

# A NEW FUTURE

It is visible: Wehwehneh Bahgahkinahgohn

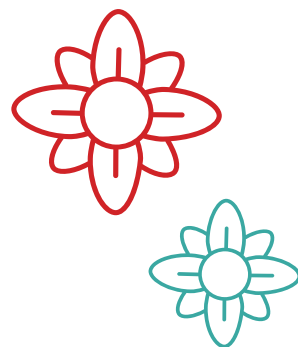


**IMPACT REPORT 2022-23**



“ The formal transfer of the iconic HBC building in downtown Winnipeg to SCO for the Wehwehneh Bahgahkinahgohn project is a monumental moment for southern First Nations. While there is much work ahead to transform the space, this building will become home to hundreds of families with childcare and a health and healing centre on site, as well as a spectacular museum, restaurants, a place of commemoration to honour Survivors, and so much more. This journey is an essential step towards reconciliation.”

– GRAND CHIEF JERRY DANIELS



# CONTENTS

---

**6**

Grand Chief's Welcome

**12**

In Memoriam

**13**

Member First Nations  
and Chiefs 2022/2023

**14**

Chiefs' Executive Committee  
and Chiefs' Finance and  
Personnel Committee

**16**

Youth Council

**20**

Chief Executive Officer's Report

**22**

Wehwehneh Bahgahkinahgoon:  
It is Visible

**28**

Fifth Annual Golf Tournament

**30**

Status Card Program

**36**

Health Transformation

**40**

Non-Insured Health Benefits Navigator

**44**

Mobile Crisis Response Team

**47**

Harm Reduction and  
Land-Based Healing Fund

**50**

Jordan's Principle Program

**56**

Survivors' Healing Program

**64**

Child and Family Services

**70**

Justice and Rights

**74**

Environment

**80**

Nation ReBuilding Project

**82**

Audited Financial Statements



# GRAND CHIEF'S WELCOME




## Boozhoo, aniin, wash-tay, and hello!

Welcome to the impact report for the Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO), which shares the work we have carried out together in 2022-2023. As Grand Chief of SCO, I am proud to represent 34 southern First Nations and more than 83,500 Anishinaabe and Dakota citizens in the territory now known as Manitoba.

I acknowledge our ancestors along with our Elders and Knowledge Keepers who surround us and remind us of what is important. Your dedication to preserving, protecting, and passing down our teachings, cultures, and languages is essential to our survival and well-being as a people. You are the inspiration behind so much of the work we do that focuses on healing from the traumas caused by systems such as residential and day schools, the Sixties Scoop, and the child welfare system.

Our Chiefs are the leaders of our Nations and they carry much strength. It is not easy to be a Chief and it is a very special person who can fulfill this role. I lift up the Chiefs and thank you for sharing your wisdom and support. I especially recognize the role of the Chiefs' Executive Committee as well as the Chiefs' Finance and Personnel Committee for your dedication to SCO:

- Chief Larry Barker
- Chief Norman Bone
- Chief Derrick Henderson
- Chief Glenn Hudson
- Chief Cornell McLean
- Chief Trevor Prince



## It is visible: Historic Wehwehneh Bahgahkinahgoohn project gets underway

We began the year with a monumental announcement to reimagine the HBC building in downtown Winnipeg as a place of social and economic opportunity. Knowledge Keeper Margaret Swan named the project: Wehwehneh Bahgahkinahgoohn which translates into "it is visible." This is fitting as SCO leads a powerful public act of reclamation and reconciliation.

Government leaders, including the Prime Minister, Premier, Mayor, and our Chiefs, joined us for our announcement in April, where we shared that our new building will create more than 300 units of affordable housing for southern First Nation citizens including assisted living for Elders. Families living in the building and beyond will have access to much-needed licensed childcare built on the language nest model, and a health and healing centre that embraces both western and traditional practices. First Nation heritage and culture will be celebrated throughout the atrium space on the main floor with a museum and gallery, where for the first time in our territories First Nations will tell our own story, and there will be a place of reflection to honour residential and day school Survivors and commemorate the children who did not return home.

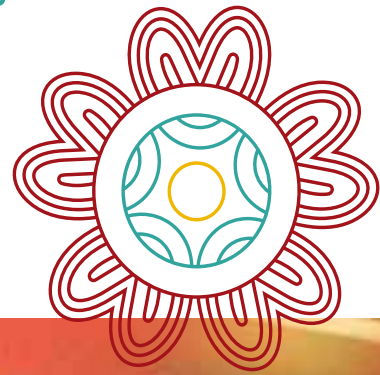
This new project speaks to a global audience, and in addition to hundreds of local, national and international news stories, I was invited to travel to Columbia to attend the World Indigenous Business Forum to present on the project. It was an honour to meet with almost 1000 Indigenous peoples from around the world, and to learn of our shared resistance and resilience.

Housing continues to be a major concern for First Nations leadership, with SCO Chiefs-in-Summit passing a resolution to increase safe and affordable housing for southern First Nations. While SCO is pleased to be creating safe and affordable housing units in downtown Winnipeg through the Wehwehneh Bahgahkinahgoohn project, the urgent need to create housing across southern First Nations must be a priority of all levels of government.

You can learn more about our exciting Wehwehneh Bahgahkinahgoohn project on the following pages.

## Reconciliation and healing

The concept of reconciliation continues to be at the forefront as more people learn the true history of Canada and what First Nations people have endured. These truths were a catalyst for SCO to create our new Survivors' Healing Program to provide support, system navigation, and advocacy to families and Survivors of residential



and day schools; the Sixties Scoop; the child welfare system; and the national emergency of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, two spirit, and gender-diverse people (MMIWG2S+).

This year, an historic apology was made by the Catholic church which ran the majority of residential schools in Canada. This was followed by a renouncing of the Doctrine of Discovery. SCO continues to call on the church to release all records and documents associated with residential schools, repatriate items that belong to SCO member First Nations, and honour their previous commitment to provide \$25 million for Survivors under the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement.

Healing from colonial systems is a continued priority for our citizens and for people across Turtle Island. SCO was honoured to receive the gift of a totem pole by artist Charles Joseph on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. The pole was raised in its temporary home at Assiniboine Park—it will eventually be home in the redeveloped HBC building.

### Putting children at the centre

Children are at the centre of our Nations and our hearts and we always keep them in mind. Putting children at the centre of everything we do is the antidote to the residential school experience—we are committed to making things better for the children to come.

We acknowledge the work guided by our Knowledge Keepers working with our CFS Program to draft and translate the Anishinaabe and Dakota Family Law Templates to provide a framework that will enable the spirit of the project as named by the late Charlie Nelson – Waakaabit – Wokesape (working within the circle to make good decisions for our children, families and communities). The guidance offered by the templates helps communities build out the circles wrapping around their children, to ensure their security and safety is grounded in strong relationships and the responsibilities of their families and communities through their own distinct laws.

SCO is committed to ensuring our children and youth are able to pursue education. Thanks to all those who attended our fifth annual golf tournament, along with our corporate

and business partners, we raised more than \$97,000 for annual and endowed scholarships. In the last five years we have raised more than \$350,000 and supported more than 56 youth to attend university and college!

### The power of our water and lands

Our work is empowered and guided by the SCO Chiefs-in-Summit. In April 2022, the Chiefs passed a resolution to pursue drinking water standards, with water delivered by a First Nations Water Authority. The Chiefs also supported a resolution to respond to changes to the permitting processes for mineral exploration on Crown land. SCO will continue to object and speak up when Treaty rights are being infringed upon.

SCO is taking part in the Climate Leadership Initiative and we will continue to engage in this work in 2023. Our Environment Program advocates on issues around protecting our water and natural resources, including carrying out tests to gather data that helps us to measure the baseline health of our water and soil. This year, we carried out more than 200 tests on different water sources in 30 SCO member Nations. SCO continues to monitor the surface water sources of our Nations to ensure cleanliness and potability.

In May 2022, we witnessed the worst flood in the history of the Peguis First Nation, and the displacement and loss of homes is significant.



SCO provided support in various ways, including daily check-ins by our Mobile Crisis Response Team to people living in hotels in Winnipeg as they await the day when they can return home.

### Transforming health care

Access to culturally safe health care continues to be a priority for SCO, as we work to close the 11 year and growing gap in life expectancy. One way to address this gap that is expected to grow in the wake of the devastating impact of COVID-19 is through Health Transformation. Our Health Transformation Team continues its work, including addressing systemic racism within health care. In June 2022, we reached another milestone when Manitoba committed to developing an Agreement-in-Principle with SCO and Canada that that will move us another step closer to a southern First Nations Health Authority.

Our Health Transformation Team hosted a range of events to empower SCO citizens over the last year, including community walks aimed at healing. The Team also partnered with our Youth Council to host a land-based youth gathering focused on reclaiming land, identity, and wellness. Such gatherings are a powerful way to engage with community members and increase the pride of First Nations youth in their identity as Anishinaabe and Dakota people.



### Land back

In February 2023, SCO renewed calls for putting a stop to an upcoming auction of Crown lands by the Province of Manitoba. We assert that our provincial Treaty partner is falling short on its own legislation when it comes to Treaty Land Entitlement and Manitoba First Nations do not yet have all of the land they were promised when Treaties were signed between 1871 and 1910. SCO will continue to advocate for our Nations to have access to the lands to which they are entitled.

A key step in connecting to traditional knowledge that can help us to govern and protect our lands and resources is the community engagement carried out in 2022-2023 by SCO's Nation ReBuilding project. This initiative worked to explore traditional forms of Dakota and Anishinaabe governance, including looking at how to integrate traditional knowledge to transform and strengthen governance.

### All eyes on Winnipeg: Standing up for MMIWG2S+

All eyes were on Winnipeg in December 2022, when the world came to know that an alleged serial killer had taken the lives of at least four sacred and much-loved women. The sacred remains of women from SCO member Nations are now in at least two landfills in the Treaty One area: the Brady Road Landfill and the Prairie Green Landfill.

Rebecca Contois, Morgan Harris, Mercedes Myran, and Mashkode Bizhiki'ikwe (Buffalo Woman—the name given to her as she is yet unidentified) are the women we remember and pray for. We send condolences to their families, loved ones, and communities, and all families devastated by the loss of loved ones to violence.

In December, SCO supported the daughters of Morgan Harris in Ottawa to call for a plan to search the Prairie Green Landfill. We also called for it to be declared an active crime scene.

To bring awareness to the issue of MMIWG2S+, we carried out our second annual major public education and awareness campaign across southern Manitoba, launched on the National Day of Action for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, Two Spirit, and Gender-Diverse People in October 2022. We announced our intention to create an MMIWG2S+ Team as we provide support to SCO citizens impacted by this ongoing national emergency.

SCO will continue to stand with families and Nations impacted by the national emergency of MMIWG2S+. I commend all who have joined the impacted families in calling for accountability and action on this emergency. It is essential we see the implementation of the Calls for Justice from the Final Report of the National Inquiry as well as the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

### Reforming the justice and policing systems

SCO's Justice Program grew in the past year, with the launch of a Restorative Justice Digital Wellness Program and a Court Worker Program. Our three First Nation Court Workers liaise between the courts and SCO citizens and their families, providing timely connections to legal as well as First Nation resources.

SCO continues to seek changes in how the justice system impacts First Nations people. The Office of the Auditor General identified that Correctional Service Canada is once again failing to address and eliminate systemic barriers that disadvantage Indigenous citizens. First Nations people continue to be disproportionately held at maximum security institutions and lack support for integrating back into community.

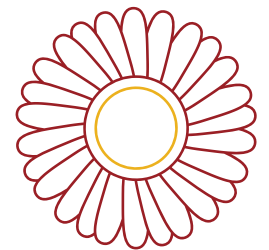
In October 2022, SCO hosted a Chiefs-in-Summit focused on justice and rights for southern First Nations citizens. A key resolution on equity and sovereignty for First Nations justice and policing was made at the Summit, and SCO is working with member Nations to develop a new First Nation policing model.

### Moving forward

I am so proud of all that has been accomplished at SCO in 2022-2023. Once again, I thank the Chiefs, staff, and citizens for your ongoing contributions. I also extend my gratitude to our Chief Executive Officer, Joy Cramer, for her tireless work on behalf of SCO and our people.

May we continue to work together in a good way and make progress on the collective healing we need to do in response to colonization. Let's work to make our ancestors proud and ensure we build a better future for our children and grandchildren.

**Ogema Makwa**  
**Grand Chief Jerry Daniels**





## In Memoriam

The Southern Chiefs' Organization acknowledges the passing of **Elder Charlie Nelson** and **Elder Brian Cloud**. Both Elders contributed to SCO in their own unique ways, and we miss their presence.

Charlie was involved with SCO's Child and Family Services Program and he also served on our Health Transformation Governance Committee and Elders/Knowledge Keepers Committee. Elder Nelson was also part of the Elders Council for the Southern First Nations Network of Care. He was a member of Roseau River Anishinaabe First Nation and a very well-respected and beloved Elder and community leader.

Brian was a member of Health Transformation's Elders/Knowledge Keepers Committee. Elder Cloud was dedicated to sharing words of wisdom and is remembered for his wonderful sense of humour. A member of the Waywayseecappo First Nation, Elder Cloud was instrumental in providing feedback to Health Transformation on a number of issues. He would continue to remind us of the importance of knowing exactly what the words meant and was quick to ask questions to keep us thinking of the words we were using on our health transformation journey.

# MEMBER FIRST NATIONS AND CHIEFS

FIRST NATION	CHIEF
<b>Berens River</b>	Norman McKay
<b>Birdtail Sioux</b>	Lindsay Bunn Jr.
<b>Black River</b>	Sheldon Kent
<b>Bloodvein</b>	Roland Hamilton
<b>Brokenhead</b>	Gordon Bluesky
<b>Buffalo Point</b>	Andrea Camp
<b>Canupawakpa</b>	Lola Thunderchild
<b>Dakota Plains</b>	Don Smoke
<b>Dakota Tipi</b>	Dennis Pashe
<b>Dauphin River</b>	Lawrence Letander
<b>Ebb and Flow</b>	Wayne Desjarlais
<b>Gambler</b>	David Ledoux
<b>Hollow Water</b>	Larry Barker
<b>Keeseekoowenin</b>	Norman Bone
<b>Kinonjeoshtegon</b>	Rod Travers
<b>Lake Manitoba</b>	Cornell McLean
<b>Lake St. Martin</b>	Christopher Traverse

FIRST NATION	CHIEF
<b>Little Grand Rapids</b>	Oliver Owen
<b>Little Saskatchewan</b>	Hector Shorting
<b>Long Plain</b>	Kyra Wilson
<b>O-Chi-Chak-Ko-Sipi</b>	Kerwin Chaboyer
<b>Pauingassi</b>	Roddy Owens
<b>Peguis</b>	Glenn Hudson
<b>Pinaymootang</b>	Kurvis Anderson
<b>Pine Creek</b>	Derek Nepinak
<b>Poplar River</b>	Vera Mitchell
<b>Rolling River</b>	Wilfred McKay
<b>Roseau River</b>	Craig Alexander
<b>Sagkeeng</b>	Derrick Henderson
<b>Sandy Bay</b>	Trevor Prince
<b>Skownan</b>	Cameron Catcheway
<b>Swan Lake</b>	Jason Daniels
<b>Tootinaowaziibeeng</b>	Barry McKay
<b>Waywayseecappo</b>	Murray Clearsky



# CHIEFS' EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND CHIEFS' FINANCE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

---



**Chief Norman Bone**  
Chiefs' Executive and  
Finance Committees



**Chief Larry Barker**  
Chiefs' Executive and  
Finance Committees



**Chief Derrick Henderson**  
Chiefs' Executive and  
Finance Committees



**Chief Glenn Hudson**  
Chiefs' Executive Committee



**Chief Trevor Prince**  
Chiefs' Executive and  
Finance Committees



**Chief Cornell McLean**  
Chiefs' Finance Committee



**MIIGWETCH AND  
PIDAMIYE  
TO THE CHIEFS FOR  
YOUR SERVICE!**

# SCO YOUTH COUNCIL REPORT

The SCO Youth Council is composed of 12 First Nations youth between the ages of 16 to 29. They represent all Tribal Councils and independent Nation regions across southern Manitoba.

## A Message from the Youth Council

This past year was one filled with challenges and achievements for young First Nations people in our territories. As we continue to recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic that kept us apart, it was a goal of the Council this year to host a gathering outside in a community that allowed space for us to come together again and celebrate our culture.

Being on the Youth Council is an honour and privilege and it is a role that we took to heart in our planning and delivery of events and initiatives. We know that we represent the concerns of all of the young people who voted for us to be their leaders, and that we are responsible for advocating for their needs and concerns.

We heard from youth during our first year about their issues and we tried to find a way to use our work plan and strategy to engage and support them. We carried the voices of those not at the table with us into meetings with other leaders and governments.

There will undoubtedly be more challenges ahead of us, but we see these as ways to grow together, and as a Council we will continue to work to address the issues that are affecting young people on and off reserve. Being on the Youth Council provided us with access to the tools and resources necessary to develop learning opportunities and events aimed at uplifting and empowering other youth. And that is exactly what we plan to do, now and into the future.

## SCO Youth Council 2022-2023



## SCO YOUTH COUNCIL

**Diandre Thomas-Hart**  
Youth Chief,  
Peguis First Nation

**Lyle Gabriel**  
Youth Chief,  
Skownan First Nation

**Sienna Gould**  
IRTC Representative,  
Pinaymootang First Nation

**Peter Traverse**  
IRTC Representative,  
Kinsonjeoshtegon First Nation

**Emilie McKinney**  
DOTC Representative,  
Swan Lake First Nation

**Sophia Smoke**  
DOTC Representative,  
Dakota Plains Wahpeton Oyate

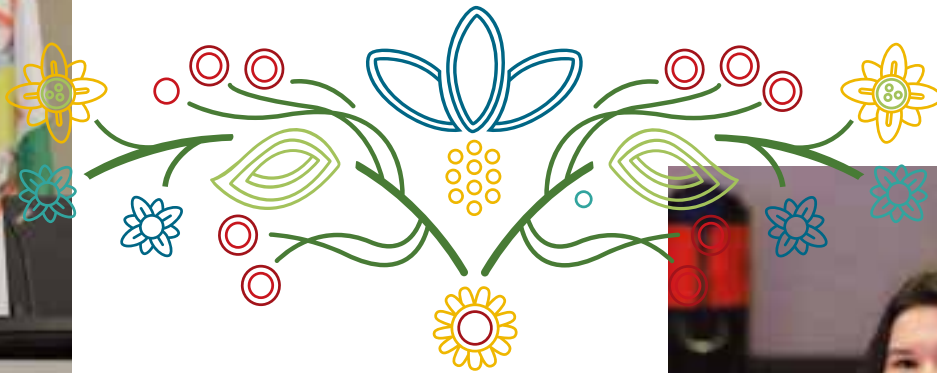
**Iroc Levasseur**  
WRTC Representative,  
Ebb and Flow First Nation

**Rhea Bird-Courchene**  
SERDC Representative,  
Black River First Nation

**Xavier Kent**  
SERDC Representative,  
Brokenhead Ojibway Nation

**Tyra Fountain**  
Independent Representative,  
Sagkeeng Anicinabe First Nation

**Rylee Nepinak**  
Independent Representative,  
Sagkeeng Anicinabe First Nation



## Achievements

Members of the Youth Council attended and hosted several events throughout the duration of their two-year terms. The Council has a vote at SCO Chiefs-in-Summit meetings and participated in various gatherings with SCO departments, such as Child and Family Services and Health Transformation. The Council also organizes and hosts monthly internal meetings to update progress on their work plan and develop content for events, social media, and outreach to other youth.

This year, the Council launched the "Rez Table Talks" podcast in collaboration with the Health Transformation team, which focused on Indigenous youth health, healing, language, mental wellness, and community initiatives. All episodes are available online and were hosted by Youth Chief Diandre Thomas-Hart.

On April 22, 2022, the SCO and DOTC council representative Sophia Smoke welcomed Prime Minister Trudeau and Hudson's Bay Company Governor Richard Baker at the announcement of the transformation of the historic HBC building into a multi-use facility. Councilor Smoke gave a powerful speech that reached an international audience. You can learn more about our exciting Wehwehneh Bahgahkinahgoohn project on the following pages.

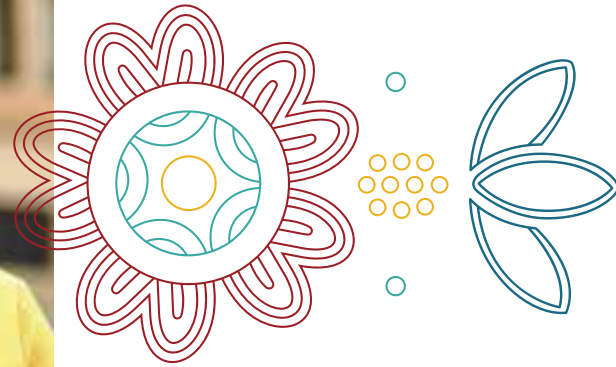
In the summer months, the Council planned and hosted a large-scale summer gathering from August 17 to 19, 2022, at Brokenhead Ojibway Nation in their brand new pow wow arbour. The gathering brought more than 150 people together to learn about culture, physical health, mental health, language, and living in harmony with the natural world.

The Council also attended pow wows in SCO member Nations representing the Youth Council in grand entries, where they encouraged other youth to get involved with community initiatives and opportunities to grow into leadership. This included a special trip to attend the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community Wacipi (pow wow) in Minnesota, USA with other SCO Chiefs.

Both Youth Chiefs also had the opportunity to participate in the Assembly of First Nations Annual General Assembly in December 2022, in Ottawa, Ontario. Their goal was to represent the youth of southern Manitoba at the national level and to network with other First Nation youth leaders from across the country to share ideas and best practices.

As the final event of their current terms, the Youth Council planned a large in-person career development and skills gathering, which featured keynote speakers and several workshop options led by industry experts and Knowledge Keepers.

If you are interested in learning more or connecting with the Youth Council and to stay updated, please like and follow our social media accounts on Facebook and Instagram: Southern Chiefs' Organization Youth Council or @scoyouthcouncil



# CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

This year has been significant with SCO continuing to grow to better serve our people and Nations. I am pleased to say we are having a positive impact with more staff, expanded programs, and a new location in Brandon, Manitoba to serve our citizens living in the western part of our territory. I extend my appreciation to our Chiefs for their leadership, to our citizens, as well as to our dedicated staff.

New initiatives in 2022-2023 include a Nation ReBuilding project; Survivors' Healing Program and Survivors Healing Fund; Harm Reduction Program and Land-Based Healing Fund; Restorative Justice Digital Wellness Program; and a Court Worker Program. Lastly, we launched our Traditional Healers Program at the end of March 2023.

We have also expanded many of our programs, including our Status Card Program and Jordan's Principle Program. Both help to eliminate barriers First Nations people face. This year, the Status

Card Program staff helped more than 5500 citizens apply for their cards, and our expanded Jordan's Principle team provided direct support to more than 2000 First Nation children and youth and their families. We are working to ensure First Nations children receive supports, with new Jordan's Principle coordinators added in school divisions in Brandon, Portage la Prairie, Selkirk, Winnipeg, and in other places such as the Children's Hospital in Winnipeg.

Over the last year, we helped to raise awareness and provide education to the public through compelling campaigns. In September 2022, we launched our annual "Every Child Matters" campaign to honour Survivors and the lost children, and to draw attention to the need for lasting and meaningful truth and reconciliation for residential and day school Survivors. You will see the billboards, bus ads, and lawn signs in this issue.

In October 2022, we launched our annual campaign to honour MMIWG2S+. This month-long campaign to honour our missing and murdered loved ones included billboards, bus ads, social media and more. SCO continues to be an active member of Giganawenimaanaanig, the Manitoba MMIWG2S+ Implementation Committee, and we do this work to honour the lives and legacy of our women, girls, two spirit, and gender-diverse people.

SCO values feedback and direction from our citizens. To this end, we regularly develop surveys so people can provide input on their priorities. Our Nation ReBuilding Team launched a survey to engage and seek input, and a Women's Gathering took place in November 2022 to seek input and direction on issues of specific interest to Anishinaabe and Dakota women.

We also launched a survey to ask Survivors and intergenerational Survivors about their priorities in relation to the residential and day school systems and the results will be published in a report in September of 2023.

SCO continues to seek ways to give back and show our care for our relatives. In December we held a winter clothing drive and we were able to fill two vehicles full of new and used winter clothing and supplies for our unsheltered relatives. Thank you to everyone who attended our annual holiday open house. Many of our attendees showed up with bags of donations to support our relatives and it is wonderful to see such generosity!

Building on our annual November tributes to southern First Nation veterans, SCO passed a resolution to identify ways to honour and support our veterans for their service and sacrifice, exploring opportunities for funding, advocacy, and program development. We are rolling out a Veterans Program including the first-ever veterans gathering in 2023.

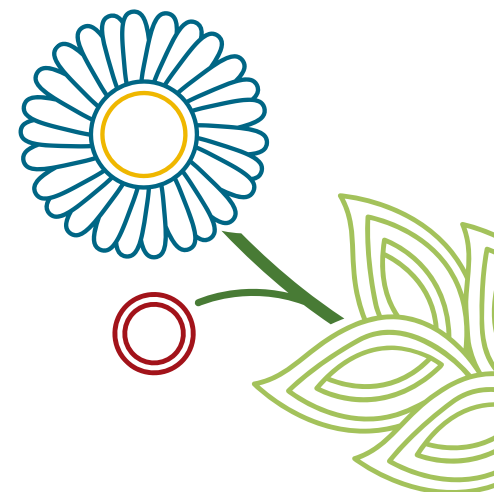
Although First Nation citizens continue to live with the intergenerational trauma caused by colonial practices such as residential schools, I have much hope for the future. There are many upcoming young leaders who are confident and well-grounded in their culture and languages. It is clear there is a strong move towards reclaiming our wellness and SCO is proud to be part of that work.

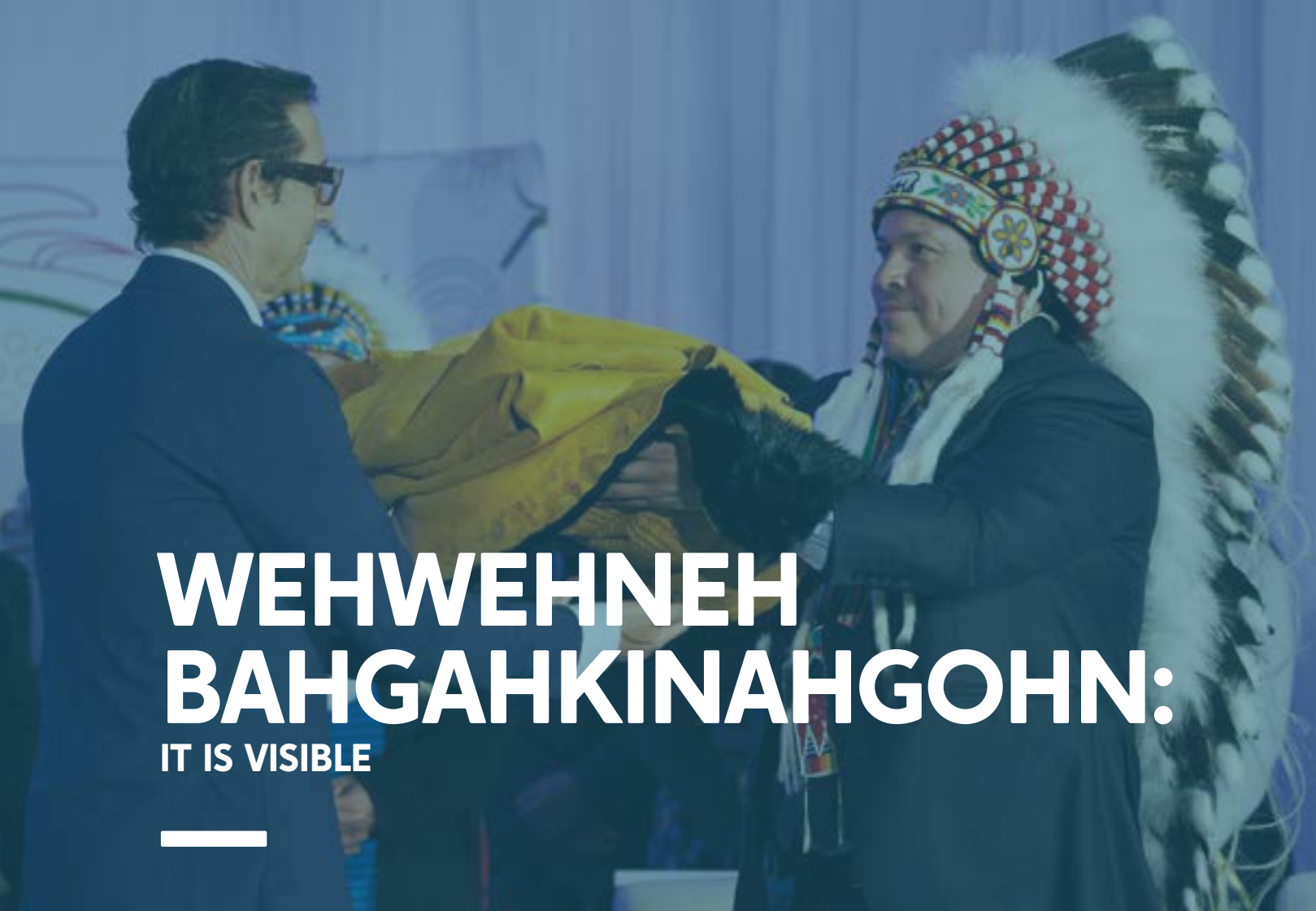
I am so proud of the care SCO shows to all Survivors impacted by these systems through our holistic programs and services. In February, SCO held our largest post-COVID event at the Convention Centre in Winnipeg. I express my gratitude for the more than 550 Survivors who attended and the many who contributed to our Survivors' Healing Gathering, also called Mino-si-toon Wichozani.

I extend gratitude to Grand Chief Jerry Daniels, the Chiefs' Executive Committee, and the Chiefs Finance and Personnel Committee for the guidance and support you provided over the last year. Thank you to our Chiefs, our staff, volunteers, and citizens for supporting the work SCO is doing to protect, preserve, promote, and enhance our inherent rights, languages, customs, and traditions.

**Chi-Miigwetch and Pidamiye!**

**Joy Cramer**  
Chief Executive Officer





# WEHWEHNEH BAHGAHKINAGHOHN: IT IS VISIBLE

In April 2022, SCO and the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) announced Wehwehneh Bahgahkinahgohn, which means "it is visible." Knowledge Keeper Margaret Swan named this project, which is a symbol of hope and reclamation. The gifting in ceremony of HBC's flagship store at Portage and Memorial in downtown Winnipeg is the largest act of corporate reconciliation in Canada.

The Wehwehneh Bahgahkinahgohn project will be one of the largest redevelopments of an historic building in Canada and the largest in Manitoba. The project is about much more than bricks and mortar, in the city with the largest Indigenous population in Canada. It is about real economic opportunity now and for years to come and it addresses some of the legacy impacts of colonialism: housing, jobs, health care, childcare, and healing.

The act of reconciliation by HBC Governor Richard Baker in the gifting of the building caught Canada's

attention, and generated more than 749 media stories, making news nationally and internationally, including in the New York Times, Japan Today, Business News Network, and the Financial Post.

SCO plans to reopen the building in time for the 100th anniversary of the building in November 2026. This project is a significant responsibility and SCO looks forward to working with our member Nations, government, and community partners to create economic opportunity and contribute to a vibrant downtown Winnipeg!

|| As we considered the future for the Winnipeg building, it was important to ensure a sustainable plan for the site that also had meaningful purpose for the city of Winnipeg. HBC's Truth and Reconciliation journey requires actions that demonstrate our commitment to moving forward together with Indigenous communities. We believe SCO is the right steward for this location, and can create a new community landmark that will help advance reconciliation."

- RICHARD BAKER, GOVERNOR AND EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN OF HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY



# Plans for the 650,000 square foot space

- More than 300 units of affordable housing for families and post-secondary students, and assisted living for Elders (studios, one, two, and three bedroom apartments)
- 100 space childcare centre, built on the language nest model
- Health and healing centre including a pharmacy with traditional and western medicines
- Two restaurants, including a First Nations café and a reboot of the beloved Paddlewheel
- First Nations Museum and Centre for Reconciliation
- Public atrium with ceremonial and commemorative space to honour residential and day school Survivors, and our children who did not return home
- SCO Governance House and office space
- Rooftop garden for residents



**“ This is a bold vision of what the future can hold. A new world of hope and possibility, a place and space where we care for our children, our families and our Elders, where artists create and healers heal, and people come from across Turtle Island. This is where the Chiefs of the southern First Nations meet, to lead our people from a new Governance House. Here we stand together in unity, speaking with one voice, proud of who we are. This is the vision of our ancestors.”**

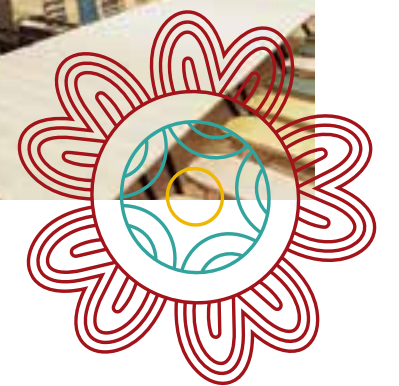
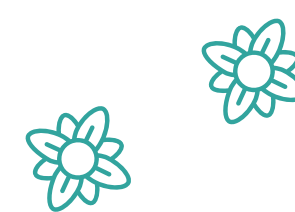
**– GRAND CHIEF JERRY DANIELS**





“ Everyone deserves a safe and affordable place to call home. By reimagining the iconic Hudson’s Bay Company building in Winnipeg’s downtown core, the Southern Chiefs’ Organization is helping preserve this historic building, while creating almost 300 much-needed housing units for members of the southern First Nations in Manitoba.”

– THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JUSTIN TRUDEAU, PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA



More than \$97,000 raised for students!

# EDUCATION MATTERS: FIFTH ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT A SUCCESS

“ Empowering our youth is always one of my top priorities, and I am pleased to know that a fundraiser like this will help bring our students one step closer to achieving their academic goals. I am also proud to partner with Indspire and innovative academic institutions including Assiniboine Community College, Brandon University, and the Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology, to help create positive outcomes for our students.”

— GRAND CHIEF JERRY DANIELS

Our annual fundraising golf tournament raised more than **\$97,000** towards annual and endowed scholarships that will be awarded to students from SCO-member Nations.

SCO worked closely with the beautiful Kingswood Golf and Country Club in La Salle, to ensure a fun and well organized event while keeping the focus on increasing access to post-secondary education for southern First Nation students.

The golf tournament could not have happened without the generous support from our sponsors and participants.

### Thanks to our Sponsors!

#### Platinum:

RBC – Royal Bank

#### Gold:

Sagkeeng Anicinabe First Nation, Spirit Healthcare Group, and SkyAlyne in partnership with KFAerospace, Canadian Base Operators, and Lockheed Martin

#### Silver:

Evident IT, Babcock Leonard Canadian Aircrew Training, and Pratts Wholesale Food Service

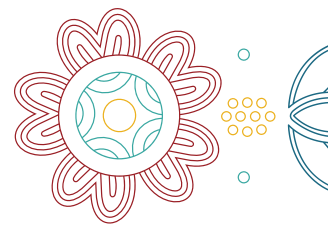
#### Bronze:

Bird Construction, The Fort Garry Hotel, Spa & Conference Centre, and Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology (MITT)



### THANK YOU CORPELL'S AND DOMO!

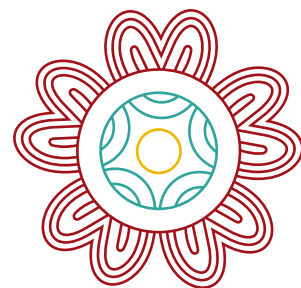
Corpell's Water joined us this year in supporting reconciliation. Corpell's raised **\$2508** through water sales and this was matched by the Domo Corporation, for a total contribution of **\$5016** to SCO's scholarship funds.







# STATUS CARD PROGRAM



SCO's Status Card Program grew exponentially during our first full year of operation making it one of the largest programs in Canada in terms of the number of citizens it serves. In 2022-2023, SCO helped a total of 5527 citizens to apply for their status number, or renew, replace, or obtain a new status card.

As Status First Nation citizens, our status cards are key to accessing benefits negotiated by our ancestors. Registered persons have certain benefits, rights, programs, and services, such as Non-Insured Health Benefits; Jordan's Principle; education funding; hunting/harvesting rights; and tax exemptions for fuel and other goods.

The Secure Certificate of Indian Status (SCIS) is a valid form of government photo identification. Status First Nations citizens can use the identification to cross the border, when travelling by land, between Canada and the United States.

Our trained staff can walk clients through the application process, assist with filling out forms, take photos of people who want a card, and submit completed applications to Indigenous Services Canada. SCO is authorized as a "Trusted Source," which means that our staff are designated to help people with completing an application for registration and/or a status card. Our program is offered free of charge.

## SCO staff will:

- review the application to ensure its complete and that all the required documentation is attached;
- take a client's picture using the SCIS photo app and digitally sign as a guarantor as a Trusted Source;
- provide guidance on acceptable forms of valid identification; and
- submit the completed application for processing.

As part of this service, SCO also offers free photocopying and mailing services by appointment at our Winnipeg Dublin Avenue sub-office.

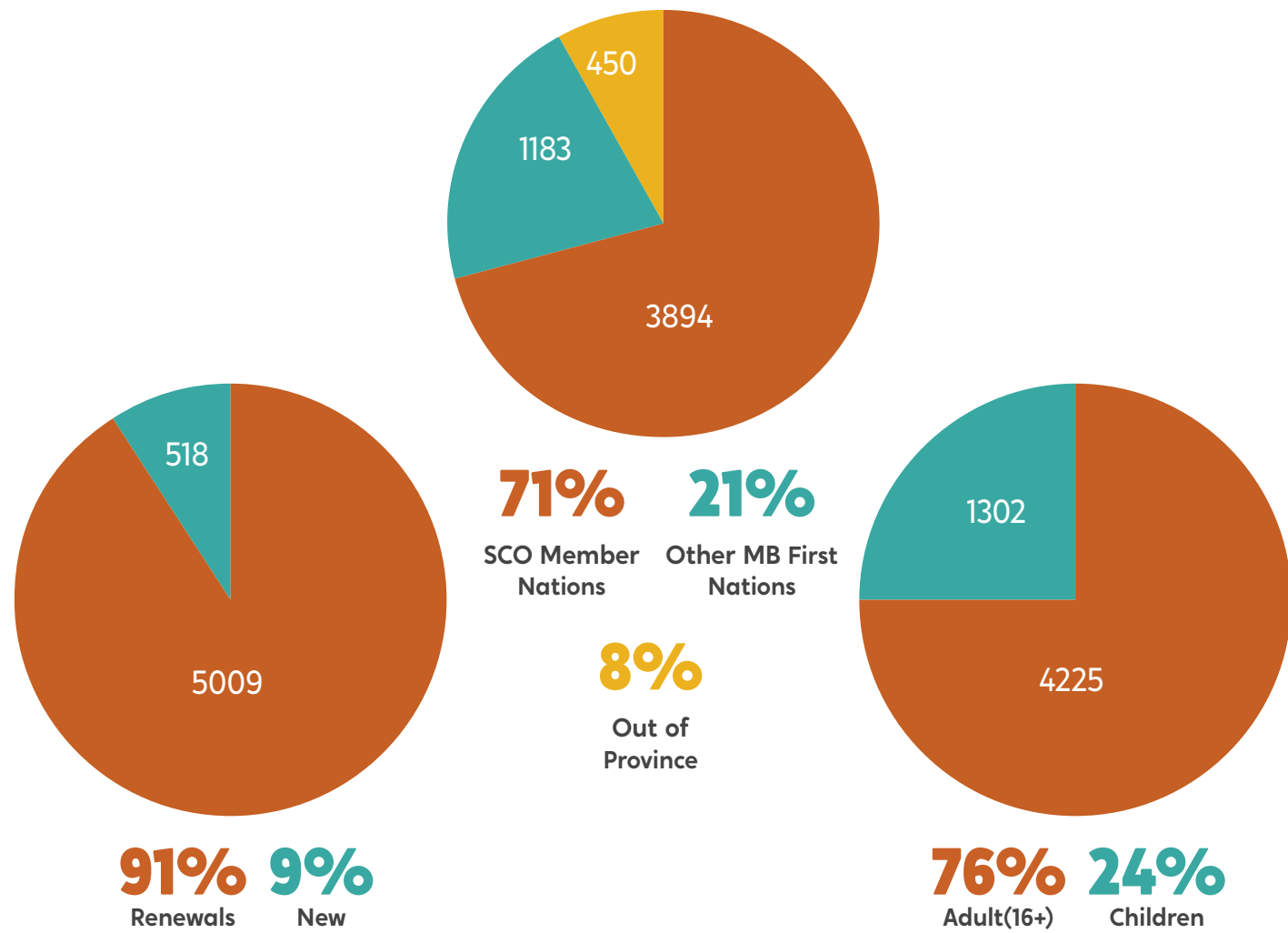
Our Status Card Program now offers mobile clinic service options. We offer this service in urban centres, organizations, and in our southern First Nations. The program is available for renewals, replacements, as well as expanded service in new registration applications through Bill S-3. This addresses inequities in the registration terms of *The Indian Act* to extend entitlement to descendants of women affected by sex-based discrimination dating back to 1869. The most recent changes under Bill S-3 were made in 2017 and 2019.

## Accomplishments

The team is dedicated to meeting the needs of our Nations, which includes urban centres and organizations. The program welcomed a full-time Registry Officer and two full-time Status Card Intake Clerks at the launch of the first year of the program, and in June 2022, the program welcomed a much-needed summer intern to assist with office administration.

Our program was pleased to be invited to attend three conferences held in Winnipeg; two of which were Survivors and Healing Gatherings. During those conferences, our program assisted more than 500 clients in accessing a status card!





**TOTAL = 5527 Citizens Served!**



This past year, the program attended the following SCO-member Nations, urban clinics, conferences, and Winnipeg organizations:

**First Nations**

- Ebb and Flow First Nation
- Lake St. Martin First Nation
- Sandy Bay Ojibway First Nation
- Skownan First Nation

**Urban clinics (outside Winnipeg)**

- Brandon
- Dauphin
- Portage la Prairie
- Selkirk: Lord Selkirk Regional Secondary School

**Organizations (Winnipeg)**

- Lord Serkirk Park Resource Centre: Family Resource Centre
- Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre: Family Resource Centre
- Makoon Transition Inc.: CFS Transition program for families
- Shawenim Abinoojii Inc.: Therapeutic Home Placement for Southeast Child and Family Services
- Siloam Mission

**Conferences**

- Gizhe Waa Ti-Sii-Win Expo
- SCO Survivors' Healing Gathering
- Way-Say Healing Gathering
- Vision Quest Conference

**Ongoing community partnerships**

- Headingley Women's Correctional Centre
- Native Clan Organization
- Province of Manitoba Community Mental Health Program
- SEED Winnipeg
- Winnipeg School Division



## Key challenges

New appointments are received by telephone, email, and third-party referrals. As the program was not funded to have a full-time dedicated staff member to field all the calls and emails we received on a daily basis, at times this resulted in clients waiting for call backs.

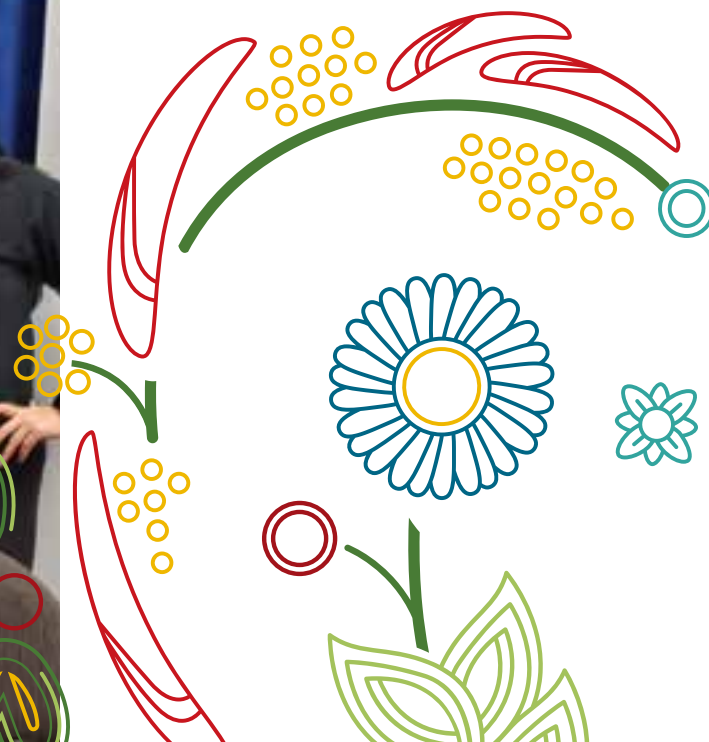
Another key challenge is the long wait times from Indigenous Services Canada and the Manitoba Regional office that can leave clients waiting for months for their cards. SCO staff also continue to field calls and concerns from our member citizens about the lengthy wait times when accessing the national call centre for updates on their status card applications. This has been consistent for the entirety of our program. The program has raised this with the regional office, as SCO does not have access to check on the status of our clients' applications.

## The year ahead

In 2023-2024, the Status Card Program will continue to expand our service delivery to our member-Nations. The expansion will also include urban clinics and attending conferences and events to continue providing education and awareness of the program.

Other goals include:

- Continuing to meet requests from our member-Nations to support their membership in obtaining SCIS cards and provide ongoing support and training if necessary
- Expanding staffing to continue to meet demand
- Continuing to build cohesive partnerships with First Nation-serving organizations in urban communities to best meet the needs of First Nations clients
- Implementing a three-month pilot project in Brandon to gauge the demand for service for an SCO Status Card Program satellite site
- Improving on our service delivery including developing client tracking databases to assist in ensuring accurate numbers to reflect member (and non-member) SCO First Nations



**" As a Status First Nation citizen, a Secure Certificate of Indian Status is key to accessing benefits negotiated by our ancestors. For many years, our citizens have faced difficulties and barriers in accessing their much-needed status cards. I am so grateful to the staff who have worked tirelessly to make our Status Card Program successful. We are making a difference in the lives of many First Nations citizens, both young and old. It is beautiful to witness our citizens being able to access their Treaty rights through the services provided by our Status Card Program."**

**- GRAND CHIEF JERRY DANIELS**

# HEALTH TRANSFORMATION



The Health Transformation department at SCO continued its journey to create a southern First Nations Health Authority, including initiating the process of hiring a Chief Executive Officer and Chief Operating Officer. We continue to engage with our Elders/Knowledge Keepers Committee, leadership, health directors, and community members.



As SCO Health Transformation moves towards the creation of the Health Authority, staff are building the foundation by working on the following initiatives:

- Developing an anti-racism strategy with community engagement and interviews with community members about their experience with the health care system
- Meeting regularly with the southern First Nation health directors to establish a southern First Nations Health Directors Association
- Developing a Health Human Resource Strategy with the objective of having more high school students interested in a career in health care, supporting them through their post-secondary studies, and having them working in the southern First Nations health care field once they successfully complete their studies
- Developing a Mental Health Strategy that will focus on prevention, education and intervention, treatment, and aftercare
- Developing awareness campaigns for ancestral and traditional knowledge and gender-based violence
- Establishing a Two Spirit Council for the new Health Authority
- Continuing the Public Health and Primary Health Care Working Group and engaging with community to provide updates to First Nations about our work



## In remembrance

The Health Transformation Team and the Elders/Knowledge Keepers Committee acknowledge the guidance and support that the late Charlie Nelson and the late Brian Cloud provided on our journey. As we move forward, we remember their words of wisdom, which continue to guide our way.

## Chiefs' Health Action Table

In 2022-2023, the Chiefs' Health Action Table (CHAT) was comprised of the following members:

**Chair Chief Gord Bluesky**  
Brokenhead Ojibway Nation

**Chief Donnie Smoke**  
Dakota Plains Wahpeton Nation

**Chief Craig Alexander**  
Roseau River Anishinabe First Nation

**Chief Sheldon Kent**  
Black River First Nation

**Chief Dennis Pashe**  
Dakota Tipi First Nation

**Chief Derrick Henderson**  
Sagkeeng Anicinabe First Nation

**Chief Lola Thunderchild**  
Canupawakpa Dakota Nation

**Chief Kyra Wilson**  
Long Plain First Nation

**Chief Cameron Catcheway**  
Skownan First Nation

CHAT continues to provide leadership and guidance to all aspects of Health Transformation.



## Community Engagement

The Health Transformation team continues to engage with First Nations. Over the last year, our staff took part in:

- Traditional Knowledge Forum
- Naming ceremony
- Treaty Speaker Series
- Community outreach
- Public health and primary health care



### Traditional Knowledge Forum

The Elders/Knowledge Keepers Committee held a Traditional Knowledge Forum in May 2022 at the Turtle Lodge in Sagkeeng Anicinabe First Nation. The goal of the forum was to bring together Elders and Knowledge Keepers from the 34 southern Anishinaabe and Dakota Nations to establish the foundations of Traditional Knowledge in the Health Transformation process.

Elders from each of the 34 Nations were invited to attend the forum along with members of our Elders/Knowledge Keepers Committee. There were 47 Elders from 15 Anishinaabe and Dakota Nations in attendance.

Throughout the forum, the main theme that continually surfaced was the need to get back to the ways of our ancestors as it is quite apparent that the ways of the western world are not working for our people.

The need to invigorate our ancestral and Traditional Knowledge with the youth and community members is essential to our health and well-being. To ensure that our ancestral and Traditional Knowledge is embedded and implemented into this new health authority, it is essential that our committee and Elders provide the guidance and support that is needed for transforming health systems.

### The names of a healthier future

The Elders/Knowledge Keepers Committee gifted names to Health Transformation for the new southern First Nations Health Authority. A naming ceremony was held in August 2022, on the front lawn of a former residential school building in Long Plain First Nation. Our Elders and Knowledge Keepers gathered in a sharing circle along with Long Plain First Nation's Chief Kyra Wilson, SCO Grand Chief Jerry Daniels, members of our Chiefs' Health Action Table, Community Health Transformation Liaisons, First Nation community members, health experts, and various members of our team for this important and monumental step in our journey.

**The names of the future health care system are as follows:**

**IN DAKOTA:**

**WICOZANI HDUHA MANI**  
(WALK WITH HEALTH)

**IN ANISHINAABEMOWIN:**

**O-NII-GAH-NEEK MINO AYAWIN**  
(LEADERS IN HEALTH)

**" Guided by our ancestors and led by First Nation health professionals, throughout the pandemic we responded to longstanding health inequities by advocating, partnering, and leading delivery of services."**

**- GRAND CHIEF JERRY DANIELS**

### Community Outreach

The Community Health Transformation Liaisons continue to support our work through various engagement activities, including coordinating and supporting First Nations sports/games, holding information booths at pow wows or health fairs, facilitating men's and women's groups, or promoting community contests, such as yard cleaning.

In acknowledgement to the land and tradition, the liaisons have often promoted outdoor or cultural activities. Over the last year, such activities have included maple tree tapping, medicine picking, bike riding, ribbon skirt making, and holding gatherings and/or hosting dinners for Elders.

### Public Health and Primary Health Care

To effectively address the 11-year and growing gap in life expectancy between First Nations and others living in what is now Manitoba, public health and primary health care approaches must be integrated to provide high quality, culturally safe health care while addressing the determinants of health disproportionately affecting First Nations individuals, families, and communities.

Over the next fiscal year, Health Transformation will continue to work towards the signing of an Agreement-in-Principle with the provincial and federal government; establish a southern First Nations Health Directors Association; develop the various strategies for health human resources, mental health and addictions, anti-racism, public health and primary health care, and housing; as well as start work on demonstration projects to bring better services onto the southern 34 Anishinaabe and Dakota Nations.



### Treaty Speakers Series: Doctor Elder Harry Bone

We held a virtual series on the Treaty relationship and how the Treaties are relevant to health. Dr. Elder Harry Bone spoke to community members about the obligations, the importance of the medicine chest clause in Treaty 6, our own First Nation sacred laws, our own First Nation social determinants of health, our Nation-to-Nation relationship, and how we can move forward with our Treaty partners in a good, respectful way.



The NIHB Navigator is an active member of the National NIHB Navigators' Group. The group met in person more frequently this past year and included the national leads for the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB).

Regional Navigators were able to share the major issues within the NIHB program. The national dentistry group joined and the hope is to break down barriers in the coming year to make dental an easier program to navigate.

The Navigator meets quarterly with the regional FNIHB management team, the Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Navigator, and Keewatin Tribal Council team. These meetings increase communications between all teams and work to address ongoing issues, such as with medical transportation. The meetings are also successful in assisting with complex NIHB cases.

# NON-INSURED HEALTH BENEFITS NAVIGATOR

The Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) Navigator at SCO continues to provide support and advocacy to status First Nation citizens and their families to remove barriers and increase access to the NIHB Program.

## The NIHB Navigator:

- Serves as first point of contact for communities, organizations, and individuals to facilitate access to the NIHB Program and provides support for NIHB denials and appeals
- Promotes an understanding of the Navigator's role and responsibilities to SCO member Nations, health care providers, organizations, and agencies
- Liaises with First Nation, federal, provincial, and territorial health services, professional organizations, and health care providers to assist eligible clients to navigate the NIHB Program or related benefits
- Identifies gaps and inequities in service, as well as training requirements and opportunities for improving access to health services and health outcomes
- Works with the NIHB Regional Office on programs, projects, and initiatives to improve awareness and access to the NIHB Program and better integration of health services
- Maintains a network of contacts to strengthen relationships with stakeholders, health care providers, and partners

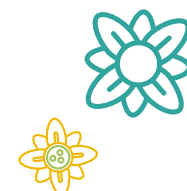
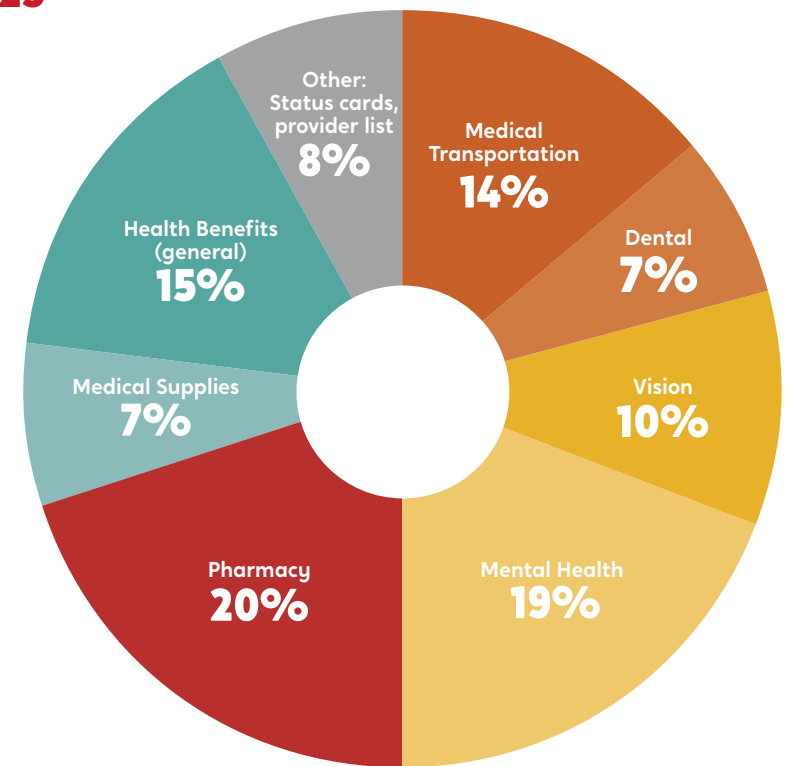
## Call Distribution 2022-2023

The NIHB Navigator received a total of 699 contacts. Of these contacts, most interactions resulted in multiple types of requests for assistance, which totaled 1723 requests.

This number is significantly higher than the previous year, in part due to the launch of SCO's Jordan's Principle Program. This has opened up the Navigator's role to include educating the coordinators about benefits that may be accessed through NIHB without having to escalate to Jordan's Principle.

The Navigator assisted clients from 25 of the 34 SCO First Nations and also helped six communities not within SCO.

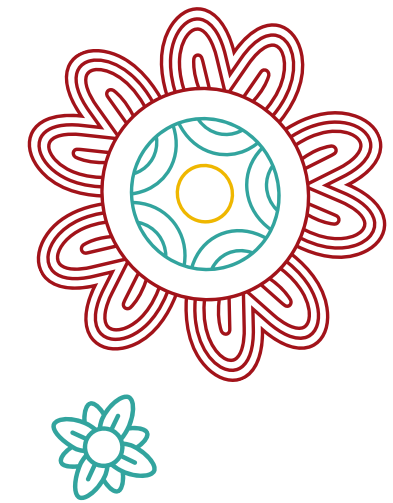
This chart reflects the 1723 different types of requests for service, advocacy, as well as support in the areas of medical supplies, medical transportation, pharmacy, mental health and Traditional Healers, dental, vision, Jordan's Principle, and other categories.



## Key challenges

Clients identified the following issues:

- Billing irregularities between provincial health benefits and NIHB
- Procedural deficiencies with providers, resulting in overpayment by clients or approved benefits not being covered for eligible recipients
- The need for education and awareness for providers, such as pharmacists, about program benefits and the products clients are entitled to, such as vitamins and pain relievers
- Pharmacy inclusion and exclusion updates
- Lack of awareness of the appeal process through NIHB
- Difficulties in navigating the appeal process, even in exceptional circumstances where support would greatly improve the health of individual clients
- The need for resource sharing and collaboration with agencies
- Medical transportation coverage amounts and point of care locations
- Accessing status registration in a timely manner
- Providing both First Nation communities and individuals with all mental health resources available under the NIHB Program



## Accomplishments

The last year was busy, with a heightened profile of the NIHB Navigator's role. The Navigator attended events such as Vision Quest, the Royal Manitoba Winter Fair in Brandon, an annual summer block party in the north end of Winnipeg, and numerous SCO events.

Along with more exposure came more complex cases and greater need for support. The Navigator worked closely with the SCO Jordan's Principle and Wellness Services Lead to problem solve certain scenarios. In one complex case, it was suspected that a client's family member was experiencing racism and discrimination within a Manitoba medical facility. The team worked with the family to break down barriers and the Navigator met with all parties to discuss the issues with the medical team. This resulted in solutions that supported the family and patient. The Navigator also shared knowledge with the new SCO teams that launched this year.

The Navigator continued advocacy efforts with FNIHB and Indigenous Services Canada by providing relevant data on the barriers clients face when accessing the NIHB Program, including the lack of services in Winnipeg for dialysis patients and urban Elders who require weekly transportation to essential health services.

The Navigator's role is vital to continue advocacy and education for clients and providers about the services and benefits to which First Nations citizens are entitled as negotiated in the Treaties. The Navigator will continue participating in public events both in community and in urban centres to build awareness and knowledge of rights and entitlements.

Many First Nation people face challenges, racism, and barriers when navigating complex systems and accessing supports through the NIHB Program. The Navigator at SCO will continue to advocate, address gaps in services, improve awareness of the NIHB benefits, and participate in national and local tables intended to improve the overall health and well-being of First Nation peoples.





# MOBILE CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM

Anishinaabe and Dakota peoples are assuming greater control and self-determination over their mental health and wellness since SCO launched its Mobile Crisis Response Team in 2022. SCO delivers a culturally responsive and trauma-informed mental health and wellness program that meets the needs of southern First Nation citizens.

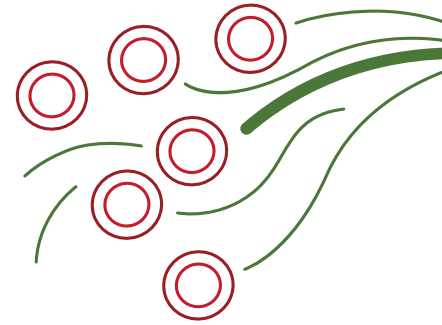
Our team consists of one team lead, two intake coordinators, and seven crisis response team members with a diverse range of knowledge and skills. The team is trauma-informed, culturally safe, and provides a holistic response for southern Manitoba First Nations experiencing crisis incidents. The diverse backgrounds of team members includes experience in mental health, psychiatric nursing, counselling, and therapy, including two Anishinaabemowin speakers.

## Goals and objectives

The objectives of the team include:

- Increase capacity for emergency responses to crisis within the southern First Nations
- Provide and ensure rapid response services throughout southern First Nations to address complex challenges that require timely and flexible treatment responses
- Strengthen coordination and collaboration between interjurisdictional organizations to provide effective and rapid responses to a crisis in community

This past fiscal year, our team responded to 358 intake calls and served 5216 citizens. This included mental health supports, crisis debriefing, grief and loss, advocacy, assessment and care, community consultations or information inquiries, counselling, therapy, and referral to long-term aftercare.



During this period, the team responded to 27 of the 34 SCO-member Nations in the following three services areas:

1. **Crisis response:** Critical incident stress debriefing, mental health and psycho-social assessment and consultation, facilitated sharing circles, grief and loss counselling and supports
2. **Continuum of care:** Counselling and therapy, post crisis and supports, referral, advocacy, wellness checks, care plan, and case management
3. **Prevention:** Telephone consultation and support, helping connect citizens to other resources, providing training and education, suicide prevention, and grief and loss workshops

Type	Total: March 2023
Intakes	358
Number of clients contacted/served	5216
Referral	439

**5216 FIRST NATION CITIZENS SUPPORTED!**

Two of our member Nations faced flooding or fire evacuation in 2022, including Peguis First Nation. The team provided mental health support to many of the evacuees, which continued throughout the entire year. During this time, the team assisted with wellness checks, crisis intervention, suicide prevention, team building workshops, and provided training opportunities, and crisis debriefing. Following best practice, the team worked in collaboration with the Peguis Wellness Team, the Peguis Evacuation Team, and supporting organizations to ensure that all evacuees had the mental and emotional supports needed.

In November 2022, the team held the first annual "Caring for the Caregiver Wellness Conference" at the Victoria Inn, with an emphasis on the overall importance of self-care and wellness for each community wellness team. This conference provided an opportunity to introduce our services and staff, and gave each community wellness

team an opportunity to introduce their team. All 34-member Nation wellness teams were invited. A total of 163 people attended the conference.

Our conference agenda consisted of presentations on grief and loss and avoiding burnout and vicarious trauma as well as presentations from the First People Wellness Circle and Thunderbird Partnership on an Indigenous Worker Wellness Strategy and an Indigenous Crisis Debriefing Model.

To promote wellness, the Mobile Crisis Response Team provided opportunities for self-care for participants, including cedar bath ceremonies and reiki. Gator Beaulieu of Sandy Bay Ojibway First Nation and Paul Rabilaskas of Poplar River First Nation performed and there was good food, entertainment, and fun! Evaluations of this event were very positive, and included good ideas for our next annual conference.



### Evaluating our program

SCO recognizes the need to remain consistent, and also to continually search for ways to enhance our services and provide even greater support in response to crisis incidents. Our program has been in service for more than one year and is in the process of a full program evaluation conducted by an independent external organization.

The evaluation will assess how our team meets the needs of community members, with a focus on program strengths and areas for growth. A final evaluation report will include recommendations to improve program structure and delivery.

### Program accreditation

SCO understands the importance of quality assurance and accountability of service delivery. The program has begun the first stages of accreditation through the Canadian Accreditation Council. This process of accreditation will take at least 14 months to complete. It is of utmost importance to ensure that we deliver exceptional service to our Nations and that our service delivery attains the best national standards of practice.

Over the next year, the Mobile Crisis Response Team will look to expand with a clinical therapist and

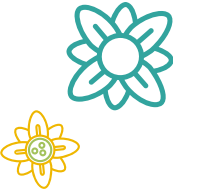
develop more partnerships in the area of addictions, mental health, and harm reduction, as these are areas of great need as identified by communities. We look forward to providing training opportunities to each community, such as crisis response, Mental Health First Aid, addiction assessment, psychological assessment, and grief and loss.

We will continue to work closely with a range of SCO programs. We have also expanded our services to include off-reserve supports to our members who live away from their home Nations.

**// Decades of intergenerational trauma has led to a crisis in many of our communities that can manifest in mental health issues and substance misuse. The Mobile Crisis Response Team is critically important - our people and communities need it and we are so thankful for this incredible team of compassionate and caring professionals."**

**- GRAND CHIEF JERRY DANIELS**

# HARM REDUCTION AND LAND-BASED HEALING FUND



The Harm Reduction and Land Based Healing Fund Program launched in January of 2023 with a focus on reducing the harms associated with substance use in a culturally appropriate way. The program also administers a grant program for southern First Nations to support land-based healing activities.

### Program purpose and scope

The Harm Reduction Coordinator facilitated presentations and training opportunities using a harm reduction approach to increase awareness and decrease the stigma our relatives can face when using substances.

SCO First Nations, community members, and agencies that support First Nation citizens received harm reduction and safer sex supplies at no cost. Training included instruction on the use of harm reduction supplies such as fentanyl test strips and how to administer Narcan spray in cases of suspected opioid poisoning (overdose).

SCO established the Land-Based Healing Fund, which provided up to \$25,000 to Dakota and Anishinaabe member-Nations and related organizations to support land-based healing projects. The coordinator worked with SCO Nations to provide funding for community-led initiatives that promote personal and community wellness, using land-based activities for healing, connection and education.

**// We need your support to create a safer society for everyone. I am also asking all elected officials to challenge themselves to do everything they can to bring safety and dignity to every human being they represent."**

**- GRAND CHIEF JERRY DANIELS**



## Accomplishments

- 4000 doses of Narcan nasal spray acquired, enabling the creation of 2000 Narcan opioid poisoning reversal kits for community use
- Distributed more than 1000 condoms and other safer sex supplies
- Land-Based Healing funds totaling \$390,490 granted to 17 Nations to support community-led projects:
  - Black River First Nation
  - Brokenhead Ojibway Nation
  - Canupawakpa Dakota Nation
  - Dakota Tipi First Nation
  - Dauphin River First Nation
  - Gambler First Nation
  - Keeseekoowenin Ojibway First Nation
  - Kinonjeoshtegon First Nation
  - Lake Manitoba First Nation
  - Lake St. Martin First Nation
  - Little Saskatchewan First Nation
  - O-Chi-Chak-Ko-Sipi First Nation
  - Pinaymootang First Nation
  - Roseau River Anishinabe First Nation
  - Sagkeeng Anishinabe First Nation
  - Tootinaowaziibeeng Treaty Reserve
  - Waywayseecappo First Nation
- Established numerous network connections and developed collaborative relationships with local harm reduction service providers
- Presented and facilitated breakout sessions at SCO's Survivors' Healing Gathering, Gambler First Nation's Spring Wellness Fair, and at Fisher River Cree Nation's Harm Reduction Workshop
- Held safe usage demonstrations for the Peguis First Nation Flood Evacuee Coordinators to support those housed in Winnipeg hotels
- Attended Sagkeeng Anicinabe First Nation land-based youth initiative funded via SCO's Land-Based Healing Fund

## Key issues and challenges

Stigma is a key challenge faced by our relatives who use substances and harm reduction approaches. Harm reduction does not promote substance use, instead it helps people who use drugs to use them safely and provides opportunities for those who would like to stop with options for healing and recovery. Stigma can lead people who use substances to feel that they are bad or unworthy of love and respect, making them hide their use.

The toxicity of the drug supply is a significant challenge and the leading cause of drug poisonings (overdoses). Currently, unregulated substances are often mixed with potent non-pharmaceutical grade fentanyl with no regard for the safety of people who use them. Education and encouragement via harm reduction are the key to safer use of substances, which can prevent unintentional loss of life.

Providing nonjudgmental education and building awareness using harm reduction approaches are key to minimizing the harm of the toxic drug supply and preventing the unintentional loss of life.

Other challenges include anti-Indigenous racism, sobriety requirements to receive treatment and support, long wait lists, lack of options for care, no support for safe injection sites and shortages or barriers to accessing safe supplies for substance use.

## Next steps

In summer 2023, SCO is launching a public awareness campaign focused on harm reduction and the importance of getting tested, seeking treatment, and increasing awareness of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Sexually Transmitted and Blood Borne Infections (STBBIs). Our campaign will promote love, acceptance, and a sense of belonging for our relatives who use substances and/or live with HIV or STBBIs. Our team is also working to further develop and offer presentations and seminars to educate on safe substance use and safer sex practices to reduce the spread of HIV/STBBIs.

The stigma surrounding harm reduction is quite prevalent and resistance to safe usage versus abstinence is common. The guiding principles of harm reduction are the key to prevent unintentional loss of life and to support people who use substances to feel loved, accepted, and part of our community. All of our relatives deserve love, respect and kindness regardless of their substance use or HIV/STBBI status.



# JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE PROGRAM

Jordan's Principle is named in memory of Jordan River Anderson, a young boy from Norway House Cree Nation in Manitoba. Jordan was born in 1999 with complex health needs and stayed in the hospital from birth.

When he was two years old, doctors determined that Jordan could move to a special home for his medical needs, however, the federal and provincial governments could not agree on who should pay for his home-based care. As a result, Jordan remained in-hospital for an additional three years where sadly, he passed away at the age of five. Jordan never spent even one night at home.

In 2007, the House of Commons passed "Jordan's Principle", a commitment to ensure First Nation children would get the products, services, and supports they need, when they need them. That commitment by the federal government is still in the process of being fully honoured. In many instances, the burden still lies on the ability of parents and caregivers to access and advocate for the services and supports their children need.

In response to these identified needs, SCO has built a network of Jordan's Principle Coordinators to support improved health and educational outcomes for First Nation children in southern Manitoba.

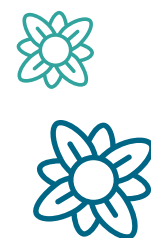
In 2022-23, SCO expanded and shifted from Jordan's Principle navigation services to full financial administration of Jordan's Principle. This includes procuring and purchasing specialized equipment and services, and coordinating cases for children and families entitled to Jordan's Principle supports.

This shift in delivery of Jordan's Principle from Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) First Nation and Inuit Health Branch to SCO is aligned with the priority to devolve services from the department to First Nations and First Nation organizations. It also implements the mandate set out by the SCO Chiefs-in-Summit resolution called "Developing Jordan's Principle Supports and Services."

Over the last year, SCO expanded from having Jordan's Principle coordination services at one site, to an additional eleven sites across Winnipeg and southern Manitoba. Along with one in-house coordinator to fulfill emergency requests, SCO has

coordinators at the following partner sites to help address unmet health and education needs:

- Specialized Services for Children and Youth (SSCY) Centre
- Winnipeg Children's Hospital, including Women's Hospital and CancerCare Manitoba
- Brandon School Division
- Lord Selkirk School Division
- Louis Riel School Division
- Pembina Trails School Division
- Portage la Prairie School Division
- River East Transcona School Division
- St. James School Division
- Seven Oaks School Division
- Winnipeg School Division



SCO's enhanced focus on delivering service within the school settings is based on the belief that improved equity and access to supports for children and youth will improve educational outcomes and increase high school graduation rates. Manitoba's four-year high school graduation rate for non-Indigenous students is 89.9 per cent and for Indigenous students it drops to 50.7 per cent. If the data was specific to First Nation students, sadly, the high school graduation rate would be even lower.

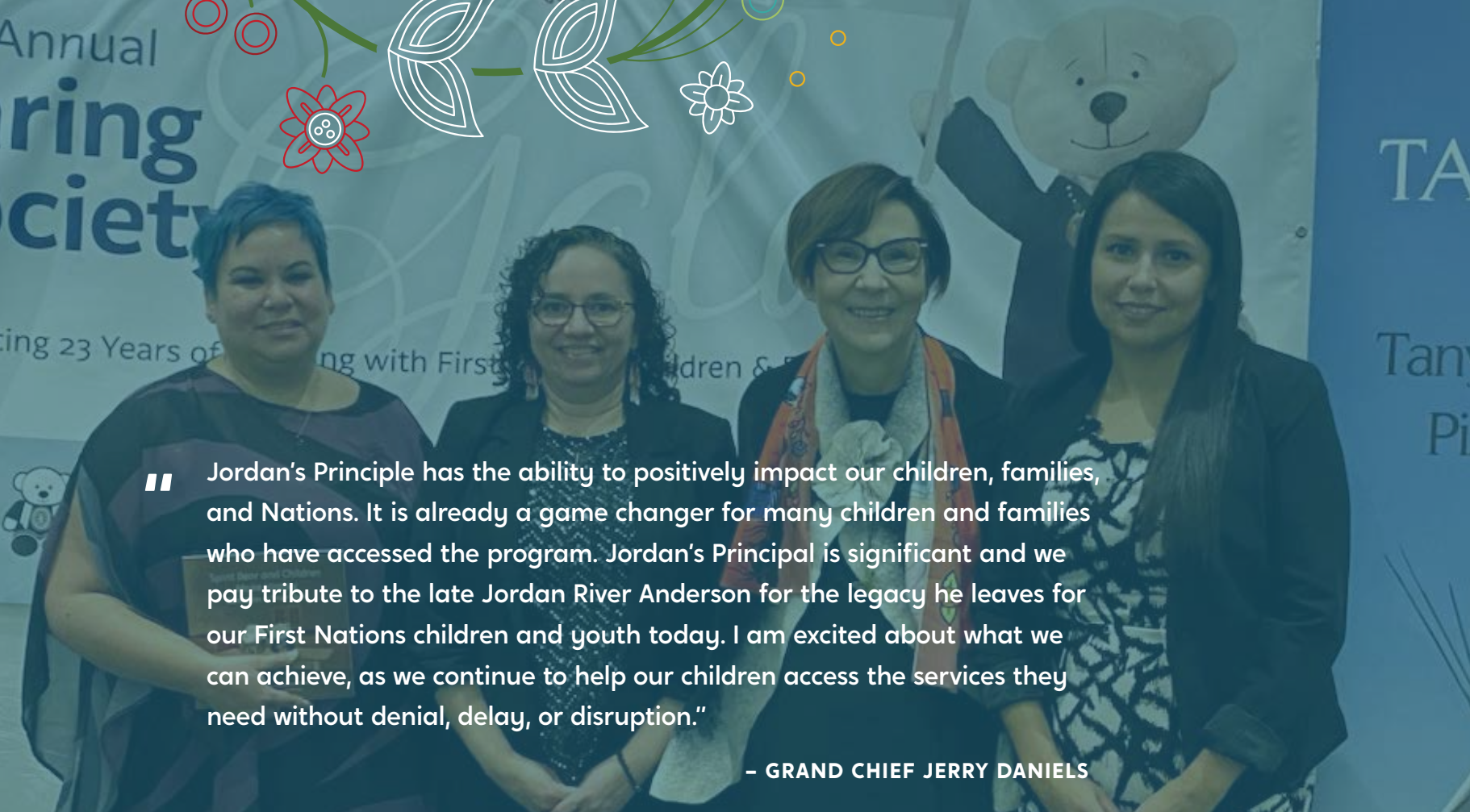
## Role of Jordan's Principle Coordinators

SCO's Jordan's Principle Coordinators work with educators, health care professionals, families, and other providers to access programs, products, services, and supports without denial, delay, or disruption to improve health, educational, and social outcomes for First Nation children.

Providing high quality, comprehensive, competent, and culturally appropriate services that are responsive to families' needs includes:

- assisting with the application process and providing direct access to Jordan's Principle funding for services and supports;
- providing navigation to appropriate programs, services, and agencies;
- offering education and information on types of supports and services Jordan's Principle can provide for eligible children;
- attending case conferencing on request; and
- collaborating with service providers to offer wrap around services for children.





|| Jordan's Principle has the ability to positively impact our children, families, and Nations. It is already a game changer for many children and families who have accessed the program. Jordan's Principle is significant and we pay tribute to the late Jordan River Anderson for the legacy he leaves for our First Nations children and youth today. I am excited about what we can achieve, as we continue to help our children access the services they need without denial, delay, or disruption."

– GRAND CHIEF JERRY DANIELS



2024  
First Nation  
children  
and youth  
served!

### Accomplishments

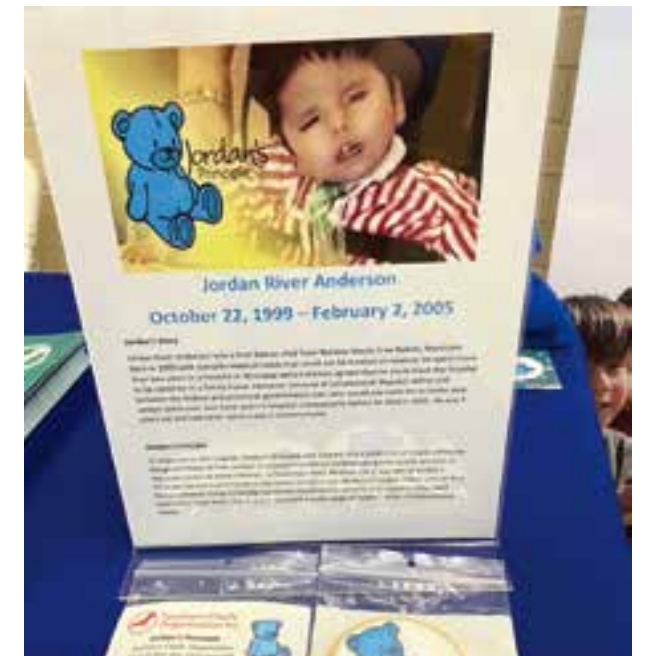
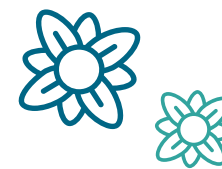
Despite the full implementation of services being delayed due to the global pandemic, our program grew exponentially in 2022. Additional resources were secured to increase capacity for oversight and administration of the program. A Jordan's Principle and Wellness Services Lead was hired in July 2022 and a dedicated Intake and Administrative Assistant joined later in the year.

Discussions were initiated with various metro and rural school divisions in the south based on the percentages of Indigenous student enrolment and their proximity to First Nations or service hubs. Each of the nine school divisions were receptive to partnerships with SCO, signing memorandums of

understanding and soon after, acquiring Jordan's Principle Coordinators to work with their school teams and families.

Intensive work took place to fully implement program activities, including the hiring, training, and supervising of Jordan's Principle Coordinators, and developing materials including posters, brochures, guideline and procedure documents, and intake/referral forms.

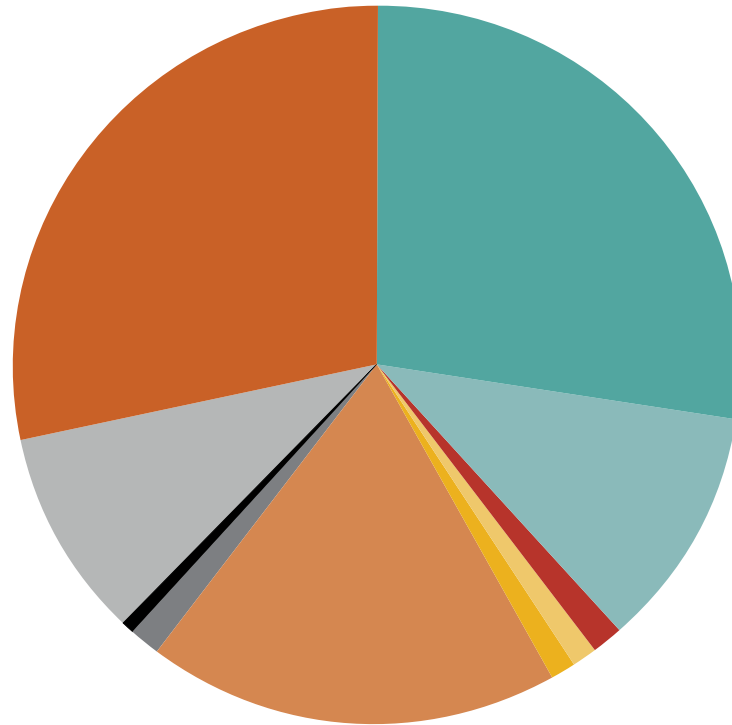
Our Jordan's Principle team was successful in providing direct support to more than 2000 First Nation children and their families, fulfilling more than \$400,000 worth of goods and services.



## Top Individual Requests by Site

<b>577</b> Winnipeg School Division <b>WSD</b>	<b>557</b> Brandon School Division <b>BSD</b>
<b>220</b> Winnipeg Children's Hospital <b>CH</b> including Women's Hospital and CancerCare Manitoba	<b>26</b> Portage la Prairie School Division <b>PLPSD</b>
<b>20</b> Pembina Trails School Division <b>PTSD</b>	<b>27</b> River East Transcona School Division <b>RETSO</b>
<b>369</b> Emergency Requests to <b>SCO</b>	<b>26</b> St. James School Division <b>SJASD</b>
<b>14</b> Seven Oaks School Division <b>SOSD</b>	<b>188</b> Specialized Services for Children and Youth ( <b>SSCY</b> ) Centre

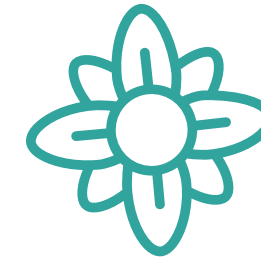
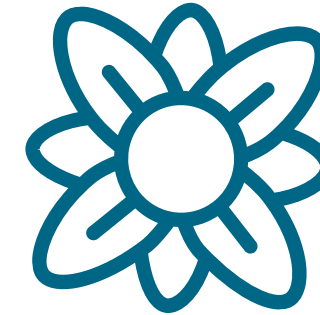
**TOTAL = 2024**



Not having the supports of Jordan's Principle past a youth's eighteenth birthday leaves them and their caregivers at a disadvantage and also creates an ethical dilemma for our Jordan's Principle team members.

In the new fiscal year, our program anticipates:

- Identifying gaps and expanding services to more school divisions and sites across southern Manitoba
- Working to develop a database system that team members can use across various sites
- Continuing to provide education and awareness of our services
- Creating a culturally relevant evaluation framework for the program



## Key issues and challenges

Our team facilitated and participated in many events throughout the year. These ranged from festivities offered on Bear Witness Day on May 10 and memorial celebrations on Jordan River Anderson's birthday on October 22, to sharing information at Chiefs' Summits, conferences, and other events throughout the year.

On April 1, 2022, the federal government introduced its "Jordan's Principle Back-to-Basics Approach.". Through team efforts, SCO developed a guidelines document to aid in decision-making when it comes to approving and processing Jordan's Principle requests.

Eligibility for Jordan's Principle remains a concern and challenge as the federal government continues to enforce the cut-off to "age of majority." In the school system, there are many youth who attend past the age of 18. Additionally, students who qualify for the provincial Community Living Disability Services program are expected to remain in high school until the age of 21.

The top three requests funded by SCO Jordan's Principle in each area were:

- A. Health
  1. Medical/adaptive supplies and equipment
  2. Dental
  3. Prescriptions
- B. Education
  1. Sports and recreation
  2. School supplies
  3. Transportation



# SURVIVORS' HEALING PROGRAM

In September 2022, SCO successfully launched the Survivors' Healing Program. The program focuses on providing services for those dealing with ongoing traumas associated with residential and day schools, the Sixties Scoop and child welfare system, as well as the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, two spirit, and gender-diverse people (MMIWG2S+).

The program provides culturally appropriate support, information, advocacy, systems navigation, referrals, and more to help Survivors and families. Our liaisons are ready to assist and advocate for families interacting with various colonial systems, and to help in the coordination of gatherings while providing emotional support to Survivors and their families.

**“ Time and time again, we hear from our communities that there is an urgent need to expand the range of culturally appropriate, responsive, and trauma-informed supports for residential and day school Survivors and inter-generational Survivors in our Territories, as well as those impacted by the Sixties Scoop and child welfare system, and the crisis of MMIWG2S+. This need has only been exacerbated since the discovery of the remains of the children who died at residential schools across Turtle Island.”**

**– GRAND CHIEF JERRY DANIELS**

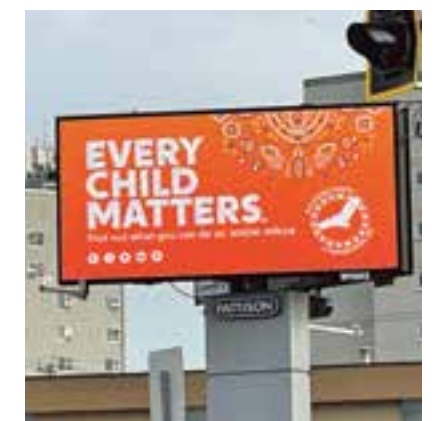
## Listening to Survivors and families of residential and day schools

During the month of September, SCO launched our annual month-long 'Every Child Matters' education and awareness campaign. This included creating a new sub-logo that was on billboards and bus signs in Brandon, Dauphin, Portage la Prairie, Steinbach, Swan River, Winkler, and Winnipeg. Additionally, we hosted giveaways of t-shirts and lawn signs to honour Survivors and the children who did not make it home.

SCO distributed a survey to identify the priorities of southern Manitoba First Nations concerning the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. The survey was open to all SCO community members and will be released in September 2023.

Since the first announcement of 215 unmarked graves being discovered at the site of the Kamloops Residential School in May 2021, thousands more anomalies have been discovered at former residential schools across Canada requiring investigation. Survivors often share about friends and family members who went missing from the schools. They have waited a long time to be believed.

Our Residential and Day School Liaison continues to educate the public about truth and reconciliation, advocate for the implementation of the Calls to Action, and provide support and resources to Survivors and families. SCO will continue to advocate for the implementation of the Calls to Action and will compile and report on the results of our survey, which will guide our work. SCO will also continue to launch an annual month-long 'Every Child Matters' campaign to honour Survivors and the lost children every September.



## Advocating for MMIWG2S+ Families and Survivors

On October 4, 2022, SCO launched its annual multi-media campaign to increase awareness surrounding the ongoing national MMIWG2S+ emergency. This included: signage on billboards throughout southern Manitoba, transit signs and bus boards in Winnipeg, and promotions on SCO's social media streams and website. As part of our work in this area, our program now has a sub-logo that includes a red dress surrounded by florals. This sub-logo helps to increase awareness and recognition of MMIWG2S+.

Throughout the month of October, SCO distributed approximately 1500 Calls for Justice booklets, posters, vigil candles, and t-shirts, at no charge. Additionally, SCO assisted in the annual gathering at the Oodena Circle at The Forks in Winnipeg by lighting candles with community members to honour Survivors and families impacted by the issue of MMIWG2S+.

The program continues to be an active member of Giganawenimaanaanig ("we all take care of them"), which is the traditional name for the MMIWG2S+ Implementation Advisory Committee, which collaborates with all organizations that support Survivors and families of MMIWG2S+. Our MMIWG2S+ Liaison assists families in organizing vigils and gatherings and provides support and advocacy to Survivors and families.

On December 1, 2022, the Winnipeg police announced the devastating news that four Indigenous women had been murdered by an alleged serial killer – and their sacred remains were believed to be at two landfills just outside of the city.

Along with our community partners, the SCO team quickly mobilized to support those affected. SCO continues to stand with the families of Morgan Harris, Mercedes Myran, Rebecca Contois, and Buffalo Woman, and every family impacted by this issue in the search for justice for their loved ones.

A team dedicated to MMIWG2S+ is being launched in 2023. SCO is beginning this next stage by consulting and engaging with families and Survivors and will develop resources and support on sexual exploitation and violence prevention.



## Supporting Survivors of the Sixties Scoop and Child Welfare System

The program serves as a point of contact for Survivors of the Sixties Scoop and child welfare system. It is the first of its kind in Manitoba and experienced a high number of calls and emails from Sixties Scoop Survivors. We provide information and services related to intergenerational trauma and loss of connection to families and communities. We provide support through systems navigation, accessing community resources, advocacy, and providing information to Survivors as needed.

Our Sixties Scoop and Child Welfare System Liaison collaborated with a design team to create a meaningful sub-logo to represent Sixties Scoop Survivors. The design was created around warm yellow golden hues to symbolize spring with the vision for growth, renewal, and new beginnings. As Nations continue to rise like the morning sun, as we reclaim who we are as First Nations people of Turtle Island, we are stronger than the scoop.

SCO is planning to conduct a survey to gather the needs and priorities of Sixties Scoop Survivors, hold an education and awareness campaign, as well as develop a Sixties Scoop Advisory Committee to inform and guide the work of the program.





The community memorial space is in the shape of a medicine wheel and is paved with memorial stones with the names of loved ones on the stones. Seven benches were placed to represent the seven sacred teachings.

## Survivors' Healing Fund

Launched in Fall 2022, SCO's fund provides grants to our member Nations to host events, gatherings, ceremonies, and/or to develop monuments to honour Survivors of the residential and day schools, Sixties Scoop, child welfare system, and MMIWG2s+, their families, and the children who did not return home.

In total, SCO provided \$614,972 to 24 Dakota and Anishinaabe Nations to show support for loved ones in their communities. These events took the form of community feasts, pow wows, and unveiling ceremonies for memorials, to name a few. One Nation created a community memorial space, recognizing all members and families of the community as Survivors and one community hosted walk to a former residential school site where the former Glee Club, who are residential school Survivors, sang songs.

- Berens River First Nation
- Birdtail Sioux Dakota Nation
- Bloodvein First Nation
- Brokenhead Ojibway Nation
- Canupawakpa Dakota Nation
- Dakota Tipi First Nation
- Ebb And Flow First Nation
- Gambler First Nation
- Hollow Water First Nation
- Kinonjeoshtegon First Nation
- Lake Manitoba First Nation
- Lake St. Martin First Nation
- Little Saskatchewan First Nation
- Long Plain First Nation
- O-Chi-Chak-Ko-Sipi First Nation
- Peguis First Nation
- Pinaymootang First Nation
- Poplar River First Nation
- Rolling River First Nation
- Roseau River Anishinabe First Nation
- Sagkeeng Anicinabe First Nation
- Skownan First Nation
- Tootinaowaziibeeng Treaty Reserve
- Waywayseecappo First Nation



A poster board with photographs of the former Portage Residential School Glee Club.



**" A few of the most beautiful highlights was seeing young girls wearing their ribbon skirts... As well, the song that was given at the ceremony. We had a lot of tears and there was so much positive feedback, and may the healing continue in our communities."**

**- PARTICIPANT, EBB AND FLOW FIRST NATION**

**" It takes a community, partnerships, and collaboration to make an event successful. With the funding we received [from SCO], we were able to do more and cover the expenses on the event. Kitchi Miigwetch."**

**- PARTICIPANT, LONG PLAIN FIRST NATION**





### Survivors' Healing Gathering – Mino-si-toon Wichozani

In Anishinaabemowin, the word “Mino-si-toon” means “putting things right” or “doing things in a good way.” In Dakota, the word “Wichozani” means “healing.” SCO used these two words together to indicate our movement forward and that we are putting things in a good way on our healing journey.

In February 2023, 550 Survivors from more than 79 First Nations attended SCO's first annual Survivors' Healing Gathering in Winnipeg at the RBC Convention Centre. This was the largest post-COVID gathering SCO had held.

Thank you to keynote speakers Dr. Phil Fontaine and Kevin Chief, and singer-songwriter Don Amero, who honoured Survivors with their presentations and music.

There were panel discussions and information sessions on topics including:

- reclaiming our traditional teachings;
- how to access child and family services files for Sixties Scoop Survivors;

- presentations on harm reduction and grief and loss;
- language, medicine doll making, and beading workshops; and
- Elder and Grandmother teachings.

Survivors encouraged SCO to make this an annual event. Data gathered from evaluations indicate that 97 per cent of participants had a good, very good, or excellent experience!

### Moving forward

Our program has many exciting projects and partnerships planned for 2023 and beyond. This includes annual events such as our month-long 'Every Child Matters' campaign in September to honour Survivors and the lost children; October events honouring MMIWG2S+; and the second

annual Survivors' Healing Gathering. Our team will support families by providing support, advocacy, resource bundles and toolkits, as well as host workshops and share teachings on beading, medicine dolls, rattle making and more.

SCO is also excited to be working with a southern First Nation artist to create a design honouring Survivors of residential and day schools. The mural will be in a prominent location in Winnipeg and unveiled in the spring of 2024. The Survivors Healing Fund grant will continue to be provided to member Nations as they honour the strength and resiliency of Survivors and remember the children who never made it home.

Recognizing that not all children came home from the schools and other systems, SCO is changing the name of the program effective September 1, 2023. The new name will be the Pathways to Healing Program.

**“ I really enjoyed learning about how events could be healing, inspiring and influential. I will continue to share positive feedback and information with my community.”**

**– PARTICIPANT,  
LAKE MANITOBA FIRST NATION**





# CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES PROGRAM

In 2022-2023, the Child and Family Services Program continued to dedicate its efforts to advancing the *Waakaabit-Woksape* Initiative, focused on supporting the southern Anishinaabe and Dakota Nations.

The inspiration for this important work comes from the teachings and wisdom of our dedicated Knowledge Keepers, Burma Bushie, Donna Pratt, Harry Bone, and Charlie Nelson (2022). Elder Nelson named the program to guide development and work within the circle, to make good decisions for our children, families, and communities.

Three jurisdictions operate within child welfare: First Nation, federal, and provincial/territorial. The federal Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families establishes a process for the Anishinaabe and Dakota Nations to pass their own laws and sets national standards for all provincial and territorial child welfare providers.

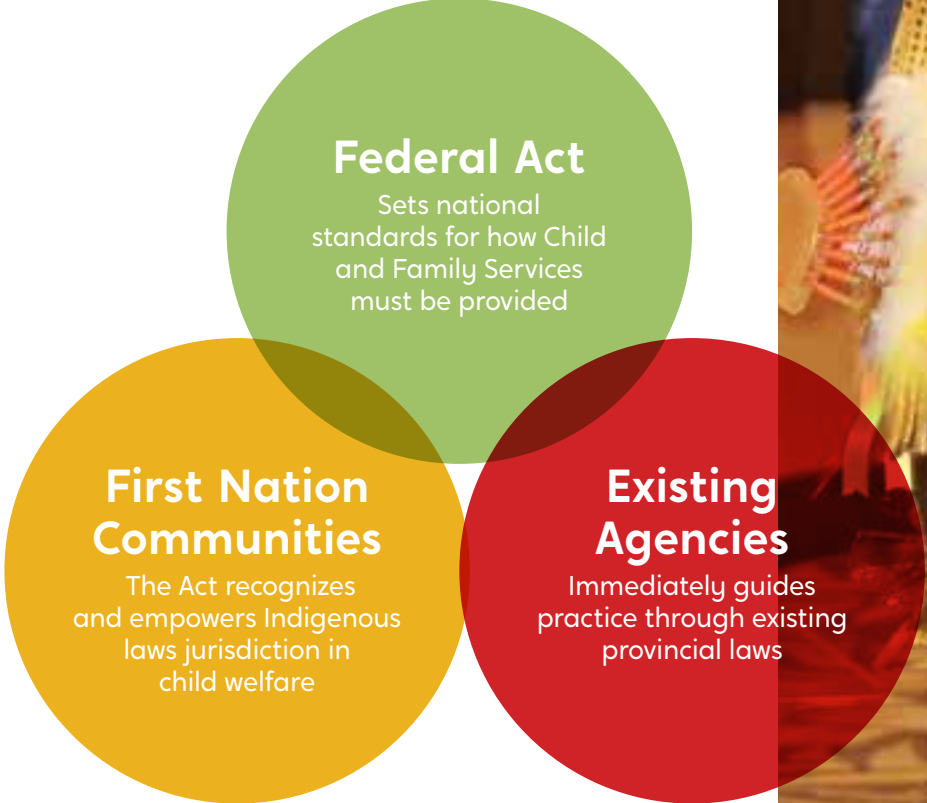
In delivering child welfare services, a child and family services agency or authority must now show the efforts made to:

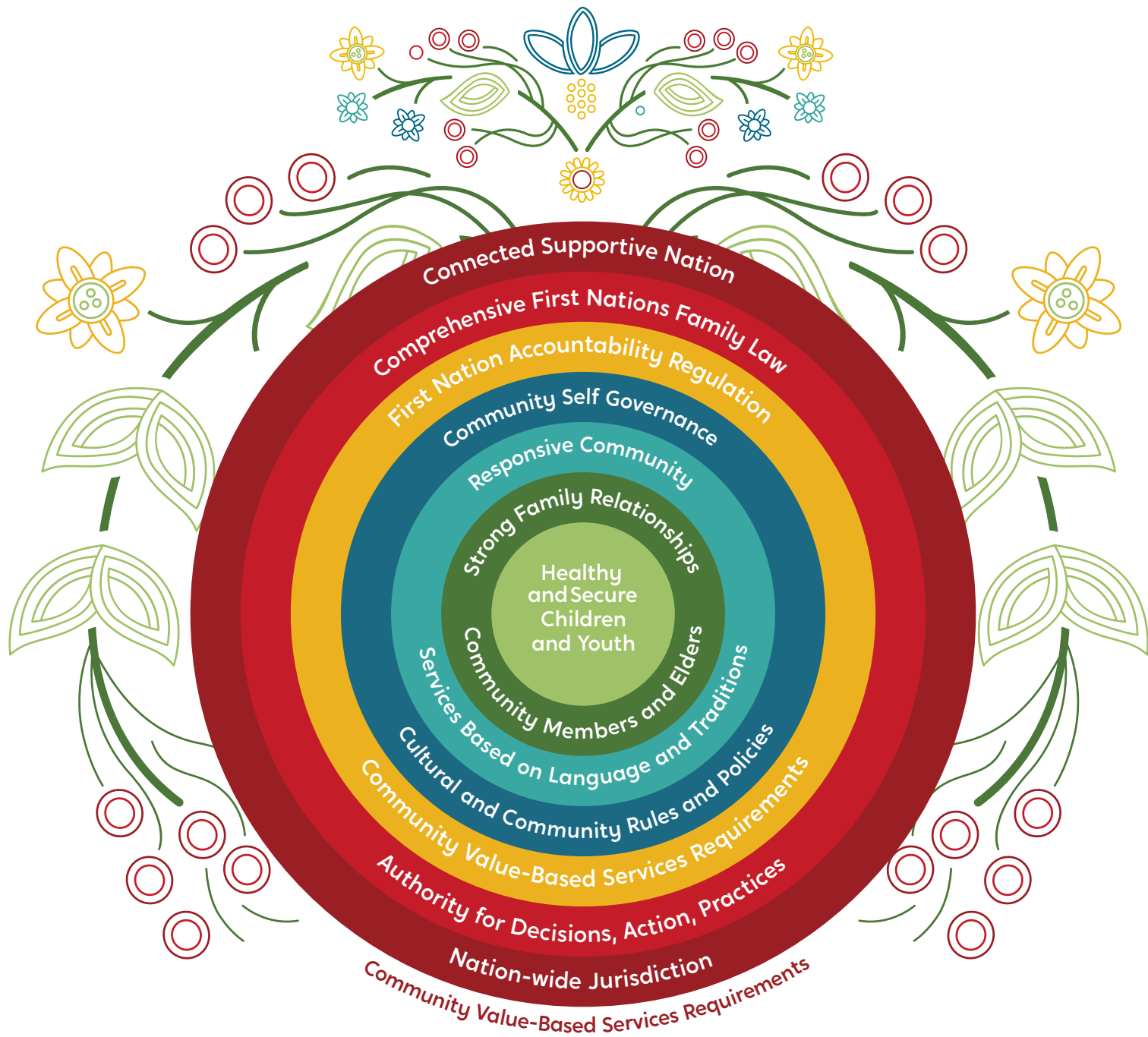
- Keep a family together
- Preserve a child's relationships with their family, community, and culture
- Actively involve the child's community in planning for their care



With a renewed focus on capacity building and governance under new community-based family laws, SCO prioritized and launched engagement activities in the pilot southern First Nations. The Knowledge Keepers Committee and the SCO Chiefs' Standing Committee on Child Welfare guided consultation topics. The goal was to develop First Nation family laws based on community capacity, vision, and knowledge of traditional and historical parenting and family life.

SCO created the *Waakaabit-Woksape* Initiative to build out the circles wrapping around the child, grounded in strong families, communities, and relationships (prevention) to ensure security and safety (protection). Our Community Engagement Liaison Team consulted communities to identify what traditional methods, infrastructure, services, and programs are necessary to achieve our goal. This work will help the southern First Nations establish coordination agreements and implement their jurisdiction over children and youth.





### Foundations

Culture, Tradition, Values, Language  
 Roles of Community, Elders, Family in Protecting the Sacredness of Children  
 Relations, Citizenship and Belonging  
 Sharing of Knowledge of Gifts  
 Self Determination, Independence

### Values - Seven Sacred Teachings

**Anishinaabe:**  
 Respect, Love, Humility, Honesty,  
 Wisdom, Truth, Courage

**Dakota:**  
 Respect, Sharing, Generosity, Bravery,  
 Wisdom, Truth, Courage

### Community engagement liaison contacts and interviews

Since 2019-2020 the Community Engagement Liaisons Team has made more than 3000 individual contacts to advance the development of the First Nations community-based laws for child welfare.

From April to December 2022, this included:

- 134 meetings with Child and Family Services and stakeholders
- 146 interviews with Elders, youth, and community members
- 287 meetings with leadership

These contacts also included assistance to initiate 173 referrals to other resources for community members based on their expressed individual needs.

Identified by leadership, Community Engagement Liaisons are community members employed by SCO to support the family law development and implementation process, ensuring that each step towards reasserting jurisdiction in child welfare is grounded by consultation and documented in the communities' work plans.

The pilot communities are:

- Canupawakpa Dakota Nation
- Dakota Plains Wahpeton Oyate
- Dakota Tipi First Nation
- Kinonjeoshtegon First Nation
- Lake St. Martin First Nation
- Lake Manitoba First Nation
- Long Plain First Nation
- O-Chi-Chak-Ko-Sipi First Nation
- Pinaymootang First Nation
- Roseau River Anishinabe First Nation
- Sandy Bay Ojibway First Nation
- Swan Lake First Nation

**" We cannot rest when it comes to ensuring that fewer of our children are apprehended by colonial systems and that family placements are prioritized so that children will remain closer to their cultural and community ties. This will ensure that southern First Nation children will have better outcomes as we transform the child welfare system."**

- GRAND CHIEF JERRY DANIELS

Four key questions guided community engagement sessions and interviews to inform the law template development for Anishinaabe and Dakota Nations.

### How can CFS improve?

- Prevention and safety (protection) programs and services must be community-informed in their development and prioritize community-based services
- Building awareness of community needs, practices, and minimum service standards in Bill C-92 through education, training, and meetings with CFS agencies, community members, and other stakeholders is essential
- Open and positive conversations between CFS agencies, and the Southern First Nations Network of Care with communities. It was noted that the language used by CFS agencies and in the child welfare Acts is “triggering” and alternatives should be developed

### What is your vision for successful prevention services?

- Services should include primary infrastructure services, such as housing, health care, food security, employment opportunities, and clean water services, along with core supportive services like daycare, parenting resources and family programming, and resources for children, youth, and adults with disabilities or chronic health issues
- Traditional activities must be restored as part of daily life to ensure children are started on a good path and parents can learn what they may have missed. Principal elements identified were Elder engagement and traditional teachings, language, community gatherings, events and ceremonies, and land-based teaching
- Working with families must be a collective responsibility by valuing relationships and allowing extended family and community members to formulate plans on how to best support a family in need

### What is your vision for First Nation family laws?

- First Nation CFS agencies, along with the provincial government, cannot cut out the family and must honour important relationships recognizing these as a path to healing for parents and to belonging for children
- The laws must actively support parents and extended family involvement in both prevention and safety issues
- Elders need to be recognized and receive authority as leaders in the community with their understanding of how to support members through their life stages
- Traditional activities must be tied to decisions and solutions

### What do you believe to be the rights of Anishinaabe and Dakota children?

Responses overall spoke to children being safe, loved, having basic needs met, a connection to their culture, and an understanding of the history of their family and community. The critical elements or rights of the child were identified as access to:

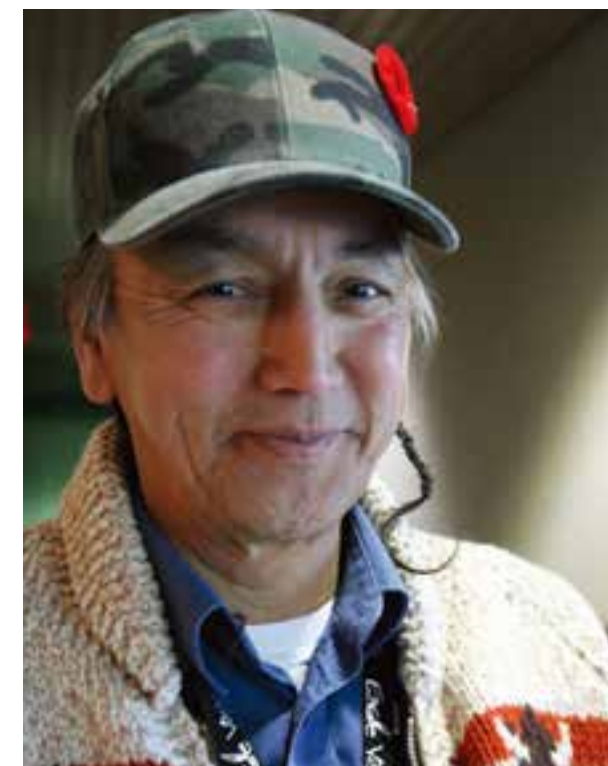
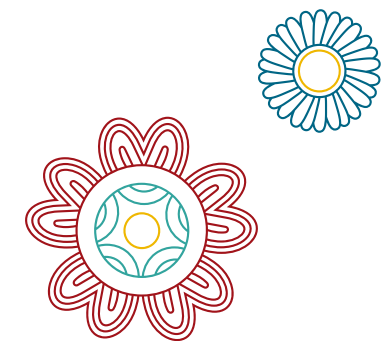
- Language
- Family and extended family
- Family lines and history
- Culture
- Education and traditional teachings

Consultations also noted the differing levels of readiness within communities to assume full jurisdiction over child welfare. This provided direction that the law template needed to be “flexible” and allow for a phased in and multi-year approach.

The final drafts of both the Anishinaabe and Dakota Family Law templates were completed in January 2023 and introduced as tools to support communities. This enables the next stage of drafting laws at the community level that represents their experience, practices, traditions and teachings, and relationships.

Going forward, SCO’s efforts to empower First Nations in reasserting jurisdiction over child welfare will provide ongoing support requirements, including:

- Legal consultation services for drafting distinct community-based laws based on the templates
- Identifying communities’ full governance structure, including the Indigenous governing body (IGB) and delegations
- Determining communities’ path to jurisdiction and readiness to request a coordination agreement through their IGB
- Developing implementation workplans
- Determining a service delivery organization(s)
- Developing core supportive services and programs
- Developing a sustainable funding model and budgets
- Culture
- Family and extended family
- Education and traditional teachings
- Family lines and history



In closing, we acknowledge the contributions and continued inspiration provided by Charlie Nelson, our cherished Knowledge Keeper who passed in late 2022. Traditionally known as Mizhakwanigiishik (Clear Sky) or Nibidekwaneb (Feathers in a Row), Charles Weston Nelson belonged to the Bizhiw Doodem (Lynx Clan).

A proud father of five and grandfather of ten, Charlie loved his people and traditional knowledge, which took him across Canada and around the globe. As an Elder involved with our program, he gifted us with the name “Waakaabit” for our process of developing First Nation family laws, and the gratitude prayer he recited at the opening of each of our meetings has been included as the opening to the Anishinaabe Family Law template.

# JUSTICE AND RIGHTS

The First Nations Justice Program is a community-based program that provides restorative justice and mediation services with professionalism, respect, and dedication to the well-being of our Nations and our citizens.

## Community Justice Program

The program assists southern First Nations in assuming greater responsibility for administering justice within their communities, based on healing and restoring healthy relationships. The program receives pre- and post-diversions from Chief and Council, the provincial Crown's office, RCMP, Manitoba First Nations Police Services, Winnipeg Police Service, and through self-referrals.

This program expanded to include Bloodvein First Nation, Brokenhead Ojibway Nation, Dakota Tipi First Nation, Dauphin River First Nation, Ebb and Flow First Nation, Keeseekoowenin Ojibway First Nation, Lake Manitoba First Nation, Lake St. Martin First Nation, Little Saskatchewan First Nation, Long Plain First Nation, O-Chi-Chak-Ko-Sipi First Nation, Pinaymootang First Nation, Rolling River First Nation, Sagkeeng Anicinabe First Nation, Sandy Bay Ojibway First Nation, and Tootinaowaziibeeng Treaty Reserve.

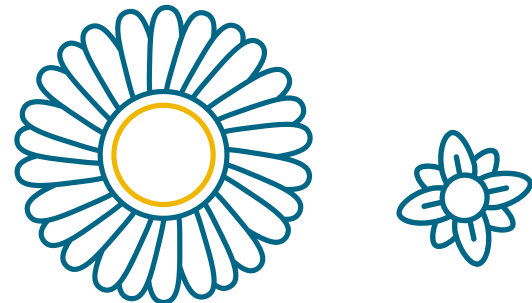
The program will continue to expand at the request of other SCO-member Nations.

## First Nation Court Worker Program

The Court Workers are responsible for liaising between the courts and SCO citizens and their families. They provide timely connections to legal as well as First Nation resources, both on and off reserve. They are critical in ensuring victims and their families connect with Victims Services, including those for families of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, two spirit, and gender-diverse peoples.

SCO has three First Nation Court Workers located across southern Manitoba. The staff provide services in the following court locations: Amaranth, Ashern, Berens River, Bloodvein, Brandon, Dauphin, Lundar, Pine Falls, Portage la Prairie, St. Martin, Selkirk, and Winnipeg.

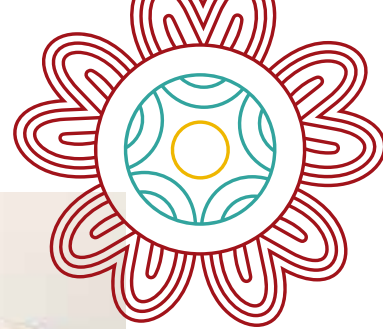
The Court Workers provide services alongside SCO's well-established Community Justice Workers to strengthen access to justice supports in a culturally safe manner. The focus for our Community Justice Workers is on diversion, reintegration, and prevention, while the First Nations Court Workers focus on the criminal justice processes, sentencing, appearances, and translation for our SCO members. It is anticipated that this program will grow to attend circuit court locations within SCO-member Nations in 2023.



**" One of my principal mandates is to reduce the overrepresentation of First Nation citizens within the Canadian criminal justice system. We need to provide our community members with a voice to help develop alternative measures for care that revolve around accountability and personal growth, rather than the current punitive measures of the colonial state."**

**– GRAND CHIEF JERRY DANIELS**





SCO provided 154 birth certificates, 15 status cards, and 200 backpacks filled with essential hygiene and harm reduction supplies for women released from custody



## Key accomplishments

SCO worked on projects, such as the Action Plan for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) Act, the Plain Languages Gladue Principles Report within the Gladue Framework Development Project, and the Indigenous Justice Strategy. The final UNDRIP report was submitted to Justice Canada and will be released by SCO in 2023. The report highlighted SCO main UNDRIP priorities, which are citizenship, water, and gaming.

In February 2023, our program started supporting women leaving the Women's Correctional Centre in Headingley, Manitoba. We worked to address the need women have for identification, such as birth certificates and status cards. Many First Nation women who enter the correctional centre do not have basic identification. SCO has provided 154 birth certificates and 15 status cards to date. We have also provided 200 backpacks filled with essential hygiene and harm reduction supplies for women who are released from custody.

SCO has created working partnerships with the federal, provincial, and regional municipal governments for restorative justice. We continued to be an active participant with the Manitoba Restorative Justice Branch's Restorative Justice Week in November 2022.

SCO is engaging with the province to develop Community Safety Well-Being Plans for Sandy Bay and Peguis First Nations. These two Nations are taking part in the initial rollout of the Community Safety Well-Being Plans. We will engage leadership to assist with this process.

SCO added the Restorative Justice Digital Wellness Program to our list of supports, which is available for our clients to complete at their own pace. This provides clients with an at-home programming option, with the five videos focusing on cultural teachings, overcoming trauma, holistic health and healing, and the importance of community-based restorative justice within our communities.

## Upcoming initiatives

In the next fiscal year, our team will work to enhance our programs and partnerships that focus on community mental health and wellness for both offender and victims, while also creating more inclusive services for citizens who are two spirit, lesbian, gay, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, and all other sexual orientations and genders (2SLGBTQIA+).

The SCO Youth Empowerment Program is creating a new diversion initiative, and SCO expects to hire someone to launch this program in summer 2023. The Community Justice Workers will receive training to facilitate this program for young people toward the end of 2023.

SCO plans to hire a Youth Project Lead to work with colleagues in the Child and Family Services and Jordan's Principle Programs to collaborate on youth programming. Our staff will engage with First Nations youth, providing direction and guidance on the prevention, awareness, mentorship, skills, and culturally based awareness capacity building

involved in the justice system. The Youth Project Lead will create a steering committee to guide this work.

SCO is undertaking a major multi-year feasibility implementation study to create a new self-administered First Nations Regional Police Service that will eventually provide policing services for SCO-member Nations that choose to participate. The project commenced in late spring 2023 and will continue until early 2026.



# ENVIRONMENT

The SCO Environment Department continued to develop in 2022, helping our Nations protect our water and the environment from the impacts of development.

SCO advocates for First Nations culture and values to be included and respected in industry and government decision-making processes. SCO member Nations have identified inclusion in these processes as a critical priority.

## Developing a First Nations-owned and-operated Water Authority

SCO continues to develop a First Nations-owned and -operated water utility that will deliver drinking water and wastewater services to SCO member Nations. Environment staff visited several communities to discuss the water utility concept and have community meetings scheduled for 2023.

In September 2022, Grand Chief Daniels and the SCO Director of Environment visited the Atlantic First Nations Water Authority in Truro, Nova Scotia in traditional Mi'kmaq territory to learn from their journey.

SCO-member Nations, Chiefs and Councils, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, community members, and youth will meet at various locations throughout southern Manitoba at regional gatherings in 2023. They will discuss and develop the guiding principles for the future Water Authority with a focus on developing consensus on a governance and service delivery model for the future utility.

## Program to test the quality of surface water

The department continues to monitor the surface water sources of our Nations to ensure cleanliness and potability. SCO's Water Quality Testers reached 30 Nations in 2022 and conducted more than 200 tests on different water sources that affect our Nations. Our team has been out in all four seasons to capture the water quality indicators of our water sources during seasonal conditions.

## Database to protect natural water sources

SCO collects data on in-field water quality following the principles of Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession. We will continue to contribute to a database of water-testing results from SCO-member Nations that is owned, controlled, and accessible to our communities.





### Canada Water Agency

SCO is working to ensure the development of the Canada Water Agency acknowledges and respects First Nation water rights as a core foundation of the agency. The goal of SCO's insertion into agency development is to ensure the policy objectives and goals of the proposed agency support First Nations' rights to self-determination as well as ensuring recognition and acknowledgement of Indigenous inherent, Aboriginal, and Treaty rights and roles in managing and governing water.



### Red River Basin Commission – International Joint Commission Indigenous Nations Round Table

SCO is a member of the executive board of the Red River Basin Commission. Our position on the board allows for direct input and involvement in water management issues within the Red River Basin. A large number of SCO member Nations are located within the basin and many community members live and work within this area as well.

SCO hosted the International Red River Watershed Board of the International Joint Commission's Indigenous Round Table in Winnipeg in January 2023. The event was an opportunity to explore new models for partnership and collaboration between First Nations, Red River Métis, and Tribal Nations with rights in respect to the management of the Red River Watershed Basin.

### First Nations Environmental Contamination Project

SCO has partnered with the Sagkeeng Anicinabe First Nation, Brokenhead Ojibway Nation, and Hollow Water First Nation to develop a monitoring project aimed at identifying, testing, and documenting known sites of industrial or commercial environmental contamination affecting them.

The project is aimed at identifying specific contaminants that have entered the water, soil, and potentially, the food chain. SCO, in cooperation with our partner communities, have identified three sites and three waterways that are known as historic areas of concern.



### Species at Risk Program

Our staff took part in the Species at Risk Program in 2023. The program involved staff surveying public lands for the presence of six plant species deemed to be at risk within the traditional territories of Brokenhead Ojibway Nation, Roseau River Anishinabe First Nation, Peguis First Nation, and Canupawakpa Dakota Nation.

SCO carried out in-field surveys and this resulted in identifying a significant number of species at risk occurrences within the identified traditional territories. Given the success of this program, and our findings, we expect to be chosen to conduct similar work in years to come.

### Engagement on co-developing proposed water legislation for First Nations

SCO hosted a one-day gathering in March 2023 in Winnipeg to collaborate with our member Nations to gather ideas, feedback, and advice to inform and guide Canada in co-developing new proposed First Nations water legislation, with a focus on the repeal and replacement of the federal Safe Drinking Water For First Nations Act.

SCO will host a series of additional gatherings in 2023 with SCO Nations, Tribal Councils, Treaty organizations, and water and wastewater treatment plant operators to continue discussion on this very important topic.







**“ Water is sacred. Water is life. As First Nations citizens, we are committed to protecting this precious resource. One way we will protect our water is by working to create a water authority that is owned and operated by our Nations. The bottom line is we need a First Nations owned and operated water authority to deliver drinking and wastewater services to SCO member First Nations.”**

**- GRAND CHIEF JERRY DANIELS**



### **Work on the International Joint Commission**

The International Joint Commission is an organization guided by the Boundary Waters Treaty, signed by Canada and the United States in 1909. The Treaty provides general principles for preventing and resolving disputes over waters shared between the two countries and for settling other transboundary issues. The Commission has two subcommittees dedicated to water governance: the International Red River Watershed Board (IRRWB) and International Souris River Board.

In 2021, the IRRWB Outreach Committee worked to engage First Nation members of the Board in developing a series of gatherings and workshops to discuss and inform it on First Nation perspectives related to water management, legal constructs, worldviews, and priorities for Indigenous partnerships and engagements. SCO was selected as the organization to lead and coordinate these gatherings.

### **Lake Manitoba outlet channels**

Our staff have been working with Black River First Nation and Bloodvein First Nation to assist both communities with preparing and submitting commentary and concerns on the proposed Lake Manitoba outlet channel project.

The focus of the submissions to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada is ensuring that the federal approval agency is holding the project proponent accountable for project impacts to inherent, Indigenous and Treaty rights, and ensuring that the project proponent, the Province of Manitoba, is fulfilling its section 35 duty to consult obligations.

### **Future plans**

SCO will work to form an Emergency Management Committee to bring together Emergency Management Coordinators from our Nations to have discussions around the short and long term needs of communities related to emergency management and the direct correlation between climate change and the frequency, duration, and intensity of climate-related emergencies and the impacts on our Nations.

Recognizing the need to develop climate-related initiatives, SCO has applied for funding from a number of programs, include the Climate Adapt Program. Receiving support will help build the capacity of SCO Nations to develop infrastructure and social programming that can respond to climate emergencies.



# NATION REBUILDING PROJECT

SCO is exploring the development of a regional traditional governance model as it works to restore original citizenship, language, laws, institutions, ceremonies, protocols, and procedures of governance and repair more than 150 years of colonization to fully restore the Anishinaabe and Dakota Nations in our territories.

## Objectives

- The project's objectives are to support Anishinaabe and Dakota Nationhood and build unity
- Assist SCO in strengthening the 34 Anishinaabe and Dakota Nations to take on greater sectoral responsibilities and, ultimately, self-determination and self-governance
- Identify agreement among SCO members on strategic Nation-level priorities for action and approaches to issues
- Enhance SCO's ability to provide input on legislation, policies, and programs so that they are more reflective of Anishinaabe and Dakota perspectives
- Increase capacity for SCO to address and resolve issues at a Nation-to-Nation level

## Accomplishments

A significant part of the work done in 2022-2023 included developing and administering surveys to SCO-member First Nation citizens, leadership, and youth. Our staff presented at the SCO Youth Gathering in August 2022 and sought feedback to learn more about youth priorities. Our team collected 350 completed surveys in 2022-2023.

Our team hosted urban engagements in Brandon and Winnipeg in November 2022 to engage and inform southern First Nation citizens on the project and seek their feedback through our survey.

The Nation ReBuilding team attended SCO events to inform First Nation citizens of the project and administer our general survey; made presentations to SCO programs about the project; held an online session in February 2023 with citizens to inform and discuss the project; and also made several presentations to SCO-member First Nations leadership.

At the request of the Dakota First Nations, the team facilitated several meetings with Dakota leadership and Elders to discuss and identify their priority issues. They spoke to the need for funding to address land and environment issues; health issues related to addictions and the drug crisis; the need for treatment centers and mental health programs; the importance of Dakota unity, culture, and traditions; Dakota governance, acknowledgement of traditional territory; land reclamation/claims; burial sites and residential school; child welfare laws (Bill C-92); and emergency management.

In November 2022, Nation ReBuilding organized a Women's Gathering in Winnipeg. The gathering aimed to inform southern First Nation women about the project to identify their priorities and discuss solutions. Attendees shared a wide range of priorities, including the economy; health; political/government; and socio-cultural concerns such as inherent rights, language, Treaty status, land and cultural teachings, healing, violence prevention, unity, and more.

Team members attended the Intermediate Establishing Indigenous Institutions of Governance program in February 2023. This provided an overview of Nation ReBuilding activities of other First Nations in Canada.

**“ SCO is committed to working with our Dakota and Anishinaabe Nations to align our strengths to support and empower one another. There is much work to be done to restore our original citizenship, languages, laws, institutions, ceremonies, protocols, and procedures of governance. It is essential for the future of our Nations that we restore our traditional ways. The Nation Rebuilding project is an important step in helping our Nations move forward together to real autonomy.”**

**– GRAND CHIEF JERRY DANIELS**

## Survey results

Our team collected 350 completed surveys from citizens of 33 of the 34 SCO-member Nations.

- 54 per cent of respondents live off reserve
- 46 per cent of respondents live on reserve
- 53 per cent identified as adults
- 36 per cent identified as Elders/Knowledge Keepers
- 10 per cent identified as youth

Survey results show the top five priority issues in rebuilding our Nations:

1. Traditions, culture, and languages (with priority involvement of Elders and Knowledge Keepers)
2. Education
3. Health
4. Inherent and Treaty rights, including traditional harvesting
5. Mental health

## Future activities

Our strategic plan and the recommended actions coming out of the plan will be integrated within the departments and program areas in 2023-2024, so that rebuilding our Nations holistically infuses all of the work of SCO.



**Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc.**  
**Consolidated Financial Statements**  
March 31, 2023



To the Members of Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc.:

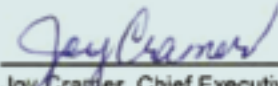
Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the accompanying consolidated financial statements, including responsibility for significant accounting judgments and estimates in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations. This responsibility includes selecting appropriate accounting policies and methods, and making decisions affecting the measurement of transactions in which objective judgment is required.

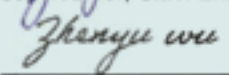
In discharging its responsibilities for the integrity and fairness of the consolidated financial statements, management designs and maintains the necessary accounting systems and related internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that transactions are authorized, assets are safeguarded and financial records are properly maintained to provide reliable information for the preparation of consolidated financial statements.

The Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc. Finance Committee is responsible for overseeing management in the performance of its financial reporting responsibilities, and for approving the financial information included in the annual report. The Finance Committee fulfils these responsibilities by reviewing the financial information prepared by management and discussing relevant matters with management and external auditors. The Finance Committee is also responsible for recommending the appointment of the external auditors.

MNP LLP is appointed by the Finance Committee, on behalf of the Members, to audit the consolidated financial statements and report directly to them; their report follows. The external auditors have full and free access to, and meet periodically and separately with, both the Finance Committee and management to discuss their audit findings.

September 10, 2023

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joy Cranter, Chief Executive Officer

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Zhenyu Wu, Chief Financial Officer

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Digna Maranan, Controller

To the Members of Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc.:

**Opinion**

We have audited the consolidated financial statements of Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc. (the "Organization"), which comprise the consolidated statement of financial position as at March 31, 2023 and the consolidated statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the consolidated financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying consolidated financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the consolidated financial position of the Organization as at March 31, 2023 and the results of its consolidated operations and its consolidated cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

**Other Matter**

The Organization prepares two sets of financial statements. One is prepared on a consolidated basis and the other is prepared on a non-consolidated basis, as explained in the accompanying notes in each set of financial statements. This Independent Auditor's Report refers only to the consolidated financial statements as explained in the *Opinion* paragraph above.

**Other Information**

Management is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, but does not include the consolidated financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The annual report is expected to be made available to us after the date of the auditor's report.

Our opinion on the consolidated financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance or conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the consolidated financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information identified above when it becomes available and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the consolidated financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

When we read the annual report, if we conclude that there is material misstatement therein, we are required to communicate the matter to those charged with governance.

**Responsibilities of Management for the Consolidated Financial Statements**

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the consolidated financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of consolidated financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the consolidated financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Organization or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

**Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Consolidated Financial Statements**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the consolidated financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these consolidated financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the consolidated financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Organization's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the consolidated financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Organization to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the consolidated financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the consolidated financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- Obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial information of the entities or business activities within the Organization to express an opinion on the consolidated financial statements. We are responsible for the direction, supervision and performance of the group audit. We remain solely responsible for our audit opinion.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

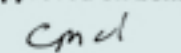
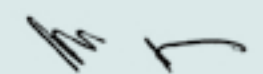
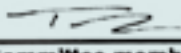
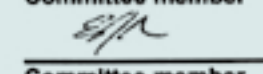

Winnipeg, Manitoba

September 10, 2023



Chartered Professional Accountants

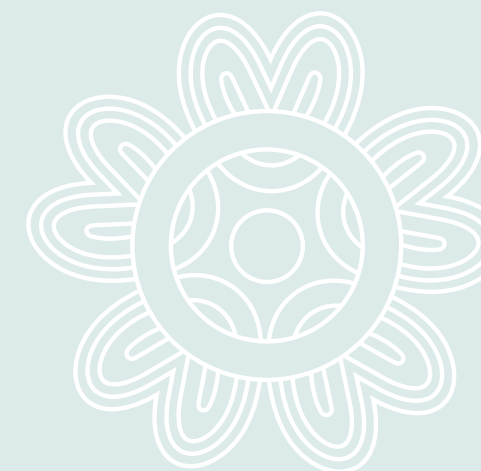
**Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc.**  
**Consolidated Statement of Financial Position**  
*As at March 31, 2023*

	2023	2022
<b>Assets</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Cash	18,654,242	10,470,558
Accounts receivable (Note 3)	5,637,817	835,058
Investment (Note 4)	-	350,000
Prepaid expenses and deposits	192,794	63,004
	<b>24,484,853</b>	<b>11,718,620</b>
Investments (Note 4)	480,722	-
Restricted cash (Note 5)	3,877,478	2,140,955
Capital assets (Note 6)	-	13,306
Due from Agencies (Note 7)	1,830,842	3,576,071
Property development (Note 8)	492,832	-
	<b>31,166,727</b>	<b>17,448,952</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Accounts payable and accruals	2,099,430	1,311,074
Deferred contributions (Note 9)	21,827,919	9,187,139
Due to Government of Canada (Note 10)	110,789	110,789
	<b>24,038,138</b>	<b>10,609,002</b>
Due to Province of Manitoba (Note 7)	5,717,026	5,717,026
	<b>29,755,164</b>	<b>16,326,028</b>
Contingencies (Note 11)		
<b>Net Assets</b>		
Unrestricted	918,731	1,109,618
Invested in capital assets	492,832	13,306
	<b>1,411,563</b>	<b>1,122,924</b>
	<b>31,166,727</b>	<b>17,448,952</b>
<b>Approved on behalf of the Finance Committee</b>		
 Committee member	 Committee member	
 Committee member	 Committee member	
 Committee member		

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these consolidated financial statements

**Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc.**  
**Consolidated Statement of Operations**  
*For the year ended March 31, 2023*

	2023	2022
<b>Revenue</b>		
Province of Manitoba	159,724,022	168,721,730
Government of Canada	15,001,572	12,397,937
Other	1,954,503	2,005,131
	<b>176,680,097</b>	<b>183,124,798</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Community programming and support services (Note 12)	16,158,628	13,656,123
Family services administration	5,804,728	4,242,138
Family services education and training	295,335	405,306
Family services agency funding	154,062,492	163,440,800
Family services programming	56,970	950,889
Amortization	13,306	129,724
	<b>176,391,458</b>	<b>182,824,980</b>
<b>Excess of revenue over expenses</b>	<b>288,639</b>	<b>299,818</b>



The accompanying notes are an integral part of these consolidated financial statements

**Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc.**  
**Consolidated Statement of Changes in Net Assets**  
*For the year ended March 31, 2023*

	<i>Unrestricted</i>	<i>Invested in capital assets</i>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
<b>Net assets, beginning of year</b>	<b>1,109,618</b>	<b>13,306</b>	<b>1,122,924</b>	823,006
<b>Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses</b>	<b>301,945</b>	<b>(13,306)</b>	<b>288,639</b>	299,918
<b>Property development</b>	<b>(492,832)</b>	<b>492,832</b>	-	-
<b>Net assets, end of year</b>	<b>918,731</b>	<b>492,832</b>	<b>1,411,563</b>	1,122,924



The accompanying notes are an integral part of these consolidated financial statements

**Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc.**  
**Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows**  
*For the year ended March 31, 2023*

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
<b>Cash provided by (used for) the following activities</b>		
<b>Operating</b>		
Excess of revenue over expenses	<b>288,639</b>	299,918
Amortization	<b>13,306</b>	129,724
	<b>301,945</b>	429,642
Changes in working capital accounts		
Due from agencies	<b>1,745,229</b>	1,423,519
Accounts receivable	<b>(4,802,759)</b>	602,400
Prepaid expenses and deposits	<b>(129,790)</b>	(6,500)
Accounts payable and accruals	<b>788,356</b>	511,118
Deferred contributions	<b>12,640,780</b>	2,323,259
	<b>10,543,761</b>	5,283,438
<b>Investing</b>		
Property development costs	<b>(492,832)</b>	-
Purchase of investment (net of proceeds on maturity)	<b>(130,722)</b>	(350,000)
Transfer to restricted cash	<b>(1,736,523)</b>	(2,140,955)
	<b>(2,360,077)</b>	(2,490,955)
<b>Increase in cash resources</b>	<b>8,183,684</b>	2,792,483
<b>Cash resources, beginning of year</b>	<b>10,470,558</b>	7,678,075
<b>Cash resources, end of year</b>	<b>18,654,242</b>	10,470,558

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these consolidated financial statements

**1. Incorporation and nature of the organization**

Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc. (the "Organization") was established in March 1999, is located in the Province of Manitoba, and provides various services to its 34 Members (34 southern First Nations) which are represented by the Chiefs of those 34 First Nations. The Organization is a not-for-profit organization incorporated without share capital. The Organization is exempt from income taxes under Section 149 of The Income Tax Act. In order to maintain its status as a registered not for profit organization under The Income Tax Act, the Organization must meet certain requirements specified within The Income Tax Act. It is the opinion of management that these requirements have been met.

**2. Significant accounting policies**

These consolidated financial statements are the representations of management, prepared in accordance with Canadian not for profit accounting standards and include the following significant accounting policies:

**Basis of accounting**

The Organization controls the following organizations:

1) Southern First Nations Network of Care

The Organization controls Southern First Nations Network of Care ("SFNNC") by virtue of the Organization's ability to appoint the Board of Directors of SFNNC. The First Nations of Southern Manitoba Child and Family Services Authority was incorporated on November 24, 2003 under the Province of Manitoba through The Child and Family Services Authority Act, S.M. 2002, c. 35 excerpt section 20; the Act came into force by proclamation on November 24, 2003. On November 15, 2015, the legal name was changed to Southern First Nations Network of Care ("SFNNC"). SFNNC was established as a not-for-profit organization with the responsibility for administering and providing for the delivery of a system of child and family services to First Nations people who are members of the southern First Nations and other persons who are identified with those southern First Nations. SFNNC is a non-profit organization and as such is exempt from income taxes under The Income Tax Act.

2) Southern Chiefs' Organization Reconciliation Foundation Inc.

The Organization controls Southern Chiefs' Organization Reconciliation Foundation Inc. ("SCORF") by virtue of the Organization's ability to appoint the Board of Directors of SCORF. SCORF was incorporated on September 14, 2022 with charitable purposes.

3) SCED Trust

The Organization controls SCED Trust by virtue of the Organization's ability to appoint the Trustees of SCED Trust. SCED Trust was established for the welfare and benefit of First Nations (the "Beneficiaries") that are members of Southern Chiefs Organization Inc. As outlined in the SCED Trust Agreement dated July 28, 2022, no benefit can accrue to the Organization as a result of the Organization's control of SCED Trust. SCED Trust is considered to be a not for profit organization for the purposes of reporting under ASNPO 4450.

These consolidated financial statements include the balances and transactions of the organizations listed above as well as their subsidiary organizations. Balances and transactions between these organizations have been eliminated upon consolidation.

**Cash and cash equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents include balances with banks and short-term investments with maturities of three months or less. Cash subject to restrictions that prevent its use for current purposes is included in restricted cash.

**2. Significant accounting policies (Continued from previous page)**

**Capital assets**

Purchased capital assets are recorded at cost. Contributed capital assets are recorded at fair value at the date of contribution if fair value can be reasonably determined.

No amortization is recorded on property development as the related property is not available for use. Amortization on capital assets is recorded using the straight-line method at the following rates intended to amortize the cost of assets over their estimated useful lives:

Computers		3 years
Furniture		3 years
Leasehold improvements	over the term of the lease	3 years

**Long-lived assets**

Long-lived assets consist of capital assets and property development. Long-lived assets held for use are measured and amortized as described in the applicable accounting policies.

When the Organization determines that a long-lived asset no longer has any long-term service potential to the Organization, the excess of its net carrying amount over any residual value is recognized as an expense in the consolidated statement of operations. Write-downs are not reversed.

**Revenue recognition**

The Organization follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions. Externally restricted contributions are recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

Restricted investment income is recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Unrestricted investment income is recognized as revenue when earned.

Other revenue is recognized when services have been provided and collectability is reasonably assured.

**Measurement uncertainty (use of estimates)**

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the consolidated financial statements, and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period.

Accounts receivable and due from agencies are stated after evaluation as to their collectability and an appropriate allowance for doubtful accounts is provided where considered necessary. Amortization is based on the estimated useful lives of capital assets. Deferred revenue is based on management's analysis of the extent to which qualifying expenses have been incurred with respect to restricted contributions.

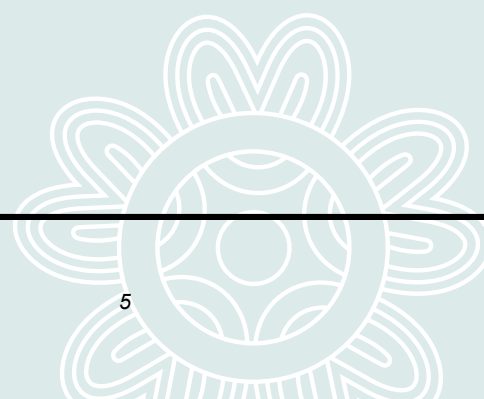
These estimates and assumptions are reviewed periodically and, as adjustments become necessary they are reported in excess of revenues and expenses in the periods in which they become known.

**Employee future benefits**

The Organization's employee future benefit programs consist of defined contribution pension plan. The Organization contributions to the defined contribution plan are expensed as incurred.

**Contributed materials**

Contributions of materials and services are recognized both as contributions and expenses in the consolidated statement of operations when a fair value can be reasonably estimated and when the materials are used in the normal course of the Organization's operations and would otherwise have been purchased.



2. **Significant accounting policies** (Continued from previous page)

**Leases**

A lease that transfers substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership is classified as a capital lease. At the inception of a capital lease, an asset and a payment obligation are recorded at an amount equal to the lesser of the present value of the minimum lease payments and the property's fair market value. All other leases are accounted for as operating leases and rental payments are expensed as incurred.

**Financial instruments**

The Organization recognizes financial instruments when the Organization becomes party to the contractual provisions of the financial instrument.

**Arm's length financial instruments**

Financial instruments originated/acquired or issued/assumed in an arm's length transaction ("arm's length financial instruments") are initially recorded at their fair value.

At initial recognition, the Organization may irrevocably elect to subsequently measure any arm's length financial instrument at fair value. The Organization has made such an election during the year.

The Organization subsequently measures investments in equity instruments quoted in an active market and all derivative instruments, except those designated in a qualifying hedging relationship or that are linked to, and must be settled by delivery of, unquoted equity instruments of another entity, at fair value. Fair value is determined by published price quotations. Investments in equity instruments not quoted in an active market and derivatives that are linked to, and must be settled by delivery of, unquoted equity instruments of another entity, are subsequently measured at cost less impairment. With the exception of financial liabilities indexed to a measure of the Organization's performance or value of its equity and those instruments designated at fair value, all other financial assets and liabilities are subsequently measured at amortized cost.

Transaction costs and financing fees directly attributable to the origination, acquisition, issuance or assumption of financial instruments subsequently measured at fair value are immediately recognized in excess of revenue over expenses. Conversely, transaction costs and financing fees are added to the carrying amount for those financial instruments subsequently measured at cost or amortized cost.

**Related party financial instruments**

The Organization initially measures the following financial instruments originated/acquired or issued/assumed in a related party transaction ("related party financial instruments") at fair value:

- Investments in equity instruments quoted in an active market
- Debt instruments quoted in an active market
- Debt instruments when the inputs significant to the determination of its fair value are observable (directly or indirectly)
- Derivative contracts.

All other related party financial instruments are measured at cost on initial recognition. When the financial instrument has repayment terms, cost is determined using the undiscounted cash flows, excluding interest, dividend, variable and contingent payments, less any impairment losses previously recognized by the transferor. When the financial instrument does not have repayment terms, but the consideration transferred has repayment terms, cost is determined based on the repayment terms of the consideration transferred. When the financial instrument and the consideration transferred both do not have repayment terms, the cost is equal to the carrying or exchange amount of the consideration transferred or received.

At initial recognition, the Organization may elect to subsequently measure related party debt instruments that are quoted in active market, or that have observable inputs significant to the determination of fair value, at fair value.

The Organization subsequently measures investments in equity instruments quoted in an active market and all derivative instruments, except those designated in a qualifying hedging relationship or that are linked to, and must be settled by delivery of, unquoted equity instruments of another entity, at fair value. Fair value is determined by published price quotations. Financial instruments that were initially measured at cost and derivatives that are linked to, and must be settled by, delivery of unquoted equity instruments of another entity, are subsequently measured using the cost method less any reduction for impairment.

2. **Significant accounting policies** (Continued from previous page)

Transaction costs and financing fees directly attributable to the origination, acquisition, issuance or assumption of related party financial instruments are immediately recognized in excess of revenue over expenses.

**Financial asset impairment**

The Organization assesses impairment of all its financial assets measured at cost or amortized cost. The Organization groups assets for impairment testing when available information is not sufficient to permit identification of each individually impaired financial asset in the group; there are numerous assets affected by the same factors; no asset is individually significant, etc. Management considers whether the issuer is having significant financial difficulty; whether there has been a breach in contract, such as a default or delinquency in interest or principal payments; etc. in determining whether objective evidence of impairment exists. When there is an indication of impairment, the Organization determines whether it has resulted in a significant adverse change in the expected timing or amount of future cash flows during the year.

With the exception of related party debt instruments and related party equity instruments initially measured at cost, the Organization reduces the carrying amount of any impaired financial assets to the highest of: the present value of cash flows expected to be generated by holding the assets; the amount that could be realized by selling the assets at the statement of financial position date; and the amount expected to be realized by exercising any rights to collateral held against those assets.

For related party debt instruments initially measured at cost, the Organization reduces the carrying amount of the asset (or group of assets), to the highest of: the undiscounted cash flows expected to be generated by holding the asset, or group of similar assets, excluding the interest and dividend payments of the instrument; the present value of cash flows expected to be generated by holding the assets; the amount that could be realized by selling the assets at the statement of financial position date; and the amount expected to be realized by exercising any rights to collateral held against those assets.

For related party equity instruments initially measured at cost, the Organization reduces the carrying amount of the asset (or group of assets), to the amount that could be realized by selling the asset(s) at the statement of financial position date.

Any impairment, which is not considered temporary, is included in current year excess of revenue over expenses.

The Organization reverses impairment losses on financial assets when there is a decrease in impairment and the decrease can be objectively related to an event occurring after the impairment loss was recognized. The amount of the reversal is recognized in excess of revenue over expenses in the year the reversal occurs.

3. **Accounts receivable**

	2023	2022
Accounts receivable	5,551,886	826,796
GST receivable	85,931	32,681
	5,637,817	859,477
Allowance for doubtful accounts	-	(24,419)
	5,637,817	835,058





**Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc.**  
**Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements**  
For the year ended March 31, 2023

**4. Investments**

As at March 31, 2023, the Organization held investments as follows:

- Guaranteed Investment Certificate, bearing interest at 5.35%, non-redeemable, maturing July 2024, for \$130,722.
- Guaranteed Investment Certificate, bearing interest at 4.05%, non-redeemable, maturing July 2024, for \$350,000.

As at March 31, 2022, the Organization held a Guaranteed Investment Certificate, bearing interest at 0.55%, non-redeemable, maturing July 2022, for \$350,000.

**5. Restricted cash**

Restricted cash consists of funds received from Agencies in repayment of working capital advances; held in a separate account since it relates to amounts Due to the Province of Manitoba.

**6. Capital assets**

	Cost	Accumulated amortization	2023 Net book value
Computers	324,716	324,716	-
Furniture	323,924	323,924	-
Leasehold improvements	48,955	48,955	-
	<b>697,595</b>	<b>697,595</b>	<b>-</b>

	Cost	Accumulated amortization	2022 Net book value
Computers	324,716	324,716	-
Furniture	323,924	310,618	13,306
Leasehold improvements	48,955	48,955	-
	<b>697,595</b>	<b>684,289</b>	<b>13,306</b>



**Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc.**  
**Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements**  
For the year ended March 31, 2023

**7. Due from Agencies and Due to Province of Manitoba**

The Province of Manitoba advanced the Organization a working capital advance in the amount of \$5,717,026 (2022 - \$5,717,026), which in turn was advanced by the Organization to child and family services agencies (the "Agencies"). Due to the introduction of *single envelope funding*, some Agencies have started paying off their advances. The amounts due from the Agencies and due to the Province of Manitoba have no fixed terms of repayment and are non-interest bearing.

	2023	2022
Animikii-Ozoon Child and Family Services	735,778	1,137,111
Dakota Ojibway Child and Family Services	-	689,610
Peguis Child and Family Services	-	221,820
Sandy Bay Child and Family Services	-	158,700
Southeast Child and Family Services	1,095,064	1,368,830
	<b>1,830,842</b>	<b>3,576,071</b>

**8. Property development**

During the year, the land and building located at 450 Portage Avenue was contributed to the Organization. The recognized fair value of the contribution was \$1. The Organization has named the building Wehwehneh Bahgahkinahgoohn and is in the process of redeveloping the building for charitable purposes.

	2023	2022
Contributed land and building	1	-
Building improvements - in progress	492,831	-
	<b>492,832</b>	<b>-</b>

**9. Deferred contributions**

	2023	2022
Government of Canada	19,628,887	6,764,072
Province of Manitoba	2,168,408	1,630,752
Other	30,624	792,315
	<b>21,827,919</b>	<b>9,187,139</b>

**10. Due to Government of Canada**

The Organization has recorded an amount repayable to the Government of Canada because the Government of Canada has required repayment of restricted contributions.

In each case, the Government of Canada has either:

- Deemed certain expenses of the Organization to be ineligible uses of funding provided, or
- Has recognized particular restricted contributions as unspent during a particular allowable time period.

The amounts due to the Government of Canada are non-interest bearing and terms of repayment have not been established.

**11. Contingencies**

The Organization is subject to funding recoveries according to their agreements with federal and provincial government departments. At year-end, it was not yet determined to what extent any funding amounts related to the year ending March 31, 2023 might be recovered by these departments.

The Organization has been named as a defendant in 8 claims. These claims remain at an early stage, and as litigation is subject to many uncertainties, it is not possible to predict the ultimate outcome of these lawsuits or to estimate the loss, if any, which may result. No accrual has been made related to these claims.

**12. Community programming and support services**

As a primary function of the Organization's purpose and mandate, SCO provides support to its Member First Nations in a variety of ways, including direct payments to facilitate programs, or other community contributions.

**13. Commitments**

The Organization has entered into various lease agreements with estimated minimum annual payments as follows:

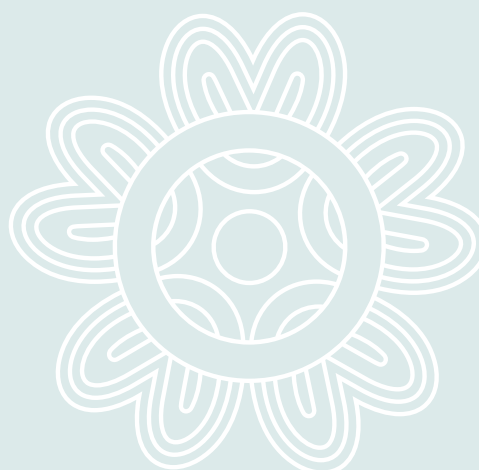
2024	\$60,000
2025	\$145,000
2026	\$142,000
2027	\$140,000
2028	\$93,000

**14. Economic dependence**

The Organization receives a significant portion of its revenue from the Government of Canada and the Province of Manitoba. The Organization's ability to continue viable operations is dependent upon the continued financial commitments of the Government of Canada and the Province of Manitoba.

**15. Financial instruments**

The Organization, as part of its operations, carries a number of financial instruments. It is management's opinion that the Organization is not exposed to significant interest, currency, credit, liquidity or other price risks arising from these financial instruments except as otherwise disclosed.





The Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO) represents 34 Anishinaabe and Dakota Nations and more than 83,500 citizens in what is now called southern Manitoba. SCO is an independent political organization that protects, preserves, promotes, and enhances First Nations peoples' inherent rights, languages, customs, and traditions through the application and implementation of the spirit and intent of the Treaty-making process.



**Southern Chiefs'  
Organization Inc.**

[SCOINC.MB.CA](http://SCOINC.MB.CA)    

Designed by *Vincent Design Inc.*

**PHONE:** 204-946-1869

**FAX:** 204-946-1871

**TOLL FREE:** 1-866-876-9701

[receptionist@scoinc.mb.ca](mailto:receptionist@scoinc.mb.ca)

**ON-RESERVE HEAD OFFICE**

Swan Lake First Nation

195-300 Alpine Way

Headingley, MB R4H 0B7

**WINNIPEG SUB-OFFICES**

1572 Dublin Avenue

Winnipeg, MB R3E 0L4

202-600 Empress Street

Winnipeg, MB R3G 0R5

**BRANDON SUB-OFFICE**

2B 136-11th Street

Brandon, Manitoba R7A 4J4