

Improving Lives Together  
Children's  
Centre  
THUNDER BAY

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LIZARD ST

# Strategic Plan 2021-2025





Children's Centre Thunder Bay, its board and staff formally acknowledge that we are on the traditional lands and territory of the Anishinabe, home to Fort William First Nation, signatory to the Robinson Superior Treaty of 1850. From time immemorial, this region was and continues to be a special gathering place for Anishinabek from all directions who gathered for ceremony, trade and kinship.

## Our Mission

Our purpose is to improve the quality of life for infants, children\* and adolescents within their family\*\* and community environments serving the people living in the City and District of Thunder Bay.

We provide quality services and take actions that:

- Improve children's mental health.
- Strengthen and support children's developmental potential.
- Strengthen and support the family's capacity to parent children.
- Build our diverse community's capacity to positively support the health and well-being of children and families.

\* the word *children* includes infants, children, youth, adolescents and young adults age birth to 21

\*\* the word *family* is diverse and includes what a person would call or define as their family

# Our Values

Furthermore, we will:

- Be respectful, honest, compassionate and fair.
- Stand up for diversity, equity, inclusion and justice.
- Collaborate relentlessly.
- Be responsible and accountable to ourselves and our community.
- Pursue continuous learning and excellence.
- Lead with courage in the service of others.

Improving **lives** together. | [childrenscentre.ca](https://childrenscentre.ca)



# Declaration of Commitment to Indigenous Peoples

We, the Board of Directors, acknowledge that we are on the traditional lands and territory of the Anishinabe, home to Fort William First Nation, signatory to the Robinson Superior Treaty of 1850. From time immemorial, this region was and continues to be a special gathering place for Anishinabek from all directions who gathered for ceremony, trade and kinship. Today, the land we call Thunder Bay is home to many Indigenous peoples.

Prior to contact, the Anishinabek were an independent sovereign nation with its own customs, language, trade (economic) practices, child rearing and kinship networks, governance system, spirituality, world view, traditions and healing ways; a thriving culture within the larger population of diverse Indigenous nations through Turtle Island (North America). The Anishinabek lived in harmony with creation - the land, water and animals.

Canada's complex relationship with Indigenous peoples, the original people of this land, was originally set within the

context of European expansionism. This time in history saw competing colonies form commercial and military alliances with First Nations in order to harvest wealth from what the settlers referred to as the "new world". Growing demand for land resulting from expansionism caused us to ignore our original relationship agreements with First Nations people and to adopt the colonizer's belief that First Nations people are an inferior race, which needed to be civilized and assimilated into the dominant culture. These colonizer beliefs then became the foundation of legislated public policy in Canada.

The theft of land, residential schools, the criminalizing of culture, and the sixties scoop were instruments of genocide, which underpins the challenges we face today. These challenges include but are not limited to racism, discrimination, violence and the inequitable access to key resources that support positive social determinants of health. These failings have been well documented in reports such as the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP),

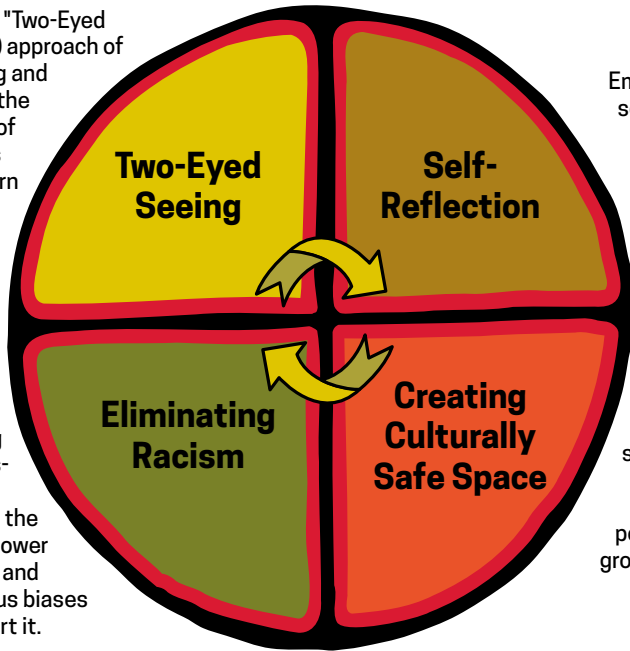
the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC), the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) National Inquiry and Jordan's Principle.

Indigenous peoples are the experts of their own realities and histories. We cannot assume we know about another's experiences and how that frames their knowing, engagement with health care providers, and healing methods. These facts have been recognized in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

Children's Centre, its Board and Staff have much to learn, to recognize and to do in support of creating both an organization and a service system that is safe to access, free of racism and respectful of individual cultural identity. Cultural safety is an outcome based on respectful engagement that recognizes and strives to address barriers, power imbalances, biases that are embedded in our health systems at the political, governance, administrative, and individual levels.

With this in mind, we as individuals and as an organization are committed to:

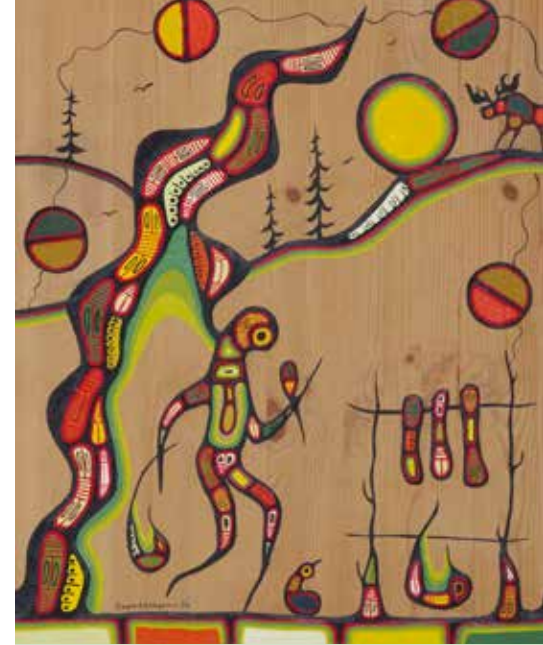
Adopting a "Two-Eyed Seeing" (1) approach of recognizing and honouring the strengths of Indigenous and Western ways of informing our work.



Embarking on a self-reflective journey of humility, openness and learning.

Creating a culturally safe space as defined by Indigenous people to heal, grow and evolve.

1. Mikmaw Elder Albert Marshal, 2004 from <http://www.integrativescience.ca>



*Camping by Goyce Kakegamic*

*Teaching children how to live off the land once intertwined with our family values and a healthy family structure. But this historical way of life cannot be as it was. So, we must teach our children in the modern world the value of connecting to Mother Earth to ensure our mental, social, physical, and spiritual selves are in balance. Going out onto the land teaches our children self-sufficiency, encourages respect for the land, and reinforces a sense of belonging to their families, to their communities, and to the land itself.*



1

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

# For the People We Serve

(clients, customers)

**MAKING SERVICE OUR  
FIRST PRIORITY**





- Be child-focused and family-centred
- Advance equity and inclusion through creating culturally safe inclusive spaces
- Generate positive outcomes through high quality evidence-informed interventions
- Improve access, reduce wait times and eliminate barriers
- Increase our outreach and improve transitions
- Prioritize interventions earlier in children's lives
- Support the adults who care for and parent children





2

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

# For the People Who Work for Us

(employees, students and Board)

**DEVELOPING AND  
SUPPORTING OUR PEOPLE**





- Have the right people for the right job
- Increase our diversity through equity and inclusion
- Actively engage in succession planning for today and tomorrow
- Develop our people's skills, knowledge, talent and capacity
- Create safe, accessible and respectful spaces to work and learn within





3

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

# For Our Organization

(culture, practices, processes, policies and assets)

**PURSUING  
EXCELLENCE**



- Deepen continuous quality improvement practices
- Engage meaningfully and communicate effectively
- Mitigate and manage organizational risk
- Leverage information & technology to improve processes
- Integrate an equity and inclusion lens into problem solving & decision making
- Utilize our resources wisely in the service of our mission





4

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

# For Our Community

(the shared space and places we live in)

**ADVANCING  
COLLECTIVE ACTION**



- Build more responsive client-friendly systems of care
- Improve access, outcomes, equity and inclusion
- Assertively champion anti-racism, anti-oppression and social justice
- Support positive community change through collaboration and shared leadership
- Address identified service gaps at the local, district and regional level





# Committed to Innovative, Equitable and Quality Services

The Children's Centre Thunder Bay provides a variety of children's mental health, child development and parenting services to infants, children, youth and their families living in the City and District of Thunder Bay.

The focus of our services is on addressing children's social, emotional, behavioural, developmental and mental health needs in the context of the child's family, learning environment (child care program or school) and larger community. Many of the people who come to the Centre are experiencing significant and often complex difficulties which impact their functioning across environments. We work with children, youth, parents, families and other professionals to address problems, strengthen functioning, and enhance quality of life.







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