



2020 - 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



Knowles Centre

ENRICHING LIVES

Two students spent the day with Knowles Centre's Day Treatment Support Worker and Cultural Coordinator. Together, they gathered wild prairie sage, a traditional healing plant, in Beaudry Park west of the city. The cultural coordinator also shared other teachings with the group, and inspired the youth to look towards a positive future.
Photo by Tracie Leost.

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WHO WE ARE

Knowles Centre is a community-based, non-profit social service agency for children, adolescents, and young adults facing difficult times in their lives. It began as a home for boys in 1907 and was incorporated in 1910. It became co-ed in 1981. Today, Knowles Centre provides group care treatment, treatment foster care, independent living, day treatment, sexual abuse treatment and counseling programs plus a range of support services to young people from Manitoba.

These therapeutic and skills-based programs help young people and their families to address past struggles, to develop healthier relationships and ways of life, and to reach their full potential in the future.

Knowles Centre is governed by an elected Board of Directors made up of dedicated members of the community who contribute their knowledge and insight to making Knowles Centre a welcoming and respected place of healing.

MISSION

Empowering healthy communities where families have a sense of well-being and belonging

VISION

Enriching lives by enhancing family, community, and cultural identity to develop a promising future

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Preservation of families and communities
- Enhancing cultural and spiritual identity
- Physical, emotional, and environmental wellness
- Assist in developing skills to make positive life choices to lifelong independence
- Safe, stable, nurturing, respectful, and healing environments
- Healthy relationships

COUNCIL ON ACCREDITATION



We are proud to be one of the few agencies in Manitoba accredited by the Council on Accreditation.

Accreditation is an objective and reliable verification that provides confidence and support to our organization's service recipients, Board members, staff, community partners, and funders.

The standards assure Knowles Centre's services are accessible, appropriate, culturally responsive, evidence-based, and outcomes-oriented. In addition, these standards confirm that Knowles Centre's services are provided by a skilled and supported workforce and that all individuals are treated with dignity and respect.

COA reviews and re-accredits the entire organization, not just specific programs. The community we serve can be confident in the credibility, integrity and achievement of our entire organization.

2020 - 2021 BY THE NUMBERS

Total number of clients who received services between July 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021:

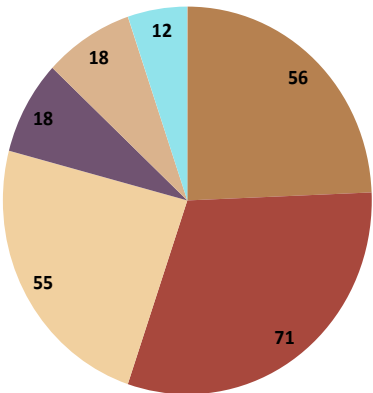
230

Number of clients by gender based on the gender by which clients identify:

Females: 126 (55%) Other, non-binary & questioning: 5 (2%) Males: 99 (43%)

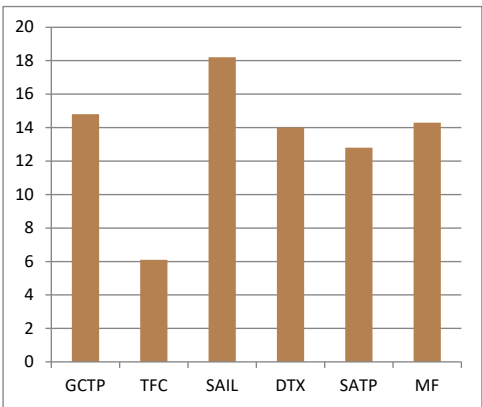


Number of clients by program:

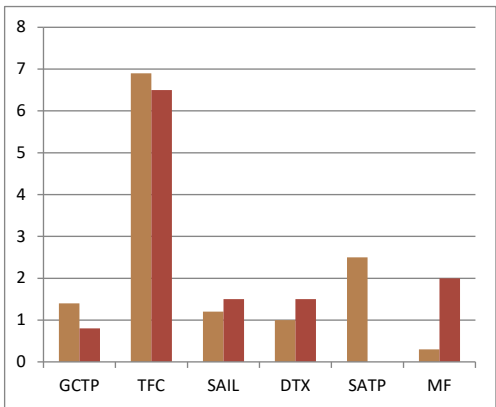


- Group Care Treatment Program
- Treatment Foster Care
- Supported Advancement to Independent Living
- Day Treatment
- Sexual Abuse Treatment
- Moving Forward

Average age at admission (years):



Average length in program (years):



Still in program At discharge

Most common concerns at admission:

- GCTP**

Mood, anger, self-harm, unapproved absences, mental health issues, substance use/abuse, suicide ideation, school issues
- TFC**

Birth family issues, behaviour concerns, past trauma (neglect), development & cognitive concerns
- SAIL**

Community living preparation
- SATP**

Sexual abuse, mental health issues
- DTX**

Anger, anxiety, behaviour concerns, school issues
- MF**

Mental health issues, behaviour concerns

BOARD CHAIR'S MESSAGE



Welcome everyone, from the Board. This is our year in review, which is more like 15 months since our last AGM in June 2020. We decided to move this year's AGM to September due to time restraints and will be staying with September going forth.

At Knowles Centre we are committed to offering a safe and welcoming environment for all our children. This year was like none other, as we navigated a global pandemic, and encountered many internal and external changes. On all accounts we were open to working together, and not losing our focus.

The Board first and foremost wants to acknowledge the challenges faced by our children, and recognize their perseverance with respect the restrictions placed on them—and the hard-working and dedicated staff—that keep everyone safe to the best of their abilities.

With COVID-19, the Board and Knowles management effectively adapted resources by using virtual platforms. The new reality of Zoom helped us to continue best care practices while under provincial restrictions. (Speaking for myself, it's just not the same as real face-to-face time, but we all need to adapt! It's the new normal and hopefully soon we can get back to more in-person sessions.)

Highlighting this year is an easy task as we had many positive changes. The first was our continuing efforts to re-brand ourselves with the focus on the future. Knowles Centre was featured in a front page article of The Herald community newspaper on October 14, 2020. The article clearly spoke about our goal to adapt and evolve in these changing times.

The second positive step forward was the completion of our reaccreditation from the Council On Accreditation (COA). Knowles proudly belongs to this internationally recognized organization for the best care of children. This process is done every four years and is a detailed and intensive examination of our programs and services. To everyone's credit and hard work, we not only passed but exceeded their expectations.

Thirdly Knowles went through a detailed audit from AASU from the Province of Manitoba Treasury who oversees funding to non-profit agencies. The audit process again showed that our finances are in order and soundly managed.

Lastly the Board needed to show our appreciation to the tireless and difficult work over this past year to our staff working in exceptional circumstances. We were able to provide a small bonus to recognize their dedicated services. A big thank you!

In Board news we have also gone through some changes over the past 15 months. We accepted the resignation of two members: Renée Greyeyes, after three years of service; and most recently Patricia Schroeder, after two years of service. We thank them and acknowledge their dedication. We also welcomed back Andrea Sherry to the Board after a few years away. We will start to recruit new members this upcoming year.

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In closing, I would like to acknowledge the ongoing struggles and challenges of Residential Schools on Indigenous peoples and their families. The recently discovered unmarked graves of Indigenous children is devastating, and reminds us that this is a time in our country's history which should never be forgotten. As an organization, we acknowledge we live and work in the territories of the Anishinaabe, Cree, Dakota, Dene, Métis, and Oji-Cree Nations. We acknowledge the land, Indigenous culture, and our history and note our deep and ongoing commitment to truth, reconciliation and an ongoing healing process.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Ihor Wenger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ihor" and last name "Wenger" clearly distinguishable.

Ihor Wenger

Chair, Board of Directors

CEO'S MESSAGE



Two major issues dominated the past year at Knowles Centre (KC): 1) coping with COVID-19 and 2) preparing for and completing the COA reaccreditation process.

Concerning COVID-19, KC established an ad hoc committee to monitor COVID-19 at KC among its clients and staff, and to implement any recommended steps. KC also participated in regular meetings with the Department of Family Services about COVID-19. There were isolated cases of COVID-19 among clients and staff across KC's various programs, but overall KC fared well during the past year. KC clients became more compliant with PPE protocols with the passage of time. Two COVID-19 vaccination clinics were held at KC, providing the opportunity for Group

Care clients to get vaccinated. The KC board recognized the hard work and effort demonstrated by KC staff meeting the needs of KC clients during COVID-19. KC clients also deserve a compliment for their stability during this time.

Concerning COA reaccreditation, KC established an ad hoc committee, which worked diligently to complete the necessary steps prior to the COA site visit for KC. COA's site visit to KC in December 2020 was changed to a remote visit in March 2021 because of COVID-19 challenges throughout North America. Following this remote visit, COA awarded KC an expedited reaccreditation, as KC met or exceeded all fundamental practice standards. COA complimented KC on its accomplishment.

Despite the challenges associated with COVID-19 during the past year, there were a number of positive developments in KC's various programs, including:

1. In the Treatment Foster Care Program (TFC) overall, foster parents and foster children coped well with COVID-19. Staff were able to maintain regular contact with foster parents and foster children. The program had a foster parent appreciation event in November 2020, where 8 foster parents were recognized for reaching 10 years of service.
2. In the Independent Living Program (SAIL), the majority of clients made gains, despite COVID-19. School and work attendance were affected by the different stages of COVID-19. Therefore, when COVID-19 numbers were high in the city and province, in-person schooling and work shifts were negatively affected.
3. In the Group Care Program (GCP), students experienced in-person learning, remote learning, and hybrid learning at John G. Stewart School during the past year. The number of student visits to Room 1 in the school (providing students with timeouts from their regular classrooms) decreased by 75% from the previous year, indicating students were able to cope in their classrooms. The Province implemented empty bed day compensation in October 2020, when there was a lack of referrals for empty GCP beds, which was helpful to KC. KC also implemented an improved tracking mechanism to maintain better control of relief staff costs, which was beneficial.
4. In the Sexual Abuse Treatment Program (SATP), the therapist maintained regular remote contact with clients during the year.

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5. In Moving Forward (MF), the program was dormant in April 2020, but reactivated in March 2021, resulting in an immediate spike in referrals to this community-based counseling service.

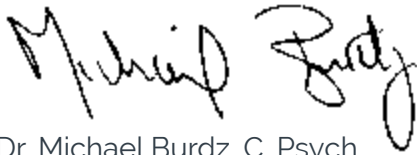
There were a few other positive developments worth noting during the past year:

1. MGEU and KC/SAIL negotiated a new contract in the spring of 2021 and MGEU and KC/GCP negotiated a new contract in the summer of 2021.
2. KC installed a new sign facing Henderson Highway.

There were some challenges during the past year that KC will be addressing going forward:

1. The SAIL program will pursue hiring more staff, which will allow the program to fill more of the empty apartment suites, as social distancing requirements within the program should be reduced.
2. The GCP will strive to fill the unfilled overnight/rover positions, which have been difficult to fill to date for various reasons.

In closing, KC is presently engaged with River East Transcona School Division and an Indigenous CFS agency in two separate pilot projects. If successful, both projects have the potential to grow.



Dr. Michael Burdz, C. Psych.
Chief Executive Officer

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Date elected to Board



Ihor Wenger
President
(November 6, 2017)



Kristin Kersey*
Vice President
(October 2, 2017)



Romero Dasmarinas
Treasurer
(January 22, 2020)



Renée Greyeyes*
Secretary
(May 23, 2018)



Richard Gooch
(January 24, 2012)



Jim Hoddinott
(January 27, 2011)



Mark Lubosch
(May 15, 1997)



Patricia Schroeder*
(March 27, 2019)



Andrea Sherry
(February 24, 2021)



Stacey Soldier
(June 28, 2013)

* Resigned during the 2020/2021 year.

PERFORMANCE & QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Each year Knowles Centre (KC) completes and analyzes several measures that provide an indication of our capabilities and successes as an agency. Through this process, we work to ensure that our programs and services are effective and efficient, and responsive to the ever-changing needs among our various stakeholders.

KC senior management made the decision to focus on preparing for COA's reaccreditation of KC and its site visit to KC scheduled for December 2021 (which was later changed to a remote visit in March 2021 due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions throughout North America). Meeting COA standards this time was demanding as these standards were the most onerous that KC had encountered in its long history with COA reaccreditation. Moreover, KC was simultaneously dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, which was also demanding. Consequently, KC senior management made the decision to skip the production of a PQI report for 2019-20 (for September 1/19 to August 31/20, reflecting the school year). It was deemed unrealistic for KC to do all three events simultaneously: preparing for COA reaccreditation, managing the pandemic, and producing a PQI report for 2019-20.

Following KC's successful COA remote visit in March 2021 and reaccreditation, KC senior management turned its attention to producing a PQI report for September 1/20 to August 31/21. KC re-established its PQI ad hoc committee, which started monthly meetings in February 2021. This ad hoc committee is presently working on producing a PQI report for 2020-21, which should be completed in the fall of 2021.

KNOWLES CENTRE STAFF

April 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021

Senior Management

Dr. Michael Burdz, C. Psych.
Chief Executive Officer

Grant Obirek
Director of Finance & Administration

Lesley Gosselin
Acting Director, Group Care Treatment

Lauren Hershfield
Clinical Director

Andrea McKenzie
Director, Treatment Foster Care

Dawn Vandal
Director, Supported Advancement to Ind. Living

External Professionals:

Dr. H. Casiano, F.R.C.P.C.
Psychiatric Consultant

Administration

Maureen Britton
Administrative & Quality Improvement Officer

Ying (Ada) Goa
Accountant

Emma Jeon
Assistant Accountant

Oliver Miaral
Building Cleaner

Jo Punongbayan
Maintenance Worker

Elfren (Ding) Raquin
Maintenance Coordinator

Ginette Sabourin
Development Manager

Tetiana Samonina
Assistant Accountant

Maximo Setosta
Maintenance Worker

Jason Silk
Kitchen Coordinator

Lee Thomas
Maintenance Worker

Sandie Wagner
Human Resources Coordinator

Group Care Treatment Program

Douglas Baba
Night Grounds

Kyla Doll
Night Off-Grounds Support

(vacant)
Night Grounds Support - Weekends

Pam Jansen
Recreation Supervisor

Cletus Joseph
Assistant Supervisor

Christian Robinson
Outreach Worker

Tiffany Waite
Program Assistant

Meadowside Home

Craig Calancia
Unit Supervisor

Youth Care Workers:
Chris Bowden
Lindsay Cloutier
Morgan Brandt
Randy Carr
Roger Endaya
Chika Okolie
Celena Roberts

Creekside Home

Stephanie Bartelette
Unit Supervisor

Youth Care Workers:
Meagan Bouchard
Abraham Duot
Craig Moroz
Marilyn Penner
Rachel Shupena
Shelley Thomas
Chelsea Welch

Marshall's Place

Colleen Keating
Unit Supervisor

Youth Care Workers:
Cynthia Bergen
Kristi Fiddler
Taura Gentle
James Paulson
Enoruwa Uhuangho
Ecko Zimmer

Respect House

Ashley Parker
Unit Supervisor

Youth Care Workers:
Michelle Bazinet
Christine Delveaux
Brad Esslinger
Shanda Kerman
Ebenezer Nyamekye
Christopher Skovrlj
Tanya Szwed

Courage House

Darrel Fedoruk
Unit Supervisor

Youth Care Workers:
Kirby Bater
Tammi Dupras
Steven McDonald
Amanda Rodriguez
Anna Zyla

Biimautaziiwin Cultural Program

Lori Hart
Indigenous Cultural Program Coordinator

Treatment Foster Care Program

Tiffany Krueger
TFC Coordinator

Clinical Case Managers:
Tammy Delarosa
Roni Dhaliwal
Marijana Dumbovic
Pam Freeth

Melanie Skaptadottir
TFC & SAIL Receptionist

Kari Borlang
TFC Program Assistant:

Supported Advancement to Independent Living (SAIL) Program

Case Managers:
Paul Clarke
Arielle Klassen
Kendall Mulligan
Christopher Ricardo-Passley
Kim Sawchuk

SAIL Support Workers:
Melissa Barendregt
Vanessa Dao
Leah Kasdorf
Jack Lima
Sean Martin
Randi Mistelbacher
Heather Poll
Danielle Semko
Meghan Schwarz
Rebecca Taraschuk

Cyril Gbeve
On-Site Supervisor

On-Site Staff:
Dave Ajuwon
James Attah
Desmond Essien
Serjiro Giwa
Joseph Le
Scott MacDonald
Solomon Negash
Johnson Nkansah
Adedoyin Samuel
Jennie Sarifa

Facility Workers:
Bridget Johnson
Pamela Schyretski

Clinical Services

(Group Care Treatment, Day Treatment, Sexual Abuse Treatment, Moving Forward)

Liezel Ambalina
Therapist

Melissa Beaudry
Therapist

Raul Dimaculangan
Therapist

Tracie Leost
Day Treatment Support Worker

Andrea Moore-Melville
Therapist

Shirin Riahi
Therapist

Kristi Venton
Coordinator/Therapist

STAFF RECOGNITION

Long-Service Awards

Knowles Centre is pleased to recognize staff who reached a milestone year of service. Thank you for your dedication and exceptional service through the years.



Kirby Bater
Youth Care Worker
Group Care Treatment
25 years



Dr. Michael Burdz
Chief Executive Officer
25 years



Lesley Gosselin
A/Director
Group Care Treatment
20 years



Grant Obirek
Dir., Finance & Admin
20 years



Andrea McKenzie
Director
Treatment Foster Care
15 years



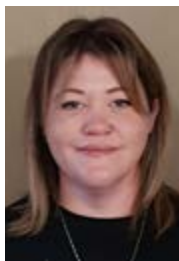
Tammy Delarosa
Clinical Case Manager
Treatment Foster Care
10 years

Photo not
available

Heather Poll
Support Worker
SAIL
10 Years



Pam Freeth
Clinical Case Manager
Treatment Foster Care
10 years



Tanya Szwed
Youth Care Worker
Group Care Treatment
10 years



Sandie Wagner
HR Coordinator
10 years

Farewell and Good Luck

We offer our best wishes to employees who have left us over the past year.

Alissa Camplin
Marianne Carroll
Alex D'Aoust
Marie Feakes
Sharon Hambly

David Hayward
Maria Ibanez
Joshua Malyk
Lee Mistelbacher
Roger Moreau

Jannelle Oulette
Alla Pinegin
Brad Ross
Juana Schoch
Nicholas Tardiff-Peters

Shae-Lynn Taylor
Kathleen Williamson

PROGRAM REPORTS

Group Care Treatment

This past year has been unique as the entire world faced new challenges from COVID and shifted to the "new normal". The Group Care Treatment Program at Knowles Centre was no different. Through it all, our young people and staff demonstrated a high level of resiliency to the uncertainty and fear, but also showed adaptability to the ever-changing rules and restrictions. Stay-at-home precautions forced us all to get creative and seek new and different outlets for fun, fitness and relaxation—both indoors and out. Several homes benefited from new workout equipment that can be enjoyed by clients and staff. One home installed a basketball hoop in the yard and built raised gardening beds that will reward them with a crop of fresh veggies. Another home—not deterred by tight restrictions—found a way to enjoy a fun country Christmas together. As always, day trips were a popular way to be outside and explore Manitoba year round.

We also held a contest to rename three of our five group care units to mark a shift in the atmosphere of the healing homes. Staff and clients alike generated many creative entries. Units 1 and 2 were respectively renamed Meadowside Home and Creekside Home, which reflects the beautiful natural green space on which Knowles Centre's main campus is located. Edison House was renamed Courage House to acknowledge the spirit of the young people who reside there. Ongoing discussions and reflections on the future of the Group Care Treatment Programs continue to take place as we continue to move toward fully becoming "healing homes". An active ad hoc committee of front line caregivers, therapists, management, home supervisors, and recreation and indigenous cultural staff leader are reflecting on how we can best support youth who are working towards wellness. Together we are setting a path for exciting transformation.

Finally a year in review would not be complete without the mention of the newly built healing garden on Knowles Centre's Henderson Hwy campus. It was designed by a professional landscaper and brought to life by Knowles Recreation coordinator Pam Jansen along with many other staff members and clients. It is truly a work of art and no inch of the garden is without significance and meaning. This will be place to be enjoyed for many years to come.



The Knowles Centre Group Care Treatment Program serves 28 youth aged 12 to 17. It offers four 6-bed and one 4-bed healing homes, including on-site and in the community. The program is suited to clients who have been affected by neglect, emotional, physical, and/or sexual abuse, impacts of intergenerational trauma and racism, and feelings of hopelessness, which often contribute to emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Treatment Foster Care

While COVID made it a challenging year, the Treatment Foster Care team continued to support our foster parents and children in both regular and new ways. Thankfully, the families were incredibly resilient, adapting to a new way of life that included remote learning and reduced freedoms, as we all did. Our TFC team focused on helping parents provide an emotionally safe and comforting environment (and some fun!) to support mental health as much as attending to heightened physical health and educational needs.

Thanks to a donor grant, we were able to offer surprise packages for each child in our care. Gifts such as Lego, art supplies, and footballs helped to ease the stress of social isolation for all. Moreover, while lock down impeded our annual foster parent celebration, we were still able to share our appreciation with a coupon for a special meal and virtual speeches to recognize those marking milestone years of service.



We also welcomed 12 new young people to TFC—including two new sibling groups of four children!—and placed them in caring homes. One of the sibling groups included children ranging in age from seven to 13. The two youngest moved into their new home first, and, after great consideration and planning, the two older children successfully joined them soon after. The teen, who was expected to have the greatest challenge settling in, soon developed a positive connection with her foster mom. During one of many late night talks, the teen confessed to the foster mom, that "I'm really glad that we have a home."

While connections with birth family are re-established over time, these children know they have both a foster parent and an advocate that will work with their agency worker to support their relationship with their family and their culture.

In the moment of crisis, the wise build bridges and the foolish build dams.

~Nigerian proverb

This kind of unconditional support by foster parents helps children to strengthen their relationship with their birth families. During lock downs, TFC and foster parents facilitated virtual birth family visits. In response, one birth mom reached out with much-welcomed gifts for Christmas and spring for her children, despite the challenges she is facing in her own life. The children were so happy to know they are in their mother's thoughts, and the gifts gave them something to hold on to until the next time they could be together. Such connections between foster parents, children and birth parents help to ease the journey from the past to the present, and the present to the future.

Knowles Centre's Treatment Foster Care Program employs an effective model of care that brings together professional treatment services with the strength of caring families from the community. Children of all ages who are referred to the program have specialized behavioral or emotional needs and may be depressed, acting out, suffer from a psychiatric illness, or a family crisis. They may have trouble forming relationships, or may be struggling to work out past relationships. Where possible, siblings are placed together.

Supported Advancement to Independent Living

Grateful. That's how Robert* feels about his experience in the SAIL program. Although it's only been a short while since graduating from the program Robert knows he is a very different person from the one who moved into the SAIL apartments.

Robert first entered care at age five, and had been in a number of foster homes before joining SAIL when he was almost 18. It wasn't like what he thought it was going to be, he recalls. There was a lot more to it and a lot more help than he anticipated. SAIL exceeded his expectations.

Robert admits he wasn't always the easiest to deal with and knows he could have been asked to leave the program a number of times. But SAIL didn't give up that easy. Looking back, he is thankful for the staff's caring perseverance when he was demanding and angry, especially after being told 'no'. It was a good mix of support and being firm when needed. He knows it was a life lesson that he needed.

While there was a lot taught in SAIL, Robert says the most valuable was learning that being a good tenant goes beyond just paying the rent. As well, Robert said being introduced to a variety of resources was helpful, especially those that were critical to helping him get jobs while in SAIL. Learning to live within his means was another valuable lesson that Robert appreciated.

Overall, Robert credits SAIL with helping him to grow as a person. He feels he is more mature and views obstacles differently. Previously he used to think that if something bad was going to happen, it would happen to him. Now he approaches a problem with the mindset of looking for ways to work around it.

Robert feels he wouldn't be where he is today had it not been for the support and guidance of the SAIL program and staff. He speaks fondly of those who worked with him during his time in the program, especially a particular support staff, and his Case Manager Kendall. Robert is also grateful to Paul, who took time to help him buy a used car, even though Paul was not his case manager.

Robert's future looks bright. After completing high school and some additional upgrading, Robert is now waiting to start university to pursue dentistry—a dream he has had for a while. In the meantime, Robert is training for the Manitoba Marathon and hopes to qualify for the Boston Marathon one day.

*Name has been changed.



The SAIL Program helps youth living in care of the child welfare system to transition to living in the community as young adults. With guidance from a support worker, clients build on the skills and competencies needed for future independent living. Once on their own, their support worker continues to follow-up and provide guidance as their confidence and abilities grow. SAIL welcomes young people ages 16 and over who are living in care and have no plans to live at their family home after they reach the age of majority.

Day Treatment

While the world may remember 2020 and 2021 for the pandemic, students in the Day Treatment Program were busy creating better memories.

First, Knowles Centre, John G. Stewart School and the students welcomed Tracie Leost, the new Support Worker to the joint program mid-year. Tracie is a recent university graduate and proud Indigenous person who is passionate about sharing her culture and working with youth.

During Code Red, Day Treatment students studied remotely; however, their unique needs met the government criteria that allowed them to attend school in-person on a rotating basis. This meant they could access the supports that are the hallmark of the program and critical to their success. Tracie also planned some safe but fun events to provide a break from on-line learning, such as making bannock dogs, learning to "Boot, Scootin' Boogie", and having Dance Dance Revolution competitions.

Day Treatment support does not end with school in June. Tracie continued to build positive relationships with students over the summer. Some highlights include:

- Joining the WRENCH program for afternoon bike rides, plus learning bike safety and repair
- Sowing wild medicinal plants outside of Knowles Centre's on-grounds lodge with the Cultural Coordinator
- Visiting a strawberry farm, and picking enough of the tasty fruit to make jam, share with families, and share with the community as part of a ceremony
- Picking wild prairie sage (also with the Cultural Coordinator) to be used for personal healing, as well as sharing with others who access Knowles Centre programs
- Learning how to harvest, use and make offerings of other traditional plant medicines



Despite the challenges of the pandemic, staff were inspired by our clients' positive attitudes and willingness to follow ever-changing safety restrictions. Staff were greeted by students with joy on home visits (sometime with lunch or a Slurpee to share!). Time spent together in the car on the way to outings and activities gave students a chance to open up and share thoughts, memories, or goals ... and to build important connections that can make a difference.

Student Shaneqwa* shared how the program makes her feel: "I had a hard time with my attendance; but every time I come to school Tracie rolls out a red carpet ... well, pink actually. She always greets me with a smile and a hot chocolate. It makes me feel special, like I belong. It makes me want to come to school more."

* Name has been changed.

The Day Treatment program is offered in partnership through Knowles Centre and the River East Transcona School Division. Students attend John G. Stewart School located on the grounds of Knowles Centre in addition to meeting on a regular basis with a Knowles Centre therapist. The program is directed toward adolescents (aged 12 to 17) experiencing emotional and behavioral difficulties in school and the community. Students may be living at home, in foster care, or a group home.

Sexual Abuse Treatment

Madison* was sexually abused by her uncle beginning when she was 11 years old and into her teens. "I never told anyone about what happened to me because I was worried whether people would believe me—my uncle said they wouldn't. I worried if my family would help me and if my friends would avoid me. Instead, I kept quiet and struggled to deal with what was happening."

Like many young people affected by abuse, Madison struggled with feelings of shame and with trusting others. She became withdrawn and began skipping school, and even ran away from home at one point. She began experimenting with substances and overeating as a means of self-medicating. "I would stuff down feelings with food," she said. "I knew it wasn't healthy or helping, but I did not know how to stop." Madison also had frequent suicidal thoughts and wondered if it would be better for everyone if she was not here.

It took Madison three years for her to finally find the courage to tell her mother about the abuse. Her mother was there for her. She believed Madison, reported the abuse, and took steps to get help. That included contacting the Sexual Abuse Treatment Program at Knowles Centre.

Today, Madison attends twice-monthly individual counselling sessions at Knowles Centre. Here the healing started and things began to get easier for her. "With the support of my therapist Kristi, I finally found the courage to talk about the sexual abuse and my experiences."

The changes in Madison's life are significant. She is less withdrawn, and attends school more consistently. Currently, she is staying connected to the people who care about her, creating healthy relationships, and learning to become more trusting of others. "I feel better and no longer think it would be better if I was not here," says Madison.

"Therapy helped me understand I was not responsible for the abuse. It also taught me how to take care of myself through self-care practices. I also learned that substance use can worsen many symptoms, interfere with treatment, and contribute to problems at home, school, and in my relationships." Madison is not currently using substances. Exercising has helped her to relieve stress and feel more powerful and in control of her body. Madison also learned how to manage her emotions ways that do not involve food. She has become mindful and has learned how to stay connected to her emotional experiences.

"Attending therapy with SATP is one of the best decisions that I've ever made. I don't know where I would be if I hadn't accessed this service when I needed it the most. I hope that anyone else in a situation like this can get the same kind of help. Everyone deserves to feel safe and good, and to have their mental health supported."

* Name has been changed.



The Sexual Abuse Treatment Program (SATP) provides treatment services at no cost to clients referred through a variety of sources. Clients may be male or female, aged 4 to 21 years, who have previously made a disclosure of sexual abuse, or have a sibling who has made such a disclosure. Non-offending parents or caregivers may be referred to the program if they are caring for or have previously cared for a child who has made such a disclosure.

Moving Forward

This year the Moving Forward program provided therapeutic services to 11 young people, including nine new clients and two who transitioned from Knowles Centre's Group Care program. The clients ranged from 12 to 18 years of age, and their needs reflected what so many other young people in our community are facing, from school and family struggles to substance use and suicidal ideation. As expected, these and other concerns co-exist with or are brought on by mental health struggles faced by youth.

We understand and recognize the importance of positive emotional and mental wellness of youth. For this reason, Knowles Centre invested in youth by creating a new clinical therapist position within the Moving Forward program to work with youth and their families and/or caregivers. We are also exploring alternative funding sources so we can reduce or eliminate the financial barriers to families seeking therapeutic services when they need them most. To this end, our Moving Forward therapists are recognized by Jordan's Principle and can provide services to Indigenous clients under that important funding source.

Moving Forward program has also begun supporting youth who are on the waiting list of our specialized Sexual Abuse Treatment Program. This means clients can access immediate mental health services when they need it most. Once an SATP space opens, therapists from both programs can work with the client to ensure a smooth transition between programs.

As Moving Forward continues to grow, we are committed to:

- Reducing barriers for clients by maintaining an easy, efficient referral process, and eliminating or reducing any wait times for services;
- Supporting youth and their families/ caregivers to address the enormous stressors caused by the COVID pandemic;
- Working closely with youth and their families and caregivers to ensure our programming meets their needs; and
- Partnering with other youth and family focused organizations to expand services to the larger community.



Moving Forward is a community-based therapeutic counselling program. It is open to young people who are dealing with mental health challenges, as well as emotional or behavioural issues arising from current and past experiences. The program is offered on a fee-for-service basis, and takes referrals from families, CFS agencies, victim service agencies and other organizations that work with young people facing adversity. Moving Forward therapists can also work with the families or caregivers of young people registered in the program.

Culinary Arts

Culinary Arts students had an exciting year and adapted well to the blended home and school-based learning experience in keeping with the COVID restrictions. Of course, there were challenges along the way, but students and teachers still were able to overcome and have a great learning experience.

At times, students received their homework and needed supplies to prepare meals at home that fit in with the curriculum, to the delight of many families who were able to enjoy the students' work. At school, much of the hands-on work moved outdoors to the sacred Indigenous grounds on the Knowles Centre property. Traditional cultural menus were prepared on the fire pit, including Bison burgers and the traditional Three Sisters Soup with corn, squash and beans.

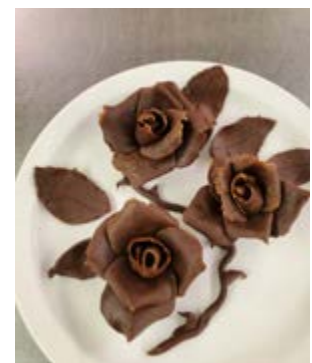
Students also tried out new and old recipes with a twist. For most, it was the first time making and eating frog leg poutine. We had fun rolling out a 3-foot-long cinnamon roll before cutting and baking delicious treats to share. Chocolate Rice Krispie eyeballs were seen peering through the kitchen doors and hallways at Halloween time. At Christmas we continued our tradition of making decorated sugar cookie trees; however, our holiday student luncheon featured a special menu of lobster along with filet mignon.

Always popular, students baked and decorated cakes with icing and chocolate roses for special events, including special occasions and birthdays. As well, students also kept busy making a variety of muffins, cookies, meals, and vegetable and fruit platters.

This great work is not possible without students learning kitchen basics and advanced skills. Students always enjoy making, cutting and boxing pizza. Later in the programs, student fine tune their knife skills with batonnet, julienne, large dice, small dice and brunoise cuts.

Over the last year, two students from the Culinary Arts program, with help from professional chef and culinary instructor Paul Lemire, and chef de cuisine Jason Silk, turned their essential culinary skills into paid employment in the community. Congratulations to JFR and EV! As well, two students earned their five-year Food Safety Accreditation. Way to go EV and AA!

We are proud of all our students who complete the year. Each one shows great improvement. This year, we were pleased to announce AA was our outstanding culinary arts achiever, and was awarded a set of professional knives in a kit to mark his success.



The Culinary Arts Program combines education, training and experience to prepare students for future employment in a restaurant kitchen. Students begin working in the protected environment of the Knowles Centre kitchen, and will progress to working in a community setting. In addition to vocational skills, clients will develop personal and employability skills necessary to gain and maintain employment.

AWARDS

Vicki Whitehead Memorial Award

Vicki Whitehead was the Supervisor of Unit 1 (now called Meadowside Home) and an adamant supporter of Indigenous cultural programming at Knowles Centre. Sadly, Vicki passed away in 1997. In honour of Vicki's memory, an annual award was established to recognize participants in the Biimautaziwin Cultural Program who have embraced the spirit of the Indigenous culture.

In 2020/21, the award was presented to **Brandi T.** who has shown great interest in being a helper to Ms. Hart, the Indigenous Cultural Coordinator. Brandi has helped Ms. Hart with making tobacco ties and other items. She has taken part in the Equine Therapy Program as well as volunteered to teach jingle dress and fancy shawl dancing to three girls under age 10 for six weeks. Brandi has a caring and encouraging manner with the children she taught, as well as the horses she was paired with at equine therapy.



Education Awards

High school can be a difficult time. It can be even more challenging for a youth in the Day Treatment who is transitioning back to a community school, a youth in Group Care Treatment who is attending a community school while in care, or transitioning back to a community school from the specialized environment of John G. Stewart School. High school and university can also be especially challenging for those in the SAIL program who must balance their studies with managing their own home and possibly working part-time. Education Awards recognize those students who take on this responsibility and succeed. We are pleased to recognize the following recipients of the 2020/2021 Education Awards:

- Tashina B., SAIL Program
- Meadow M., SAIL Program
- Julia C., SAIL Program
- Sheldon N., SAIL Program
- Monique E., SAIL Program
- Devon S., SAIL Program

Arthur E. Prior Scholarship

The Board of Directors established the Arthur E. Prior Memorial Scholarship Fund in 1987 to assist former clients of Knowles Centre in pursuit of continuing education. The endowed fund was created with a bequest from the estate of Arthur E. Prior.

The Arthur E. Prior Scholarship Committee approved one scholarship in 2020/2021 for **Brad R.** who is taking the electrical course through Red River College. Brad is almost finished the course, which has gone exceedingly well for him.

Congratulations Brad! We are so happy for you!



FUND DEVELOPMENT REPORT

This year has certainly been unlike any other. Knowles Centre has had its share of challenges, many of which we were able to overcome with the support of donors.

COVID-19 created new obstacles for us. One of our most pressing needs early in the pandemic was for personal protective equipment such as masks, eye shields, gloves and protective gowns. Dozens of home sewers were quick to offer fabric masks for our children and essential staff. Hundreds of hours of work came to us in the form of life-saving and colourful masks and more.

We also had to find new ways to offer some of programming. Technology provided much relief, but came at a high cost, made more challenging by limited fundraising opportunities. Thank you to The Winnipeg Foundation, The Graham C. Lount Family Foundation and our private donors for stepping up and helping us meet many of our unexpected needs while our staff remained committed to keeping everyone healthy and well.

We also had a lot of support for our recreation program which was critical to help our youth get through pandemic restrictions. With grants from The Winnipeg Foundation Summer Programming, City of Winnipeg Wellness Program, and the Province of Manitoba's Healthy Together Now and Safe at Home grants we were able to provide youth with activities indoor and outdoor while being able to adhere to public health orders.

Throughout it all, we continued to address our ongoing needs. This year we were finally able to complete the exhaust fan installation in our commercial kitchen used by the our Culinary Arts Program with help from The Winnipeg Foundation, Wawanesa Insurance, private donors, and past fundraising events.

We also renovated our Indigenous Cultural Space thanks to an Essential Needs Grant from the Richardson Foundation through the United Way of Winnipeg.

With the support of the Manitoba Real Estate Association Shelter Fund we were able to purchase an AED machine for our SAIL Program.

We are also grateful to the Home Depot Foundation for providing us much needed funds to do foundation repairs to a building in our SAIL Program.

This year would not have been possible without the generosity of our donors. From all of us at Knowles Centre thank you so much.

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The Winnipeg Foundation Summer Internship Program

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And many anonymous donors

Dear Mom

I wonder why they took me from home

They robbed me of everything

Even my clothes

The black dressed women aren't nice

For lunch I eat a single orange slice

Every night is so dark and cold

They took away Mr. Bear

So I have nothing to hold

My name now is Lauren

I can't remember my old one

It's okay Mom

They found us

I'm dancing with the sun because

It's finally all done

~ Anonymous

The author wrote this poem in response to the discovery of the unmarked graves of 215 children at the site of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School on the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation, BC in May 2021.







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