

SESSION & PANEL DESCRIPTIONS

BIOGRAPHIES: ELDERS, MC, SPEAKERS & PERFORMERS



Breakout sessions were thoughtfully curated and guided by the teachings of the Medicine Wheel, focusing on the interconnected aspects of the **heart, mind, body, and spirit**.

Capacity for each breakout session is limited and varies by room size. Sessions will be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

WEDNESDAY MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS

•>> 10:45 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Choose 1 of 4

HEART

HOMELESSNESS AND MISSING PERSONS: ADDRESSING THE INTERSECTION OF VULNERABILITY AND DISPLACEMENT WITHIN WINNIPEG'S INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

Sponsored by: Me-Dian Credit Union

Led by: Nicole Martel (Community Engagement/Support Team, Aboriginal Alert)

Where: Charleswood B

The crisis of missing Indigenous persons in Winnipeg is closely linked to homelessness, particularly in urban Indigenous communities. Homelessness heightens vulnerability, often leading to tragic disappearances. Aboriginal Alert, a grassroots initiative, raises awareness and supports families of missing Indigenous persons. This session will examine the connection between homelessness and the missing persons crisis, exploring social, economic, and systemic factors. By emphasizing lived experiences and Aboriginal Alert's work, this session aims to foster collaboration among service providers, policymakers, and Indigenous leaders to address homelessness and prevent future disappearances.

MIND

THE INTERSECTION OF BRAIN INJURY AND COLONIAL SYSTEMS: AN INTERACTIVE MINI-WORLD CAFÉ TO EXPLORE HOUSING INSECURITY AND HOMELESSNESS WITH A VISION TO IMPROVE POSITIVE OUTCOMES THROUGH RECONCILIATION

Led by: Lisa Engel (University of Manitoba, Institute for Work & Health), Janine Bramadat (End Homelessness Winnipeg), Meredith Daun (Social Worker & Counsellor), and Kevin Plett-Hoffman (Community Member & Person with Lived Experience)

Where: Assiniboia A

Individuals with brain injuries often struggle with long-term challenges in thinking, mobility, emotions, and social interactions, which can lead to housing insecurity or homelessness without proper support. Indigenous people in Canada are disproportionately affected by brain injury and face greater barriers to accessing care, worsening their vulnerability. Within colonial systems, brain injury is stigmatized and under-serviced, especially when intersecting with housing issues, racism, and systemic inequities. This session will explore these intersections and discuss ways to address these inequities and improve support for those affected.



BODY

DESIGNING HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS SOLUTIONS FOR SPECIFIC POPULATIONS

Sponsored by: Home Depot

Panel: Cheryl Starr (Cultural Support & Program Coordinator, Spence Neighbourhood Association), Levi A. Foy (Executive Director, Sunshine House), Dodie Jordaan (Executive

Director, Ka Ni Kanichihk), and Shanlee Scott (Executive Director, Ndinawe)

Moderator: Brandy Kowal (Registered Social Worker, Red Willow Connections Consulting and

Wellness)

Where: Assiniboia B

This session will focus on designing housing and homelessness solutions tailored to the unique needs of specific populations. Experts will discuss how customized approaches can address the distinct barriers these groups face in accessing stable housing, from cultural considerations to specialized support services. Attendees will gain insights into innovative programs and policies that prioritize equity, inclusivity, and long-term stability for vulnerable populations.

SPIRIT

THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING THE ROOT OF INDIGENOUS HOMELESSNESS

Sponsored by: Bruce Oake Recovery Centre

Led by: Kim Kakakaway (Indigenous Training and Relations Consultant, A Way Home Canada)

Where: Charleswood A

Homelessness began at the initial displacement, oppression and colonization towards the Indigenous people of Turtle Island, also known as Canada. To effectively support and come alongside Indigenous people, we need to start at the root of Indigenous homelessness by "Acknowledging Truth" and look at the impacts of colonization, residential schools, the 60's scoop, intergenerational trauma and ongoing systemic racism. From there we "Work Towards Reconciliation" by understanding the importance of Relationship when coming alongside Indigenous peoples, as well as highlighting the resiliency and strength of our people, culture and community.



WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

•>>•1:15 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Choose 1 of 4

HEART

LEARNING AS WE GROW: STRATEGIES TO MANAGE BURNOUT DURING CRISIS

Sponsored by: Réseau Compassion Network

Led by: Levi A. Foy (Executive Director, Sunshine House) and Aaron Mann (Data Management

and Program Analyst, Sunshine House)

Where: Charleswood A

Sunshine House experienced a period of rapid unplanned and chaotic growth between 2020 and 2024, during this time the organization had to develop a number of different policies and changes to provide relevant appropriate care for our teams. This workshop will present the cultural frameworks for addressing challenges and traumatic events. We will provide examples of solutions and impacts as well as examples of how to navigate the complexities of supporting employees and community members in unprecedented times of crisis.

MIND

DATA SOVEREIGNTY

Led by: Dr. Stephanie Sinclair (Data Sovereignty Lead, First Nations Health and Social Secretariat of Manitoba) and Carla Cochrane (Data Sovereignty Implementation Lead, First Nations Health and Social Secretariat of Manitoba)

Where: Charleswood B

The session will look at what Data Sovereignty is, the importance of data, knowing the differences between western vs. First Nations research ethics and building and maintaining relationships. The workshop will engage attendees to see what the priority areas and data needs are when working with ending homelessness to help communities and organizations move towards their visions. The engagement report will be submitted to End Homelessness Winnipeg and will also be used within FNHSSM's overall engagement report to help identify what is needed within the Manitoba region for Data Sovereignty.



BODY

TRANSFORMING SHELTER SPACES: RETHINKING TEMPORARY HOUSING FOR LASTING IMPACT

Sponsored by: F-Blok Architecture

Panel: Christine Vanagas (Director of Community Wellness, Siloam Mission), Jamil Mahmood (Executive Director, Main Street Project), Frank Parkes (Executive Director, N'Dinawemak-Our Relatives' Place)

Moderator: Mark Fleming (Chair, Community Advisory Board, End Homelessness Winnipeg)

Where: Assiniboia B

How can we design shelters that truly meet the needs of those they serve? This panel will explore innovative approaches to modernizing and adapting physical spaces to create environments that go beyond basic shelter—spaces that foster dignity, safety, and community, including citing specific examples of challenges and successes in Winnipeg's shelter spaces.

SPIRIT

BANNOCK & TEA GRANDPARENTS CIRCLE

Elders Circle: End Homelessness Together Elders Council Members – Ivy Chaske, Mary

Wilson, Helen Robinson-Settee, Wambdi Wakita, Linda Schatkowsky

Moderator: Kathy Mallet **Where:** Assiniboia A

Imagine the warmth of family gatherings where relatives share stories over bannock with blueberry jam and hot tea. Spoken in their traditional language, these conversations carried a sense of comfort, connection, and curiosity. Quietly observed by children, they are filled with wisdom and lessons that echo through generations. In this session, you'll listen in on an intimate conversation among Elders as they share stories, reflections, and lived experiences. Weaving a tapestry of resilience, community, and tradition, they will explore the roots and impacts of homelessness while offering solutions grounded in cultural knowledge, community strength, and ancestral wisdom, inspiring fresh perspectives and hope for meaningful change.



THURSDAY MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS

•>> 10:45 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Choose 1 of 4

HEART

ART AS KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION RESEARCH TEAM: ART IN ACTION: YOUTH EXPERIENCES OF HOMELESSNESS THROUGH A HARM REDUCTION LENS

Sponsored by: Canadian Mental Health Association

Led by: Brianna Hunt (Children's Hospital Research Institute of Manitoba), Sunday

Queskekapow, Cheyenne Traverse, Jaydin Peters, Jody Martens

Where: Charleswood B

This workshop presents findings from a literature search and environmental scan, revealing that few youth-serving organizations in Winnipeg are grounded in harm reduction practices, despite their proven effectiveness in reducing housing barriers for at-risk youth. Artwork from six harm-reduction-based workshops (April-June 2024), where youth with lived experiences of homelessness shared their perspectives on housing supports and harm reduction, will be showcased. Participants will receive a Zine featuring art and quotes from the workshops, highlighting youth voices in shaping future interventions. Initial findings on the role of ceremony and the potential of youth-focused harm reduction to prevent homelessness will also be shared.

MIND

FOCUSSING ON STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION THROUGH A PEER LENS [PART ONE]

Led by: David Stewart (Manager of Education and Training, Sara Riel)

Where: Assiniboia A

Despite whether or not we have a diagnosable mental illness or struggle with an addiction, we all have mental health – sometimes good and sometimes not-so-good. When we can recognize and acknowledge our own struggles, our own weaknesses and vulnerabilities, we can begin to see ourselves as peers – Models of Living Hope – who have made it through dark times, and who can empathize and support family, friends, neighbours and our community-at-large. We can begin the process of tearing down walls between US and THEM, eradicating stigma and discrimination for those who continue to struggle.

This interactive workshop is presented in two scaffolded sessions – morning and afternoon – designed to explore recovery from mental illness and addiction, while gaining tools to enhance mental wellness and help individuals reframe self-stigma. While each session holds valuable insights on its own, attending both provides the fullest benefit.



BODY

INTERNATIONAL SUCCESS STORIES FROM SEATTLE AND HOUSTON

Panel: Melody Barr (Assistant Director, Public Services & Economic

Development, City of Houston), Nawiishtunmi Nightgun (Chief Traditional Officer, Chief

Seattle Club) and Derrick Belgarde (Executive Director, Chief Seattle Club)

Hosted by: Helen Robinson-Settee

Where: Assiniboia B

This workshop will explore international success stories from Seattle and Houston, highlighting innovative approaches to addressing homelessness within Indigenous and marginalized communities. The Chief Seattle Club, a leading housing developer for Indigenous peoples, is working toward achieving functional zero in chronic homelessness by using culturally appropriate frameworks. Despite Indigenous populations representing less than 2% of Seattle's population, they have accounted for up to 32% of the city's chronic homelessness rate. Melody Barr will also share insights from Houston's successful homelessness initiatives. Learn how Winnipeg can draw inspiration from these successes to improve its own strategies in addressing homelessness and supporting Indigenous populations.

SPIRIT

ADDRESSING THE NEED BENEATH THE CHALLENGE: CREATING SPACES OF SAFETY & LOVE FOR YOUTH

Sponsored by: Home Depot

Led by: Brandy Kowal (Registered Social Worker, Red Willow Connections Consulting and

Wellness)

Where: Charleswood A

Participants will explore how to shift focus from surface-level challenges faced by youth, especially those experiencing homelessness, to addressing their deeper needs for safety, connection, and identity. Through reflection, storytelling, and interactive activities, attendees will examine how their own actions and environments can foster safety for youth. Facilitators will present key insights on youth homelessness, redefine perceptions of challenges, and engage participants in a co-regulation activity to create a sense of safety. The session will conclude with practical strategies for supporting vulnerable youth in meaningful ways.



THURSDAY AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

•>>•1:15 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Choose 1 of 4

HEART

WHAT IS PEER ENGAGEMENT? WHY DO WE NEED IT?

Sponsored by: Johnston Group Inc.

Led by: Al Wiebe (Peer and Community Engagement Trainer, Of No Fixed Address)

Where: Charleswood A

Peer engagement, a practice involving the integration of people with lived experience (PWLE) into organizations, is a growing movement. But what does it really mean? Is it something you fully embrace or is your philosophy, "if it ain't broke, don't fix it." This thought-provoking, full-session presentation will dive into the heart of peer engagement. Al Wiebe, a nationally recognized peer engagement trainer with lived experience, will lead this session. With a deep understanding of both the benefits and challenges of bringing PWLE into organizational frameworks, Al will explore the methodologies and strategies necessary to build successful, sustainable peer engagement programs and engage PWLE into your organization.

MIND

FOCUSSING ON STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION THROUGH A PEER LENS [PART TWO]

Led by: David Stewart (Manager of Education and Training, Sara Riel)

Where: Assiniboia A

Despite whether or not we have a diagnosable mental illness or struggle with an addiction, we all have mental health – sometimes good and sometimes not-so-good. When we can recognize and acknowledge our own struggles, our own weaknesses and vulnerabilities, we can begin to see ourselves as peers – Models of Living Hope – who have made it through dark times, and who can empathize and support family, friends, neighbours and our community-at-large. We can begin the process of tearing down walls between US and THEM, eradicating stigma and discrimination for those who continue to struggle.

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BODY

DATA WALK

Led by: End Homelessness Winnipeg

Where: Charleswood B

An interactive community experience that invites gathering attendees to engage in meaningful dialogue around local data and research findings. Participants will rotate through six data stations to discuss the findings and offer their perspective on how, moving forward, we can all focus our time and resources to end homelessness.

SPIRIT

PANEL: SUPPORTING NEWCOMERS TRANSITION FROM SHELTER TO PERMANENT HOUSING

Panel: Mark Stewart (Executive Director, Salvation Army), Eve Sotiriadou (Executive Director, Canadian Muslim Women's Institute), Omar Fahmawi (Access to Justice Project Coordinator, Healthy Muslim Families)

Moderator: Codi Gunthur (Executive Director, New Journey Housing)

Where: Assiniboia B

This panel will explore strategies and best practices for supporting newcomers in their transition from shelters to permanent housing. Panelists will discuss the unique challenges newcomers face—such as navigating housing systems, overcoming financial barriers, and addressing cultural and language needs—while highlighting successful community-based programs, collaborative approaches, and policy recommendations that promote a smooth transition and long-term housing stability.



BIOGRAPHIES: ELDERS, MC, SPEAKERS & PERFORMERS

ELDERS

◆>> HELEN ROBINSON-SETTEE

Tansi. Aniin. Boozhoo. Helen is Anishinaabe (Ojibwe) from Dauphin River First Nation in the interlake region of Manitoba. She currently resides in Winnipeg, Treaty 1 territory and homeland of her nation the Anishinaabeg. Helen's first language is Anishinaabemowin (Ojibwe) and is honoured that her parents spoke their language in their home. She learned to speak English when she entered the public school system. She understands her language fluently, writes and speaks Anishinaabemowin semi-fluently.

Helen is a lifelong educator and is currently on leave from the Province of Manitoba. She has a Bachelor of Education and a Masters of Education from the University of Manitoba. Helen is also active on a number of education, community and health boards.

Helen lives The Good Life as an Anishinaabe-kwe and shares her knowledge and experiences with the various teachings she has been gifted. Helen is the mother of two adult sons and a proud Kookum (Grandmother) to three beautiful grandchildren.

◆>>>·IVY CHASKE

Ivy Chaske is a Dakota Grandmother, Elder, and Knowledge Keeper. She has been working with the NorWest Co-op Community Health Intervention and Outreach Team for over three years and provides teachings and support to the youth participants and their families. She has been instrumental in changing the way the Intervention and Outreach Team approaches wraparound supports and was invited to sit on the Wrap Canada board two years ago.

She has dedicated her life to working on Indigenous issues through community activism and is passionate about improving relationships and developing alliances with non-Indigenous people. Ivy believes that traditional teachings are a foundation for the work that IOT does with youth and families and that through reclaiming this knowledge youth will develop a sense of pride in their identity, strength of spirit and belonging, and a sense of place within their Indigenous Nation.

•>> FLORENCE PAYNTER

Florence Paynter is from Sandy Bay First Nation and a band member of Norway House Cree Nation. She is a third degree Mide Anishinabekwe and holds a Masters Degree in Education from UM. Florence speaks Anishinabe fluently and has been involved in many language and cultural initiatives and ceremonies. She helps teach the cultural and spiritual knowledge and traditions of the Anishinabe people. Florence attended residential school and works hard to teach about the history of her people, the legacy of Indian residential schools and its impact on us as people. She believes that we can be proud of who we are by learning about our own families, our own histories and our own languages.



◆>>> LINDA SHATKOWSKY

Linda Shatkowsky is a parent and foster care provider who has lived in the Garden Grove School community for over 30 years. Linda is a proud Métis with roots that originate from St. Laurent, Manitoba. She is also a member of the Manitoba Métis Federation and serves as vice chair for the Métis Elder and Youth Local. As a foster care provider, Linda has gained experience in navigating the Child and Family Services system. She is known as a strong advocate for children in care and within the school system. Linda has been active in the school community for many years. She has been a School Trustee and sat on various boards. She sat on the Kindergarten to grade twelve school and early Childhood Learning. Linda and her husband Doug have been together for more than thirty years. She has two adult twin sons, a daughter-in-law, and four grandchildren. She is known by others to be caring and willing to support those in need. She always makes the time to meet with people to hear their ideas or concerns and works with them to find a solution. She believes that with all the diversity in our city, communication is a priority within our school and community. Linda believes that children must come first, as they are the future.

◆>>> MARK HALL

Mark Hall, Ikce Wicasta, was born and raised in Sioux Valley Dakota Nation. He has dedicated his life to serving others in the helping field. A traditional Dakota man, he is deeply connected to his community, finding joy in hunting and guiding children toward a good way of life. Mark draws inspiration from the teachings of his Dakota grandparents, using their wisdom to foster healing and provide direction for future generations.

◆>> · MARTHA PEET

Martha Peet, Inuit Elder and Traditional Knowledge Keeper from Taloyaok, Nunavut, believes that coming from the Traditional Knowledge perspective, telling stories is about sharing her own experiences and the traditional Inuit way of life. Taloyaok was founded in 1948 when the HBC established a trading post. Five nomadic families moved in, including hers. Martha Peet was born in 1950.

"I was there from the beginning. I lived in an igloo in the winter and a tent in the summer. My job as a child was collecting cotton in the summer for the wick on the seal oil [soapstone] lamp, which was fueled by blubber. I always had chores. I carried water twice a day from the lake. I made bannock and tea. We boiled our meat—seal and caribou," she says. As a Traditional Knowledge Keeper and a storyteller for over 30 years, Peet enjoys sharing stories about her life, where she is from, and the Inuit way of life of years ago including the importance of animals and traditions.



•>> DR. MARY WILSON

Dr. Mary Wilson is known to many as Grandmother Of Four Directions and Walks With Wolves. Renowned in Canada and many parts of the world as a spiritual teacher, Spirit Walker, and Healer. Mary focuses on rebuilding community and individual strength and independence through a wide range of therapies, practices and guided spiritual programs to ultimately create a better life and place for everyone. Her gentle presence has touched many lives over the past forty years helping people heal, emotionally, physically, and spiritually. Mary shares a short and empowering message for our people.

◆>>> PHILLIP PAYNTER

Philip Paynter is from Norway House Cree Nation and is a fourth degree Midewiwin of the Minwewewigan Lodge. Elder Paynter served for many years as a spiritual advisor and Elder at Stony Mountain Penitentiary. He is also a retired cultural teacher having taught young people about tradition and spirituality at the Niji Mahkwa School in Winnipeg, MB, and a former counsellor for First Nations students at all levels in the education system.

◆ > WANBDI WAKITA

Wanbdi Wakita, from Sioux Valley Dakota Nation, has spent a lifetime making prayers for people and is a member of the University of Manitoba's Respectful Rematriation Repatriation Ceremony Council. As a residential school survivor, peacekeeper with the Canadian Armed Forces, former Chief of Sioux Valley Dakota Nation, and Sundance Chief, Wanbdi has walked many paths. Wanbdi sits on numerous councils for organizations such as the Winnipeg and Louis Riel School Divisions Grandparents' Advisory Councils and the MKO Traditional Healer Program. In 2016, he received the Order of Manitoba for his lifelong work to support those in need and promote unity among peoples. After thirty-three years working in corrections he transitioned into the role of Grandfather in Residence for the University of Manitoba Access Program in 2018.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES

◆>>·LISA MEECHES

Lisa Meeches, CM, OM, is an extraordinary Anishinaabe Kwe from Treaty 1 Territory. She is a remarkable figure and a devoted mentor to the next generation of storytellers. Her contributions to the television and film industry, both in her home province, Canada, and on the international stage, have been nothing short of groundbreaking, earning her numerous awards and accolades.

As a producer, Lisa has been at the helm of award-winning projects that have not only entertained but also enlightened audiences. Her work has furthered the cause of First Nation and Indigenous storytelling and shed light on some of the most critical issues facing our nation.

But Lisa's impact doesn't stop there. She has developed and hosted programs that beautifully showcase our First Nations stories of resilience, giving voice to narratives that deserve



recognition and understanding.

Beyond the screen, Lisa Meeches is actively engaged with community and national organizations. She serves as the executive director of the Manito Ahbee Festival, a cultural celebration that holds deep significance, and she is a proud founding partner of Eagle Vision INC., where she continues to shape the future of Indigenous storytelling.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

SOLUTION THOMAS MÜLLER

Clayton Thomas-Müller is a member of the Treaty #6 based Mathias Colomb Cree Nation also known as Pukatawagan located in Northern Manitoba, Canada. Based in Winnipeg. He has been recognized by Yes Magazine as a Climate Hero and is featured as one of ten international human rights defenders in the National Canadian Museum for Human Rights. He has campaigned across Canada, Alaska and the lower 48 states organizing hundreds of First Nations, Alaska Native and Native American communities to support Indigenous Peoples to defend their territories against the encroachment of the fossil fuel industry with a special focus on stopping the expansion of the Canadian tar sands and its associated pipelines. Clayton is an award winning film director, media producer, organizer, facilitator, public speaker and bestselling author on Indigenous rights and environmental & economic justice. His book, *Life in the City of Dirty Water*, was a national bestseller and a CBC Canada Reads finalist.

NIIGAANWEWIDAM SINCLAIR

Niigaan is Anishinaabe and originally from St. Peter's (Little Peguis) near Selkirk, Manitoba. He is an award-winning writer, editor and activist whose written work has appeared in The Guardian, The Globe and Mail and the Winnipeg Free Press. He trains educators across Canada, having written curricula for organizations like the Assembly of First Nations. Currently an associate professor and formerly head of the Department of Native Studies at the University of Manitoba, Niigaan teaches courses in Indigenous literature, culture, history and politics. He and his first partner have a daughter, Sarah, born in 2006. Niigaan is the son of the late great Senator Murray Sinclair, who was chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada from 2009 to 2015.

PERFORMERS

***)>** BUFFALO RED THUNDER DRUM GROUP

Buffalo Red Thunder is a family drum group that focuses on connection as well as tradition. At the heart of Buffalo Red Thunder are drum brothers that celebrate life with every single beat of their drum. They welcome people of all ages from all walks of life to share in that heartbeat of the drum.



•>>> LEONARD SUMNER

Anishinaabe MC/Singer/Songwriter Leonard Sumner's storytelling flows directly from the shores of Little Saskatchewan First Nation, located in the heart of the Interlake of Manitoba. Sumner's self-determined sound is evidence of his ability to simultaneously occupy landscapes of multiple musical genres including; Hip-Hop, Spoken Word, Country, and Rhythm and Blues.

With every vibration of the strings on his guitar, Leonard rattles the dust off truths that have been buried for far too long. On stage he poetically sings to awaken the consciousness of audiences who may have been unaware of their slumber. In this era of unsettling history and healing wounds of the past, Sumner's music is an expression of medicine that walks the line between fortitude and fragility.

•>> NIKKI KOMAKSIUTIKSAK

Nikki Komaksiutiksak is an Inuit woman from Chesterfield Inlet, Nunavut. Nikki is the Executive Director to Tunngasugit, Western Canada's first Inuit Resource Centre. She has been featured in many events around the world, always sharing her identity and teaching about her Canadian Inuit Culture. Nikki was selected by Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada as the 2023 Inuk Woman of the Year. An amazing honour, indeed.

TAYLER FLEMING

Tayler LeClaire, of Tayler Fleming Music, is a proud Red River Métis from Minitonas, MB who promotes Métis culture through the art of traditional Métis fiddle music. Her journey began at 9 years old and it has since provided countless opportunities to perform locally, nationally, and internationally.