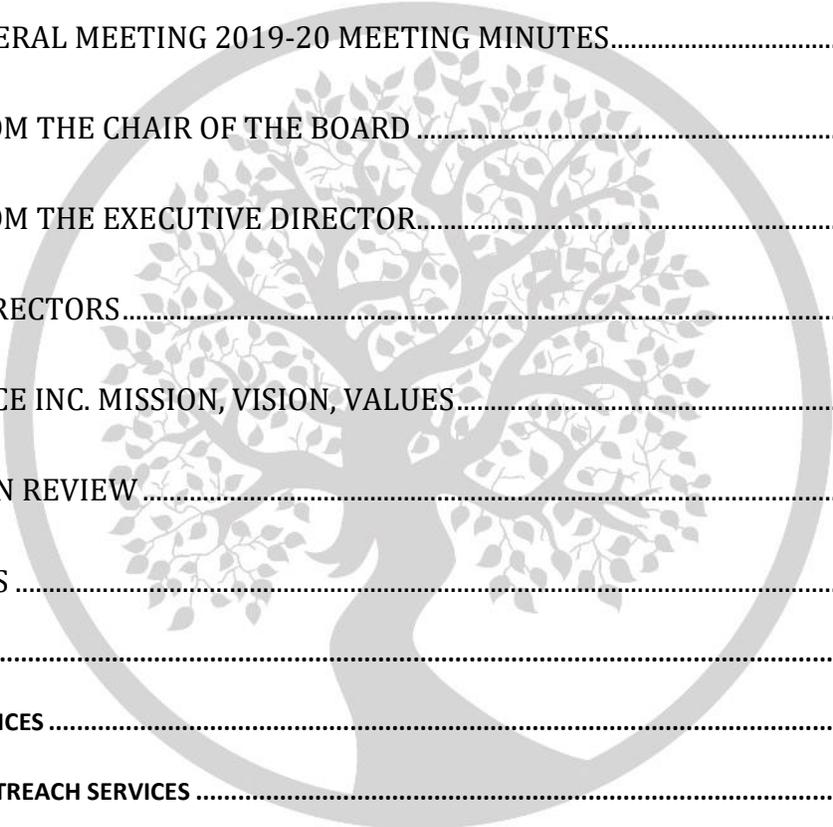
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Annual General Meeting 2020-2021 Agenda

Wednesday, September 29th, 2021, 6:00 – 6:30 pm
Location: Zoom

6:00pm

Call the Meeting to Order

Approval of Agenda 2021

Approval of Minutes 2020

Presentation & Overview of Audited Financial Statement

Motion to approve Audited Financial Statements

Appoint and motion to approve Auditor for 2022

Motion to approve the Annual Report 2020-2021

Nominations to the Board

6:30pm

Adjournment

Annual General Meeting 2019-20

Meeting Minutes

Held on:

Wednesday, September 30th, 2020 - 6:00pm - 6:30pm

Location:

Zoom

Attending:	Chelsea Fraser	Co-Chairperson	
	Isabel Bight	Board Member	
	Tatjana Brkic	Board Member	
	Deanna Delgrosso	CUPE Board Representative	
	Susan Emerson	Board Member	
	Amanda Mather	Board Member	
	Erin McEvoy,	MGEU Board Representative	
	Pamela McLeod	Board Member	
	Marcie Wood	Executive Director	
Also attending:	Douglas Smith		
	Sarah Brown	To be elected as a new board member.	
Call to order:	6:00 p.m.		
Agenda	Amanda/Sarah: "That the agenda be approved."		CARRIED
Minutes	Emerson/Delgrosso: "That the minutes of the AGM of 2019 be approved."		CARRIED
Audited Financial Report	Presentation by Scarrow and Donald. Mather/McLeod: "That the audited financial statements be accepted as presented."		CARRIED
	McLeod/Emerson: "That Scarrow and Donald be retained as the financial auditors for Willow Place for 2020-2021."		CARRIED
Annual Report	McLeod/Emerson: "That the annual report be approved as presented."		CARRIED
Nominations	McLeod/Emerson: "That Isabel Bright be elected to the Board of Directors of Willow Place."		CARRIED
Adjournment	6:09 p.m.		

Message from the Chair of the Board

It is hard to believe that this report encompasses a full year of life during a pandemic. For Willow Place, it meant finding new ways to support survivors of family violence while keeping everyone physically safe and mentally supported - including staff and volunteers. The Board is profoundly grateful to the entire Willow Place community for your courage, imagination and dedication over the past year. Because of you, we've been able to continue the momentum that began well before we ever heard of COVID-19.

The ability to adapt and respond to its clients' changing needs has established Willow Place as a vital part of Manitoba's network of family violence shelters. Willow Place continues to be a leader in innovative strategies and programming for the families we provide services to.

As a policy, not an operational board, it is our purpose to support the programs and initiatives designed and undertaken by our dedicated staff team and volunteers, led by the executive director, Marcie Wood, whose report details the activities of the preceding year.

We are filled with gratitude and appreciation for financial support from the province and our funders, as well as the generosity of supporters and service partners. A special thank you to the partnerships who have been able to provide guidance, support, innovation and a calm approach as Willow Place has adapted to the ever changing needs and protocols.

We are profoundly grateful to the board members for the gift of their time and talents.

Chelsea Fraser, Board Chair

Message from the Executive Director

The year began with unprecedented challenges that could never have been foreseen. The COVID-19 pandemic ushered Willow Place, as well as the entire gender-based (GBV) and family violence (FV) sector, into uncharted territory that demanded the re-envisioning of ways to continue to provide service delivery while ensuring the protection and safety of everyone. The Willow Place team came together, succinctly, and persevered through the unknown to maintain necessary services for the vulnerable individuals and families we serve.

Each day, we support diverse individuals and families who have had complex, intersectional experiences related to violence, those most adversely impacted were in particular, racialized people – Black, Indigenous and People of Colour. These intersectional experiences were exacerbated by COVID-19 and what is now known as the “shadow pandemic”. Signs of the emergence of the “shadow pandemic” were evident early due to the decrease in crisis line calls and request for shelter services. As this was of serious concern, Willow Place created and participated in a public awareness campaign to ensure that the community knew that shelters were open and outreach services were still accessible during “Code Red”. Willow Place also made texting services available via the crisis line. This addition allowed for increased access to crisis services that were less obvious during the long periods of isolation imposed as a result of the health orders in effect. The delivery of outreach services, including the addition of a Housing Specialist position, were also required to pivot to meet the needs of the community. As on-site drop-in services were not available, Willow Place experienced an increase in outreach services provided via phone counselling.

Although this past year was filled with many challenges, there are notable highlights as well. The need for greater collaboration and conversation between stakeholders across the province was identified very early. As a result, many tables were formed as a means to join forces to ensure that service delivery gaps would not grow during the pandemic. Many of these tables have led to continued collaborative capacity building that centres on culturally inclusive, anti-oppressive, trauma-informed practice rooted in compassion, survivor – and human-rights based perspectives. These tables are integral for the continued work required to reduce barriers for service for marginalized and racialized peoples. Among our core values is to routinely engage in a reflective practice that considers established power imbalances and collectively grow this awareness so that we can continuously work toward equitable response and solutions reflected in the wrap-around services provided at Willow Place.

Another important highlight to mention was the exceptional support received from the community during this time. This support allowed for the expansion of programming and enhanced service delivery that would not have been otherwise possible.

In closing, as we reflect on this past year and look ahead to the next, we would like to honour the dedication, commitment, resiliency and growth of our organization. We will take the knowledge that we have gained and allow this to guide our further understanding of the complex intersectional experiences of individuals and families who have experienced violence and renew our commitment to continued growth.

Sincerely, Marcie Wood, Executive Director

Board of Directors

Chair

- Chelsea Fraser

Secretary

- Pamela McLeod

Treasurer

- Amanda Mather

Directors

- Tatjana Brkic
- Isabel Bright
- Dr. Sarah Brown

MGEU Staff Representative

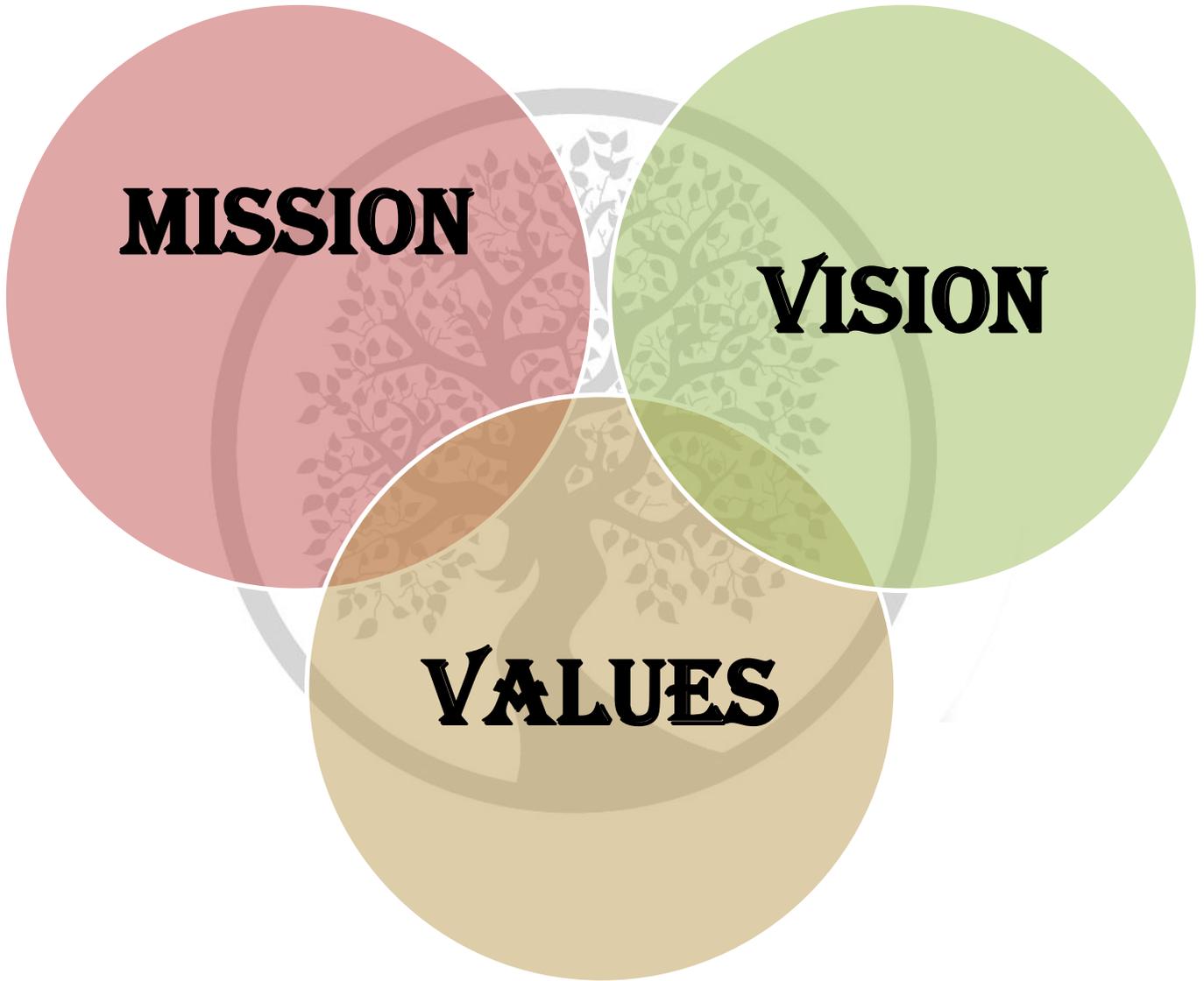
- Erin McEvoy

CUPE Staff Representative

- Deanna Del Grosso



Willow Place Inc. Mission, Vision, Values



OUR MISSION

**We Support Manitobans
in Nurturing Healthy
Relationships in a Safe
Space.**



OUR VALUES

**Understanding
Compassion &
Respect**

**Integrity &
Commitment**

**Diversity &
Collaboration**

OUR VISION



2020 – 2021 IN REVIEW

The year began with uncertainty and challenges presented by COVID-19. Although there was so much unknown about COVID-19, especially in the beginning weeks, our Willow Place team was able to put into a place a robust pandemic plan.

We have always dealt with infectious or contagious virus and/or illness in shelter, given that we are a 24/7 operation, so this enabled us to build upon the protocols that we already had in place resulting in little impact for the continuation of shelter services.

Unfortunately, many of our community initiatives and partnerships with external stakeholders and collaterals were impacted by the virus which resulted in initially, a stoppage of these offering of these services and once deemed safe to do so, they resumed with their own set of restrictions in place.

Partnerships and Networks

- Willow Place partnered with the Klinik MWMS team in 2019 as a means to support their STAR bed program. This partnership is mutually supportive for both Willow Place and Klinik and in particular the individuals and families we serve to ensure that safe addition recovery is available when needed. As a result of the STAR Bed program expansion, Willow Place is now able to refer current shelter residents into this program as well.
- Willow Place has continued to participate on the transitional housing committee led by Wahbung Abinoonjiiag as the lead of this collaboration that include 9 organizations. This past year focused on the design, infrastructure and capacity building.
- Women’s Health Klinik and Willow Place had joined forces to provide onsite medical care for residents while they are in shelter as well as the offering of groups surrounding female health issues. These services were not implemented onsite but rather via virtual consults as a result of the pandemic. Unfortunately, there was not significant interest in this format by residents. The residents did, however, actively participate in the virtual groups that were offered by the WHC team that centred on aspects of female health issues.
- The delivery of Caring Dads was met with significant challenges over this past year. For the period of April 1 2020 through March 31 2021 a total of 26 Dads were enrolled with a total 10 that were able to complete the program. Code Red restrictions that often led to groups closures or “pauses” played a large factor as the offering of this program virtually was not successful.

- During this past year, we continued to strengthen our partnership with the Salvation Army SonRise Village. This partnership was established to bring perching services and supports to those who access these services and are in need of support due to GBV or family violence. Onsite services were paused for a period of time as COVID restrictions were implemented, however, once these were established in-person counselling resumed. Outreach services offered at the Downtown Access Centre continued via phone counselling as a result of referrals or informational posters.
- The Willow Place Challenge for Change project, sponsored by WAGE, wrapped up at the midway point of the year. The final include:
 - ***Stop the Violence Training***: This training was made available to all civil servants via the Government of Manitoba OSD training portal. This training has been made available to the public via the Manitoba Association of Women’s Shelters and the Willow Place websites. A press release in December 2020 made by Cath Cox, the Minister responsible for the Status of Women, highlighted the availability of the “Stop the Violence” training and announced that the Family Violence Prevention Program had sponsored 1500 participants to obtain this training as well.
 - ***Gender-based Analysis of Street Health Survey***: The research project with End Homelessness Winnipeg released an infographic on initial findings in November 2020 related to gender differences in experiences of homelessness using the last Winnipeg Street Health Survey data.
 - ***Evaluation of Promising Practices for Domestic Violence Services***: The final evaluation report from Health in Common regarding the promising practices that were implemented at Willow Place to strengthen service delivery for those experiencing domestic and family violence.

Trauma-informed Services

The implementation of enhanced protocols related to COVID-19 were necessary to offer safe, uninterrupted service delivery for individuals and families needing our support. However, these enhanced restrictions did pose challenges for our team as they did not align with the trauma-informed service delivery principles that are at the core of our organizational values. As a result, our team worked very hard to balance the impacts of these restrictions through the provision of trauma-informed practices rooted in compassion for our shelter residents. The dedication and resiliency of our Willow Place team was exceptional as they persevered to present a steadfast and calm approach, which helped to alleviate frustrations, anxieties and fears, so we could continue to provide person-centred services.

Healthy Living Program

The Healthy Living program was significantly impacted during the first wave of the pandemic. As the need to follow restrictions and protocols was paramount and due to space restrictions within our facility, the offering and facilitation of counselling groups and activities became very difficult. As more information became known, our team was able to pivot and adjust

from the usual ways of offering this programming through their creativity and ingenuity. As a result, by fall a full offering of safe programming was once again made available for those whom access our services. This includes our Elder Victoria, various therapeutic groups, drumming and cultural crafts and activities, yoga, WHC groups and physical activities. The ultimate goal of this program is to experience positive social and cultural activities, build healthy life skills and provide opportunities to develop connections within our community. Willow Place intends to provide a wide range of activities and groups that will introduce the women and children to various aspects of healthy living practices.

Services for Children

Willow Place offers the families and children who access our services a robust continuum of support. This continuum evolves from the holistic, wrap-around therapeutic counselling and support provided by our Children's Counsellor. This includes counselling and case management for the mom and the child, as well, age appropriate groups for the children and parenting groups for the moms'.

In addition to this, the Department of Education and Training provides Willow Place with a full-time onsite teacher for the school year. This allows the children to maintain regular daily learning in safe space with a teacher who understands their needs.

Last but not least was the addition of two full-time ECE's for a period of 10 months as well as the summer day camp during the months of July and August. These positions allow for the additional support and programming for children while they reside in shelter. They assist with building supportive structure for the children while offering a range of activities. These positions were made possible by grant funding.

Supporting Research and Student Practicum

Willow Place has continued to welcome opportunities to collaborate with post secondary institutions for the purpose to support research projects as well as student practicum placements. During this past year Willow Place has had the privilege to participate in the following:

- A National Forum on GBV and the Impacts of COVID-19 whereas Willow Place presented on behalf of central Canada. The event was hosted by the Minister Monsef, and other leaders from organizations across Canada were in attendance.
- Our team hosted 4 four practicum students from the University of Manitoba School of Social Work. Each of these students were at varying stages of their educational journeys.
- A national project hosted by the Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women & Children. The goal of the project is to identify a national set of core capacities that will be helpful to GBV organizations as they continue to design and

implement sustainable and relevant training to strengthen collaborative community responses.

- The Law Modernization Pilot Project implemented in 2017 these initiatives were created as a result: Law Modernization Arbitration for family law matters; Enhancements to the Maintenance Enforcement Program; Launch of the New Child Support Service on July 1, 2020; Launch of Phase 1 of a single-window Family Resolution Service; A central portal for digital services has also been launched and services are available 24/7; Family Guides will help families navigate the system;
- The advisory committee for “*Caught in the Middle.*” This study is being carried out by the University of Manitoba and Resolve as it looks at the impact and outcomes with regard to children whose parents are currently in the court system and where domestic and/or family violence is present.

Support from the Community

Due to health precautions and restrictions for the novel coronavirus pandemic, the second annual *Hockey Helps the Homeless* (HHTH) was adapted to become a virtual fundraiser in March 2021: The Canada Life Cup. The Canada Life Cup allowed virtual teams to compete with fundraising, and Manitoba competed against other virtual events in Alberta and BC. Willow Place along with Resource Assistance for Youth (RaY) and Red Road Lodge, will receive equal shares of the \$90,000.00+ raised through HHTH in 2021-2022. During the pandemic, Willow Place was also fortunate to experience increased monetary donations from both private and corporate donors. Royal LePage Winnipeg teams continued to raise both awareness and funds for Willow Place via a variety of means, granted to Willow Place through the Royal LePage Shelter Foundation (\$40,000.00+). Third party fundraising also increased by 30% over the prior fiscal year, and included a virtual comedy night, proceeds of sales, and online donation drives (monetary and in-kind).

Facility

Warm, welcoming spaces that support the well being of our residents and staff are a priority for our organization. We continuously endeavor to maintain all of our spaces utilizing a 5S or lean management approach to maximize our limited space or improve the technology we use. It should be noted that these upgrades would not be possible without the generous community support and grant funds that were received over the past year. The following are improvements made over the past year:

- Medical room renovation completed - May 2020
- New storage sheds – November 2020
- Camera equipment upgrade - September 2020
- Safety pendant range upgrade - June 2020
- Workstation and server upgrades – January 2021

OUR SERVICES

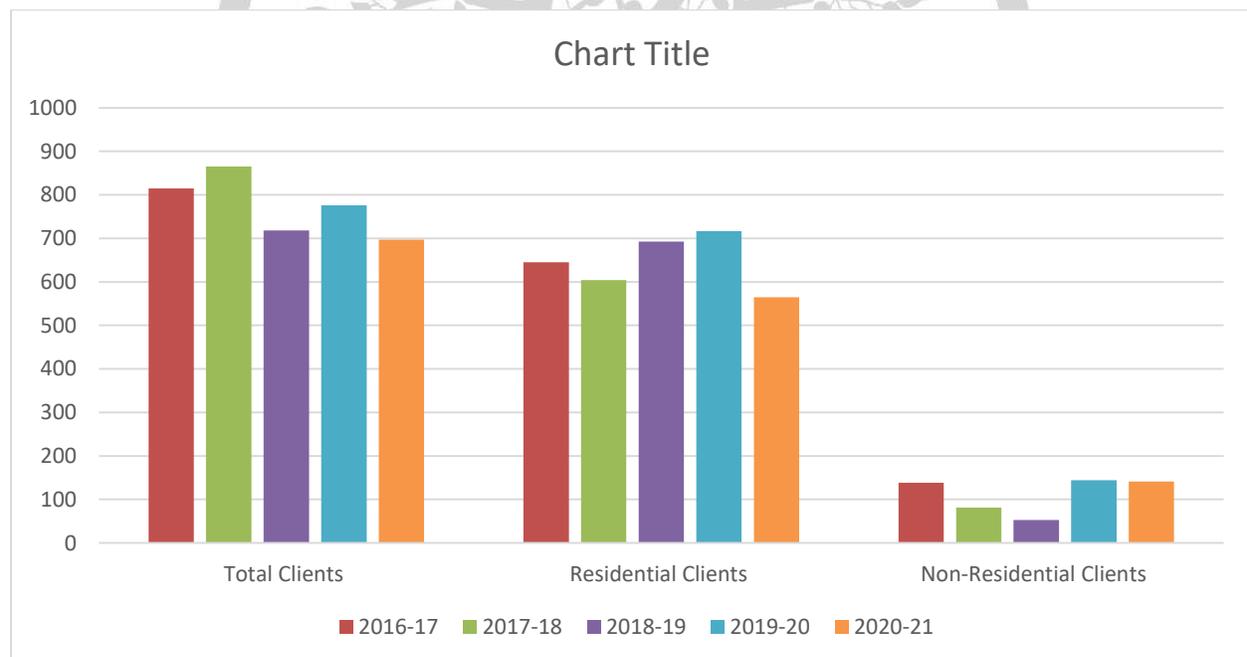
CRISIS SERVICES

Purpose:

To provide crisis stabilization for women and their children in a secure 38 bed shelter environment by ensuring physical, mental, emotional and safety needs are met. The program provides counselling, advocacy and referral support services.

The facility is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including the crisis line.

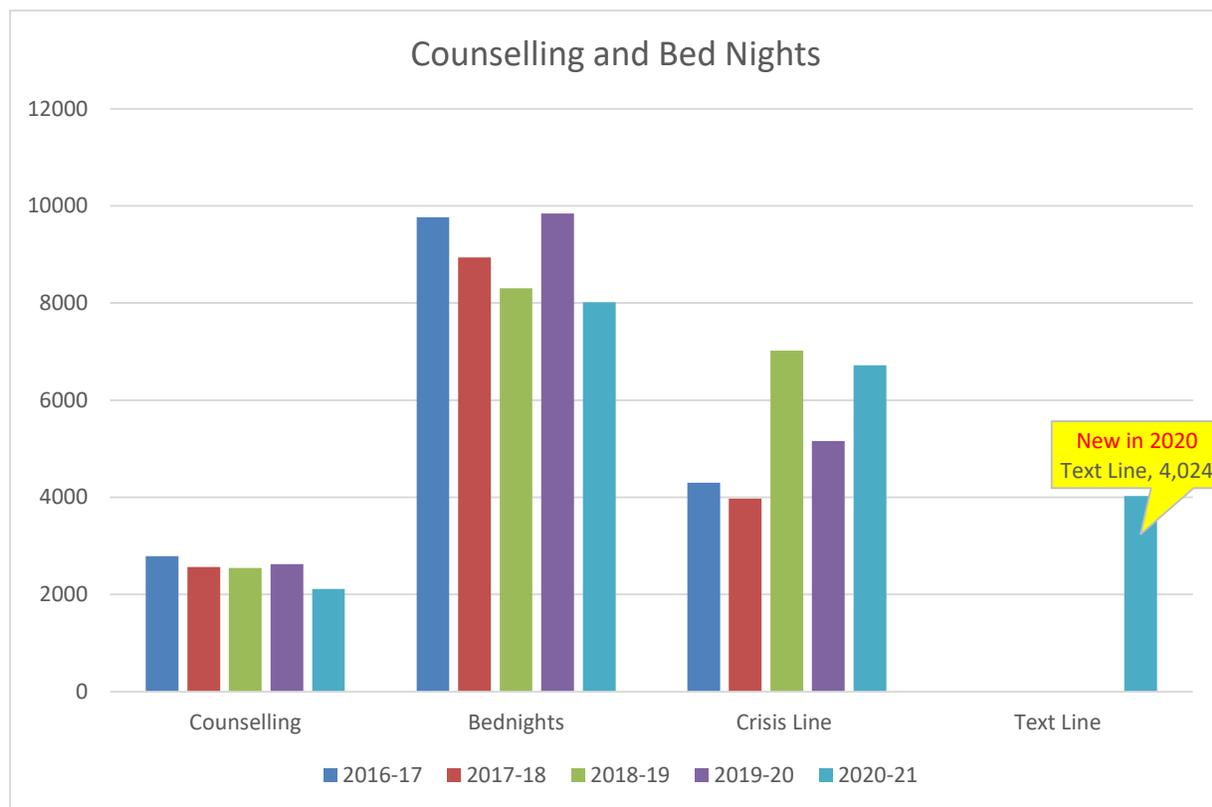
Clients' Statistics



	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-2020	2020-2021
Total Clients	815	865	718	776	697
Residential Clients	645	604	693	717	565
Non-Residential Clients*	138	81	53	144*	141*

**Non-Residential clients include participants that seek outreach counselling through the various outreach services provided by Willow Place. This includes on-site services at Son Rise Village and the Downtown Access Centre and the co-facilitation of Caring Dads with Winnipeg CFS. During this fiscal year we experienced a decrease in off-site in-person outreach services and an increase in outreach services provided by the residential counsellors.*

Counselling & Bed Nights Statistics

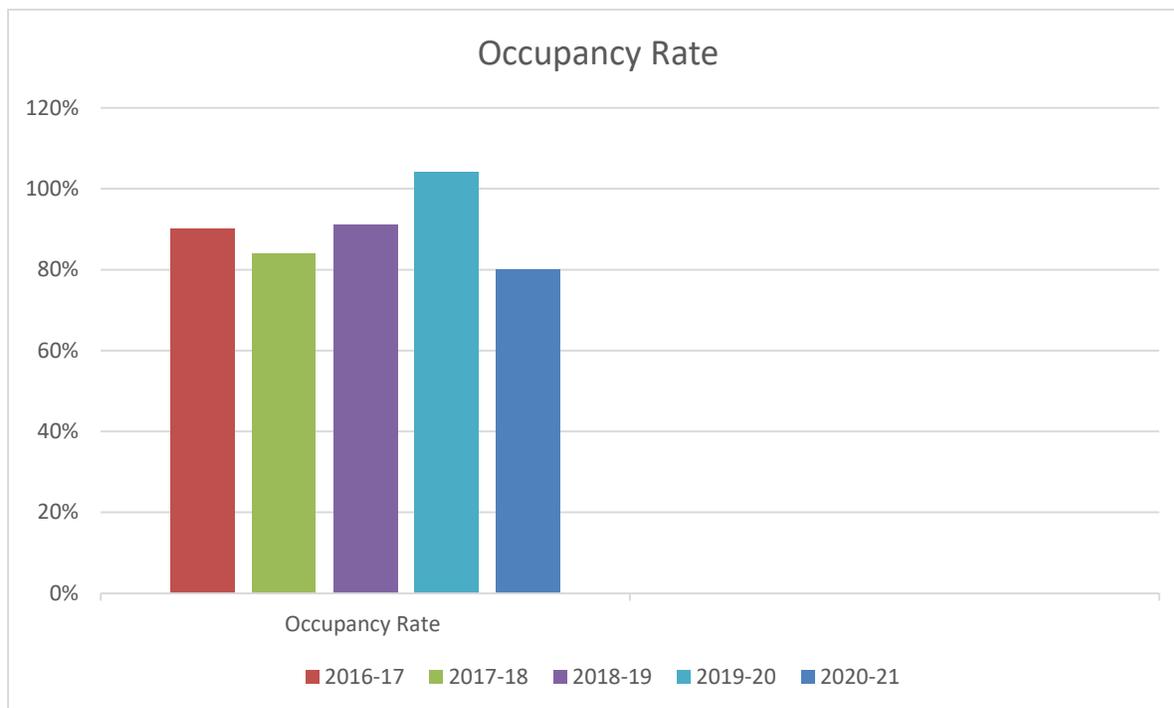


	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Counseling	2790	2564	2543	2625	2116
Bed Nights	9766	8936	8304	9845	8018
Crisis Line	4299	3977	7021	5162	6717
Text Line	-	-	-	-	4024

Facts for 2020-2021: Counseling: 27% of counseling in Manitoba shelters; Bed Nights: 27% of *all* bed nights in Manitoba; Crisis line: 42% of calls in Manitoba

** Number of Counselling Sessions for residential women's individual counselling session only as this does not include outreach counselling services. This is calculated using total number of residential women to better reflect which women the data value, number of counselling sessions applies to.*

Occupancy Analysis for Willow Place over the past 5 years

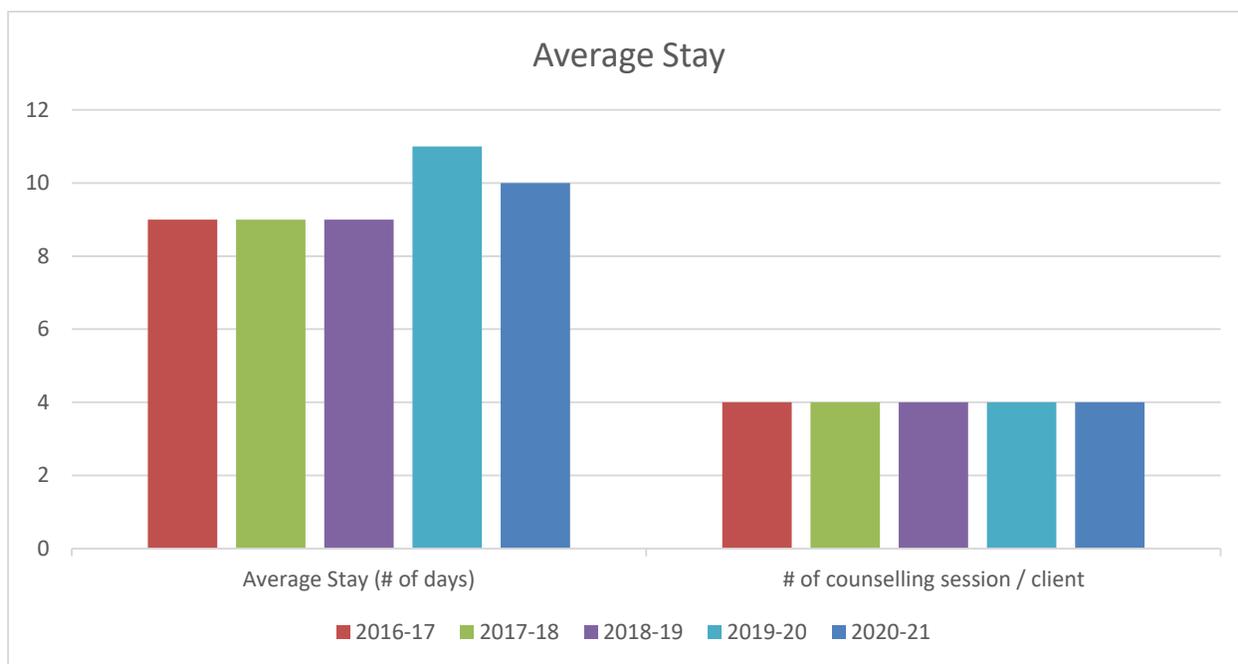


Year	Rooms	Bed-nights	Estimated Occupancy Rate
2016-2017	17	5,569	90%
2017-2018	17	5,243	84%
2018-2019	17	5,631	91%
2019-2020	17	6,447	104%
2020-2021	17	4,778	80%

COVID restrictions and resulted in a lower occupancy rate for 2020-2021.

**5 years Average Rate of Occupancy from 2015-2020: 95%. This calculation looks at occupancy as a portion of available rooms (i.e. 100% occupancy means one person in every room). This method takes the children out of the equation so we don't have to consider family size as a factor.*

Average Stay Statistics



	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Average Stay (no. of days)	9	9	9	11	10
# of counseling session/client	4	4	4	4	4

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

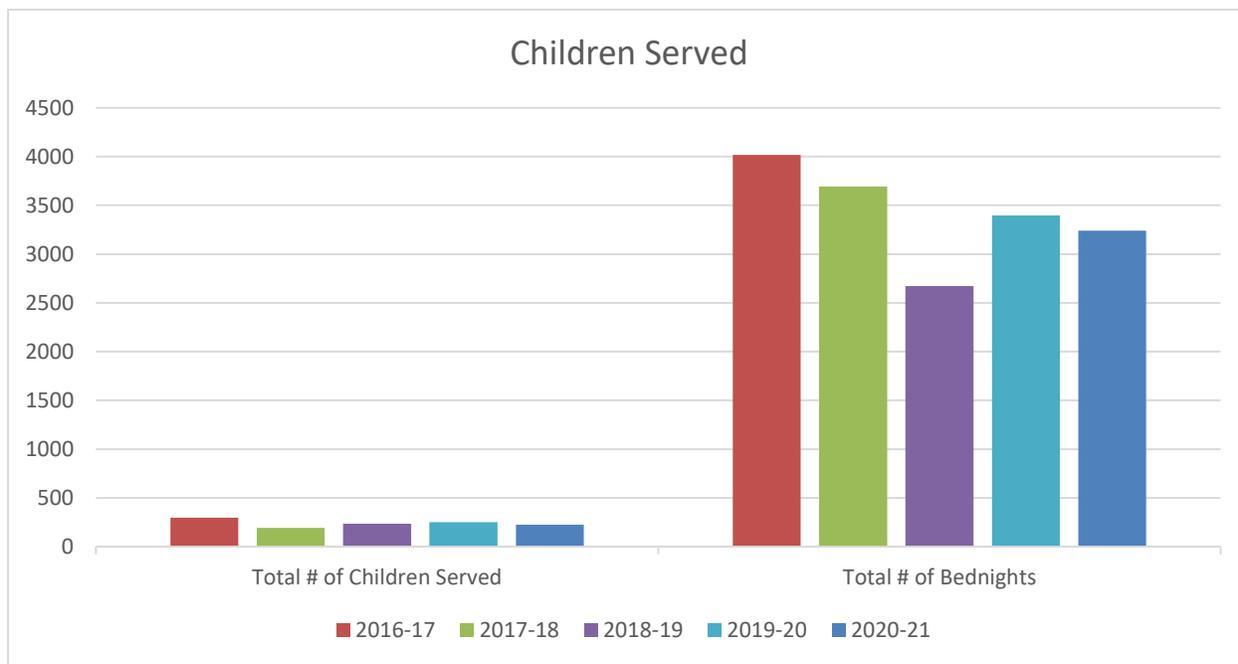
Purpose:

To provide support to children in the shelter in an environment of unconditional care.

The Children's Counsellor oversees Children's Services which include:

- Support to children and parents regarding the impacts of domestic violence;
- Child-minding and respite in both a structured and non-structured, play-based environment;
- On-site school program supported by Winnipeg School Division and the Province of Manitoba for full-time teacher. The Canada Summer Jobs program grant and donations support a full-day Day Camp program for July and August.

Children’s Services Statistics



	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Total # of Children Served	297	194	234	251	224
Total # of Bed nights	4016	3693	2673	3398	3240

COMMUNITY OUTREACH SERVICES

Purpose:

To provide education and awareness regarding healthy relationships and domestic violence services that support population health prevention and early intervention initiatives. To reach out to populations experiencing domestic violence who currently are not accessing services.

The Community Coordinator, with support from the Outreach Coordinator and Community Facilitator, oversees developing community connections not only with organizations, groups, businesses and the general public, as well as public education; this includes recruiting, training and managing volunteers; managing our web site and social media, marketing, fundraising, and grants. 2020-2021 saw the following results:

- Public Presentations..... 35
- Number of People reached in presentations..... 334

Social Media Followers:

Twitter.....	1000+
Facebook.....	1500+
LinkedIn.....	1000+
Instagram.....	1000+
Number of Volunteers.....	4
Number of Donors.....	1000+

Although the Community Team was limited to virtual presentations, over 105,000 individuals were reached annually through social media platforms, excluding any boosted social media content. Growth in followers and engagement was seen across all social media applications.

Willow Place quarterly e-newsletters reached over 1,200 subscribers per distribution in 2020-2021 and helped to communicate agency priorities and current needs.

Although the on-site volunteer program was suspended due to COVID-19, a small group of volunteers supported Willow Place with gardening, donations pick-up and collection drives for in-kind items. Community Team staff utilized this time to re-vamp the volunteer recruitment and training program, and to build skill in virtual presentation delivery. Regular Women's Health Centre virtual information sessions were facilitated in shelter for residents. Special presentations included Financial Literacy with Miss World Canada 2020, Svetlana Mamaeva.

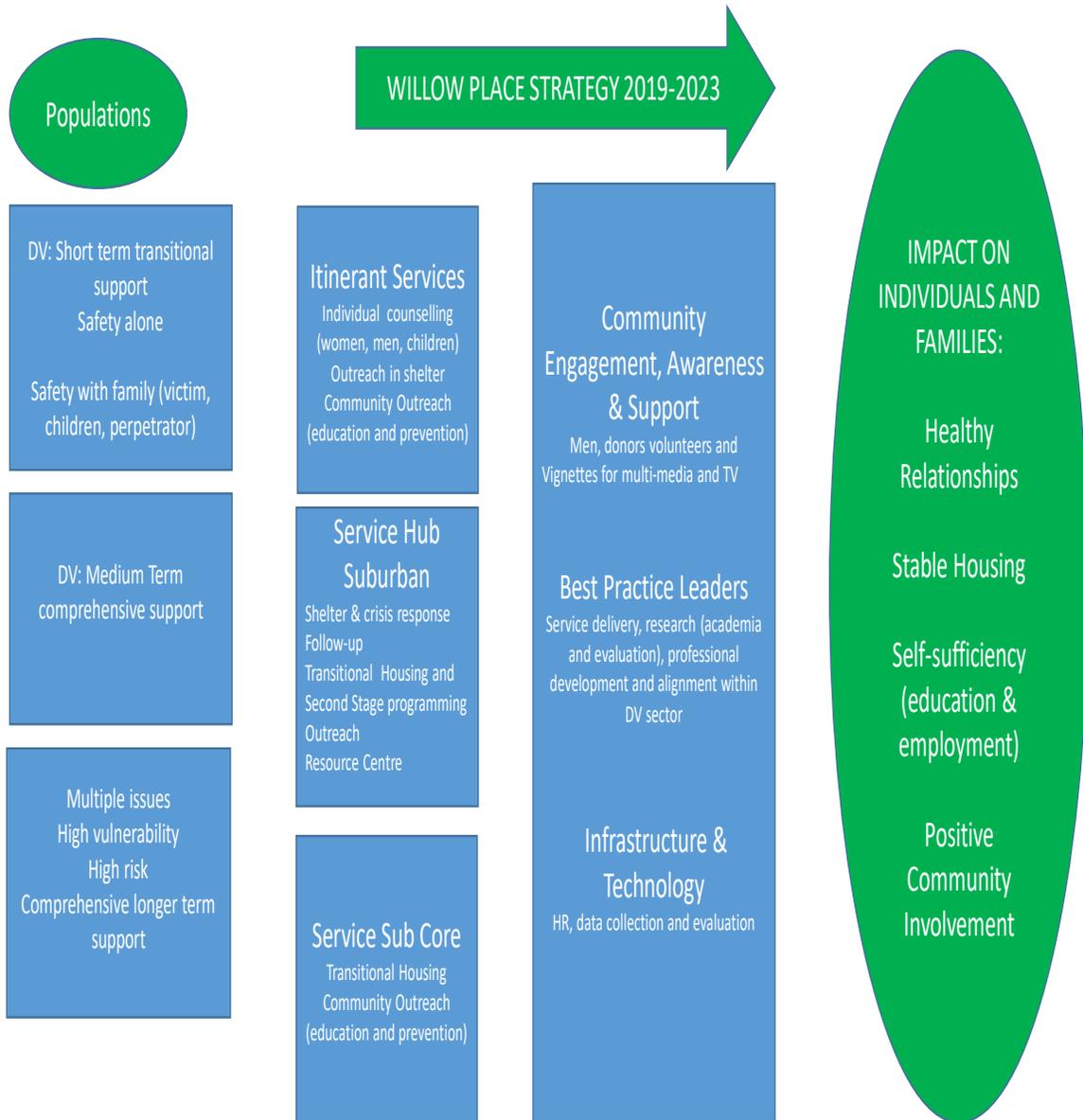
Caring Dads programming bridged the prior fiscal year, with the first group (15 participants) intake beginning in February 2020. Unfortunately, the group was unable to continue beyond mid-March 2020. The Community Facilitator maintained client contact during this time, and also supported Willow Place Outreach with a caseload of three clients weekly throughout 2020-2021.

Willow Place: Moving Forward

Strategic Priorities 2019-2023

1. **Create and Strengthen Our Strategic Partnerships** to expand and extend the reach of the kind and quality of our services with the resources required to do so.
2. **Become a Best Practice Leader** as we continue to evolve and enhance our service delivery with training and research collaborations within Manitoba and across the country.
3. **Innovate Transitional Services** with the development of supportive transitional housing that meet the needs of those we serve through collaborations and partnerships within our community and government.
4. **Engage Men as Allies at all Levels** to be a part of the conversations surrounding domestic and family violence as well as to further expand support services for men through partnerships with collateral organizations.
5. **Implement a Communication Strategy for General Awareness of Willow Place** to further extend and expand the brand recognition of Willow Place within the community.
6. **Generate \$500,000 of Additional Revenue Annually** through the progressive diversification and increase in sources of revenue.
7. **Enhance Professional Development** through a planned, coordinated approach to provide training opportunities that align with the needs of the organization and the individuals and families we serve.
8. **Integrate Technology and Operations** to further expand and enhance administration and infrastructure processes and community connections.
9. **Collect, Analyze and Leverage Data Collection** through stringent processes that align with best practices and employ database software to support the effective utilization of aggregate data.

Willow Place Strategy 2019 – 2023



Focus 2021-2022

Quality Assurance

- Establish a lived experience advisory group to provide feedback on services provided.
- Utilize aggregate data gathered from the service delivery feedback survey now available online to inform policy and procedural adaptations.
- Implement the use of standardized, common intake and evaluation processes.
- Obtain more physical space at current location or within the community.
- Implement and maintain consistent use of 5S to maintain a LEAN workplace.
- Persevere with a comprehensive policy and procedure review process to support the further decolonization and trauma-informed care approaches to service delivery.
- Implement the integration and use of HIFIS management software.

Expand services

- Persevere with the further enhancement trauma-informed service delivery with the incorporation of compassionate care and healing-centered engagement principles through an intersectional, anti-oppression lens.
- Explore potential additional drop off sites in the city center and south end of the city; seek from local businesses in these areas.
- Seek other opportunities for further expansion of outreach services via community partnerships and fiscal support.

System Transformation: Challenge for Change Project

- Further promote the “Stop the Violence Training” made available through the Willow Place and MAWS websites.
- Continue to participate at table that support a coordinated system response to family violence across the province.

RECOGNITION OF YEARS OF SERVICE TO WILLOW PLACE

30 years

- Karen van Leusden

20 years

- Betty Lemire

15 years

- Tamilynn Ward



Willow Place would like to thank these staff as well as those that have retired during the past year for their longstanding commitment and dedication to the organization.

Acknowledgements: Partners, Donors and Collateral Agencies

Willow Place gratefully acknowledges the Province of Manitoba for their on-going support.

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- 
- Royal LePage Shelter Foundation
 - Royal LePage Dynamic
 - Telus Friendly Future Foundation
 - Canada Summer Jobs Grant
 - Soup Sisters Winnipeg
Soup Sisters Canada
 - The Helping Hand Thrift Store
 - Centre Flavie-Laurent
 - Superstore Gateway
 - Cargill Limited
 - Van Helden Coaching Services
 - Fill-A-Purse for a Sister
 - Food Rescue
 - Chatters Salons
 - Royal LePage Top Producers
 - Hockey Helps the Homeless
 - Jewish Foundation of Manitoba
 - Kinsmen Jackpot Bingo
 - Winnipeg Harvest Food Bank
 - Pay Pal Giving Fund
 - Oyate Tipi Cumini Yape
 - Superstore Regent
 - Iron Mountain
 - Cargill Limited
 - Blanketing Manitoba
 - The Shoebox Project
 - Masks for Manitoba
 - Royal LePage Alliance
 - Royal LePage Prime
 - United Way – ECSF Grant Fund
 - Rotary Club of Winnipeg
 - The Winnipeg Foundation
Private Donor Grants
 - WRHA
Healthy Together Now
 - Forester’s Financial
 - Superstore St. Anne’s
 - National Council of Jewish Women Canada
Winnipeg Section
 - Richlu Manufacturing
 - The Shoebox Project
 - Marshall’s – Winner’s
 - Old Navy – The Gap

- 
- H & M Canada
 - Manitoba Prairie Quilters
 - Congregation Shaarey Zedek
 - Dominos Canada
 - Sarah Brown Family
 - Kraken Steampunk Group
 - Sweet Impressions Bakery
 - Qualico – Kensington Homes
 - TD Bank – Cyber Grants
 - Anonymous Angels
 - FrenchWay Cafe
 - EMK Clothing Company
 - Discovery Toys
 - Fifty 5 Fitness
 - Camryn Kangas
 - The Manitoba Museum
 - Health in Common
 - All Charities Campaign
 - The Thelma Wynne Project
 - Souper Women
 - Jacked Up Jill Coffee
 - Fit Body Boot Camp St. Vital
 - Zen Eclectic Jewelry
 - Svetalana Mamaeva
 - Katherine Smith
Winnipeg Embroidery Guild
 - Sheldon and Betty Wu
Winnipeg Foundation Fund

We are thankful for the organizations and individuals who have made generous in-kind and monetary donations this year. Your kind support is welcomed and appreciated by the hundreds of clients and families we serve and makes an positive impact for recovery and healing.