



Mount Carmel
CLINIC





The Gifts We Carry: The Healing Role of Indigenous Women in Their Own Health

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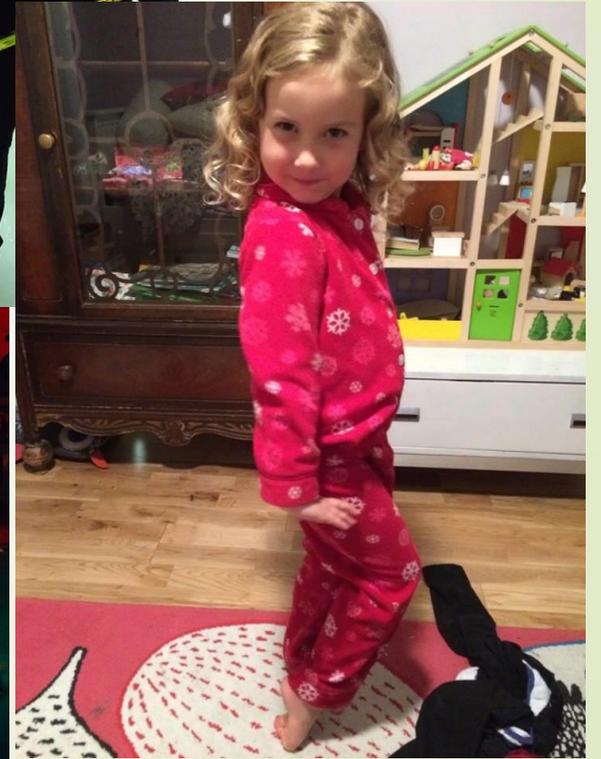
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Honouring the Land Acknowledging First Peoples



Introductions



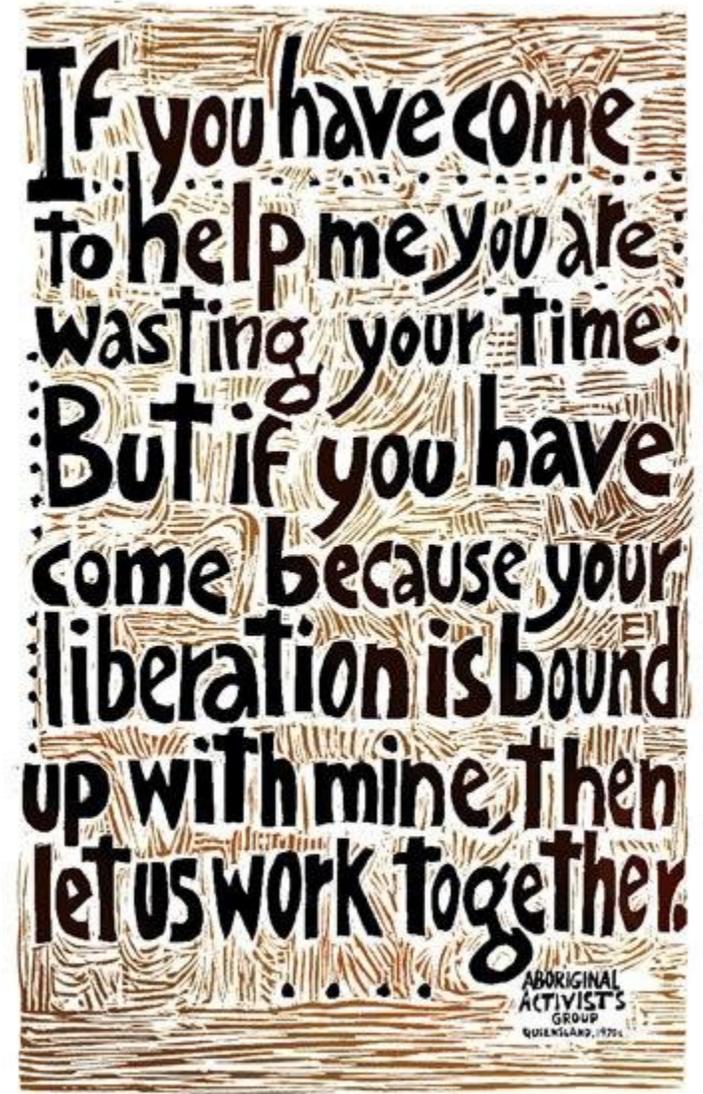


What we are going to explore today

- Settler society and thinking about our role in decolonizing healthcare.
- The teaching of our spirit name, Manito Ikwe Kagiikwe, and how it shapes our approach to care.
- Nothing about us without us. The MIK Women's Advisory Committee.
- What guides our practice and what our participants, staff, and advisory team think about that.
- Early Outcomes (i.e. yes people still get healthcare if we do it this way)
- Learning together: what next?

The role of
settlers in
decolonizing
our
workplaces

➔ www.groundworkforchange.org



If you have come
to help me you are
wasting your time.
But if you have
come because your
liberation is bound
up with mine, then
let us work together.

ABORIGINAL
ACTIVIST'S
GROUP
QUEENSLAND, 1970s

This quote is often attributed to Eribano ana activist leader Ula Wilson who was a member of the group that created the statement.
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Manito Ikwe Kagiikwe: What do we do?



- 'One Stop Shop' providing prenatal care, primary care (including dental), outreach services, housing support, advocacy, childcare, substance use supports, parenting and attachment support, and **social support (drop-in and cooking groups)**.
- *"We're like a little family and I love it. I love all of these staff workers and I love the girls, the clients. We're all related in some way, just even through the streets, whatever, we're all related in some way and we all relate to the same things."*

Manito Ikwe Kagiikwe

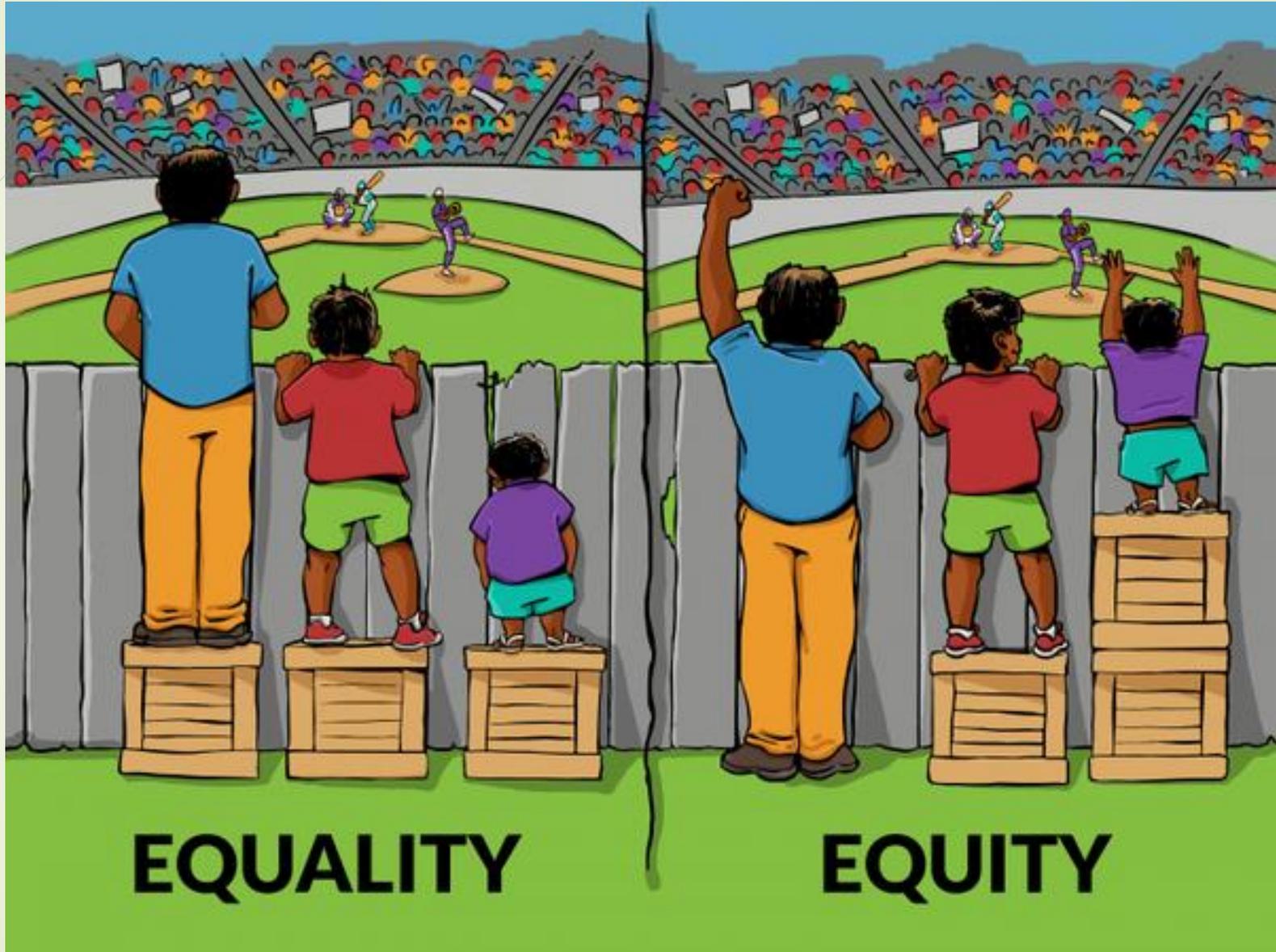


How this Teaching shapes practice



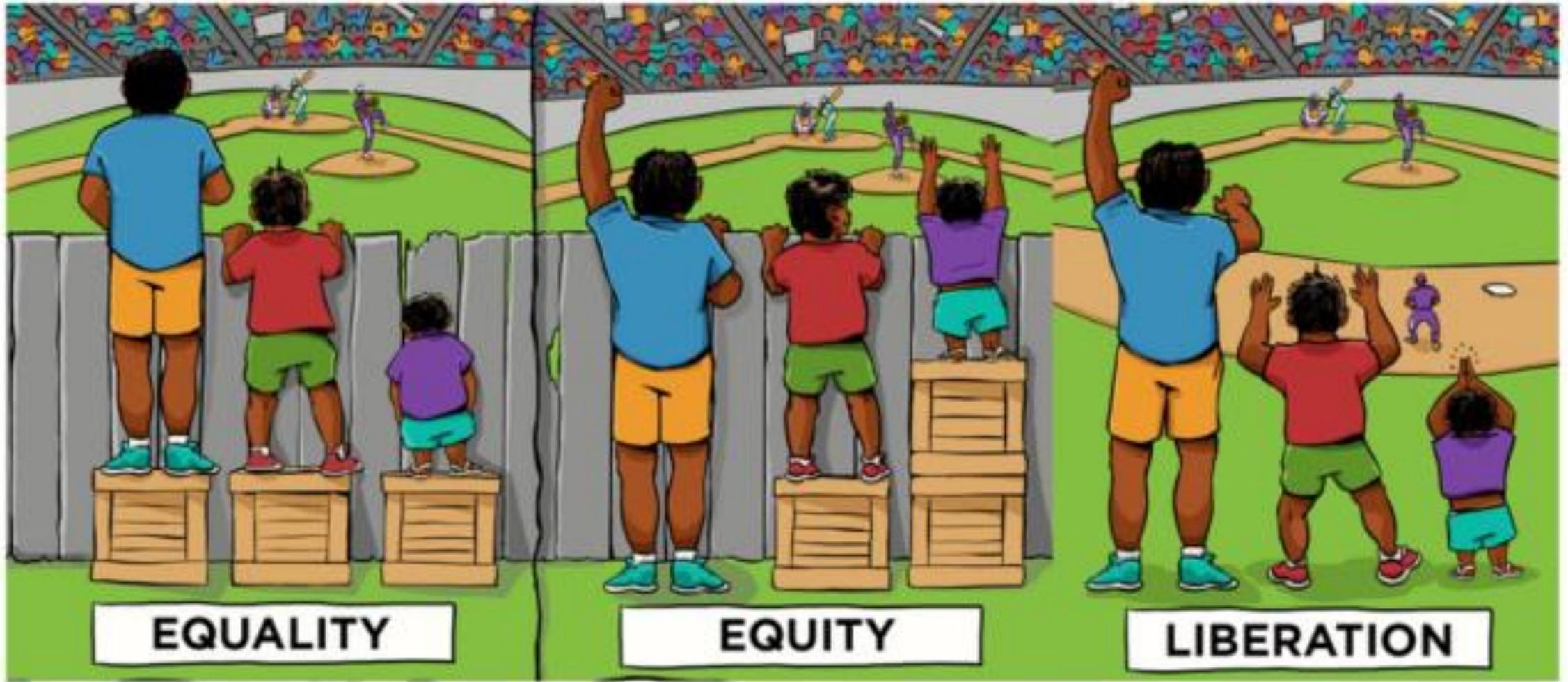
How do we do it?





EQUALITY

EQUITY



We always remember that...
Our Women's Advisory Committee Leads





Women carry all of the teachings they need within them. The role of the program is to walk with women & gently remind them of what they already know

WOMENS ADVISORY COUNCIL
OF MANITO IKWE KAGIIKWE

THE WOMENS ADVISORY COUNCIL IS THE ADVISORY BODY, GUIDING COMPASS, AND KNOWLEDGE KEEPING ORGANIZATION OF THE MOTHERING PROJECT AT MOUNT CARMEL CLINIC. THE MOTHERING PROJECT SUPPORTS WOMEN WHO ARE PREGNANT AND DEAL WITH SUBSTANCE USE. WE ARE THE HEART AND SPIRIT OF THE PROGRAM. WE GATHER REGULARLY TO MAKE DECISIONS ABOUT THE PROGRAM, DETERMINE DIRECTION AND PRIORITIES, AND SHARE OUR INSIGHTS TO HELP THE PROGRAM SERVE WOMEN AND THE COMMUNITY.

THE WOMENS ADVISORY COUNCIL HONOURS THE TRADITIONAL NAME GIVEN TO THE MOTHERING PROJECT: MANITO IKWE KAGIIKWE, BY CARRYING THE TEACHINGS OF THIS NAME FORWARD IN OUR WORK.



KISKAINAMOWIN
NIBWAAKAAWIN - WISDOM

We know that knowledge that is based on lived experience by people who are willing to learn from the choices they have made. Wisdom means committing to learning continuously, and carrying traditional knowledge into the future.



TAPAHTYIMISIWIN
DABAADENDIZIWIN - HUMILITY

We know that humility means being yourself without thinking you are better or worse than anyone else, being able to own our mistakes and be accountable to them, and treating each other as equals with acceptance and inclusion.



SAKETOWIN
ZAA GI'IDIWIN - LOVE

Love means leading with kindness, to ourselves, our children, our families and everyone around us.

OUR WORK IS LED BY OUR GOALS TO:

- BUILD COMMUNITY CONNECTION
- MEET WOMEN WHERE THEY ARE AT WITHOUT JUDGMENT
- KEEP FAMILIES TOGETHER
- HONOR TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE
- SUPPORT AND EMPOWER EACH OTHER
- USE OUR EXPERIENCE TO CREATE CHANGE



SOKITAYHAINNIMOWIN
AAKODE'EWIN - COURAGE

We show courage by sharing our stories. Courage means revealing yourself without knowing what the outcome will be. It also means to stand up and fight for ourselves and others through advocacy, support and connection.



KISTAINNIMOWIN
MINAADENDAMOWIN - RESPECT

We show respect by making sure that everyone's value and knowledge is recognized, that no one is treated with discrimination and judgment and acknowledging that everyone is the expert of their own lives. Security is necessary for respect to be given or received.



TAPWAYWIN
DEBWEWIN - TRUTH

Truth means walking as you talk, following through on things you say you will do. Truth also means honoring your personal truth by being authentic, and being open to the truths of others.



TAPWETHAMOWIN
GWAYAKWAADIZIWIN - HONESTY

Honesty means telling hard truths, and having difficult talks without sugar coating but with kindness. Honesty means taking responsibility, and moving towards a positive future and a better life.

Nothing About Us Without Us



4 Key Program Model Components



Lead With Kindness

- *"I have support there 'cause I have no family out here. I have no support so I kind of look to the Mothering Project."*



Low Threshold Service Access

- ▶ *We didn't want women to feel forced to do any kind of programming, to do any kind of treatment. We kind of were hoping that I guess women would just come and be comfortable and if they needed help, they would feel safe enough and trust enough to ask for whatever it is that they needed..."*



Partnering with other systems and agencies.



- ▶ *“I think that’s our biggest goal, is to build those relationships and let other service providers and agencies know like – we want to help too, right? And we want to work together and we want the best for whoever it is that we’re working with right now. We just want the best; I will come in the kindest, most supportive way.”*

Practice Approach



Harm Reduction Oriented

- *“You know, some of the women that we work with have never been involved in a program that accepts them for they who are and are able to be honest about whatever it is that’s going on in their lives. And not to feel judged, right? Not scrutinized or to feel kind of worthy in any way. So, yeah, I love this program, I really do.”*





A cartoon about Harm Reduction, Addiction, and Connection.

➤ [Cartoon Link](#)

Culturally grounded



"It's really beautiful watching some of those women who were really quiet and withdrawn and kind of suspicious of the people around them, like they're just so lively. And to hear them, like sing and like – for me, when I see someone who was scared of their culture coming to really appreciating it and identifying with it and being grounded in it, and then taking that next step of not just like learning about it, but sharing it too, that's phenomenal..."

Trauma Informed



- *“ So I think the relations that I have with people are honest and are met with integrity. ... I think when I'm working with people that's sort of the way I try and do it....I don't lie, nothing should be a surprise in this program because we are already working with people who are traumatized, like we don't need to traumatize ourselves with mysteries...you know, what you see is kind of what you get*

Early outcomes at Manito Ikwe Kagiikwe

PROMISING PRACTICES FOR KEEPING AT RISK FAMILIES TOGETHER



A GENTLE DOOR THAT LEADS TO ALL THE OTHER DOORS
WOMEN CONNECT WITH US AND USE THIS POSITIVE ATTACHMENT TO ENGAGE WITH OTHER SERVICES AND SUPPORTS IN AN EFFECTIVE WAY

ONE STOP

EASY ACCESS
CHILD CARE
HEALTH CARE
PRENATAL CARE
SOCIAL SUPPORTS
ONE ON ONE SUPPORT
GROUP PROGRAMMING
ADVOCACY



THE MOTHERING PROJECT

MANITO IKWE KAGIIKWE MOUNT CARMEL CLINIC

WHEN WE LAUNCHED THE PROGRAM TWO YEARS AGO:



100%

OF OUR CLIENTS WERE

- USING DRUGS AND ALCOHOL OR WHITE KNUCKLING IT THROUGH PREGNANCY
- ON SOCIAL ASSISTANCE OR HAD NO INCOME
- DEALING WITH A LACK OF SUPPORT

97% HAD AN OPEN FILE WITH CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

OF THE WOMEN ENTERING OUR PROGRAM WITH CHILDREN, 94% HAD CHILDREN IN CARE UPON INTAKE.

90% DISCLOSED SIGNIFICANT TRAUMA HISTORY

56% WERE HOMELESS OR UNDER HOUSED

96% HAD NEVER COMPLETED A TREATMENT PROGRAM

79% DID NOT HAVE PRENATAL CARE

WHAT WE ARE SEEING FOR OUR CLIENTS NOW

92%

ARE NOW RECEIVING SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

63%

OF FAMILIES ARE CURRENTLY HOUSED

37%

ARE PARENTING FULL TIME

36%

NOW STATE THAT THEY ABSTAIN FROM USING DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

47%

STATE THAT THEY HAVE REDUCED THEIR SUBSTANCE USE

53%

HAVE TAKEN THEIR BABIES HOME WITH THEM FROM HOSPITAL.

62 WOMEN WERE SCREENED INTO THE PROGRAM

49 OF THOSE WOMEN ARE WELL CONNECTED WITH OUR TEAM AND ENGAGE IN PROGRAMMING REGULARLY

WE ARE SERVING PRIMARILY INDIGENOUS FAMILIES



Key Lessons Learned



- ▶ Stable Housing is a strong predictor of parent's likelihood of going home with their baby.
- ▶ For programs to be deeply meaningful for participants, the participants must be involved in the design of the program at all levels :Development, Implementation, and Evaluation.
- ▶ It is easier to get funding to build a building than it is to staff a program.
- ▶ Hiring for kindness is the single most important factor when building a team from scratch.
- ▶ Frank, open, knowledgeable and value neutral positions on drugs and alcohol help ensure that women impacted by substance use will regularly access prenatal care.
- ▶ Build strong and respectful relationships with the child welfare system while continuing to advocate for a better way to support families.
- ▶ Mothering looks different for different people, but is no more or less meaningful to that mum or that child.

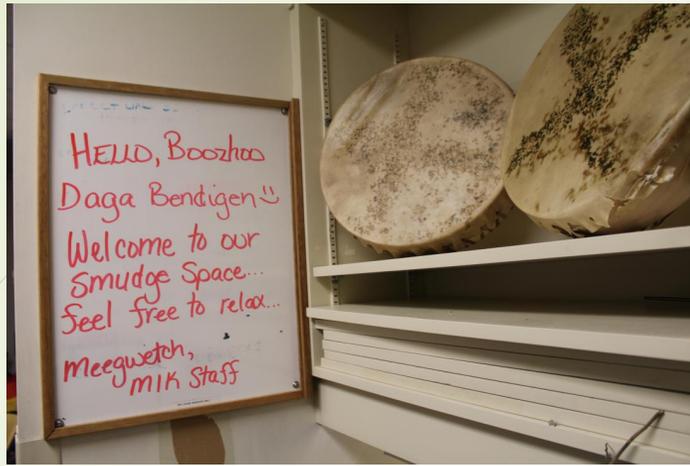
THE RELATIONSHIP IS THE INTERVENTION



Culture and Identity = recovery/healing

- *"I never lived back in the day, but when I hear other people take that step and they sing or whatever, it like projects me to this other time and place when it was just like – when that stuff was natural and it's just like – there's a real magic in that. And not like a hocus-pocus kind of magic, but like a – I don't know, something that you can't take away from, you know."*





- *“When you have a space and a place and a time where all the issues that people label you with, when you get to go and like none of those things are what confine you, or limit your ability or your heart or your spirit, you have a real chance to come into growing who you are and who you want to become.”*

