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Inuuqatigiit

Centre for Inuit Children, Youth and Families

Tunnganarniq

Fostering good spirit by
being open, welcoming,
and inclusive.

Strong Culture
Families
Communities



Societal Values

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Decision making through discussion and consensus.

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Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq

Respect and care for the land, animals and the environment.

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Piliriqatigiingniq/Ikajuqatigiinniq

Working together for a common cause.

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Respecting others, relationships and caring for people.

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Serving and providing for family and/or community.

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Pilimmaksarniq /Pijarriuqsarniq

Development of skills through observation,
mentoring, practice, and effort.

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Being innovative and resourceful.

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Fostering good spirit by being open, welcoming and inclusive.

Inuuqatigiit Centre
for Inuit Children,
Youth and Families

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President



Executive Director

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

The year 2022/2023 proved to be a time of growth for the Inuuqatigiit Centre as we worked to bridge gaps in the services we offer to our community.

Our social value of Ikajuqatigiingniq — working together for a common cause — is what guides Inuuqatigiit Centre's advocacy for equitable services and programs for Inuit. This includes Inuit who currently reside in Ottawa, for Inuit coming down to further their education, and for those coming for medical services.

Partnerships have been established to ensure that Inuuqatigiit Centre can continue to bridge gaps that many of us Inuit face in today's society — gaps in the education system, gaps in child welfare system, gaps in accessing mental health, and gaps in the legal system.

Highlights for 2022/2023 reflect growth of the Centre with the new Inuit Legal Support Program, a joint project with Tungasuvvingat Inuit funded by the Justice Partnership and Innovation Program. This new program provides culturally relevant support and advocacy for Inuit adults aged 18 years and over using Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principles to deliver relevant Public Legal Education and Information (PLEI) and legal advice and support in areas of family violence, child protection, human rights, criminal matters, and other emerging issues. This is a trauma-informed and strength-based program delivered in collaboration

with our partnering organizations, our external partnerships, and the broader Ottawa community.

In order to successfully run our programs and services, Inuuqatigiit Centre requires very dedicated staff, to which, our staff members have proven. Accordingly, we would like to acknowledge the teamwork, perseverance, dedication, and devotion each and every one of our staff have demonstrated and displayed day in and day out. Thank you to all of Inuuqatigiit Centres devoted staff members, we truly appreciate your hard work which does not go unnoticed.

Inuuqatigiit Centre for Inuit Children, Youth and families is now the largest Inuit and Indigenous service provider in Ottawa with roughly 150 staff delivering programs and services to Inuit through five departments: Early On, Youth, Education, Family Well-Being, and Community Initiatives and Mental Health.

We would like to recognize the significant contributions of our partners, sponsors, and funders. It is through your continued support and collaboration that allows us to continue to offer a safe space to deliver culturally specific programs and services for our ever-growing Inuit community here in Ottawa and Ontario.

We want to thank our community members, board of directors, the management team, and our dedicated employees and volunteers for their commitment, dedication, and time supporting our Inuit community, qujannamiik.

Stephanie Mikki Adams, CAFM
Executive Director

Alyssa Flaherty Spence
President,
Board of Directors



HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

Inuuqatigiit Centre's new Human Resources department is committed to supporting internal stakeholders and employees by promoting and cultivating Inuit principles and culture. This is accomplished by focusing on core organizational pillars, Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principles, and ensuring that recruitment, retention, recognition, and respect are integral to our human resource processes and procedures.

Recruitment and Retention: Having experienced significant growth, Inuuqatigiit Centre has hired over 27 new employees since January 2023 inclusive of a 17 percent increase in its employee base within eight months. Turnover remains very low at 9 percent for the year to date.

Onboarding: Human Resources has created a new employee handbook to welcome new staff members and to provide a high level overview about Inuuqatigiit Centre and department programs. Additionally, Human Resources has updated the policy and procedures manual to ensure our policies reflect the growth and development of the Centre.

Leadership: Human Resources has created a series of lunch and learn opportunities to provide support and ongoing learning for leaders within Inuuqatigiit Centre. Learning topics include accommodation, performance management, group benefits summary, and respect in the workplace.

Recognition Program: Human Resources has implemented a peer recognition program following Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principles. This program allows employees to recognize their peers who demonstrate the highlighted monthly principle. Employees are rewarded each month based on peer votes.



EARLY YEARS PROGRAMS

Inuuqatigiit's programming is committed to supporting young Inuit children's learning, development, health, and well-being in a loving, caring, holistic, and cultural context that promotes the preservation of the Inuktitut language. Inuit view children as unique gifts to a community.

Our Early Years programs are guided by Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit as well as by the six Aboriginal Head Start Components of the provincial learning resource *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years* and the *Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities Initiative*. Our program statement emphasizes Belonging, Well Being, Engagement, and Expression. Our philosophy is that children and families are competent, capable, curious, and rich in potential.

Kindergarten

In partnership with the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board, the Inuuqatigiit Kindergarten Program allows children to attend school in a familiar environment that celebrates Inuit culture while meeting provincial curriculum guidelines. The program is unique in the



province by offering instruction in Inuktitut, French, and English. This year the Kindergarten Program ran at full capacity with 18 children. The program is licensed for 10 Tumiralaat preschool children and eight Sivummut Head Start children. Childcare activities included:

Field trips: Visits to the Cosmic Adventures indoor playground, the Canada Agriculture and Food Museum, and the Mer Bleau Bog.

Other Activities: Hockey Day, PJ Day, Crazy Hair Day, and Orange Shirt Day, a Back To School BBQ, the First Celebration of Success for the Inuuqatigiit Educational Department, and a Professional Development Day (CPI training).

Kativik Ilagiinut EarlyON Program

Kativik Ilagiinut (EarlyON) Program offers culturally rich programming to Inuit families with children aged 0 to 6 years in Ottawa and Ontario. Programs and activities included:

Tuesday Cultural Program: Provide country food and cultural programming for families.

Nutrition and parenting support services: We held Breakfast Drop-ins and provided clients with nutritious breakfasts. EarlyON also held Play Drop-ins and provided children and their parents with a culturally safe play-based space suitable for physical and cognitive development.

Weekly field trips: These included visits to the Canadian Museum of Nature, the Canada Science and Technology Museum, the Canada Agriculture and Food Museum, and the National Gallery of Canada. Other outings included picnic in the park, berry picking at Miller's Farm, and the Kiwanis Adventure Park.

Sivummut Headstart

The Sivummut Head Start Program is part of the national Aboriginal Head Start initiative funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada. Children aged 18 months to 6 years attend this culturally rich half-day program with a focus on the six Aboriginal Head Start components: Education, Nutrition, Parental/Guardian Involvement, Culture and Language, Health Promotion, and Social Support. The program also follows Inuit Qaujjimajatuqangit principles and *How Does Learning Happen*.

We provide children with the opportunity to engage in such activities as Cultural Circles, Inuktitut Words of the week, Drumming, Throat Singing, etc. These opportunities make this a unique and enjoyable program where young children can thrive in their culture.

The Sivummut Head Start Program is licensed for five toddler children in the morning and eight preschool children in the morning and afternoon.



Tumiralaat Childcare Centre

Tumiralaat Child Care Centre is a full-day, year-round licensed childcare program where educators provide an enriched learning environment based on the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principles and Ontario's early years pedagogy *How Does Learning Happen*. Instruction is in Inuktitut and English and Inuit culture is woven into play-based activities with cultural materials.

The Tumiralaat Child Care Centre is licensed for 10 toddlers and 10 preschool children. The program ran at full enrollment.



Pirurviapik Childcare Centre

Pirurviapik means “a place to grow.” Pirurviapik Childcare Centre's goal is to provide high-quality, culturally rich programming to Inuit infants, toddlers, and preschoolers that equip them with the skills and confidence to succeed in school. The childcare centre opened its doors to children on August 1, 2022, after a long construction period during the global pandemic. Services and activities through the year have included:

Algonquin College Students: Pirurviapik has been hosting students from Ottawa's Algonquin College's Early Childhood Education Program since opening. To date, there have been eight students who passed their practical training and we have recruited one supply staff from the student cohort.

Outreach and Cultural Support: The children have been supported by Ottawa Public Health Dental Screening Program, Art and Speech Therapy programs, visits to the Ottawa Public Library, and to Social Harvest Ottawa for food growing activities.

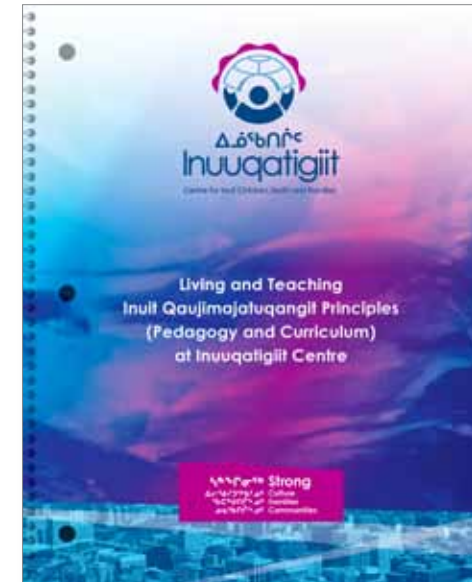
Playground Improvement Plan: Thanks to funding from Ontario's Ministry of Indigenous Affairs the playground improvements will begin August 2023. This includes a new bike track, direct water access, and many other nice additions to the children's outdoor experience.

Early Childhood Education Projects

IELCC-QIP Phase 2: Journey to Inuit Qaujimaqatuqangit Pedagogy at Inuuqatigiikunni: With funding from Employment and Social Development Canada and the successful completion of Phase 1, we have continued working on the department's Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Quality Improvement initiative. We completed Inuuqatigiit Centre's pedagogy framework Journey to *Inuit Qaujimaqatuqangit Pedagogy* and it is now available to all staff working with our Early Years programs.

This framework helps to identify and document how the eight Inuit Qaujimaqatuqangit principles are being lived and practiced by educators in their planning, implementation, and evaluation of their programs. It further helps to identify revised teaching methods as necessary. Finally, it supports the collaboration of the Inuit Qaujimaqatuqangit principals with *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*.

Algonquin College: Our partnership with Algonquin College continues, giving Cultural Teachers the opportunity to embark on their formal studies for becoming Registered Early Childhood Educators. The teachers work three days each week and then study the other two days. The teachers will achieve their Early Childhood Educator Diploma over a four-year period. This program started as a pilot in 2021 and continues to grow.



Language and Culture: Tasiurluta

With funding from Canadian Heritage and its Indigenous Languages and Cultures Program, Inuuqatigiit Centre has been expanding its cultural and language competency and resources. The Centre has developed an Inuktitut/Inuktit Language Framework for use in all our Early Years programs. The Framework was created in collaboration with an Elder, an academic researcher,

an Inuktitut linguist and the Project Coordinator. This resource describes the manner in which children acquire their language. Within the document, there are traditional stories and songs that can be shared with children at the Centre. It further guides the reader in ways to strengthen Inuktitut/Inuktit skills as well as Inuit culture and traditions.

In the second phase of the project, the Project Coordinator continued to work with an Elder and a researcher to focus on cultural teachers and the Algonquin College curriculum in order to adapt the Early Childhood Education lessons into Inuit pedagogy, producing Inuit-specific early childhood education materials.

Professional Learning Leader Pilot Project

The Professional Learning Pilot is a new opportunity and part of the Child Care and Early Years program for Ottawa. This project is an innovative sector-wide professional learning and mentorship opportunity for the childcare and early year's workforce for 2022/2023. The pilot was intended to be complete in June 2023 but has been extended to December 2023.

The Professional Learning Leaders participate in coordinated sector-wide learning activities which are to be provided as mentoring opportunities within our organization and tailored to meet the unique needs of our programs.

The project focuses on four priority areas which align with local Ottawa needs and the Ontario-wide goals outlined by the Ministry of Education:

- Anti-racism and inclusive practices.
- Incorporating Indigenous perspectives and pedagogies.
- Mental health and well-being for children, families and staff.
- Supporting children with special needs through inclusive practices.

So far, our activities have included numerous on-line training opportunities and shared resources. We have specific Professional Development days planned for the fall which will include in-person training and workshops specific to the identified priority areas.



YOUTH PROGRAMS

Tukimut Afterschool Program

The Tukimut Afterschool Program is a comprehensive program designed to provide enriching and culturally sensitive activities for Inuit children aged 6 to 12 years. With a focus on culture, language, sports, homework support, and arts, this program aims to foster holistic development while celebrating and preserving Inuit culture. The program is funded by Indigenous Services Canada and the provincial Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport. The program runs Monday to Friday between 3:30 and 7:00 pm, and provides transportation, nutritious snacks, and a dinner each evening. This past year, our program engaged 90 youth across the City of Ottawa. Throughout this past year, we worked closely with Let's Talk Science, Isaruit, ACTUA, OSEG Foundation, SAW, DNT Transportation, Ottawa School of Art, and the City of Ottawa to enrich our program each evening.

The program promotes Inuit culture and traditions. Children engage in activities such as storytelling, drumming, throat singing, and traditional crafts. They learn about Inuit history, customs, and values, ensuring the continuity of their rich cultural heritage. The program integrates Inuktitut language learning. Children participate in language classes, conversations, and games to develop proficiency and a sense of pride. Creative expression is fostered through various artistic activities. Children explore visual arts, music, dance, and dramas, allowing them to develop their artistic talents, boost self-confidence, and nurture their imagination. Cultural elements are incorporated into artistic projects, providing a platform for children to showcase their cultural identity through creative means.



Physical activity and sports play a vital role in the program. Children have opportunities to participate in traditional Inuit games, outdoor activities, and team sports. These activities promote physical fitness, teamwork, leadership, and a sense of accomplishment. Emphasis is placed on Inuit-specific sports to connect children with their cultural roots. The program provides a nurturing environment for children to complete their homework and receive academic support. Tutors help with various subjects, helping children develop effective study habits, problem-solving skills, and a positive attitude toward learning. The program ensures that the children's academic needs are met and academic success is encouraged.



Overall, the Tukimut Afterschool Program provides a well-rounded experience that acknowledges and respects Inuit culture, language, and traditions. By integrating cultural activities, language learning, sports, homework support, and arts, the program nurtures the holistic development of Inuit children, instilling a strong sense of pride, identity, and belonging within them.

“Thank you so much for having this group run and making it fun for the kids. It is a relief for my child to be at the Tukimut after school program and have something to look forward to.”

– Parent

“My child looks forward to coming to Tukimut every week. Even when Tukimut was closed, the team kept my child engaged with the online programming. Keep up the great work Tukimut.”

– Parent

“Tukimut is its own little community within a big, spread-out city. Having a space where youth can gather safely and have their culture and elders present... this helps them be proud and builds identity.”

– Youth worker

“Children who have attended Tukimut tend to be more socially involved within the community than those who have not. Graduates of the program often return to work at Tukimut, visit or volunteer, which reflects positively on the lasting social impacts of the program.”

– External partner

Youth Life Promotion

The Youth Life Promotions (YLP) initiative is a Youth Drop-In Afterschool Program funded by the Ministry of Health. It is a dynamic and inclusive initiative catering to the needs and interests of Inuit youth aged 13 to 24 years. The program supports over 80 youth each month. The aim is to provide a safe and empowering space with a strong emphasis on culture, language, physical activity, belonging, mentorship, and arts. This encourages Inuit youth to explore their identity, build connections, and develop essential life skills. The YLP Program operates Monday to Friday from 3:30 to 7:00 pm, providing an opportunity for our youth to stay connected to the community. Youth participating in program are provided a nutritional meal, snacks, and transportation to and from the program each evening.

The YLP Program places a significant focus on promoting Inuit culture and heritage. Through engaging workshops, cultural events, and activities youth can deepen their understanding of traditional practices, storytelling, drumming, and other elements of Inuit culture. This cultural immersion fosters a sense of pride and strengthens cultural identity. Inuuqatigiit Centre recognizes the importance of language preservation and offers Inuktitut language conversational sessions. Participants have the chance to enhance their language skills, engage in meaningful conversations, and embrace the beauty of the Inuktitut language.

Creating a sense of belonging and community is a central aspect of the program. Inuit youth can connect with their peers, share experiences, and build lasting friendships in a supportive environment. Activities such as group discussions, cultural gatherings, and team-building exercises foster a strong sense of belonging, acceptance, and unity among participants. Inuit youth are provided with mentorship opportunities that allow them to connect with experienced role models from the community. Mentors offer guidance, support, and advice on various aspects of life, including education, career exploration, personal growth, and cultural identity. Mentorship fosters positive relationships, inspires youth to pursue their aspirations, and empowers them



to overcome challenges. The program recognizes the power of artistic expression and provides platforms for youth to explore their creative talents. Inuit youth engage in diverse artistic activities, such as visual arts, music, dance, and storytelling, enabling them to showcase their creativity and develop confidence in their abilities. Cultural elements are integrated into artistic projects that celebrate Inuit artistic traditions and contemporary expressions.

“Just being there is good for their social, emotional well-being. Having role models who are Inuit, having a good time, being with other Inuit, learning cultural and physical activities; just being at the program is good for their wellbeing.”

– Parent

“The YLP Program provides a safe space for youth to gather, be connected, and voice what type of programs we would like to see. I like that the YLP team takes into consideration what the youth want and allow them to voice their needs.”

– Participant

“I like going to the YLP Program to socialize with my friends and participate in the weekly outings. The staff are nice and welcoming.”

– Participant





Right to Play

The Right to Play Program is a transformative initiative dedicated to empowering youth aged 6 to 24 years through a strength-based approach. With a focus on physical health, Inuit culture, art, and building strong positive relationships, this program aims to create a safe and inclusive environment where youth can thrive, develop essential life skills, and celebrate their unique identities.

Recognizing the importance of cultural preservation, the program integrates Inuit culture throughout its activities. Participants can learn and celebrate their cultural heritage through workshops, traditional storytelling, drumming, and art. This cultural immersion fosters a sense of pride, belonging, and connection to Inuit traditions, language, and values. The Right to Play Program's strength-based approach focuses on the inherent strengths and assets of each youth. It aims to build upon their unique talents, skills, and interests, allowing them to discover their full potential. By recognizing and nurturing their strengths, participants gain confidence, develop a positive self-image, and are inspired to overcome challenges.

The program recognizes the significance of positive relationships in youth development. It creates a supportive community where youth can build strong connections with peers, mentors, and caring adults. Through group activities, team-building exercises, and mentorship opportunities, participants develop social skills, empathy, and a sense of belonging. Positive relationships foster resilience, self-esteem, and provide a foundation for personal growth. Artistic expression is celebrated and nurtured within the program. Youth are encouraged to explore their creativity through various art forms such as visual arts, music, dance, and storytelling. By providing a platform for self-expression,

the program empowers participants to share their unique voices, perspectives, and experiences. Artistic activities also promote confidence, resilience, and problem-solving skills. The program places a strong emphasis on promoting physical health and well-being among youth. Through a variety of engaging activities, including sports, outdoor adventures, and recreational games, participants are encouraged to lead active and healthy lifestyles. This not only improves physical fitness but also instills values such as teamwork, resilience, and discipline.

The Right to Play Program offers a comprehensive and holistic approach to youth development, encompassing physical health, cultural celebration, artistic expression, and positive relationship-building. By promoting active lifestyles, preserving Inuit culture, fostering artistic exploration, and nurturing strong connections, the program empowers youth to lead fulfilling lives, embrace their identities, and contribute to their communities.

“The Community Mentor use to work at the Tukimut Program when I was a participant. I love learning how to do digital printing and looking forward to learning more from the mentor.”
 – Participant

“I loved our workshop on screen printing and making prints for t-shirts, bags, and cups! The community mentor is awesome and very artistic.”
 – Participant

“The mentor works closely with all the youth. I find it to be a safe space for me to connect witha them and learn some new skills.”
 – Participant.



Makkuktukuvik – A Place for Youth

The Makkuktukuvik Program is specifically designed to support Inuit youth aged 13 to 24 years during the critical hours of unstructured time with a safe and nurturing environment for personal growth and development. With a focus on the arts, Inuit culture, and physical activity, this program aims to empower Inuit youth to celebrate their cultural heritage and promote their overall well-being. The program supports over 50 youth each month. The program runs every Friday from 4:00 to 8:00 pm and is funded by Indigenous Services Canada.

The program operates during hours when youth often face challenges due to limited structured activities or supervision. By providing a safe and supportive environment Inuit youth have the opportunity to use this time for meaningful activities that build positive relationships and develop life skills. Trained staff and mentors offer guidance, support, and mentorship that meet the unique needs and challenges faced by Inuit youth during these unstructured hours.

The preservation and celebration of Inuit culture is a central pillar of the program. Inuit youth have the chance to engage with their cultural heritage through language, traditional practices, storytelling, and cultural activities. By embracing their cultural roots, participants develop a sense of pride, identity, and connection to their community, fostering a strong sense of belonging and empowerment. The program recognizes the power of artistic expression and offers a wide range of creative opportunities for Inuit youth. Participants are encouraged to explore various art forms including visual arts, music, dance, and storytelling. Through engaging workshops and mentorship youth can unleash their creativity, gain confidence, and express their unique perspectives and identities.

The program actively engages the community by collaborating with local organizations, Elders, and cultural leaders. This collaborative approach ensures that the program remains rooted in the community, benefits from local wisdom and expertise, and provides opportunities for intergenerational learning and connection. The Makkuktukuvik Program takes advantage of what was unstructured time to empower youth through creative expression, cultural celebration, and physical well-being, participants develop confidence, a sense of identity, and valuable life skills. The program serves as a catalyst for personal growth, community engagement, and for building a positive future for Inuit youth.

"I always looked forward to taking part in parka-making on Saturdays with our Makkuktukuvik program. Learning a new skill, but also connecting with other youth during the pandemic on weekends helped me."
 – Participant

"Going camping with everyone this past year was special. Since COVID-19, we haven't had the chance to go out on the land much and being able to do that this year brought back many memories."
 – Participant



Summer Camps

The Summer Camp Program is a seven-week immersive experience designed specifically for Inuit children aged 6 to 12 years living in the Ottawa area. The program supports 105 children across the Ottawa region each summer. With a strong focus on culture, language, physical activity, outdoor play, and art, this program provides a vibrant and enriching summer camp experience that celebrates Inuit heritage and nurtures holistic development. The program places great importance on promoting Inuit culture and traditions. Through engaging workshops, interactive activities, and storytelling sessions, children can learn about Inuit history, customs, and values. They actively participate in such traditional practices as drumming, throat singing, and Inuit craft-making which foster a sense of pride and connection to their cultural roots. We have multiple partners who support the program including the Ottawa Sports and Entertainment Group, Indigenous Sport and Wellness Ontario, Actua, Let's Talk Science, SAW, and the Ottawa School of the Arts.

Physical activity and outdoor play are key components of the program. Children participate in a wide range of activities, including traditional Inuit games, team sports, nature walks, and outdoor



adventures. These promote physical fitness, develop gross motor skills, enhance coordination, and cultivate a love for the outdoors. Through active play and exploration, children build resilience, teamwork, and a connection to the natural world. Creativity is nurtured through visual arts, music, dance, storytelling, and hands-on art projects inspired by Inuit tradition. Through art, children learn to appreciate and celebrate Inuit artistic heritage while developing self-confidence and self-expression.

The program incorporates cultural excursions and field trips to provide children with enriching and educational experiences. These may include visits to museums, cultural centers, historical sites, and natural landmarks that deepen their understanding of Inuit culture, history, and the local environment. These excursions offer a broad perspective that contributes to the children's overall learning and appreciation. The Summer Camp Program is a dynamic and immersive experience that celebrates Inuit culture, language, physical activity, outdoor play, and art. It provides a nurturing and engaging environment where children can explore their heritage, develop new skills, make lasting friendships, and create cherished summer memories. The program serves as a bridge between generations, fostering cultural pride and a sense of belonging among Inuit children living in the Ottawa area.



Strength in Numbers – Sports Program

The Centre's Sports Program is funded by Canadian Heritage as a transformative initiative designed specifically for Inuit children and youth. With a strong emphasis on incorporating Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principles our programs promote health and wellbeing, provide access to sports, offer mentorship opportunities, and foster team building among participants. We operate five days a week and support our Educational Hub Program and our evening programs. The Sports Program supports over 100 children and youth each month. Through a variety of sports activities, fitness training, and wellness sessions, participants are encouraged to lead active lifestyles, develop healthy habits, and prioritize their wellbeing. This holistic approach promotes physical fitness, mental resilience, and emotional wellbeing, ensuring a well-rounded experience for all.

We are committed to providing equal access to sports for all Inuit children and youth. Our program works to remove barriers and create inclusive environments where participants can engage in a wide range of sports and recreational activities. By offering access to quality equipment, facilities, and qualified instructors, we strive to ensure that all individuals can explore their athletic potential and receive the benefits of sports participation. Teamwork and collaboration are central components of our program. Participants can engage in team sports, cooperative games, and group activities that emphasize the importance of working together towards common goals. Team



"The Sports Program has provided the opportunity for our child to participate in sport without any financial barriers. This program continues to provide a much-needed service for youth in the community."
– Parent

"I've learned more about Inuit games in the Sports Program. I love participating in the two-legged high kick!"
– Participant





building exercises help develop communication skills, leadership qualities, and a strong sense of community. By fostering positive relationships, our program builds a supportive network where participants feel valued, included, and motivated to achieve their personal and team objectives.

Education Hubs

The Educational Hubs Program is a specialized educational initiative designed to provide academic support and promote cultural connection among Inuit children and youth in grades 1 through 12. Currently the program is funded by Indigenous Services Canada and supports 35 children and youth. The program works collaboratively with the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board and partners with The Boundless School to provide our youth with an opportunity to attend an outdoor education program geared to academic success and the outdoors. With a dedicated team consisting of a teacher, educational assistant, and cultural educator the program aims to create a nurturing learning environment where participants can excel academically while deepening their connection to their culture and language.



Within the Hubs Program we also have access to a councillor and one-to-one student support. The program prioritizes academic success by providing tailored support to meet the unique needs of each student. The teacher and educational assistant work collaboratively to better deliver comprehensive academic assistance, including individualized tutoring, homework help, and targeted interventions. Through personalized attention, participants are empowered to overcome challenges, strengthen their academic skills, and reach their full potential.

Recognizing the importance of cultural connections, the program offers numerous opportunities for participants to deepen their understanding and appreciation of their Inuit heritage. The cultural educator plays a vital role in organizing activities, workshops, and events that celebrate Inuit traditions, language, and practices. These not only instill a sense of pride and identity but also promote a greater understanding of Inuit culture and a strong cultural connection among participants. Language enrichment forms a significant aspect of the program, as it plays a vital role in preserving Inuit culture and identity. Participants can learn and practice Inuktitut with support

"I really enjoyed doing cultural things and learning more about Inuit culture and doing art and everyday activities with the class."
- Participant

"I like that I can voice my opinion in a conversation, and it will be heard."
- Participant

"Our student regularly attended the hub unlike at our school and attained 5 credits!!! Before that it was almost no credits earned in a year."
- Guidance teacher

"Lots of great work was being done at the hub through cultural avenues. It was great to see the student engaged in their community and culture while at the same time earning credits for school."
- School teacher

"My child had problems with self-confidence; the hubs have helped a lot with that."
- Parent

from the cultural educator and language resources. Language lessons, conversational practice, and cultural storytelling sessions are integrated into the curriculum, promoting fluency and preserving the richness of Inuit linguistic heritage.

The program recognizes that education extends beyond academic achievement to support the holistic development of participants by fostering social-emotional skills, character development, and a sense of belonging. Through group activities, team-building exercises, and community engagement, participants develop interpersonal skills, resilience, and a strong sense of community pride. The program thrives on collaboration among the teacher, educational assistant, and cultural educator. By working together they create a cohesive and integrated learning experience that seamlessly combines academic support, cultural connection, and language enrichment. The collaborative approach ensures that participants receive comprehensive support and benefit from the unique expertise of each team member.

The program provides a nurturing and culturally enriching environment where grade school Inuit children and youth receive academic support, a deeper connection to their culture, and an opportunity to enhance their language skills. This multi-dimensional and coordinated approach empowers participants to succeed academically while fostering a strong sense of cultural pride, identity, and community.

PSE Hubs

Inuit Post-Secondary Educational Hubs is a transformative initiative designed to provide comprehensive support to Inuit youth who are further post-secondary education. With a focus on eliminating barriers to success, the program offers a range of services and resources to empower participants, strengthen their connection to the community and Inuit culture, provide financial workshops and funding opportunities, and offer vital homework support. The program is funded by the Kakivak Association and supports over 35 students who are currently enrolled in post-secondary studies. The program is supported by an Elder and a Student-Support Worker.

PSE Hubs is dedicated to empowering Inuit youth in their post-secondary journey. Part-time youth mentor positions are available, providing peer-to-peer support and guidance to navigate the challenges of academic life. Mentors serve as role models, offering insight, encouragement, and

practical advice to help participants succeed academically and adapt to life in post-secondary education. Recognizing the importance of fostering connections and a sense of belonging, the program emphasizes the community and Inuit cultural engagement. Cultural activities, workshops, and gatherings are organized to promote cultural pride, heritage, and a strong connection to the Inuit community, creating a supportive and inclusive environment.



Participants have access to a network of Elders, mentors, community leaders, educators, and financial advisors who can serve as sources for guidance and support. Through partnerships with post-secondary institutions and community organizations, the program creates a seamless network of support and resources for participants that maximize their chances of success.

Financial barriers can hinder academic success which is why the program offers financial workshops and funding opportunities. Workshops cover various topics such as budgeting, financial planning, scholarships, and grants that equip participants with the knowledge and skills to effectively manage their finances. Additionally, the program assists participants in exploring and accessing available funding opportunities, ensuring that financial constraints do not impede their educational goals. Recognizing the academic demands of post-secondary education, the program provides vital homework support. Participants have access to tutoring services, study groups, and academic resources to enhance their learning experience. Experienced tutors and educators help with coursework, assignments, and exam preparation to ensure participants have the necessary tools and support to excel academically.

PSE Hubs is a dynamic initiative that supports Inuit youth in their post-secondary education journey. By providing part-time youth mentor work, cultivating connections to the community and Inuit culture, offering financial workshops, and funding opportunities, and delivering vital homework support, the program works to eliminate barriers to success and to empowers participants to achieve their academic goals. Through comprehensive support, Inuit youth can thrive in their post-secondary studies and confidently navigate their path toward a successful future.

EDUCATION

As the needs of the community have grown, so has the Education Department's student support services team. At the beginning of the fiscal year, the department had fourteen team members and by the end of the year the team had grown to 19 members. The team comprises of a Manager, four Coordinators, six Student Support Services Workers, two Presenter, one Cultural Support Worker/Presenter, two Youth Mentors, one Job Placement Officer, and one Career Counsellor.

The Education Department's programs have been developed to support a wide range of goals. Various partners provide funding, including the Ministry of Education, Employment Social Development Canada, the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres, Indigenous Services Canada, and the Ottawa Carleton District School Board. As needs change, the Education Department continues to evolve and grow to better support the Inuit community in Ottawa and area. Over the course of this fiscal year the department has supported 636 students ranging in age from 5 to 60 years. The total combined in person visits were 5,581.

Student Support Services

Inuuqatigiit Centre's Inuit Student Support Services deliver a range of wraparound supports intended to:

- Help children, youth, and their families prepare for school entry.
- Support the school board to follow the Truth and Reconciliation Commission when it comes to school recommendations.



EDUCATION

- Build awareness of Inuit culture and language with community partners.
- Develop more access to cultural support for the clients we support.
- Increase student engagement.
- Increase the feeling of safety and/or comfort of parents and students attending educational planning meetings.
- Improve parental engagement in school communities.
- Improve access to Authentic Student Learning Experiences with an Inuit focus.
- Advocate for access to additional school support.
- Expand access to community supports for Inuit students, families, caregivers, etc.
- Provide Psychoeducational Assessments to evaluate student strengths and weaknesses.



“Learning to sew gave me so much new confidence and I love learning with my friends.”
– 11 year old Akwe:go client



“Your support has helped so much this year, and the consistency with your visits always gives [the student] something to look forward to.”
– OCDSB Teacher

“I see more confidence in my child and they are proud to share their culture with their friends.”
– Parent of Akwe:go client

Akwe:go Urban Aboriginal Children’s Program

The Akwe:go Urban Aboriginal Children’s Program works with at-risk children between the ages of 7 and 12 years to provide individualized supports based on their specific needs. The program provides a direct individualized service approach to address each client’s unique needs. The role of the Coordinator involves



"It is great working together with an organization serving the Inuit community!"

– OCDSB Education Assistant

"You help my family when you make sure my kids have food to eat at school and it makes it so they don't feel scared to go."

– Parent of Akwe:go client

"It makes me happy when I get to see [the Akwe:go Coordinator] at school because we always learn and have fun and I get my favourite fruits."

– 8 year old Akwe:go client

forms of institutional intervention and social support for children in care, children with disabilities, and those needing support for health and physical development. This fiscal year 21 Inuit children received support with 390 one-to-one sessions. Akwe:go sessions generally take place at school, but home visits as well as visits during after-school programs are common.

Bridging the Gap Program

The Bridging the Gap Program (BTG) provides critical supports to Inuit students and works to increase the knowledge and awareness of all students about Inuit history, culture, and values. The program also fosters parental engagement in schools and increases Inuit cultural literacy among Ottawa teachers.

Inuit Cultural Presentations: A major part of the BTG Program is bringing Inuit culture, art, and history alive for students. A variety of presentations have been developed for elementary and secondary school students, each geared to specific grade-level curriculums. For each, the teacher has the opportunity to request one or several presentations about Language, Visual Arts, and Social Studies. Presenters are Inuit and bring their own unique life experiences and skill set to the presentations. Inuit Elders are important advisors to the program and help to ensure the quality and authenticity of all presentations. A total of 750 Inuit Cultural Presentations were delivered this fiscal year, with 17,450 attending.

Cultural Enrichment Workshops/Supports for Teachers /Professionals: Inuuqatigiit's BTG Program delivers presentation workshops to increase the cultural competency of teachers so they can provide culturally safe support to Inuit students. Teacher workshops have highlighted Inuit culture, history, traditions, and values. They promote an understanding of the factors important to working in a culturally safe and aware manner with Inuit students. These workshops equip teachers and school administrators to better meet the unique learning needs and learning styles of Inuit students. For example, Truth and Reconciliation workshops have instilled a deeper understanding of the legacy of residential schools from an Inuit perspective. Through these workshops, teachers can better understand the historical and current issues that impact Inuit children and their families which, in turn, support their work with Inuit students. BTG provides 12 Cultural Education Workshops for teachers each academic year. As we continue to grow, we are now providing workshops and presentations to not-for-profit organizations and government agencies to advance their cultural competencies.

Individual Student Support: A crucial component of BTG programming is the one-to-one support provided to Inuit students and parents struggling to navigate the education system. Inuit families from the North find that expectations by the education system are quite different from what they experience in their home communities. The history of Inuit education has not always been positive. The trauma of the Residential School experience has seeded mistrust in the educational system. Inuktitut is the first language of many parents and they experience challenges with registration forms and other documentation required by schools. The Student Support Services Worker supports parents at school meetings to help ensure their children's needs are being met. This staff member is also a valuable resource for teachers and school support teams working directly with Inuit students. As well, teachers connect with the worker for information about culture, norms, and customs and as a liaison during meetings with parents. This BTG service provided 90 Inuit youth with one-on-one academic and personal support this year.

"These past couple of months have been wonderful for my students. They are keen to attend school and share their heritage with their peers. I've noticed my students are wearing cultural attire to school and two of the students performed throat singing in several classes today. They will also present at our final assembly next Thursday. Wishing you a good summer and I look forward to our work together next year."

– Principal, RE Wilson Elementary

"This [Inuit] student has really grown in their time here. The difference is night and day. I'm really looking forward to the things they will be taking on in the future."

- Guidance Counselor,
The Boundless School

"Thank you! I am so glad he is interested [in attending Youth Council and the trip for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women's Day] and also so proud that he is finally interested in our culture!"

- Parent

"I can't thank you enough, I truly appreciate it. [The Hubs and Tukimut Programs are] such a big help. She is super excited to be attending and making new friends. I am not fluent in the language, and I haven't kept a lot of the culture, but I am happy that they get to be a part of this."

- Parent



Silatunig Youth Engagement Program

The Silatunig Inuit Youth Engagement Program focuses on school re-engagement and school maintenance for Inuit children and youth aged 6 to 18 years living in eastern Ontario. The goal is to break the cycle of poverty and achieve meaningful employment by helping Inuit youth complete high school and continue on to a post-secondary education. The program is Inuit-specific and community-based and provides social, cultural, and practical supports that includes tutoring, mentorship, life skills, youth leadership, outreach, advocacy, and case management. Youth Mentors support the newly developed Silatunig Youth Council which is an open, safe space for Inuit youth aged 13 to 24 years who are interested in having their voices heard. Participants are encouraged to discuss topics of concern with the mentors and to take the lead in planning and implementing

"Lindsay has helped me with lots of appointments this year and applying for the YESS program."
- Student

"I like spending time with Lindsay, she always listens to me and helps me at school."
- Student

"I appreciate Lindsay's involvement with our client's circle of care, she always makes herself available to attend appointments with the client and to be present for the client when making decisions."
- Community Partner

"[Lindsay] helps my son get help at school and helps me make appointments."
- Parent

"Lindsay has a great relationship with our family and always checks in to offer support and info about programming."
- Parent

"I am always glad when Lindsay comes to school to see the student to check in with how the family is doing and for her to be a liaison to the student's family to get forms signed so the student can attend field trips and complete assessments. She is an amazing advocate and trusted support for the student and their family."
- Community Partner

change within their community. Youth Mentors work with both internal and external support programs as well as provide support through cultural clubs, visit to Indigenous Lodges within the school board, school visits, and one-to-one support. Over the course of the fiscal year Inuuqatigiit supported 152 children and youth with a total of 1,039 in-person visits.

Wasa-Nabin Urban Aboriginal Program

Wasa-Nabin is a self-development program for Urban Aboriginal at-risk youth of aged 13 to 18 years. By accessing the program's services and supports youth learn about setting goals, develop leadership skills, and learn how to make healthy choices that ultimately lead to healthier lifestyles and personal success. Activities are culturally appropriate and geared to improve interpersonal skills, knowledge, attitudes, and to enhance values and promote personal well-being. This fiscal year 25 Inuit youth were supported with 630 in-person visits.

Youth Employment and Skills Strategy (YESS) Program

The YESS Program assists Inuit youth aged 15 to 30 years to navigate through the education and job sector of their choice. Through a combination of workshops, networking, skill building, and

"I like being around other Inuit Youth."
- Participant

"It's nice being around other members of our community."
- Participant

"On the Land Day was great!"
- Participant

"I love working with the YESS team, they are always attentive and proactive. We have also hired great employees as well."
- Community Partner

"I enjoy coming to the program every day and will miss it when it ends."
- Participant

"I like the program so far and I like the people teaching it."
- Participant

"I love the food offered in the program."
- Participant

the option for a 60-hour paid Quality Employment Opportunity with an organization, artist, or industry that is matched to each youth's strengths and career goal, youth come away from the program better prepared to navigate the adult world, whether it is a post-secondary education or employment. These objectives are attained by supporting the needs of youth, especially those facing barriers, to developing the knowledge, skills, networks, and work experience needed to advance their employment goals.

Over the course of the fiscal year, we supported 32 people in the program but also expanded the employment support component for an additional 56 clients for a total of 88 individuals. The program had a total of 2,003 in-person visits.

Post-Secondary Education, Student Support Services Worker

The PSE Student Support Service Worker ensures Inuit students in post-secondary programs have access to support. The role of the PSE student support services worker is similar in Inuuqatigiit's Silatunig program but with a focus on youth 17 years of age and older who are receiving a post-secondary education. The PSE student support worker provides direct assistance to students for funding applications, advocacy, taking appointments, and by providing cultural supports

“Awesome! Thank you so much Pete! This wouldn't have been possible without you! I hope you understand how much you're supporting me and my baby and our future! Forever grateful.”
– Student on getting into college.

“Thank you so much Pete I really do appreciate everything you and the team has done for me.”
– Student after receiving help to return home.

“I'm so thankful they have you folk, without you guys, honestly, they would be lost. As an Inuk, I just want to say thank you....”
– Government of Nunavut Employee

“I look forward to growing the collaboration between Algonquin and Inuuqatigiit.”
– Algonquin College Employee

and more. Our team, along with the PSE student support worker, are building relationships with several post-secondary institutions throughout Ottawa to give Inuit students even more support. The PSE student support worker also connects students to other programs like School Within a College (SWAC) which helps students recover credits. There are 43 students enrolled in Inuuqatigiit Centre's PSE program. This support included 369 in-person visits.



“So glad they are being social, BIG THANK YOU TO YOU.”

– Parent
(A parent after I invited their daughter to our YLP and offered to drive as they live around the corner from me.)

“Good day, you are all heroes to my daughter and I. As a teacher, you have given her the capacity to believe in herself and to dream big, you give the best of yourselves to others to advance them and give them better prospects for their futures. Our respect and admiration for you as a teacher/ staff cannot be expressed in words.”

– Parent

“You make an impact on the lives of the students in your class, and they will remember you for many years to come. Thank you for being the positive change in their lives. I am so grateful she could be in your class and get to experience the marvel of having you as her teacher.

This is a gift that only a special person such as you could have given. Thank you for believing in her. thank you for all you have done and stepping in and helping when you could see that she was struggling, even though you had many other students in your class to supervise.

It really means a lot that you cared. You have filled up the role of a parent at the college and welcoming her in your homes and we can't thank you enough for that in every way possible to take her to a safe home and knowing she is relieved and safe ♥

I cannot find the right words to express my gratitude.

Our sincere thanks to you for being such excellent guides, mentors, and friends, to my daughter Olivia.

Your positive influence and moral guidance assure me that my daughter will make the most of her studies/education.

♥ Thank you Inuuqatigiit staff.”

– Parent



FAMILY SUPPORTS

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Family Well-Being

The Family Well-Being Program (FWB) supports families with a variety of programs and services that maintain or improve overall wellness. The FWB team has shifted back to offering primarily in-person meetings with community members, increased programming, and expanded services this year as we developed a path forward from the pandemic.

Supports: One-on-one family supports continue to be the primary focus for staff, as the demand for help increased. Many requests for assistance involve legal concerns, custody issues, mental health challenges, identification applications, assistance with referrals, and advocacy with external programs and services as needed. Supporting clients with treatment program applications and issues pertaining to finding adequate family housing continue to be challenges faced by the FWB Team. Sadly, there was also an increase in the need to support the Ottawa Police Service with death notifications to families of Inuit community members and subsequently, the repatriating the remains of loved ones to the North. We made every effort to do this with care and sensitivity, to ensure the process was as seamless and stress-free as possible for the families.

Food hampers or gift cards continued to be delivered for Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. As in previous years, the FWB department was able to provide 115-150 families/Elder households with food hampers or gift cards during these holidays, representing support for 450 community members for each celebration. We were



fortunate to be able to continue to make use of COVID-19 funding to supplement family budgets with emergency food vouchers when costs were rising exponentially. Demand for this type of support increased dramatically, at times elevated to levels upwards of \$4500+ per month, or as high as 45 families. Noting that this was not a sustainable target for future years, changes to eligibility criteria were made at the end of the year to reduce the frequency families could access this emergency option. As well, an active attempt was made to educate clients about food banks, meal trucks, and other sources that can help feed their families.

With the important and necessary growth in the Centre's Mental Health, Youth, and Education departments, Family Well-being has witnessed a greater demand in requests for support, outpacing the ability of staff members to respond, and creating challenges for the team to offer both support and programming. A need to increase direct support staffing as well as program staff has been identified. In response, a new position was created to assist with overseeing programming and future positions to increase access to programs are being explored.

Programming: Family Well-being returned to offering pre-pandemic levels of programming in the fall with some success, including the Women's Circles and the Inunnquiniq Parenting Program. The reintroduction of a stable Evening Childcare team reduced barriers for parents wishing to attend these programs, in particular for those who lacked the support needed to leave their children at home. This has primarily impacted attendance in the Women's Group. Other programming included Sewing, Beading, Games Nights, and Movie Nights. An over-night family camp was held, hosting 15 clients with support from an Elder. Activities included qulliq lighting, Inuit games, storytelling, outdoor activities, jewelry making, and bannock making.

Christmas Sponsorship: The Christmas Gift Program was successful thanks to 38 sponsors. Staff facilitated support to forty-five families with approximately \$36,000 in gifts and food donations. Once again, Royal Bank of Canada staff stepped up to generously donate gifts to 88 youth and as a result of these efforts, a happier Christmas came to over 200 community members.



The start of this reporting period began with the exciting receipt of prevention funds to target mental health and housing. Through these funds the FWB department was able to purchase bikes for kids and their parents, museum passes, exercise equipment, and household items to improve living conditions. There was assistance to pay rental arrears, overdue utilities, and income tax as well as supplies for programming such as sewing machines and community computers. The Centre was also able to purchase a large passenger van to transport clients to activities such as museums and camps. While the funding was quite a significant, the time period was very short, with spending completed by the end of June.

Cultural Presentations: As an ongoing partner with the Ottawa Police Service, the Centre again delivered cultural presentations to inform officers enrolled in the Sexual Assault Response Officer Course about Inuit history, the strengths of the community, the reasons why Inuit come to Ottawa, and about promising practices for engaging individuals while responding to calls for service.

Elder's Support: Despite the lack of dedicated funding for this year's Elder's program, Inuuqatigiit Centre continued to offer support. Elders were the recipient of food hampers, emergency food cards, and when available, they had access to country food. One-on-one support was delivered as needed by a dedicated staff person including regular check-ins on their well-being by phone and assistance with personal needs such as attending doctors' appointments and support for Children's Aid Society visits. Thank you to the Ministry of Children, Communities and Social Services for the funding to do such important supportive prevention work.



The Children's Aid Society: The effects of the pandemic continue to have a heavy impact on the Inuit community and the need for support by parents navigating the child welfare system and Children's Aid Society (CAS) and was a major activity undertaken by the Family Well-being department. Caseloads remained high as the Child Welfare Liaison Workers attended home visits, virtual court proceedings, and meetings with the CAS. They gave support by gaining legal aid certificates, performing visitation check-ins, and making referrals to treatment programs and housing services. These interactions for CAS clients alone totaled 956 over the past year. The team hosted 168 access visits at the Centre for thirteen families with children living in foster care. These visits aim to help maintain the attachment between children and their parents in a safe and supported environment, supported by culturally knowledgeable staff.

Additional work with CAS included participating in cultural safety planning for potential adoptive parents of Inuit children, should the need arise. Staff engaged in a process of educating potential parents about the responsibilities they would be committing to. Potential parents were informed about the need to maintain meaningful connections to the community and the child's family, to support the child's ongoing access to programming and events held by the community, and the commitment to life-long learning about Inuit culture.

Men's Services: For many years there have been attempts to build programming specifically designed to address and support the needs of urban Inuit men. While there had been some success in years past, the impacts of COVID-19 were quite profound for these services. Several programming ideas were attempted, such as on-the-land camps, ice skating, day trips to a camp, tool making, and weekly men's programming but these were met with minimal success. One-on-one support has been slightly more effective, with relationships being fostered with a designated staff person at the Centre who has also assisted with any CAS cases.

Many thanks to the Ontario Trillium Foundation and Child First Initiative for providing additional funding to support this work.

Kamatsiarniq Program: This year saw some growth in the Kamatsiarniq Program, which focuses on supporting Inuit children and youth living in non-Inuit foster homes or those who have been adopted into non-Inuit homes. Tungasuvvingat Inuit and Inuuqatigiit Centre continue to work to reduce the number of children living in non-Inuit homes. The Child and Youth Worker's goal is to ensure that Inuit children have the opportunity to learn about their culture from a fluent Inuktitut-speaking Inuk worker who can provide experiences that authentically help children understand who they are and where they come from. Parents and foster parents can also learn from this staff member about culture and ways of following the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principles when raising Inuit children.

The worker offers adoptive families in-home visits that include cultural activities and often include country food. There was some growth with regard to developing materials and starting to offer in-home visits for children.

As part of the work connected to the Kamatsiarniq Program, FWB is a proud partner in the development of the Sapujjijuit Project undertaken by Tungasuvvingat Inuit. This project is developing and evaluating an Inuit-specific foster care model to address the under-representation of Inuit foster

homes available to Inuit children in care. The program will offer a culturally appropriate assessment and training tool that can be readily received by the local community and also meet Ontario's Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services standards. This is an exciting project to take part in and contribute to because it will have a huge impact on the community when it is approved.

We are very appreciative of the partnership we have developed with the staff at Tungasuvvingat Inuit and the opportunity to work together.

Well-Being & Gender-Based Violence Project: This year, the Gender Based Violence (GBV) Project went through the second stage of an evaluation process with the purpose to collect data regarding how the wrap-around model has supported those impacted by GBV. Results should inform staff about what is working well and where there gaps remain in the services.

Project staff coordinated the engagement of participants and Inuuqatigiit Centre's staff to take part in interviews with the NVision Insight Group. Project partner agencies Tewegan Housing for Aboriginal Youth, Interval House of Ottawa, Serenity Renewal for Families, Tungasuvvingat Inuit, Minwaashin Lodge, Inuit Non-Profit Housing, Gignul Non-Profit Housing Corporation, Odawa Native Friendship Centre, CHEO, Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre, Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women, and Ottawa Police Service were also invited to complete online surveys. Information from the interviews, surveys, and meetings were included in a report created by the external evaluation team, which advocated for 15 recommendations for improvements to help best support Inuit GBV survivors.

The GBV project team shared the recommendations with our Advisory Committee and Stakeholders to gather their opinions on how best to implement the recommended changes. After receiving the report's recommendations and guidance from the Advisory Committee and Stakeholders, we were able to move forward with various action items in 2021. Examples include the preparation and coordination of agency-wide departmental meetings to increase staff awareness of the GBV project and to create training feedback forms to ensure our cultural sensitivity training remains relevant. Other top priorities have included establishing data tracking, updating our Sannginivut Resource Kit for Inuit women, transitioning our cultural sensitivity training to an online platform, and finding training and resources for other Inuuqatigiit Centre employees on GBV-related topics.

We appreciate the funding for this project provided by the Women and Gender Equality Canada.

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES AND MENTAL HEALTH

Child First Initiative

Inuuqatigiit Centre's Child First Initiative (CFI) has provided support services to approximately 276 children and youth in 2022/2023, an increase over previous year. As a mental health service, most staff were exempt from the COVID-19 mandates and were able to continue to meet with clients throughout the pandemic restrictions.

The program provides a variety of services that aim to:

1. Assist in accessing funding for Inuit children and youth with health, social, cultural, and educational needs.
2. Address critical gaps in mental health and cultural support services for Inuit children and youth by providing access to Inuit-specific mental health services and cultural programs.
3. Deliver case management for those Inuit children and youth.

The CFI funded programs and services offered at Inuuqatigiit Centre are the Silatuniq and Tukimut Programs, the Educational Hubs, occupational therapy, mental health counselling, cultural, and child welfare services.

Service Coordination: The CFI Coordinator works closely with families to acquire funds for the educational, health services, and supports their children require. During this reporting period 43 individual applications were submitted, approved, and funded by CFI. These included requests for Educational Assistants in the classroom, equine therapy, specialized equipment (such as hearing aids), one-on-one support while attending programs, devices for learning, travel to and from Inuit specific programming, as well travel to the north for exposure to Inuit culture.



Through the Integrated Plan of Care process, the coordinator provides case management services for children and youth who require the support services of two or more agencies, groups, or individual service providers. Throughout 2022/2023, the coordinator maintained an active caseload of six clients with complex needs.

Child and Youth Counselling: The CFI Child and Youth Counsellor provides trauma-informed mental health counselling to children and youth. The services are provided in an accessible, safe, and timely manner. The Counsellor also participates in case conferencing, accesses resources to ensure the delivery of quality client services, and provides ongoing support through the Centre's wrap-around service approach. Counselling services were provided to 32 children and youth during the year 2022/2023.

Art Therapy: Art therapy sessions were offered during this reporting period for individual children and youth. This therapy allows children to explore their feelings, process emotional conflicts, build self awareness and self-esteem, and reduce stress and anxiety.

Cultural Programming: Children and youth are presented many opportunities to learn about their culture, traditional skills, and language to help develop leadership skills. Cultural materials are provided to participants involved in Inuuqatigiit programming and meals and snacks are offered to help engage the youth. Transportation assistance helps clients attend and participate in the support programs and services.



Child Welfare Support Services: Inuuqatigiit Centre also provides support services from a strength-based approach to families who are involved with the Children's Aid Society. This includes informing parents and caregivers of their rights, helping them identify next steps to address problems and keep their families together. Parents and caregivers are informed about the Children's Aid Society process and responsibilities, and are offered guidance to help them make informed choices. Family supports are also provided to help reduce the barriers in accessing services and appointments. This includes addressing such needs as transportation and food security as well as cultural support to promote the health and welfare of Inuit families, children, and youth.

Inuutiarnirmut Katujjiqatigiit Program

Inuutiarnirmut Katujjiqatigiit Program provides clinically supervised mental health and crisis support services for Inuit parents and youth. Funding from the federal Non-Insured Health Benefits Program has enabled Inuuqatigiit to provide these services to those Inuit community members struggling with of inter-generational trauma and for those seeking support for their mental wellness needs. The program goal is to deliver culturally relevant counselling that holistically engages individuals and families while learning coping strategies that they can incorporate into their daily lives. Services also focus on providing resources and supports to individuals and families in situations of crisis and stress. A full-time Inuit Mental Health Counsellor provides individual counselling services for parents, Elders, couples, families, and youth throughout the year.

This year, the Inuit Mental Health Counsellor provided counselling services to 80 parents and family members. Due to on-going pandemic restrictions, the counsellor provided clients with regularly scheduled virtual appointments as well as virtual drop-in support groups and crisis counselling. As well, in-person appointments were provided as needed following



COVID-19 and public health restrictions and safety measures. Clients were referred from other Inuuqatigiit Centre programs or were self-referrals.

The counsellor also facilitated weekly Inuit Women's Health Circles and supported clients by attending virtual Children's Aid Society meetings and Circles of Care. Despite the challenges of COVID-19 safety protocols, we were able to offer weekly Elder's Drop-In groups allowing community members to come and visit and/or meet individually with the Elders and receive cultural teachings on various crafts and activities. Client referrals were also made as needed to other agencies such as the Akausivik Inuit Family Health Team, Tungasuvvingat Inuit, treatment facilities, and other housing and legal support services.

Youth Mental Health Systems Navigation

Inuuqatigiit Center's Youth Mental Health System (YMHS) Navigator works with a variety partnering agencies to help children and their families seamlessly negotiate various support systems. The Navigator helps to organize their care, overcome barriers, and ensures continuity of care as clients transition from one service to another. The Navigator's case management role also includes facilitating bi-weekly intra-agency case management meetings as well as participating in monthly case management meetings with the Children's Aid Society.

During this programming year, the Systems Navigator provided such services as advocacy, home visits, school support, transportation support, referrals to other agencies and services, individual supportive counselling, and case management support. Additionally, the YMHS Navigator provided support for completing and submitting Inuit-specific funding applications through Child First Initiative for individual children/youth under the age of 18 years who are lacking a required service in social, health, or educational domains.

The Systems Navigator also acted as the agency implementation lead for the Aboriginal Integrated Plan of Care Process. The goal of this process is to identify barriers and challenges faced by children and youth with complex mental health concerns and to help them achieve their goals with the support of team members and the community.

The YMHS Navigator provided case management, supportive counselling, advocacy, referrals, systems navigation, and support services to 148 clients this year.

Tasiuqatigiit Program

The Tasiuqatigiit Program provides a broad range of social and cultural navigation services to vulnerable Inuit children and youth and their families. This includes Nunavut families traveling to Ottawa for medical services for their children as well as for medically fragile Inuit children and youth in foster care and group home settings.

The program provides Social-Cultural Navigators who help Inuit families through advocacy, information, respite, and referrals to other programs and services. The navigators maintain connections with Ottawa's Inuit Community and local services providers and provide access to culturally rich arts and social programs. The navigators also provide cultural education sessions to service providers who work with Inuit families. The program receives financial support from Indigenous Services Canada's First Nations and Inuit Health Branch and Urban Programming for Indigenous Peoples and is delivered in collaboration with Tungasuvvingat Inuit's navigator team and other partner agencies in order to coordinate services that support the health of Inuit children and their families.

The team continued its partnership endeavours in order to provide wrap-around services for clients. Ongoing referrals and collaborations with partnering agencies continued to be essential to ensure that families received support every step of the way. The past year was another year unlike any other, but the program was still highly successful in helping to support families from Nunavut during their medical journeys south. Navigators hosted more than 90 social cultural events at Larga-Baffin in 2022/2023, with more than 1,800 participants attending.

Sivumut Alluqatigiit

The Sivumut Alluqatigiit Program was created in September 2020 to support the wellness of Inuit youth and families living in Ottawa. The team consists of three people: a Youth Wellness Counsellor, a Youth Culture and Wellness Counsellor, and a Peer Outreach Worker. The program serves youth from the ages of 12 to 24 years and is guided by the Inuit Qaujjimajatuqangit principles.

The program supported 84 individuals from April 2022 to March 2023. Services provided by Sivumut Alluqatigiit staff included:

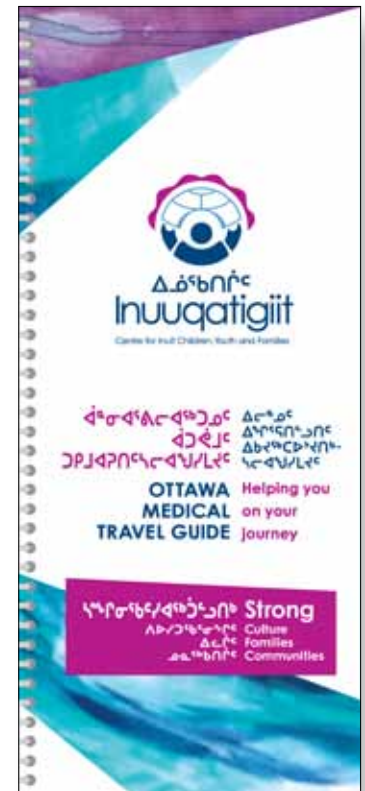
- Individual, group, and family counselling.
- Substance use counselling.
- Grief counselling.
- Referrals to treatment centres.
- Case management services.
- Education services about substance use.
- Transportation.
- Housing support.
- Legal support.
- Home visits.
- Community outreach.
- Support for parents with children in counselling.
- Cultural support and activities.

One of the main initiatives of the Sivumut Alluqatigiit Program is to provide harm reduction education and supplies (such as Naloxone kits), and smoking cessation services to the Inuit community and staff. The team provided 102 Naloxone kits to the community in the last year. Staff also worked with youth to educate them on substance use and harm reduction strategies through presentations, surveys, and street engagement. In addition, staff created partnerships with Period Packs and Ottawa Public Health for increased access to feminine hygiene products and condoms.

Throughout 2022/2023 the Sivumut Alluqatigiit staff continued to introduce initiatives to support and maintain the engagement with Inuit youth such as the Morning Wellness Program which scheduled two-hour sessions every Monday and Thursday. Organized program activities included a breakfast with an Elder, Inuktitut lessons, beading, gardening, and yoga. The yoga program was not successfully attended; therefore, an additional beading day was offered in its place. The program ran from January to March 2023.

Other programs, support services, and activities offered to Inuit youth through the Sivumut Alluqatigiit Program include:

Sharing Circle and Activities: The Sivumut Alluqatigiit program provided a weekly sharing circle for Inuit youth at the Inuuqatigiit mental health office. Despite COVID-19 protocols, the group





was able to continue through the various lockdowns and provide opportunities for youth to share their concerns and gain support. The two-hour Youth Circle continued to be actively attended on Thursday afternoons. Other activities provided throughout the year included archery tag, cultural films, traditional teachings of making tea over a qulliq, qulliq lighting, orange shirt designing, syllabic bingo, beading, paint pouring, and a self-care spa evening, as well presentation on substance use, Naloxone, and quitting smoking.

Street Outreach: The Sivumut Alluqatigiit program continued to assistance with locating housing and connecting with services and the provision of food, water, condoms, and Naloxone kits to street entrenched Inuit youth on an outreach basis. The service is provided every week and has been crucial throughout the pandemic. Partnerships were made through staff with local shelters such as Young Men's Shelter, Shepherds of Good Hope, and The Mission and this continues to grow.

On the Land Programming: The Sivumut Alluqatigiit staff recognize the importance of continuing to provide opportunities for the Inuit Youth to connect with the land. In the next year the Sivumut Alluqatigiit program hopes to be able to further organize more opportunities for the youth to connect with the land.

Nipilimaavut Youth Justice Program

The Nipilimaavut (All Our Voices) Youth Justice Program started in the summer of 2021 and provides culturally tailored system navigation and mental health supports for Inuit youth aged 12 to 17 years

in Ottawa who are looking for supports within the justice system. The program also focuses on justice prevention by supporting Inuit youth to engage in psycho-education workshops, healthy living groups, and one-on-one supports. Through this programming, the goal is for youth to explore and gain knowledge in areas that will promote positive self-esteem and self-advocacy skills. We are very appreciative of the input and support provided by the Inuit Justice Advisory Committee regarding program development, approach, and direction. This year 43 clients received support through the program.

Prevention Work – Activities include:

- Counselling support and case management for youth aged 12-17 years.
- Partnering with the Ontario Justice Education Network to support youth leaders in the development of justice-specific education and workshops to deliver in Fall 2023.
- Facilitating healthy living groups focused on “knowing your rights,” healthy relationships, internet safety, and land-based programming.

- Developing and strengthening partnerships with other Indigenous and Youth Justice organizations.

Judicial System Navigation:

- Supporting navigation through the legal system (e.g., finding a lawyer, attending court, advocacy, etc.).
- Providing support in the completion of probation orders and reintegration.

Advocacy:

- Supporting those who have been affected by the actions of others in ensuring that their voice is heard.

Inuit Legal Support Program

Inuit Legal Support Program is a joint project with Tungasuvvingat Inuit that is funded by the federal Justice Partnership and Innovation Program. The Inuit Legal Support Program uses Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principles in supporting and advocating for Inuit adults aged 18 years and over by providing culturally relevant Public Legal Education and Information and legal advice and support in the areas of family violence, child protection, human rights, criminal matters, and other emerging issues. This is a trauma-informed and strength-based program delivered in collaboration with our partnering organizations, our external partnerships, and the broader Ottawa community.



“Thank you so much for having this group run and making it fun for the kids. It is a relief for my child to be at the Tukimut after school program and have something to look forward to.” – Parent

FUNDERS & PARTNERSHIPS

Funders

Canadian Heritage
Champlain Local Health Integration Network
Children First Initiatives
City of Ottawa
Department of Justice Canada
Employment and Skills Development Canada
Health Canada
Indigenous Services Canada
Kakivak Association
Laidlaw Foundation
Laurentian University
Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
Ministry of Education
Ministry of Health
Ministry of Indigenous Affairs
Ministry of Justice
Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport
Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
Ontario Association of Aboriginal HeadStart
Ontario Council for the Arts

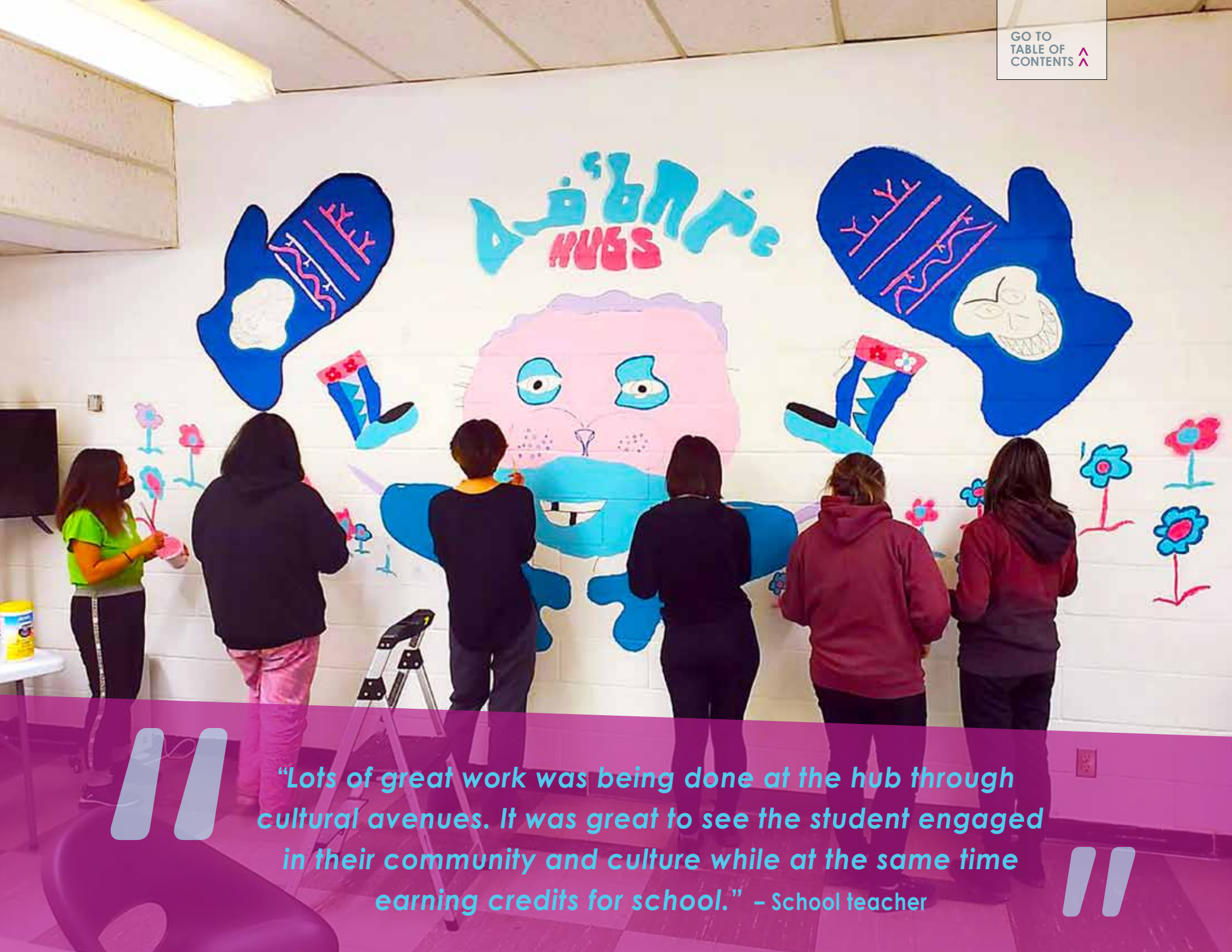
Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres
Ontario Trillium Foundation
Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition
Ottawa Community Foundation
Ottawa Public Health
Ottawa-Carleton District School Board
Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada
Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre
Public Health Agency of Canada
Right to Play Canada
Tewegan Housing for Aboriginal Youth
United Way of Eastern Ontario
Women and Gender Equality Canada

Partnerships

ACTUA
Akausivik Inuit Family Health Team
Algonquin College
Anglican Diocese of Ottawa
Beechwood Cemetery
Children's Aid Society of Ottawa (CASO)

Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO)
DNT Transportation
Gignul Non-Profit Housing Corporation
Government of Nunavut
Indigenous Sport and Wellness Ontario
Interval House of Ottawa
Inuit Non-Profit Housing Corporation
Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami
IODE Laurentian
Jays Care Foundation
Kagita Mikam
Kitikmeot Inuit Association
Laidlaw Foundation
Larga Baffin
Let's Talk Science
Makonsag Aboriginal Head Start
Minwaashin Lodge
Nike
Nunavut Sivuniksavut

Odawa Native Friendship Centre
Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women (OCTEVAW)
Ottawa Health Services Network
Ottawa Humane Society
Ottawa Police Service
Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre
Ottawa School of Art
Ottawa Sports and Entertainment Group Foundation (OSEG)
Qikiqtani Inuit Association
Royal Bank of Canada
SAW
Serenity Renewal for Families
Tewegan Housing for Aboriginal Youth
The Boundless School
Tungasuvvingat Inuit
Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health
White Hatter
Youth Services Bureau (YSB)



“Lots of great work was being done at the hub through cultural avenues. It was great to see the student engaged in their community and culture while at the same time earning credits for school.” – School teacher

Strong Culture
Families
Communities

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