



Reflecting on Our Journey This Year – and the Road Ahead



WELCOME MESSAGE

Dear Team,

As we close out another year, I want to take a moment to reflect on what we've accomplished together and to recognize the heart and spirit you bring to this work. Every day, you embody the commitment to "Keeping Our Own" by creating spaces of safety, connection, and culturally appropriate care for Indigenous children, youth, and families.

This year has been about building strength—within our teams, our programs, and the communities we serve. The progress we've made through the Agency Refresh Project, the growth of prevention services, and programs like Circle of Security Parenting and the Biindigen Program is a testament to your hard work and dedication. Whether it's supporting families through challenges, guiding youth toward independence, or uplifting cultural teachings, you have made a meaningful difference in so many lives.

Your efforts go beyond delivering services; you are helping preserve traditions, strengthen family bonds, and foster a sense of belonging that is vital to our communities. It is not easy work, but it is important work—and you do it with compassion, integrity, and care.

As the holiday season approaches, I hope you take time to rest, reconnect with loved ones, and find joy in the simple moments. The land has so much to offer us—whether it's the quiet of a winter morning, the warmth of shared meals, or the laughter of family and friends. Give yourself the same care and kindness you extend to others every day.

Thank you for everything you do and for walking alongside the families and communities we serve. Together, we are building something powerful: spaces of healing, growth, and hope for generations to come. I'm excited for all that 2025 will bring as we continue this journey, grounded in our values and traditions.

Wishing you a peaceful and restorative holiday season.

Chi Miigwetch,

*Kristin Murray
Executive Director*

Year in Review: Strengthening Families and Communities In 2024

As we reflect on 2024, Kunuwanimano Child & Family Services is proud of the programs and services launched or enhanced this year to better serve children, youth, and families across our 11 First Nations communities.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2024

Parenting Workshop:

The **Circle of Security Parenting Program** provided parents with tools to support their children's emotional well-being and self-esteem. One participant shared:

“*I'm enjoying this program and how much it's helping me learn and grow!*”

Youth Empowerment:

Our redesigned **Transitional Aged Youth (TAY)** program supported youth transitioning to independent living with life skills training, housing support, and cultural teachings. The **Biindigen Program** helped two youth secure independent housing, while the re-established **Oskatish Club (OC)** offered life-skills workshops and cultural programming with growing attendance.

Cultural Services

From **sweat lodges** to **drumming circles**, our Cultural Connectors facilitated teachings and ceremonies, fostering stronger connections to Indigenous heritage for children and families.



Northern College Powwow.



Rock your Mocs, CHarnelle Kapashesit, Cultural Connector, Chapleau district.

Impact Update

SUCCESS STORIES:

- Siblings supported across multiple departments secured subsidized housing, accessed services tailored to their needs, and re-enrolled in school with a path toward graduation.
- Increased self-referrals for youth programs as participants shared how much the services helped them grow.

IMPACT BY NUMBERS:

- **563** prevention services opened to support families.
- **79** Child and Youth Worker programs opened.
- **\$7.4 million** in Jordan's Principle funding secured through application assistance to help children and families access vital services.

This year, we strengthened our commitment to "Keeping Our Own" by delivering culturally grounded, innovative programs that meet the unique needs of the families and youth we serve.



Mattagami Open House, February 2024.



Rock Your Mocs, Timmins District.

Continuing Professional Development Opportunities

As we approach 2025, we encourage all staff to actively engage in the professional development opportunities available through our Learning and Development Department. Participating in these programs not only enhances your skills but also strengthens our collective ability to serve Indigenous children, youth, and families more effectively.

Available Training Programs:

- **In-House Trainings:** Sessions covering essential topics such as Case Note, Duty to Report, Difficult Conversations, and Child Protection Standards. To register, visit: my KunuNet to view and register for upcoming sessions.
- **First Aid/CPR Training:** Facilitated by our certified trainers, offering both in-person and hybrid sessions across various districts. To register, email: firstaidtraining@kunuwanimano.com
- **Child Passenger Technician Training (Car Seat Squad):** Specialized training for staff and caregivers who transport children and youth. For more information, contact: CarSeatSquad@kunuwanimano.com
- **External Trainings:** Opportunities through organizations like OACAS, ANCFSAO, and YWCA Toronto, offering courses such as Pathways to Authorization, Customary Care, and Life Skills Coach training.

We encourage you to take advantage of these opportunities to further your skills and consider pursuing new certifications that align with your career goals. Once completed, please forward all training certificates and documents, including supervisor-approved training request forms and training agreement forms, to the training email address to keep your training history up to date. If you have questions, please contact the Learning and Development Department.



HR Career Fair



Rock Your Mocs.

Staff Spotlight: The Seven Grandfather Teachings Awards & The Humour, Creativity, and Kindness Awards:



Celebrating Our 2024 Award Winners

At Kunuwanimano Child and Family Services, we believe in recognizing and celebrating the incredible contributions of our team. The annual awards are an opportunity to honour individuals who embody our core values and demonstrate exceptional qualities in their work. This year, we are proud to highlight the recipients of the seven awards based on the Grandfather Teachings, along with three additional awards recognizing Humour, Creativity, and Kindness.

Each of these individuals was nominated and voted for by their colleagues—a true testament to their impact and dedication.

Not pictured: Treena Demers, Kindness Award; Carrie Shaw, Love Award; and Staci Etherington, Respect Award.



Josee Portelance, Creativity Award



Tracy Ryan, Honesty Award



Stella Okimaw, Wisdom Award



Kaidin Doiron, Humility Award



Dailyn Brunet, Courage Award



Natalie Bedard, Truth Award



Victor Linklater, Humour Award

Looking Ahead to 2025

As we look forward, Kunuwanimano remains committed to:

- Expanding access to services for families and youth.
- Strengthening programs that reflect our cultural values and traditions.
- Supporting Indigenous youth in building the skills and confidence they need to lead strong, independent lives.



Hand drumming.



Cleaning Geese.



Medicines on a blankets.



Staff Holiday Luncheon



Closing Message from the Board Chair



A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

Dear Team,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to extend my deepest appreciation to each and every one of you. Your work this year has demonstrated unwavering commitment, compassion, and care for the families, youth, and children we serve.

As a Board, we see firsthand the impact of your efforts: families finding support during difficult times, youth gaining the tools to build brighter futures, and cultural teachings being woven into every aspect of care.

This year, we have seen progress in building stronger, more culturally grounded spaces where children and families feel supported and connected. That success comes from you—the frontline workers, caregivers, leadership, and support teams—whose dedication drives this agency forward.

As we enter the holiday season, I hope you take the time you deserve to rest and reflect on the positive change you've created. The work you do matters deeply—not just today, but for generations to come.

Looking ahead to 2025, the Board remains steadfast in its support of the agency's mission and vision. Together, we will continue to build on this momentum, guided by the principles of "Keeping Our Own" and strengthening the bonds that unite us as a community.

Thank you for everything you do. Your contributions make a difference every day, and we are truly grateful.

Wishing you a peaceful holiday season and a new year filled with hope and renewal.

Chi Miigwetch,

Roger Archibald

Board Chair

