

Annual Report 2022/23

Reclaiming Wholeness to Embrace Purpose



THUNDERBIRD
PARTNERSHIP FOUNDATION

Our annual report cover design honours the first National Ribbon Skirt Day in 2023. The day stems from a young Indigenous girl, Isabella Kulak who proudly wore her ribbon skirt to school for formal dress day, but it wasn't accepted as 'formal'. This prompted a massive response from the public that rose to Parliament and resulted in the creation of National Ribbon Skirt Day in Canada on January 4, in honour of Isabella Kulak.

Vision: Cultivating and empowering relationships that connect us to our cultural strengths and identity within wholistic and healthy communities.

Mission: The Thunderbird Partnership Foundation, a division of the National Native Addictions Partnership Foundation Inc., is a leading culturally centred voice advocating for collaborative, integrated and wholistic approaches to healing and wellness.

Mandate: The Thunderbird Partnership Foundation is the national voice advocating for First Nations culturally-based substance use and mental wellness services.

Thunderbird Partnership Foundation has a centralized office located on the Eelūnaapéewi Lahkèewiit Territory, in southwestern Ontario.

MAIN OFFICE
22361 Austin Line
Bothwell, ON
N0P 1C0

PHONE
(519) 692-9922

TOLL-FREE
1-866-763-4714

E-MAIL
info@thunderbirdpf.org

FAX
(519) 692-9977

thunderbirdpf.org

[f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [ig](#) [p](#) @thunderbirdpf

VISIT OUR LIFE PROMOTION WEBSITES
cultureforlife.ca for Youth
wisepractices.ca for Communities



Dakota quill pattern

Message from the Board President and CEO	4
Thunderbird Surveys Updated and Revised	6
NNADAP Year in Review	8
NYSAP Year in Review	10
AMIS Expands in 2022/23	12
Thunderbird Training Numbers	13
New Train the Trainer Programs	14
Indigenous Knowledge and Epigenetics Training Pilot Launched	14
Buffalo Riders Program Trains 84 Newly Certified Facilitators	15
Naloxone/Harm Reduction Training Course in Development	16
Decolonization Training Course Development Underway	17
Moving Forward in Support of Worker Wellness	18
Exploring Standards for eMental Health Apps for First Nations Youth	19
Vital Partnership Agreements	20
Indigenous Knowledge Activity	20
Truth and Reconciliation 2022	21
Summit on First Nations Substance Use	22
Integrating the FNMWC and Community Safety Planning	22
FSIN Comprehensive Wellness Summit	23
Thunderbird Moves in a New Strategic Direction!	24
Thunderbird's Internal Checkup	26
Complex Trauma and Emotional Regulation App in Development	27
Virtual Services - French Translation Updates	28
Community Wellness Hub Reaches 1000 Members	30
Campaign Connects Harm Reduction to Culture	31
Knowledge Tools Support Life Promotion	32
Podcast Boasts Successful First Full Year	33
Thunderbird Website Redesigned	34
Thunderbird Websites Welcome High Percentage of New Visitors	35
Thunderbird Social Media Sees Major Growth	35
Resources Distributed	36
Financial Report	37
Conferences and Partner Connections	38

Message from the Board President and Chief Executive Officer

Welcome to our 2022-23 Annual report, a snapshot of our journey in the past year to support First Nations mental wellness. The work of Thunderbird Partnership Foundation is reflected in this year's report, titled: **Reclaiming Wholeness to Embrace Purpose**. We know the lives of First Nations people are enriched through a journey that meanders along a path that touches on Hope, Belonging, and Meaning, culminating in Purpose. That journey is reflected in the stories we present in this annual report. Data from the Native Wellness Assessment, (a class "B" assessment meant to establish a quantitative database to show the difference culture and Indigenous Knowledge make in mental wellness) demonstrates Hope, and the valuable relationships with our partners demonstrates Thunderbird's place and belonging within First Nations mental wellness. The work of Thunderbird is done with the intention to facilitate understanding of the meaning of Indigenous Knowledge as it translates within mental wellness.

A prominent activity during 2022-2023 focused on raising awareness to recommendations that will significantly address equitable resourcing for First Nations. This includes wage parity for the mental wellness workforce, and program resources that will enable capacity to respond to the ongoing drug crisis and drug poisoning deaths, made worse because of the pandemic. A position paper outlined the core issues and solutions, along with two pre-budget submissions, podcasts, as well as social and print media campaigns, which were supported by a number of national programs and professional associations.

Overall, the recommendations call upon provincial, territorial, federal and First Nations governments to be accountable to the principles of the Canada Health Act and ensure the rights of Indigenous people as defined in the legislation of Canada are upheld. We have more information on our website: thunderbirdpf.org/wage-parity

The outcomes of high-quality First Nations addictions programs are presented through data collected from First Nations communities and treatment centres. Efforts are underway to expand the National Addictions Information Management System to First Nations communities. This data will set the context with First Nations voices and illustrate the prevalence and impact of drugs and alcohol among First Nations while also telling a story of the difference culture makes in wellness.

Advocating for the right to life, protection, and preservation of the sacred breath of life for First Nations people who use drugs, along with their families and communities has also been a critical focus for Thunderbird and our partners. Thunderbird launched a harm reduction campaign entitled, *The Sacred Breath of Life*. The campaign conveys the importance of First Nations harm reduction approaches that connect to the culture and sacred teachings of Creation – we all have the responsibility to protect the sacred breath of life, for all. The Spirit gave to us the breath of life, and for that reason it is sacred. When people who use drugs ingest substances that are contaminated with unknown toxins, they can lose their breath, which is often

referred to as overdose. However, the word "overdose" implies the person who uses drugs may be at fault for consuming "too much" drugs, but the evidence shows that is not the case. We have also learned the number of deaths does not represent an increase in the number of people who are using drugs. Instead, the increase in deaths is due to the contamination/poisoning of the drugs.

Thunderbird benefits daily from the wisdom of Elders, Knowledge Holders, and Cultural Practitioners who support us as we work together. Over the past year, many guests shared their experiences and perspectives of harm reduction, from community initiatives to individual practices. We heard through the Mino Bimaadziwin podcasts with Elders and Knowledge Keepers that First Nations who are grieving the loss of their loved ones, family, or friends, due to the harms of drugs and alcohol still have the right to a culture-based burial. Often families are shy to talk about how their friend or relative gave their breath back to the Great Spirit and as a result, they hold the pain. Culture-based practices to support moving through grief are: spirit feast, fire, pipe, language, giveaways, round dances, and memorials where people share their experiences and stories of the person who has passed on. These culture-based initiatives are powerful tools for attending to grief and loss. Thunderbird held a round dance for all First Nations whose lives were lost to drug poisoning.

A northern public health working group on the impacts of the pandemic on Indigenous mental wellness produced a number of reports with key recommendations. This work also informed the guidelines for addressing opioid and methamphetamine use. Further work focused on cannabis use and new understanding of public health risks such as cannabis hyperemesis (cyclical nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain after using cannabis) and drug-induced psychosis. If we don't understand mental illness, it can be alarming to observe people who use drugs experiencing hallucinations. Knowledge translation resources are in development to extend the awareness of wise practices.

It has been a busy and productive year! We hope you are inspired by the presentation of our Annual Report for 2022-23 outlining our efforts and achievements, and present to you, **Reclaiming Wholeness to Embrace Purpose**.


President Austin Bear
Thunderbird Board President and Chair


Dr. Carol Hopkins, O.C., MSW, LL.D (hons)
Chief Executive Officer





Thunderbird Surveys Updated and Revised



The **Cannabis Survey for First Nations** has been updated to reflect the thinking around cannabis after legalization and regulation. The updated survey now includes more questions that will help First Nations understand what knowledge exists about cannabis and what perception First Nations have about the risks and benefits of cannabis use. Several questions specific to parental cannabis use are also included. The knowledge gathered can be used to create health promotion and other educational materials for First Nations communities. The updated survey has 55 questions for those aged 12 years and older and takes about 15 to 25 minutes to complete.



The **First Nations Opioid and Methamphetamine (FNOM) Survey** was revised based on the lessons learned from the survey completion and other feedback gathered from First Nations communities. Questions were added to capture the current context for substance use among First Nations. To support people taking the survey we added directions on how to respond to each question and what direction to take if questions are skipped. The survey can be done on paper or electronically.










Nakoda Oyadebi pattern

A Snapshot of Some FNOM Survey Results

Thunderbird received 2,220 First Nations Opioid and Methamphetamine Surveys from respondents aged 18 years and older. Of those, 428 surveys were dropped because either they didn't consent to be in the national analysis, they didn't answer most of the questions, or they didn't identify themselves with a known community, treatment centre or First Nations organization.



Harmful opioid use was defined as:

-  tampered with opioid medication,
-  injected opioids,
-  used opioids for reasons other than medical purposes,
-  used street sources,
-  used opioids with alcohol,
-  used opioids with other substances, or
-  declared their use as harmful.

Opioid Use






We calculated the prevalence of harmful opioid use was 28% (95% confidence interval 26% to 30%).

We examined what characteristics of a respondent were associated with using opioids in a harmful way. We found the characteristics below were all together associated with using opioids in a harmful way:

- younger participants aged 18 to 49 (3.4 to 4.1 higher risk of using than respondents aged +50 years),
- male / other gender identities (1.5 higher risk),
- unable to buy food (1.7 higher risk),
- feeling helpless to change their life (1.3 higher risk),
- having upsetting memories (1.3 higher risk),
- feeling betrayed by others (1.4 higher risk), and
- not having health/drug awareness education (1.3 higher risk).

Methamphetamine Use

We calculated the prevalence of methamphetamine use was 18% (95% confidence interval 16% to 21%). Examining the characteristics associated with methamphetamine use we found similarities with those for harmful opioid usage. We found the characteristics below were all together associated with using methamphetamines:

-  younger participants aged 18 to 49 (3.4 to 4.4 higher risk of using than respondents aged +50 years),
-  male / other gender identities (2.1 higher risk),
-  unable to buy food (2.3 higher risk),
-  experiencing nightmares (2.0 higher risk) and,
-  not having positive role models in their lives (1.6 higher risk).



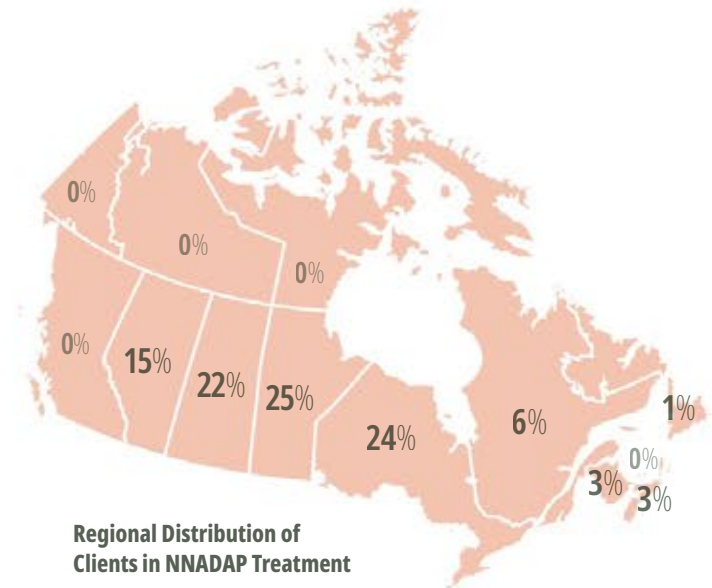
* *First Nations communities interested in implementing the First Nations Opioid and Methamphetamine Survey or the Cannabis Survey for First Nations please email research@thunderbirdpf.org*



NNADAP Year in Review

The Addiction Information Management System (AMIS) meets the needs of 45 National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program (NNADAP) and 9 National Youth Solvent Abuse Program (NYSAP) funded treatment centres across Canada. Seventy-two percent of treatment centres are registered to use the AMIS database for recording, monitoring, and reporting on service delivery.

Data from the Addictions Information Management System (AMIS) was pulled May 14, 2023 and covers April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023. The data represents treatment centres from across Canada. (Note: Not all treatment centres had completed their fiscal data as their annual report is due at a later date.)



Regional Distribution of Clients in NNADAP Treatment

Total NNADAP applicants

2054 **+44%** from previous year (n=1431)

Number of clients accessing multiple levels of care

509 **+48%** from previous year (n=345)

Total number of clients accessing treatment

2425 **+54%** from previous year (n=1570)

Males: 1198 Average Age: 37 **+56%** from previous year (n=770)

Females: 1227 Average Age: 34 **+53%** from previous year (n=800)

Pre-treatment services

1036 **+65%** from previous year (n=626)

Post-treatment referrals

864 **+41%** from previous year (n=611)

Client characteristics upon entry to treatment

- 51% completed high school (n=1307)
- 27% history of suicide ideation (n=656)
- 44% attended previous residential treatment (n=523)
- 24% involved in the justice system (n=607)
- 56% completed treatment (n=562)



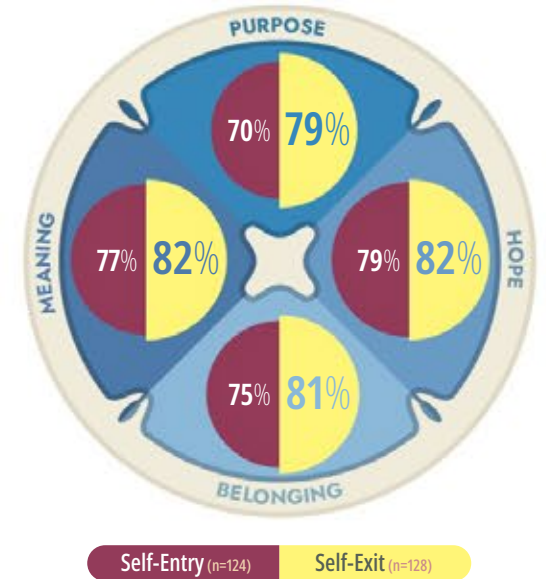
The following lists the types of substances used by active and inactive clients January 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023 (only full DUSI was used. n=858) All categories remained similar to those reported in 21/22 with only a few percentage point increases or decreases.

- 81%** Alcohol (n=695) (and related products such as mouthwash, hairspray, etc.)
- 97%** Caffeine (n=832) (coffee, tea, soda/pop, energy drinks, chocolate, over the counter cold remedies, over the counter weight loss aids)
- 75%** Cannabis (n=644) (prescribed and non-prescribed)
- 74%** Cocaine, uppers, khat (n=640) (total sample size is 999 and both the full and short DUSI. DUSIs were completed between April 1, 2022 and March 31, 2023.)
- 30%** Hallucinogens (n=257) (PCP, angel dust, ketamine, cyclohexylamine, diazepam, LSD, mescaline, MDMA/ecstasy, DOM/STP, DMT, magic mushrooms, morning glory seeds, Jimson Weed, Salvia Divinorum)
- 4%** Inhalants (n=34) (glue, fuel, paint thinner, etc.)
- 45%** Methamphetamine (n=450) (total sample size is 999 and both the full and short DUSI. DUSIs were completed between April 1, 2022 and March 31, 2023.)
- 46%** Opioids (n=395) (prescription suboxone, prescription methadone, prescription oxycotin, oxycodone, codeine and morphine, non-prescription oxycotin, non-prescription oxycodone, non-prescription codeine, non-prescription morphine, non-prescription heroin, diverted methadone, diverted suboxone and fentanyl)
- 55%** Sedatives (n=472) (sleeping medications, anti-anxiety medications, barbiturates, benzodiazepines etc.)
- 90%** Tobacco (n=772) (smoking, chewing, smokeless)
- 10%** Other (n=86) (anabolic steroids, anti-inflammatory drugs, antihistamines, nitrous oxide/laughing gas or unknown)

NNADAP Native Wellness Outcomes

The NWA™ assessment tool validates the effect of cultural interventions on wellness over time. Gathered from clients attending NNADAP treatment centres who had completed their NWA™ from Jan 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023. (n=128)

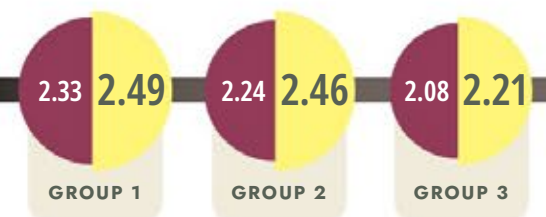
Balance in Wellness Across Time



NNADAP Comparative Cultural Practices to Promote Wellness

Indigenous culture can be expressed through cultural practices in our journey toward wellness. Cultural practices have long been recognized as Indigenous expressions of spirit-heart-mind-body at work, in which the client participated from different perspectives.

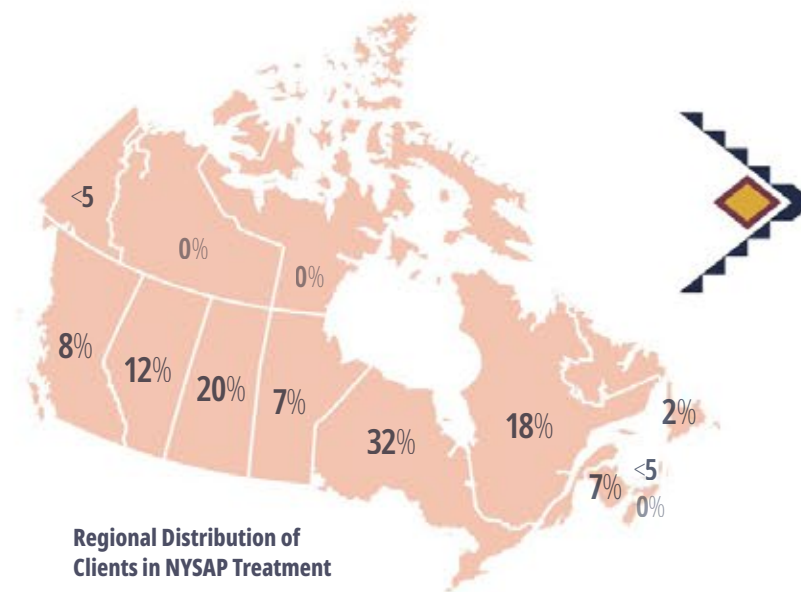
In the chart below **Group 1** includes activities more commonly practiced on an everyday basis such as smudging, using sacred medicines. **Group 2** includes practices that are seasonal such as harvesting, fishing and hunting. It also includes practices that occur often between group 1 and group 3 such as pipe ceremonies or seeking the help from a traditional healer. **Group 3** includes specialized activities that are less frequent such as memorial feasts and fasting. The chart shows a connection to cultural practices from 1.00 (weak) up to 3.00 (strong).



NYSAP Year in Review

The Addiction Information Management System (AMIS) meets the needs of 45 National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program (NNADAP) and 9 National Youth Solvent Abuse Program (NYSAP) funded treatment centres across Canada. Seventy-two percent of treatment centres are registered to use the AMIS database for recording, monitoring, and reporting on service delivery.

Data from the Addictions Information Management System (AMIS) was pulled May 14, 2023 and covers April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023. The data represents treatment centres from across Canada. (Note: Not all treatment centres had completed their fiscal data as their annual report is due at a later date.)



Regional Distribution of Clients in NYSAP Treatment

Total NYSAP applicants
 266 **+59%** from previous year (n=167)

Number of clients accessing multiple levels of care
 137 **+128%** from previous year (n=60)

Total number of clients accessing treatment
 301 **+69%** from previous year (n=178)

♂ Males: 115 Average Age: 17 **+69%** from previous year (n=68)
 ♀ Females: 186 Average Age: 16 **+69%** from previous year (n=110)

Pre-treatment services
 90 **+329%** from previous year (n=21)

Post-treatment referrals
 156 **+88%** from previous year (n=83)

Client characteristics upon entry to treatment

- 34% does not attend school (n=90)
- 31% attended previous treatment (n=82)
- 35% history of sexual abuse (n=92)
- 30% history of child welfare involvement (n=80)
- 6% history of gang involvement (n=16)
- 62% history of suicide ideation (n=165)
- 54% history of suicide attempts (n=144)
- 68% come from families where violence has been present (n=178)
- 32% trouble with the law (n=86)
- 24% involvement with the legal system (n=63)
- 44% history of self-harming behaviour (n=117)

The following lists the types of substances used by active and inactive clients January 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023 (only full DUSI was used. n=858)

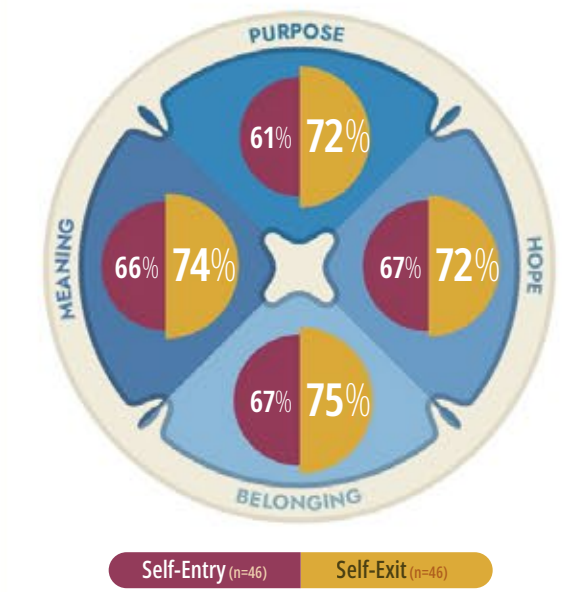
- 89% Alcohol (n=121) (and related products such as mouthwash, hairspray, etc.)
- 97% Caffeine (n=132) (coffee, tea, soda/pop, energy drinks, chocolate, over the counter cold remedies, over the counter weight loss aids)
- 93% Cannabis (n=126) (prescribed and non-prescribed)
- 41% Cocaine, uppers, khat (n=52) (total sample size is 999 and both the full and short DUSI. DUSIs were completed between April 1, 2022 and March 31, 2023.)
- 82% Hallucinogens (n=60) (PCP, angel dust, ketamine, cyclohexylamine, diazepam, LSD, mescaline, MDMA/ecstasy, DOM/STP, DMT, magic mushrooms, morning glory seeds, Jimson Weed, Salvia Divinorum)
- 4% Inhalants (n=34) (glue, fuel, paint thinner, etc.)
- 37% Methamphetamine (n=29) (This is for 127 youths who completed either the full or short DUSI from April 1 2022 to March 31, 2023)
- 30% Opioids (n=41) (prescription suboxone, prescription methadone, prescription oxycotin, oxycodone, codeine and morphine, non-prescription oxycotin, non-prescription oxycodone, non-prescription codeine, non-prescription morphine, non-prescription heroin, diverted methadone, diverted suboxone and fentanyl)
- 49% Sedatives (n=67) (sleeping medications, anti-anxiety medications, barbiturates, benzodiazepines etc.)
- 91% Tobacco (n=124) (smoking, chewing, smokeless)
- 11% Other (n=15) (anabolic steroids, anti-inflammatory drugs, antihistamines, nitrous oxide/laughing gas or unknown)

DUSI= Drug Use Screening Inventory

NYSAP Native Wellness Outcomes

The NWA™ assessment tool validates the effect of cultural interventions on wellness over time. Gathered from clients attending NYSAP treatment centres who had completed their NWA™ from Jan 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023. (n=46)

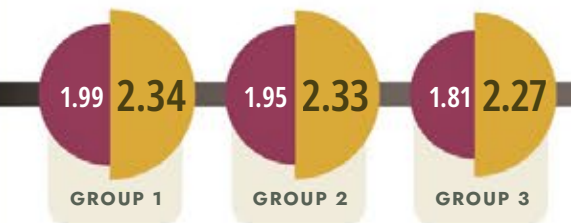
Balance in Wellness Across Time



NYSAP Comparative Cultural Practices to Promote Wellness

Indigenous culture can be expressed through cultural practices in our journey toward wellness. Cultural practices have long been recognized as Indigenous expressions of spirit-heart-mind-body at work, in which the client participated from different perspectives.

In the chart below Group 1 includes activities more commonly practiced on an everyday basis such as smudging, using sacred medicines. Group 2 includes practices that are seasonal such as harvesting, fishing and hunting. It also includes practices that occur often between group 1 and group 3 such as pipe ceremonies or seeking the help from a traditional healer. Group 3 includes specialized activities that are less frequent such as memorial feasts and fasting. The chart shows a connection to cultural practices from 1.00 (weak) up to 3.00 (strong).



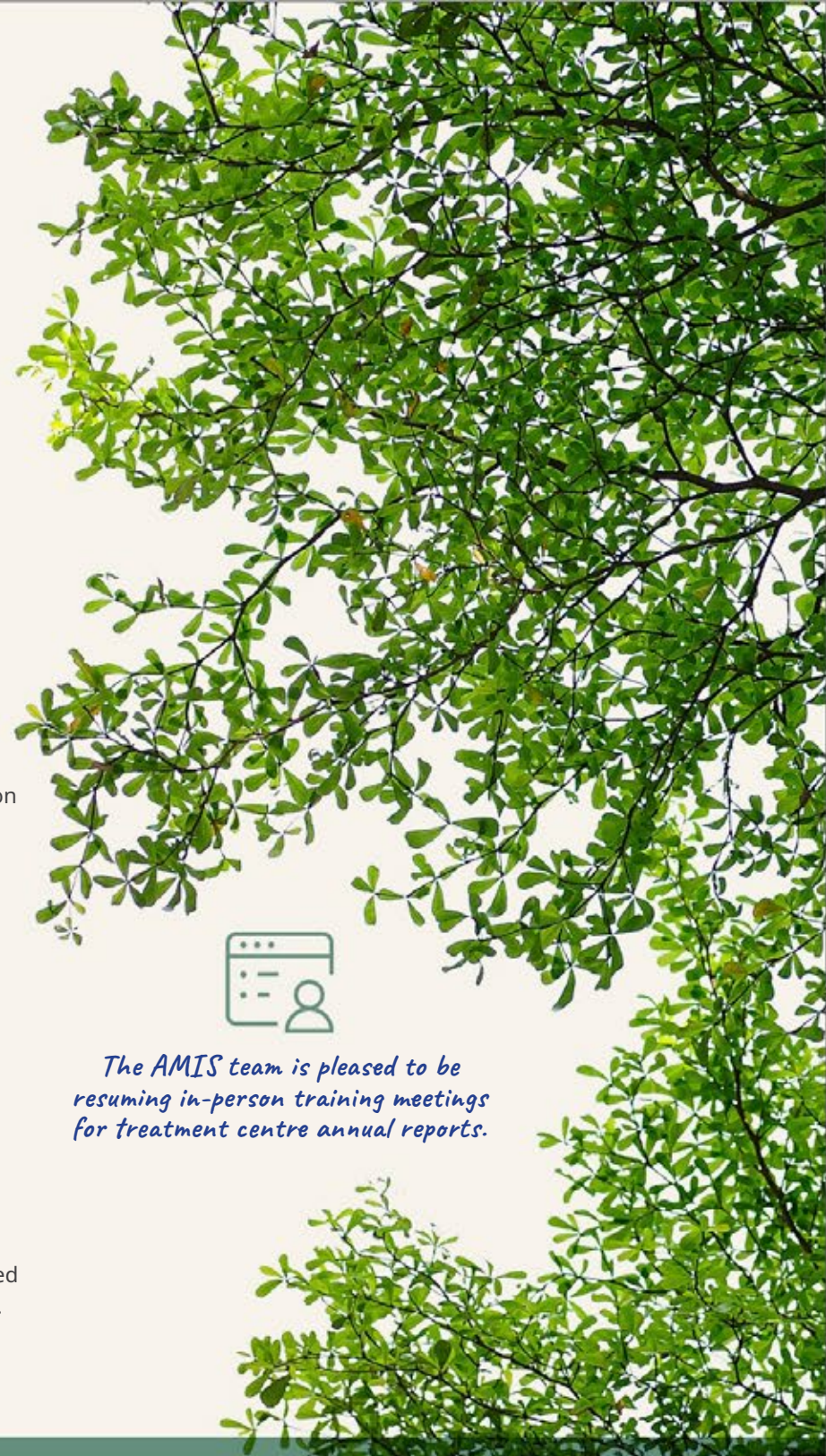
Shawnee pattern

AMIS Expands in 2022/23

The Addictions Management Information System (AMIS) launched an expansion project in 2022 for First Nations **community-based** substance use and addictions programs. AMIS is a case management system that supports the collection of substance use and mental health information and a client's connection to culture to inform client care. To support the expansion to community-based services, Thunderbird has been engaging with First Nation communities that have a strong working relationship with treatment centres using AMIS in the National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program (NNADAP) and the National Youth Solvent Abuse Program (NYSAP) and with communities who have community-based addictions services.

Thunderbird has promoted AMIS through information sessions, webinars, conference booths, and individual meetings with various community-led organizations, including new addiction treatment centres. A focus group will provide information on the case management capacity of the community-based wellness/addictions workforce and will help define AMIS specific to community service providers. In 22/23, connections were made with First Nations organizations from Alberta, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Ontario, Quebec, Saskatchewan, and the Yukon. These community-based services are on a pathway to joining AMIS.

AMIS auto-generated reports can provide valuable information that can meet funders' reporting requirements, evidence to support ongoing/enhanced funding for NNADAP/NYSAP, and research initiatives. Please email amis@thunderbirdpf.org to find out more.



The AMIS team is pleased to be resuming in-person training meetings for treatment centre annual reports.



Jicarilla Apache pattern

Thunderbird Training Numbers 2022/23

PFT (Program Facilitator Training)
TTT (Train the Trainer)

Training	Trainings	Participants	Regions
Culture as Foundation	3	86	(8) AB, ATL, BC, MB, ON, QC, SK, YK
Cannabis Education for First Nations	1	27	(4) ATL, BC, MB, ON
Community Crisis Response	2	60	(5) ATL, BC, MB, ON, QB
Epigenetics	1	16	(3) AB, MB, ON
Emotional Intelligence	1	15	(4) ATL, MB, ON, QC
First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework	1	34	(6) MB, NWT, ON, QC, SK, YK
Land for Healing	5	185	(9) AB, ATL, BC, MB, NWT, ON, QC, SK, YK
Pharmacology	4	112	(8) AB, ATL, BC, MB, ON, QC, SK, YK
Trauma Informed	3	65	(9) AB, ATL, BC, MB, ON, NWT, QC, SK, YK
Buffalo Riders - PFT	1	15	(5) ATL, BC, MB, ON, SK
Let's Talk Cannabis - PFT	1	24	(6) AB, ATL, MB, ON, QC, SK
Cannabis Education for First Nations - TTT	1	11	(4) ATL, MB, ON, QC
First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework - TTT	1	9	(5) AB, BC, MB, NWT, QC
Wise Practices for Life Promotion - TTT	1	6	(2) BC, MB
Buffalo Riders Manitoba Project	7	91	(1) MB
	33	756	(9) AB, ATL, BC, MB, NWT, ON, QC, SK, YK



Participant Training Evaluation Stats

	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent	Total
<i>Before this training, my knowledge of how culture contributes to wellness was:</i>	12	56	176	258	87	589
<i>After this training, my knowledge of how culture contributes to wellness is:</i>	1	1	18	284	283	587
<i>Before this training, my understanding of the benefits to applying culture to improve wellness was:</i>	10	58	164	284	98	588
<i>After this training, my understanding of the benefits to applying culture to improve wellness is:</i>	0	1	12	270	304	587

New Train the Trainer Programs



The fiscal year 2022-2023 saw the introduction of two highly anticipated Train the Trainer (TTT) courses, as Thunderbird continued to expand its training offerings.

In September 2022, the **First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum (FNMWC) Train the Trainer** program provided participants with an opportunity to explore the key themes of the FNMWC framework as a guide for the development of programs to support Indigenous wellness. The course was well received by participants from Manitoba, British Columbia, Alberta, Quebec, and the Northwest Territories.

In October 2022, the **Wise Practices for Life Promotion Train the Trainer** program was launched. It focuses on the prevention of youth suicide through the strengthening of community capacity to meaningfully connect young people with life and living. It was also well received by participants from Manitoba, British Columbia, and the First Peoples Wellness Circle (Ontario).

Designed to equip participants with the ability to deliver a 2-3-day version of the training in their region or community, Thunderbird's Train the Trainer courses continue to be in high demand from First Nations partners. Scan the QR code below to watch our Train the Trainer Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) video.



More information on the training courses can be found in the **2023-2024 Airtable National Training Calendar** which includes:

- A link to a video that shows how to use the Airtable calendar
- Training course posters with course descriptions
- Virtual training delivery dates
- Registration details for each course

Siksiká pattern

Indigenous Knowledge and Epigenetics Training Pilot Launched



Thunderbird Partnership Foundation partnered with Dalhousie University, Carleton University, and the University of Toronto to launch the initial pilot of the Indigenous Knowledge and Epigenetics Training in October 2022. The training supports the research project titled, *"First Nations Views Towards Health Research: Two-eyed Seeing"* curriculum which is funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR). The pilot was delivered with participants from the First Nations Health Secretariat of Manitoba (FNHSSM) and the Blackfoot Confederacy (Alberta) connected through the project: *Supporting the Trajectory of our Spirit: Living the Cree Pimatisiwin and Blackfoot Kiipaataspiisinii (Spiritual Way of Life)*.

The goal of the training is to provide an understanding of epigenetics from an Indigenous worldview and motivate research on the Indigenous experience, and to support an understanding that while environment and

life experiences can change or suppress the inherent gifts given by the Creator and carried within our DNA, it's also possible to reverse or shift these changes to gain wellness through Indigenous culture and cultural practices. The knowledge learned can also be applied in policy, program design, practice, and everyday life.

The course curriculum includes:

- a prerequisite self-paced online course on Human Biological Research from Western science and Indigenous Knowledge perspectives, and
- a three-day *in-person* training on Indigenous Knowledge and Epigenetics.

The piloting of the training will continue with identified First Nation community partners in 2023-2024 to complete the objectives of the research project prior to being offered as a standard part of Thunderbird's training platform.

Buffalo Riders Program Trains 84 Newly Certified Facilitators



In 2022 the Buffalo Riders curriculum was updated to include new content about harm reduction and life promotion. The revamped program is a result of a partnership between Thunderbird, the Manitoba provincial government and the Federal government. From May 2022 to March 2023, seven Buffalo Rider program facilitator training courses (5 days) were delivered virtually, creating 84 newly certified facilitators! This program is strengthening the capacity of First Nations communities/organizations to deliver culturally based mental wellness support services to Indigenous youth struggling with mental health and addiction concerns.

Training participants providing direct services to First Nations youth within First Nations communities and organizations (including schools) came from the following regions of Manitoba: North (20), Central (16), South (28) and Urban (20). Throughout the training, participants shared their appreciation of the strength-based approach and focus on culture as a foundation for addressing awareness of substance use, harm reduction, and life promotion. By March 2023, two 10-session programs had been delivered by newly certified facilitators, for youth in the urban region of Manitoba.



Naloxone/Harm Reduction Training Course in Development

Curriculum writing and content development for naloxone training were initiated in the Fall of 2022, with the first training delivery of a National Naloxone Training Program scheduled for this Fall (2023). This work follows the National Training outline that was established by a working group made up of treatment centre staff and regional partners. The Naloxone Training Program is designed in the format of a Program Facilitator training with both virtual and in-person options for delivery (over three days). There are seven-course modules and upon course completion the certified facilitators receive the complete training package for training and knowledge exchange with their partners/community members.

Working Group Responds to First Nations Challenges

In the Fall of 2021, Thunderbird established a working group in response to First Nations challenges in accessing Naloxone kits and the need for sharing knowledge and resources to support harm reduction approaches. Opioid/fentanyl poisonings and deaths are a worsening crisis for First Nation communities and there was consensus by the working group that a National Naloxone/Harm Reduction training course be developed that is grounded in culture, is trauma-informed, and supports efforts to protect the *sacred breath of life*. Additionally stated objectives for the development of the course included a curriculum that is relatable, experiential, and easily accessible so that regions can adapt to meet their specific community/partner needs.

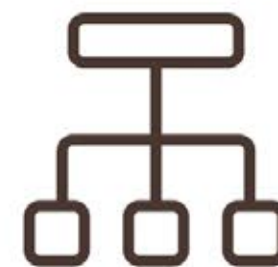


Decolonization Training Course Development Underway

Thunderbird Partnership Foundation is creating a 10-module online self-directed training course on decolonization. This introductory course supports the importance of understanding work around decolonization in facilitating wellness through reconnection to Indigenous stories of origin, cultural practice, language, land, and lineage. The course content reviews the colonial legacies and the inherent systemic racism resulting from Canada's colonization framework, and the intergenerational and continued adverse effects on Indigenous Peoples.



Seminole pattern



The course content explores responsibilities to affect positive systems change using Thunderbird's foundational frameworks, the Truth & Reconciliation Calls to Action and other resources. Participants will:

1. Define the concept of decolonization and its historical context for Indigenous Peoples.
2. Understand colonial legacy and the residual impacts felt today.
3. Analyze systemic racism.
4. Reflect on the bias (where and how bias is developed).
5. Recognize cultural humility is a continuum.
6. Discuss how culture as the foundation has fostered resiliency.
7. Learn about the importance of educating for implementing systems change.

The online course will be available and open for registration in Summer 2023.

Moving Forward in Support of Worker Wellness

Thunderbird is moving forward, leading the way for improved worker wellness and wage parity for staff in First Nation treatment centres and community-based programs. Their pay is almost 45% less than their provincial counterparts because government funding models are outdated and provide insufficient funding. This makes it very difficult to recruit and retain a workforce once they are trained and certified in addiction core competencies.

The need is substantial for addictions services, and the following provides some indication of the growing demand:

- the opioid and methamphetamine crisis,
- the toxic drug poisoning crisis,
- lack of equitable resources for community-based harm reduction
- the impacts of COVID-19, and
- ongoing impact of colonization and trauma through the discovery of the unmarked graves at residential schools and the Papal visit to Canada that did not meet the expectations of residential school survivors.

Thunderbird authored a 5-Point Plan in 2022 to address the inequity in resources and presented it to government officials who were very receptive! The Prime Minister's office offered to act as a convenor across the departments. The Chief of Staff to the Minister of Crown and Indigenous Relations expressed full support to bringing forward Thunderbird's recommendations.

In the Fall, Thunderbird presented information about workforce wellness and funding inequities at the National Summit on Indigenous Mental Wellness. Thunderbird then launched a national campaign to further amplify the message.

In January 2023, Thunderbird hosted a roundtable for key partners in the First Nations addictions and mental health sector to gather input and validation of the 5-Point Plan. Roundtable participants included members from the Assembly of First Nations, First Peoples Wellness Circle, Thunderbird Board of Directors, Yukon Regional Chief Klaune Adamak, long-time advocate and treatment Director, Rolanda Manitowabi, and community voices such as Mae Katt, nurse practitioner and Dr. Deb Dell, Executive Director of the Youth Solvent Addiction Committee. Roundtable feedback allowed Thunderbird to update and prioritize the recommendations into four key points which formed the foundation of the 2023 pre-budget submission to the federal government. Letters of support from partners were also included.

Thunderbird continues to advance the updated Worker Wellness Position Paper, with a presentation at the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations' Comprehensive Wellness Summit. As well, Thunderbird continues to promote awareness on the actions on next steps including developing a public awareness campaign on worker wellness.

We invite you to help us move this mission forward!

- Write a letter of support to info@thunderbirdpf.org.
- Share your success stories and support data to info@thunderbirdpf.org.
- Provide your support to the public awareness campaign.

For more information about wage parity and worker wellness, visit this page: thunderbirdpf.org/wage-parity

Updated Recommendations on Workforce Wellness

Thunderbird Partnership Foundation is calling on the federal government to:

1. Modernize the current funding formula and implement fair and equitable salaries for addictions workers of the National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program (NNADAP) and the National Youth Solvent Abuse Program (NYSAP).
2. Develop and enforce measurable and tangible health indicators, in consultation with Indigenous Peoples, on existing and new federal health transfers to the provinces and territories.
3. Increase federal government transparency, communication, and accountability in funding structures.
4. Strengthen coordination and integration of services and programming between the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, ensuring that all First Nations Peoples have access to services in accordance with the principles of the Canada Health Act.

Exploring Standards for eMental Health Apps for First Nations Youth

The COVID-19 pandemic increased the burden of mental health challenges among Indigenous youth. Electronic mental health (e-MH) interventions are widely suggested to address healthcare disparities, including stigma-related barriers and access to mental health services. Community-based participatory research methods were used at First Nations youth sessions during the First Nations Substance Use Summit organized by Thunderbird in March 2023. Standards focused on cultural safety, social responsibility, and equity for e-MH interventions and were explored through the following questions:

1. Does the e-MH intervention represent Indigenous culture in a 'one size fits all approach', or is it culturally matched to the specific target group/community of interest?
2. Is culturally relevant language included in the e-MH intervention?
3. Is culturally relevant multimedia (e.g., images, videos, auditory components, other aesthetic components) included in the e-MH intervention?
4. Were Indigenous media experts (e.g., Indigenous-owned film crews, Indigenous actors, Indigenous artists, Indigenous graphic designers) included during the e-MH intervention development process?
5. Is e-MH intervention content familiar/relatable? Scene locations (e.g., rural reservations), storyline characters (e.g., trusted parent, peer, or adult)
6. Are cultural values included in the e-MH intervention?
7. Are cultural norms included in the e-MH intervention?
8. Are Indigenous frameworks (e.g., Two-Eyed Seeing) included in the e-MH intervention?
9. Was culture incorporated into the research design process?



Indigenous youth recognized these questions are relevant to their wellness, and that their engagement in the development of any new e-MH app will require Indigenous Knowledge about wholistic healing, First Nations language restoration, and support understanding of land-based activities. Youth agreed that cultural connection and a user-friendly app would be very valuable for Indigenous youth and their communities.



Hopi pattern

Vital Partnership Agreements

In its pursuit to advance mental wellness among First Nations communities, Thunderbird Partnership Foundation established three vital partnerships in 2022-23, each with distinct objectives but all sharing a common mission.

Thunderbird collaborated with the Union of Ontario Indians to support the Anishinabek Nation communities in developing innovative community-based mental wellness programs supported by the learning gained from data collected through the First Nations Opioid and Methamphetamine Survey.

A partnership was formed with the Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority, focusing on the First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum framework. The work plan flowing from the partnership agreement focuses on supporting a holistic mental wellness and substance use support system, with unique strengths in trauma-informed care, privacy of data in health assessments, and analyzing policy for political advocacy work.



In addition, Thunderbird joined forces with the First Peoples Wellness Circle and Healthcare Excellence Canada. They renewed the partnership agreement focused on a commitment to enhance the well-being of First Nations throughout Canada through

- engaging in joint learning opportunities,
- addressing racism in the health system, and
- fostering equity and capacity among their organizations.

Each partnership emphasizes culturally relevant, approaches and integrates community strengths and knowledge in addressing mental health challenges. Thunderbird is committed to working closely with its partners and the communities they serve, striving to improve mental wellness for First Nations people in Canada, and progressing towards a brighter future for all.

Potawatomi pattern

Indigenous Knowledge Activity

The First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum framework identifies Elders as a primary facilitator of culture and identifies culture as the foundation of mental wellness. Thunderbird explored ways to enhance access to Indigenous Knowledge through the engagement of Elders, Knowledge Holders, language speakers, Faith keepers, and cultural practitioners. The creation of an *Indigenous Knowledge policy* supports an understanding of these roles – how Indigenous Knowledge is respected, the importance of authorship and citation of Indigenous Knowledge, and key terms and concepts to understand the value of Indigenous Knowledge. The Elders, Knowledge Holders, language speakers, Faith keepers and cultural practitioners participated in the work of Thunderbird in various ways:

- Indigenous Knowledge to set the foundation for the development of the epigenetics curriculum. The Elders, Knowledge Holders and cultural practitioners engaged in this conversation were provided with the results to ensure consent on how their voice was interpreted and reflected in the curriculum.
- In-service training focused on reconciliation.
- Working groups for Harm Reduction, Life Promotion, Trauma, Pandemic – Grief and Loss, and Virtual Services
- Mino Bimaadiziwin podcasts focused on culture and harm reduction.



Truth and Reconciliation 2022 – Staff Learning Events

Thunderbird honoured National Day for Truth and Reconciliation 2022 with multiple staff learning events to better understand our shared Canadian history, learn about Indian Residential School Survivors, and see our collective role in reconciliation.

Staff viewed films about residential school experiences, such as *We Were Children* (National Film Board) and *Indian Horse* (Netflix).

During a staff learning event in August, Elder Oscar Kistabish spoke of his personal experiences attending residential school along with the effects it had on his life and family. He also shared his story about travelling to see the Pope in Quebec and his feelings about the Pope's apology.

Elder Joanne Saddleback was invited to speak at the second staff learning event in September about the decolonization of language and its effects on reconciliation efforts. To solidify Thunderbird's deep support of working towards reconciliation, staff also discussed and drafted a Truth and Reconciliation pledge to put understanding into action.

Thunderbird also provided all staff with *Every Child Matters* t-shirts to wear in their own communities on September 30.



Solish Flathead pattern

Summit on First Nations Substance Use

Thunderbird hosted the First Nations Substance Use Summit in Toronto in late March 2023. This was a hybrid event with more than 180 participants in-person and online. The event was designed to foster a greater understanding of the current and critical needs among First Nations. This event brought together national and regional leaders to

1. inform standardization of trauma-based addiction services;
2. support regional strategies to address the ongoing toxic drug poisoning crisis;
3. understand the post-regulation of cannabis; and
4. explore the creation of and core competencies for a national mental wellness workforce association.

The summit involved conversations around these critical areas and focused on the strengths and innovations of First Nations while at the same time fostering partnerships that can support First Nations in creating meaningful change. Thirteen youths from across the country also attended and provided insight into the refinement of Thunderbird's wellness app and to review eMental Health Standards specific to First Nations youth. In addition to the discussions and relationship building, a round dance was held to honour those lost to the toxic drug poisoning crisis and their families and communities impacted by drug-related harms.

Ojibwa (Plains Bungi) pattern

FSIN Comprehensive Wellness Summit - Saskatchewan

The Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN) received a mandate from First Nations to host a comprehensive wellness summit (March 21-23) that was jointly planned by Thunderbird and various sectors within FSIN: education, justice, women, health and wellness. Thunderbird supported the identification of speakers and met with many attendees from across Saskatchewan seeking support for their own Indigenous community wellness plans. Thunderbird is supporting the FSIN with the development of a report on a comprehensive wellness strategy.

Thunderbird staff attend the information booth at the FSIN Wellness Summit



Integrating the FNMWC and Community Safety Planning

Thunderbird Partnership Foundation worked along with Public Safety Canada and First Peoples Wellness Circle in February 2023, to host a three-day hybrid summit on incorporating the FNMWC into community safety planning. The goal was to create a better understanding and application of the continuum as it relates to the Aboriginal Community Safety Planning Initiative (ACSPI). Communities from across Canada were invited to participate with approximately 100 people from 38 communities attending.



Elder Leona Stevens providing spiritual support, opening prayer and end of day reflections at the conference



Elder Wes Whetung providing spiritual guidance to the conference and leading our sage smudges daily



Jeff Howard from Public Safety Canada who Co-Chaired the Summit



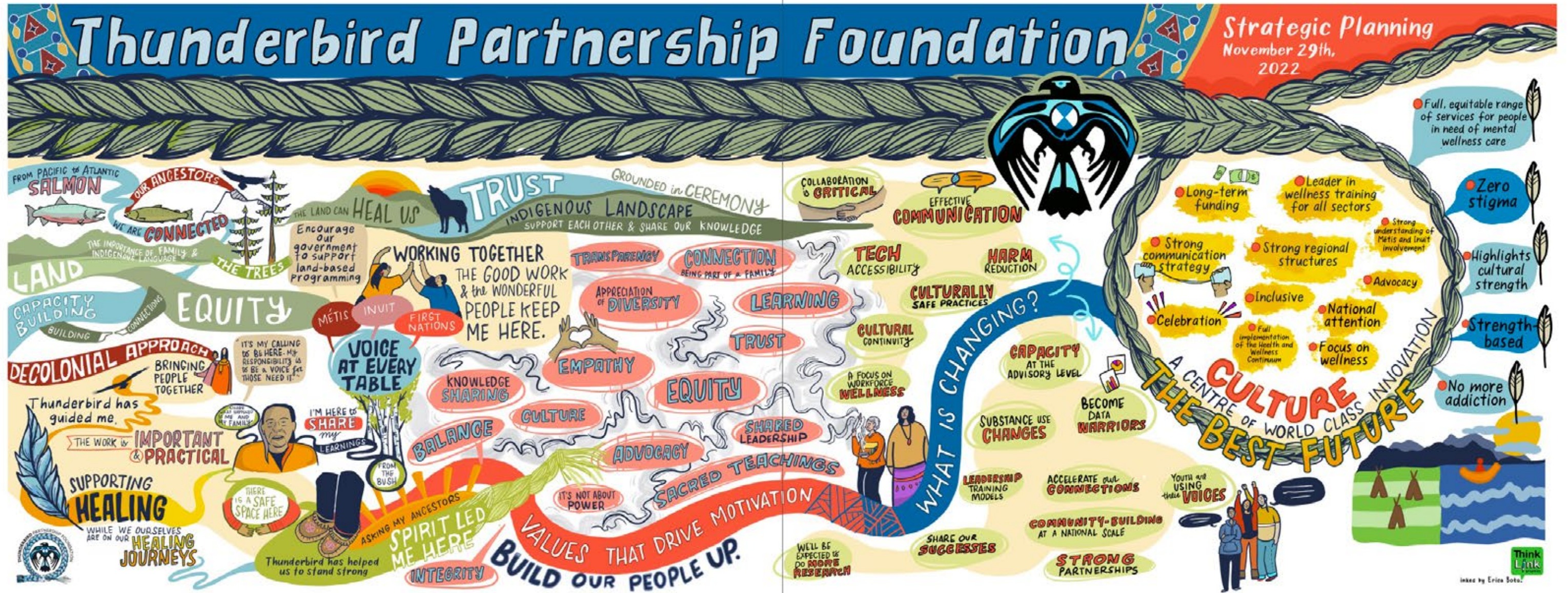
Thunderbird staff facilitate a breakout session

Indigenous Youth Leaders in Washington D.C.

Thunderbird along with First People's Wellness Circle and FRAYME, sponsored six youth leaders to attend the 2022 International Initiative for Mental Health Leadership (IIMHL) conference in Washington D.C. in October. Thunderbird's youth leaders were involved in almost every event during the very busy two-day agenda! They facilitated a youth match on Indigenous Youth Leadership in Mental Wellness, co-presented in plenary, led youth workshops, facilitated icebreakers during breaks, provided support for using the IIMHL app, and acted as co-emcee for the event. Since the event, the youth have been developing Indigenous youth-specific leadership qualities and priorities for mental wellness. Their objective is to enhance the current Wharerata Declaration and secure continued Indigenous youth participation in the IIMHL. We are very proud of all the good work done by all our youth leaders!



Youth leaders at the 2022 IIMHL conference (left to right: Jenna Robar, Tia Piche, Taylor Behn-Tsakoza, Olivia Olson, Misko Kicknoway, and Marshall Morrisseau)



Thunderbird Moves in a New Strategic Direction!

How time flies! Thunderbird's 5-year strategic plan (2018-2023) moved toward establishing the organization as a Centre of Excellence in the use of Indigenous Knowledge and Culture to support mental wellness. We will continue in this direction! For 2024-2029, with the support of Thunderbird's Board of Directors, we have identified four specific priorities:

1. Regional Capacity
2. Indigenous Accreditation
3. Public Policy and Corporate Affairs, and
4. Data and Evidence

1. Enhancing Regional Capacity in Mental Wellness

Thunderbird aims to have regional staff across the country to support:

- mapping regional networks supporting First Nation mental wellness, including provincial services;
- developing and testing of a standardized curriculum for addictions services;
- developing and piloting the First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum (FNMWC) core competencies;
- developing and monitoring (through the Addictions Management Information System-AMIS) regional strategies for opioids and methamphetamine; and
- coordinating research and mental wellness data governance.

This work will be done in partnership with First Peoples Wellness Circle (FPWC).

2. Indigenous Accreditation

First Nations treatment centres have asked Thunderbird to develop a culturally relevant accreditation program. The current process is not culturally safe, has a poor return on investment, and treatment centres struggle with the capacity to write their wise practices for broader sharing. Thunderbird will work with existing accreditation bodies, or support the development of a new one, with standards relevant to First Nations.

3. Public Policy and Corporate Affairs

This priority will focus on supporting change for wage parity partnerships, equity, and capacity. Examples include Workforce Wellness work (wage and funding equity) and developing a National Mental Wellness Professional Association (supported by FPWC). This association will enhance any existing professional certification with a focus on the FNMWC. It will provide standardized core competencies with culture as a foundation and provide a network of mental wellness workers supporting First Nations communities.

Some examples of Thunderbird advocacy work:

The National First Nations Substance Use Summit (held March 28-30, 2023) included First Nations addictions treatment centres, mental wellness teams, youth, Elders, and content experts. The overall goal was to share information and resources relevant to core competencies and program service design for the workforce that supports addictions services and treatment in First Nations communities. Wise and best practices from the Summit will be shared and followed up.

Developing a National Youth Mental Wellness Council (supported by FPWC) will involve mentorship and training in mental wellness core competencies and support the development of resources based on youth-identified priorities in mental wellness. Youth will provide advisory guidance to Thunderbird and FPWC, support them in committee and event work, and support their academic/ employment requirements.

National Naloxone Distribution: Naloxone kits will be available for communities and treatment centres.

4. Data and Evidence

Thunderbird will continue to increase its capacity to make the data on substance use and culture more accessible to First Nations, provide culturally relevant analysis to support decision-makers, inform policy, and inform quality substance use services.

Feedback on the four priorities can be provided here: menti.com/ala1vmqyg29b



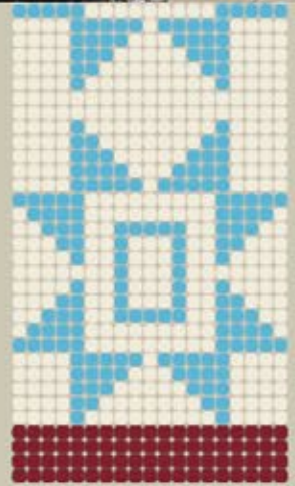
Thunderbird's Internal Checkup

The Organizational Vital Signs (OVS) survey has been taken almost every year since 2013 at Thunderbird, most recently in the Fall of 2022. The survey measures the employee's relationship with and within the organization. It supports being a trauma informed organization, assessing how to best support staff to do their work effectively. In 2022 staff engagement levels decreased by 20% over the previous year. Staffing shortages as well as new hires may be potential reasons for this. Staff left the organization to pursue other goals, and new employees were settling into their roles.

The OVS survey results were reviewed by managers and brought to a Thunderbird Staff Retreat February 7, 2023. Discussions included: next steps (e.g., retention, productivity, and future success); staff recognition (discussed what that looks like and how to move forward); competencies (new one on anti-racism, anti-oppression, social justice, and equity); and salary increases for staff to support the cost of living.

Staffing Update

During 2022 until March 2023, Thunderbird hired eleven new staff. Of these, seven were new positions. We experienced growth on our Research team with the addition of the new Addictions Management Information System (AMIS) team which includes two Addictions Program Coordinators and one Addictions Program Supervisor (see AMIS expands story). New positions on our Partnerships and Policy team also provided growth with a Knowledge Translation Specialist and a Project Coordinator. Training and Education brought on their first Training Curriculum Developer. While there have been challenges in recruiting, Thunderbird plans to continue with growth on every team.



Seminole pattern

NEXT STEPS

Continue to foster strengths expressed through the OVS survey – connection of staff values with those of Thunderbird, (Hope, wholistic and culture as foundation); positive and supportive staff relationships (Belonging); meaningful work (Meaning); and dedication to partners (Purpose).

Complex Trauma and Emotional Regulation App in Development

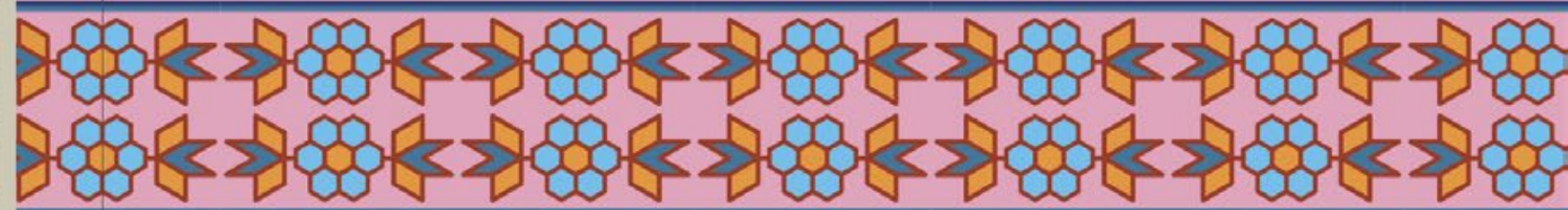
Thunderbird is excited to share an early progress report on the development of a new complex trauma and emotional regulation app. This unique app will blend emotional intelligence techniques and skills for emotional regulation, and teach skills for managing complex trauma, including the use of Indigenous cultural practices – creating a useful tool for First Nations youth, adults, and treatment centre workers.

This past year, Thunderbird collected feedback from different sources including staff and youth, reviewed the effectiveness of previous approaches to app development, tested Indigenous-specific standards for eMental Health solutions, and gathered new ideas on what makes an app useful and user-friendly.

Indigenous Knowledge, positive psychology, and emotional intelligence set the foundation for developing skills in emotional regulation that can assist First Nations in enhancing their capacity to manage symptoms of complex trauma. By learning these techniques, people can better understand their emotions as valuable information to support them in navigating their response to the world around them. This deeper understanding builds confidence to cope with the stresses of everyday life.

The app will also include a variety of tools and resources to help users understand and manage the symptoms of trauma. Cultural elements will also be embedded to foster a deeper connection with land, medicines, language, and values and practices.

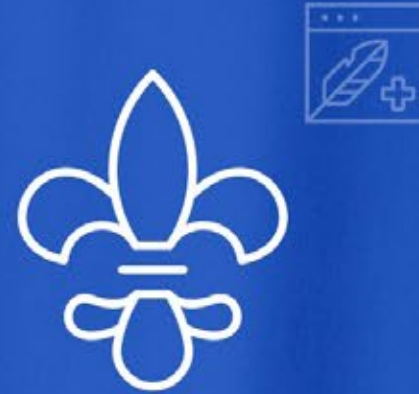
Thunderbird's research will continue to inform the further development of this new app to ensure a strengths-based point of view that embraces culture as a foundation.



Meskaki pattern

Virtual Services - French Translation Updates

The virtual Community of Practice (CoP) supports the goal of creating a national network of trainers to facilitate First Nations training capacity through certified training and knowledge transfer within regions and communities. The CoP was enhanced in 2022/23 with French translation completed in three sections. Two Train the Trainer journeys and a Program Facilitator training hub were translated. French translation of additional sections of the CoP will continue in 2023-2024.



Land for Healing Train the Trainer journey has been translated to support French-speaking regional trainers who received Trainer certification.



Crisis To Wellness (Community Crisis Planning) Train the Trainer curriculum and the CoP journey have been translated to support the delivery of training.



Let's Talk Cannabis is a youth early intervention Program Facilitator training and the curriculum and CoP hub have been translated to support the delivery of training.

Background - Journeys and Milestones!

The trainer journey involves extended virtual learning for training participants, and activities within the learning are identified as *milestones*. The milestone for each stage of the trainer journey is an example of Indigenous learning and methodology. The CoP journey is also a virtual community of support, knowledge transfer, professional development, and networking for regional trainers.



Program Facilitator Hubs for those who have completed Thunderbird training are aimed at developing the knowledge and skills needed to facilitate programs for youth and other partners. The training curriculum delivered is grounded in Indigenous Knowledge and is informed by, and includes evidence based on mainstream best practices.



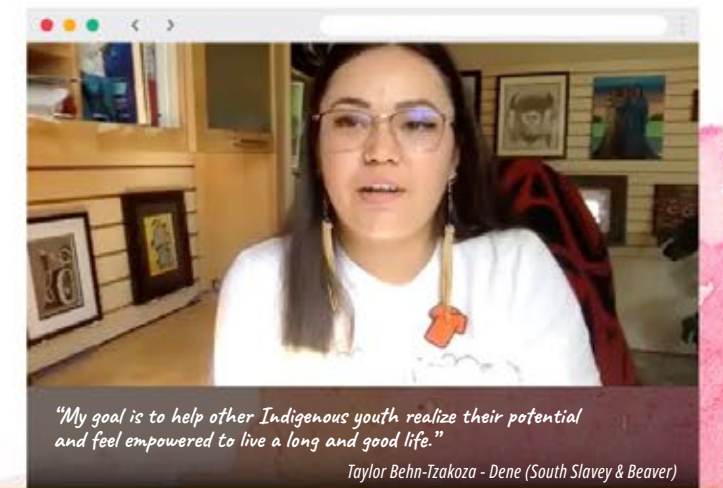
'Culture Is' Affirmation Audiograms on the Hub

'Culture Is' affirmations are a series of 68 audiograms with three statements within each that affirm our connection to our culture through Hope, Belonging, Meaning, and Purpose. The 'Culture Is' statements come from the original *Culture as Intervention* conversations that took place across 12 treatment centres. They focused on the wellness outcomes from cultural programming. The voices shared are from staff, board members, Knowledge Keepers, and Elders. The audiograms were completed in 2022/23 and were scheduled weekly on the Community Wellness Hub. To join the Community Wellness Hub, please contact training@thunderbirdpf.org.

Micro Knowledge Exchange Videos Created

Thunderbird has developed a series of micro-learning knowledge exchange videos from existing training course content. They highlight key concepts and information on Indigenous trauma-informed approaches and harm reduction, in brief easily accessible formats. In addition, six micro-videos have been developed that highlight life promotion presentations from the Indigenous Youth Action Group at the 2021 World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference. The Action Group was made up of youth from across Turtle Island and their presentations shared elements of the Life Promotion toolkit they developed supported by Elder Ed Connors and Thunderbird.

To access the videos please visit our website at thunderbirdpf.org/training or scan the QR code.



Mindfulness Meditation Series

In April 2022, Thunderbird's training and education team released a series of 16 Mindfulness Meditation videos focused on wellness through Hope, Belonging, Meaning and Purpose. They can be used as a visual meditation or an auditory meditation. These videos can be found on Thunderbird's Community Wellness Hub. Contact training@thunderbirdpf.org if you would like to join the Community Wellness Hub.

Community Wellness Hub Reaches 1000 Members

Thunderbird's Community Wellness Hub (CWH) reached 1000 members in September 2022! As a way of saying thank you to those participating and for their continuous commitment and work in supporting First Nations wellness, Thunderbird hosted a giveaway. CWH members who responded to: 'How the Community Wellness Hub supported their work and personal wellness' were entered into a draw to win one of three Thunderbird jackets.

Hubs	Enrollments for 22/23	Enrollments to Date
Community Wellness Hub	565	1265
Cannabis Education for First Nations (CEFN) Training Hub	38	34
Care Facilitation Training Hub	2	12
Community Crisis Response Training Hub	83	132
Culture as Foundation & NWA™ Training Hub	92	100
Emotional Intelligence (EQ) Training Hub	8	18
FNMWC Framework Implementation Training Hub	26	44
Land for Healing Training Hub	172	179
Pharmacology Training Hub	108	152
Strength Based Care	1	10
Trauma Informed Approaches Training Hub	69	134
Western Science and Epigenetics (since October 2022)	21	21
Wise Practices for Life Promotion Training Hub (since October 2022)	9	9
Totals (Hubs)	1194	2110

Program Facilitator Hubs	Enrollments for 22/23	Enrollments to Date
Buffalo Riders Training Hub	41	149
Let's Talk Cannabis Training Hub	7	55
Manitoba Buffalo Riders	76	102
Totals (Program Facilitator Hubs)	124	

Train the Trainer (TTT) Journeys	Enrollments for 22/23	Enrollments to Date
Cannabis Education for First Nations (CEFN)	15	30
Community Crisis Response (CCR)	5	30
First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum (FNMWC)	14	17
Land for Healing (LFH)	7	43
Wise Practices for Life Promotion (WPLP) (since October 2022)	19	15
Totals (Journeys)	60	135



'The hub has offered me a personal and professional platform to share stories, learn from others and offered a sense of empowerment and value; the questions posed gave me pause for reflection and offered growth.'

'The Hub has helped me to practice in a way that honours our culture, history, and strength. To see the gifts that are present within all. And to be patient and steadfast in my commitment to helping others.'

'The hub has been a great resource to connect with hundreds of other people working in the field. The wealth of knowledge that exists on the hub is wonderful!'

'I love having a network of other working professionals to learn from and share resources with!'

'I love this community hub it has helped me stay positive and keep my mind on track to keep my wellness on track.'

Campaign Connects Harm Reduction to Culture

In 2022, Thunderbird completed the work to develop a campaign about harm reduction in Indigenous communities. Conversations with Elders and people with lived experience and First Nations treatment centres informed the harm reduction campaign and helped to determine key audiences, messages, and a campaign strategy.

The campaign was titled *Sacred Breath of Life* and featured key messages that focused on the importance of First Nations harm reduction approaches that connect to the culture and sacred teachings of Creation. Our breath is sacred because it is a gift from the Great Spirit and we all have a responsibility to support the sacred breath of life. The campaign included digital and social media advertising, postcards, posters, and community-based toolkits accessible through this web page: harmreduction.thunderbirdpf.org

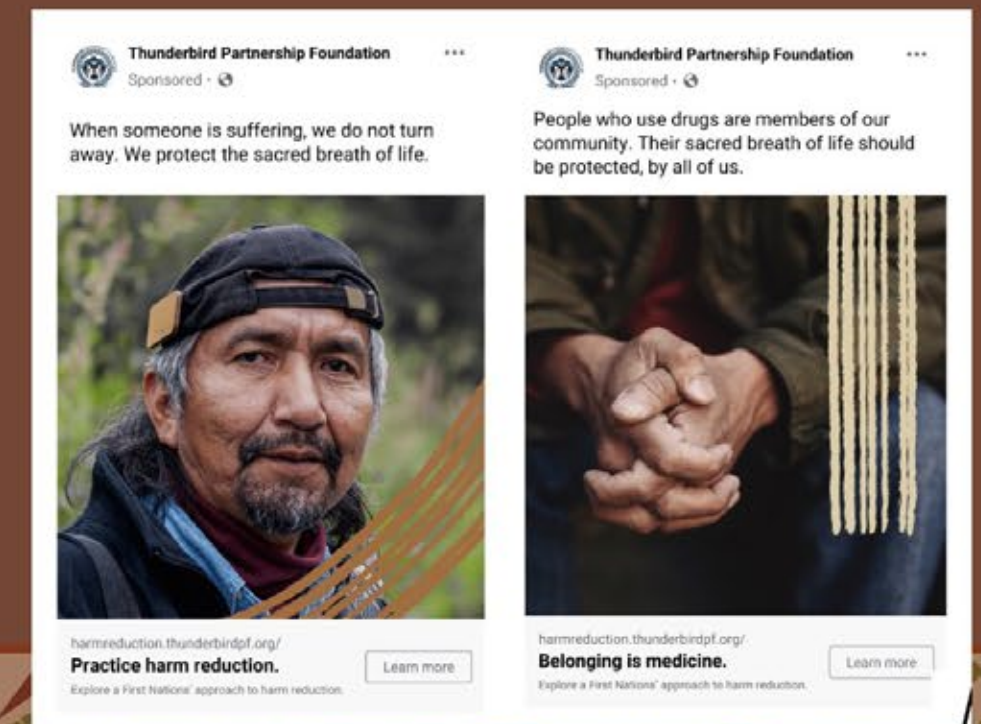
The goal of the campaign was to spark curiosity and conversations among First Nation leaders, influencers, community, Elders, youth, and the workforce to create the possibility for compassionate understanding that the benefits of reducing harm to people who use drugs and alcohol also reduces harms to the families and community. To test out the key messages, the campaign was launched in three First Nation communities in different provinces. Though the campaign continues beyond this fiscal year, early analytics have shown impressive engagement levels! Thunderbird's website also saw a surge of nearly 3,000 new visits during the first two weeks of the campaign. The analytics from this campaign will inform a broader campaign.

Evidence from First Nation treatment centres across Canada continues to show the vital role of Indigenous culture in addressing addictions. This evidence provides the necessary foundation to root First Nation harm reduction practices in culture.

Key aspects in developing the harm reduction campaign included:

- understanding stigma, its harms, and how we work to overcome it,
- understanding current perceptions around harm reduction and key barriers to adoption/action,
- incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing and being into the work and the campaign,
- respecting and building on the immense volume of work Thunderbird has already done in this area, and
- communicating to a nationwide, diverse, geographically disconnected, multilingual group.

Ojibwe pattern

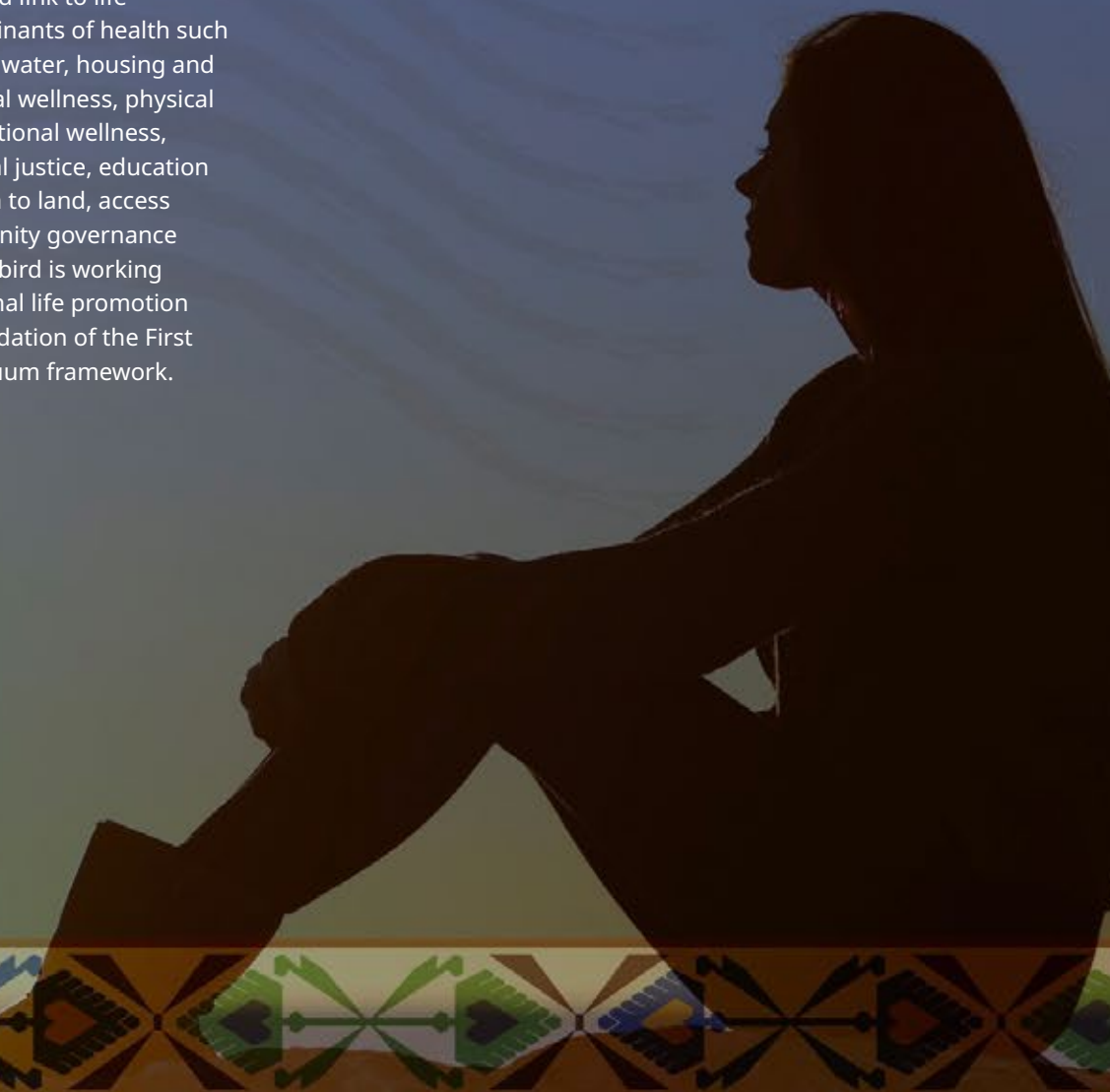


Knowledge Tools Support Life Promotion



Thunderbird is creating knowledge translation tools, such as infographics to support understanding the impact of the Indigenous determinants of health in choosing life. Highlighting community strengths that contribute to living life, is life promotion. A literature review on the impact of the Indigenous determinants of health on living life well has been completed and is informing the development of the knowledge translation tools. Thunderbird partnered with a Task Group on Mental Wellness to create a report on life promotion initiatives with recommendations on supporting mental wellness for Indigenous communities during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The infographics being developed link to life promotion and highlight determinants of health such as: food security, access to clean water, housing and community infrastructure, mental wellness, physical wellness, spiritual wellness, emotional wellness, income distribution, justice/social justice, education and lifelong learning, connection to land, access to language and culture, community governance and self-determination. Thunderbird is working with partners to develop a national life promotion framework, drawing on the foundation of the First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum framework.



Podcast Boasts Successful First Full Year

Thunderbird's podcast, Mino Bimaadiziwin has recorded 15 monthly episodes with an average of 300 listeners per month (Jan22-Mar23) since it was launched in late 2021. The last two episodes for fiscal were the most listened to yet with 850 listens in the month of February 2023.

Mino Bimaadiziwin allows Thunderbird to seek and share insight about Indigenous wellness, addictions, and mental health issues. Some of the topics discussed through the podcast interviews included:

- tackling the opioid crisis in communities (with Tim Ominika)
- transforming health care (with Dr. Evan Adams)
- life promotion and suicide prevention (with Connor Lafortune and Gabrielle Jubinville)
- the nourishing power of Indigenous cooking and harvesting from the land (with Chef Jenni Lessard)
- harm reduction saves lives (with Trevor Stratton)
- the success of culture-based harm reduction (with Audra Stonefish)
- a very personal opioid survivor journey (with Jonathan Peltier)
- the power of Indigenous languages (with Dr. Lorna Williams)
- whole communities working together to provide harm reduction support through the Fire-to-Fire peer mentors program
- land-based treatment of methamphetamine addiction at Camp Hope
- managing grief and loss through culture and ceremony (with Wes Whetung)
- connecting to those we've lost through ceremony (with Hector Copegog).

Yu'pik pattern



Mino Bimaadiziwin

Listeners Statistics as of March 2023

Total Listens podcast launch in 2022-2023:

3,687
(15 episodes)

Total Listens March 2022-March 2023:

3,413
(12 episodes)



Mino Bimaadiziwin has a 4.9 out of 5-star rating with Apple Podcasts.

According to data, 85% of people are listening to at least three-quarters of each episode, which is encouraging since the podcast industry average is less than 5%.



Listen to Thunderbird's Mino Bimaadiziwin podcast wherever you get your podcasts!

	We invite you to listen to a thoughtful new Mino Bimaadiziwin podcast episode with Wes Whetung, a ceremony maker, Knowledge Keeper, teacher, and helper originally from the First Nation community of Curve Lake Ontario. Listen as Wes and Carol Hopkins, Thunderbird's CEO, discuss managing grief and loss through culture and...	Post reach	Engagement
		10,743	851
	Fri, Feb 3		
	Elder Hector Copegog, spiritual teacher, ceremonial chief and healer is Thunderbird's guest in our latest Mino Bimaadiziwin podcast episode. Listen to our powerful discussion about managing grief through ceremony: https://blubrry.com/mino_bimaadiziwin/94004482/ep-15-connecting-to-those-weve-lost-through-ceremony-wit...	Post reach	Engagement
		6,335	633
	Wed, Feb 22		

Thunderbird Website Redesigned

In the fall of 2022, Thunderbird staff completed a much-needed makeover of our main website. It had been almost a decade since the previous redesign and during that time our name changed, our work broadened, and the organization grew a lot.

To gain insights and guide our redevelopment work we examined website analytics, surveyed our regular online visitors, and consulted with staff. Our redevelopment process included creating new content, refreshing existing pages, and enhancing site functionality. A unique addition to our new website is a library of authentic patterns from different First Nations across Turtle Island, carefully reproduced by our graphic design team.



Hunkpapa Lakota pattern

Other new website features include:



A complete design revamp that fully embraces our branding



An easy-to-use document library where you can search, sort, filter, and share.



Enhanced adaptability for mobile devices



New accessibility features



Additional pages dedicated to frameworks and initiatives.



New *Wellness Bundles* – specially curated document collections



Technical upgrades to improve website performance, stability, and content management.



All work on this redevelopment project was done by Thunderbird staff during 2022. We are proud of our new website and invite you to take a cruise through it at Thunderbirdpf.org.

Let us know what you think!

Thunderbird Websites Welcome High Percentage of New Visitors

Thunderbirdpf.org, *WisePractices.ca*, and *CultureForLife.ca* all saw overwhelmingly high percentages of NEW VISITORS (83.9% - 93.3%) during the 2022-23 fiscal year which suggests that our promotions (social media, podcasts, and event presence) are introducing Thunderbird to many new people, and the strength of our credibility supports referrals.



Thunderbirdpf.org

Website traffic increased again this past year with a total of 46,801 visitors, of which 84.4% are new visitors!



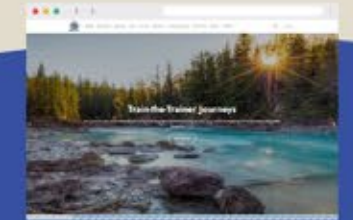
WisePractices.ca

A total of 9,217 people visited this website, 83.9% being first-time visitors!



CultureForLife.ca

Web traffic at our youth-oriented website remained stable this past year with 93.3% of all traffic being first-time visitors.



Community of Practice (CoP)

See page 25 for a complete rundown of CoP analytics.

Thunderbird Social Media Sees Major Growth

Thunderbird grew its overall online reach in the past year with social media increase rates more than double that of the previous year on some platforms. **Thunderbird's main Facebook page now has 3,619 followers (an increase of 919 people), more than double the growth rate of the previous year.** Meanwhile, our LinkedIn page also more than doubled its following, from 246 up to 576 people.

Our LinkedIn page also saw significant increases in engagement rates (likes, comments, shares) over the previous year, and our posts were seen by 11,104 LinkedIn users, which is an increase of 310% over 2021-22.

Thunderbird's other social media channels also saw increases over the past year:



Our Twitter account now has 2,838 followers which means we welcomed 38 new followers this past year.





Our Instagram following is up by 58 over last year with 215 current followers.

Visit us on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter for online chats and current news.

Kiikaapoi pattern

Resources Distributed

 Surveys 2,185	 HOS 1,395	 FNMWC 1,470	 FNMWC Wheels 797	
 Guidebooks/Toolkits 7,068	 Cannabis Info 1,380	 Opioid Info 2,244	 Training Workbooks 1,321	 Service Delivery Models 830
 Annual Report 927	 Thunderbird USB sticks 1,265	 Brochures/bags 1,765	 Life Promotion Toolkit 1,359	 French Resources 200

Lending Library

 Tablets 20	 Internet Sticks 6	 Laptops 7
---	--	--

Coast Salish button blanket detail

Financial Report 2022/23

Assets

Current Assets

CIBC Chequing Account	5,232,436.06
CIBC Feather Carriers	29.00
CIBC Treatment Standards	6,344.01
Accounts Receivable	28,202.58
Accounts Payable (Not Module)	(-269,502.01)
Payroll Clearing Account	(-50,794.84)
HST Recoverable Current Year	9,069.70
Prepaid Expenses	160,220.00
	5,116,003.60

Fixed Assets

Furniture & Equipment	108,458.95
Board Room Equipment	123,724.76
Class 10 Computer Hardware	176,411.81
Class 12 Computer Software	14,544.91
Less accumulated depreciation	-76,302.97
	346,837.46
	5,462,841.06

Liability & Shareholder's Equity

Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable	568,993.59
Accounts Payable (Not Module)	47,377.14
Accrued Accounting Fee Payable	11,500.00
Deferred Revenue	(-14,693.61)
Payroll Liabilities	(-12,331.14)
RRSP Payable	255.62
Deferred Revenue Capital Assets	346,838.76
	947,940.36

Shareholder's Equity

Retained Earnings	442,623.80
Profit (loss) for period	4,072,276.90
	5,462,841.06



Conferences and Partner Connections

APRIL 2022

- Indigenous Services Canada Reform – *Expert Advisory Committee*
- Assembly of First Nations – *Sister Organizations meeting*
- Anishinabek Nation – *Opioid Discussion*
- Safe Spaces for Drug Users – *Roundtable*
- First Nations Health Managers Association Town Hall with Thunderbird Partnership Foundation
- Ministerial Roundtable on Structural Stigma
- Addictions and Mental Health Ontario presentation
- First Nations Aboriginal Primary Care Network presentation

MAY 2022

- Minister Bennet and the Expert Task Force on Substance Use
- Assembly of First Nations Seven Generations Continuum of Care Virtual Forum – *Orientation*
- Assembly of First Nations Chiefs Committee on Health meeting
- Addictions and Mental Health Ontario Webinar
- Health Canada Expert Task Force on Substance Use
- Canadian Research Initiative in Substance Misuse Phase II
- Expert Task Force on Substance Use – *presentation to Addictions and Mental Health Ontario membership*
- Expert Task Force on Substance Use meeting
- Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Support Program meeting
- Anishinabek Nation – *Addictions and Mental Health meeting*

JUNE 2022

- Keynote Address – Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers 2022 Annual Meeting and Education Day
- Mental Wellness Among First Nations, Presentation to the Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Assembly
- Cannabis and Mental Health Research Projects – *teleconference meeting*
- Council of Yukon First Nation Healing Centre – *Carol Hopkins Interview*
- First Nations, Inuit, and Métis and Canadian Institute for Health Information Health Data Table
- Indigenous Youth Mental Wellness Project Partner meeting
- RISE Against Racism Campaign

JULY 2022

- Imagine Safer Supply Advisory Committee – *meeting*
- Elders Epigenetics – *Zoom sessions*
- National Mental Health and Substance Use Standardization Collaborative

AUGUST 2022

- Atlantic First Nations Health Conference – *presentation*
- Elders Epigenetics – *meeting*
- Naskapi Nation Of Kawawachikamach's – *meeting*
- Kilala Lelum – *evaluation*
- Mentoring, Education and Clinical Tools for Addiction: Partners in Health Integration – *meeting*

SEPTEMBER 2022

- First Nation Feasibility Study on Biobanking and Genomic Research – *meeting*
- Canadian Society of Addiction Medicine and Thunderbird Partnership Foundation – *introduction – meeting*
- Indigenous Services Canada – *eMental Wellness meeting*
- Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police – *Policing with Indigenous People Committee – First Nations Workforce Wellness presentation*
- First Nations and Inuit Health Branch Senior Management Committee meeting
- Transformative Reconciliation Gathering, Alberta – *Indigenous Knowledge/ Epigenetics presentation*
- First Nations Health and Social Secretariat of Manitoba conference – *Manitoba Buffalo Riders – presentation*
- National Summit on Indigenous Mental Wellness
- ISC Senior Management Committee presentation on Life Promotion and Suicide Prevention
- Opioid Harms Response Community – *webinar*
- Western and Indigenous Biological Research Training Research Project First Nation Partners – *meeting*

OCTOBER 2022

- Assembly of First Nations Special Chiefs Assembly dialogue
- Assembly of First Nations, Thunderbird Partnership Foundation and Dr. Bombay Epigenetics – *meeting*
- The International Initiative for Mental Health Leadership and the International Initiatives for Disability Leadership – *Leadership Exchange 2022*
- The Assembly of First Nations Virtual Town Hall on Long-Term Reform – *presentation*
- First Nations Mental Wellness Data discussion
- Atlantic First Nations Health Conference
- The Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs Secretariat Health Conference Virtual Keynote: Burnout Prevention
- Indigenous Youth Leadership in Mental Wellness
- Saskatchewan First Nations Health Partners meeting
- International Conference – From Stigma to Dignity: Sharing perspectives, Health Canada and the Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (in-person)

NOVEMBER 2022

- Ontario Regional Addictions Partnership Committee – *keynote presentation*
- First Nations Health Managers Association Conference
- Public Health Working Group on Remote and Isolated Communities – *presentation*
- Native Counselling Services of Alberta and Thunderbird Partnership Foundation discussion – *Provincial Gathering on Addiction and Mental Health*
- Ontario Native Education Counselling Association – *Post Secondary Education Fall Gathering – Indigenous Wellness Framework/ Wellness Assessment Presentation*
- First Nations Health Managers Association Pre-Conference Workshop: Trauma-Informed Practice for Managers
- Regional Round Table on Wellness and Addiction Prevention Among First Nations (First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission) – *Life Promotion Toolkit and First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum framework presentation (in-person)*
- Southern Chiefs Organization, Wellness Gathering: *Caring for the caregiver – training overview and the Community of Practice presentation*
- Northern Public Health Working Group Workforce Wellness meeting
- National Mental Health and Substance Use Health Standardization Collaborative – *plenary meeting*
- Shkaabe Makwa Leadership Circle – *meeting*
- Public Health Working Group on Remote and Isolated Communities – *meeting*

DECEMBER 2022

- First Nations Mental Wellness Data discussion
- Indigenous Services Canada Mental Wellness Evaluation – *meeting*
- Mahinkan Management re: Engaging Indigenous Partners for Dialogue on Mental Health and Substance Use Health – *meeting*
- Public Health Agency of Canada – *funding opportunities*
- Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction – *partnership discussion*

JANUARY 2023

- First Nations Biobanking and Genomic Research Feasibility Study – *Research Team and Advisory Circle – meeting*
- Changemark Research and Evaluation and Thunderbird Partnership Foundation meeting
- Distinctions-based mental wellness approaches in Northern remote and isolated Inuit and First Nations communities – *meeting*
- Government Advisory Table of Mental Health and Substance Use Health Standardization Collaborative – *meeting*

FEBRUARY 2023

- Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations – *Community Wellness Forum*
- Public Health Working Group on Remote and Isolated Communities – *presentation*
- First Nations Mental Wellness Data discussion
- Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction – *meeting*
- Indigenous Health Conference – *virtual*
- Indigenous Services Canada eHealth – *meeting*
- National Mental Wellness Workforce Association and Regional Coordinators – *meeting*
- Non-Insured Health Benefits Navigators – *meeting on workforce wellness*
- First Nations Mental Wellness and Community Safety Planning Summit, Toronto – *Presentations: Culture as Foundation; Collaboration with Partners; Thunderbird Training and Community of Practice*
- Public Health Working Group on Remote and Isolated Communities – *meeting*

MARCH 2023

- British Columbia Concurrent Disorders Conference
- Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations Wellness Summit: TCU Place, Saskatoon
- Chiefs of Ontario Health Forum – *Indigenous Knowledge and Epigenetics – presentation*
- First Nations Substance Use Summit, Toronto
- Canadian Research Initiative in Substance Misuse (CRISM) – *meeting*
- Concurrent Disorders – Standards for Mental Health and Substance Use – The Need for an Integrated Approach – *symposium*
- Mental Health Commission of Canada and Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction Cannabis Research – *event*
- Mental Health and Substance Use Standardization Collaborative Government Advisory Table – *meeting*
- Northern Public Health Working Group and Chiefs of Ontario – *presentation*
- Federation of Saskatchewan Indigenous Nations Wellness Summit, Saskatoon
- Indigenous Youth Leadership and the Whararata Declaration – *presentation*



Thunderbird staff attend First Nations Health and Social Secretariat of Manitoba Regional Health Directors meeting.



thunderbirdpf.org

