

ANNUAL REPORT

2020/2021



toba
Centre for
Children & Youth

A safe place for children and youth.

Toba Centre (formerly Snowflake Place) was created in 2013 to provide a safe, child-friendly setting for child victims and their caregivers to meet with services providers, and where children are interviewed by highly trained forensic interviewers. To date, we have conducted nearly 2,500 forensic interviews with children who have experienced abuse or been witness to violence.

Board of Directors

APRIL 2020 – AUGUST 2020

Michael Koppang
Kelly Wozney
Debra Baker
Amber Vialette
Corrine Scott

Jamie Blunden
Sheila Hutton
Olivia Baldwin
Tracie Afifi
Callum Beattie

SEPTEMBER 2020 – MARCH 2021

Don Smith
John Douglas
Lori Duncan

Chris Thorne
Sheila North
Aaron Degroot

Corporation Members

Manitoba Families
Winnipeg Police Service
Royal Canadian Mounted Police
Manitoba Justice
Shared Health
Child and Family Services Authorities

GREETINGS FROM OUR

Board Chair and Executive Director

On behalf of the Board of Directors, staff, and volunteers at Toba Centre, we are pleased to present our 2020 annual report.

This was a big year for Toba Centre, as we move ahead with our transformation into a fully functional, co-located child advocacy centre. With the arrival of a global pandemic at the start of the year, we did wonder whether we needed to take a step back on our development plans. As everyone navigated the public health crisis, much of the world came to a halt. However, child abuse did not stop and we quickly decided that we could not step back. We could not afford to slow down – children and families in this province need us more than ever and the dire need for better coordination and increased focus on the needs of children and families affected by abuse could not be more clear. So we didn't stop. We made modifications to follow public health orders and did not interrupt our services for even a day. In fact, through all of this, and with much support, we were able to strengthen our services, adding case navigators – a critical role in fostering better outcomes for children, youth and their families. The team has gone above and beyond.

Over the past year we welcomed a whole new slate of board members with the transition to a community-based board. This new

Board of Directors includes representation from community, facilitating community ownership and leadership from individuals with professional backgrounds that will assist the organization in achieving growth and sustainability. We are incredibly grateful to the outgoing board members for their contributions. The new board was elected in September of 2020 with a few additions early in 2021/22.

This year also saw the rebranding of Snowflake Place for Children and Youth to Toba Centre for Children & Youth. You'll read more about that change in this report but most of all, we wanted the new brand to reflect what we see in the children and youth we serve; strength, hope and resilience. We also wanted the brand to be something that all Manitobans could own.

Over the past year we have been able to lay the foundation for something critical to our community. The year ahead of us will be a monumental one and we will need the help of every Manitoban. We know how much our community cares about children and youth and we cannot wait to welcome you all in to this fight. Child abuse is destructive to communities, to families, and to our most precious young people. Together WE WILL change that story. Together WE WILL ensure every child is heard, helped and healed. Stay tuned.

Christy Dzikowicz
Executive Director

Don Smith
Board Chair

INTRODUCING

Toba Centre for Children & Youth

Since 2019, our organization has been undergoing a transformation as we envision offering wrap-around services for children and youth. As part of our expansion and evolution, we officially changed our name from Snowflake Place for Children and Youth to Toba Centre for Children & Youth in January 2021.

Toba, short for Manitoba, connects the centre geographically. The evolution of the name Manitoba mirrors the history of the region it resides in. “At the Lake Manitoba Narrows, a strong wind can send waves washing against the limestone rocks of an offshore island. The waves’ unique sound is said to be the Manitou, or Great Spirit (in Ojibway, “Manito-bau”). The legend survives in the Province’s name.”

Incorporated into the brand are the centre’s primary responsibilities of Safety, Justice and Healing.

Along with our name change, we launched our new website at tobacentre.ca and new social media accounts.

“Cows run away from the storm while the buffalo charges toward it – and gets through it quicker. Whenever I’m confronted with a tough challenge, I do not prolong the torment, I become the buffalo.”

- WILMA MANKILLER





Hearing
Helping
Healing

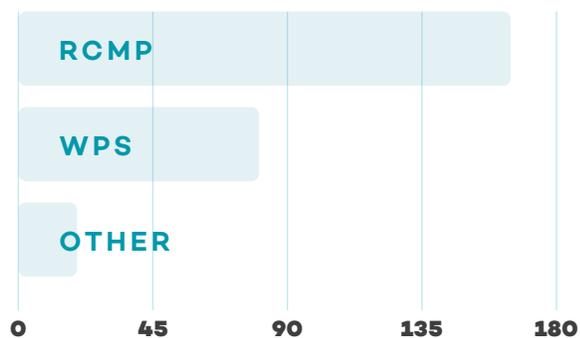
Toba Centre coordinates a collaborative approach in the response to child abuse. With our partners (police, child and family services, victim services), we work to address the needs of children and their care providers throughout the child abuse investigation and beyond, providing a better and less traumatic response.

Since 2015, Toba Centre has conducted forensic interviews of children and in August 2020, we expanded our services with the launch of our Case Navigation program. The objective of this program is to ensure that the well-being and recovery of children who have experienced abuse or been witness to violence, and that of their care providers, is prioritized. Case Navigators provide consistent and continuous support to children and care providers as they navigate both the systems involved in the response to child abuse, as well as their individual journeys towards healing and justice.

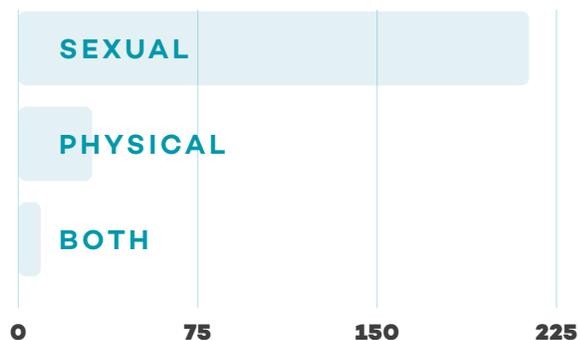
At this time, there is no referral criteria set in place for Toba Centre. Children who come to Toba Centre may not be representative of all reported cases of child abuse.

Referral Source

Toba Centre receives referrals from law enforcement agencies across Manitoba. This year, we saw a slight decrease in referrals, which appears to be related to various restrictions resulting from COVID-19, including the suspension of schools, daycares, and activities for children. While Toba Centre remained open and has continued to provide services throughout the pandemic, referrals tended to decrease (or interviews were cancelled) when more strict restrictions were in place.



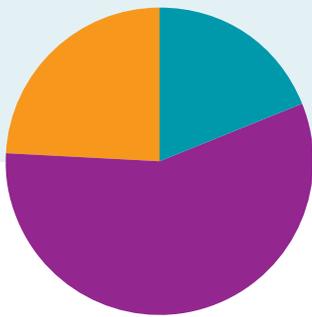
Type of Referred Maltreatment



Forensic Interviews

Each referral to Toba Centre may involve one or more forensic interviews. Over the past 5 years, we have conducted an average of 358 interviews per year. 377 child interviews were done at Toba Centre in 2020/21¹. This represents less than 10% of the approximately 4,000 child abuse investigations conducted annually in our province².

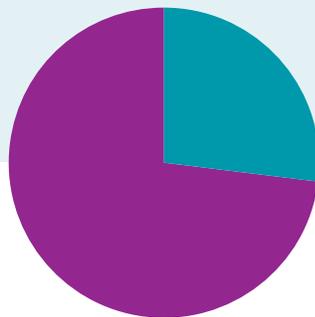
The breakdown of child interviews by age group, gender, ethnicity, and type of disclosed abuse for the year is shown below.



AGE

The majority of children who come to Toba Centre, currently and historically, are school age between the ages of 5 and 12 years old.

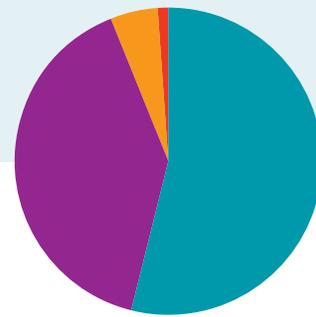
- Preschool (19%)
- School Age (57%)
- Adolescents (24%)



GENDER

(Self/Parent Reported)

- Male (27%)
- Female (73%)
- >.5% Transgender



ETHNICITY

Child abuse occurs irrespective of ethnicity and at Toba Centre, we see children from a variety of ethnic backgrounds.

- Indigenous (54%)
- Caucasian (40%)
- Other (5%)
- Unkown (1%)

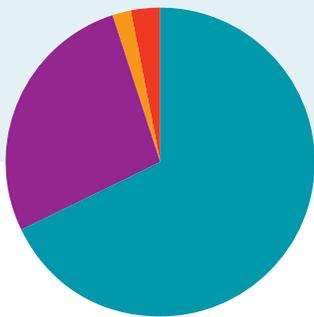
¹ A total of 381 interviews were conducted at Toba Centre in 20/21, 4 of which involved vulnerable adults.

² Each child abuse investigation may involve one or more children.

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Case Navigation

A Case Navigator is assigned to every child, youth, and care provider who attends Toba Centre. Since the launch of the program in August 2020, our Case Navigators have supported over 240 children, youth, and care providers. Families are provided with assistance in navigating the systems involved in the response to child abuse, psycho-education related to child abuse, referrals to support services/resources, information about, and advocacy with the systems, and other support as needed, all in order to promote health and healing through their recovery. Case Navigators remain involved with families beyond the involvement of mandated service agencies and remain involved regardless of the outcome of any criminal or child protection investigation.



TYPE OF ABUSE

In nearly 80% of the interviews conducted at Toba Centre in 2020/21, children disclosed information indicating they were abused or had witnessed violence. For the remaining interviews, the children either did not disclose any information or did not fully participate in the interview process.

- Sexual (68%)
- Physical (27%)
- Both (2%)
- Witness (3%)





Child Abuse Response During a Global Pandemic

Throughout this past year, very necessary steps, including the suspension of schools, daycares, and other children's activities and the cancellation of community groups, were taken in response to COVID-19. This was accompanied by business closures, economic instability, social distancing, and isolation. Through all this change, children have been particularly vulnerable. For some, home is not always a safe place, and for others, increased family stress put them at increased risk.



Our Kids Can't Wait campaign was designed to raise awareness of the increased risk and provide adults with steps they could take if they were worried about a child or youth in their lives. The video was shared through social media, news outlets, and other online platforms, both within Manitoba and across Canada.

Toba Centre remained open throughout, continuing to provide forensic interviews while adapting our services in response to COVID-19. Recognizing a need for increased coordination through the pandemic, we worked to create a joint intake process and Case Navigation Program. While it has always been our intention to include these services within our new centre, the restrictions, responses, and impacts resulting from COVID-19 underscored the necessity and urgency of these roles within the response to child abuse.

A Community Response to Child Abuse

As a community, we all share a responsibility for children's safety and well-being.

Throughout 2020/21, many amazing individuals, families, community groups, businesses, and foundations chose to support the children and families who use our centre. From our wonderful volunteers who gave their time and skills, to the numerous individuals who participated in fundraisers in support of Toba Centre, to all who gave resources and gifts. Each makes an enormous impact and helps to ensure that we can continue providing services for Manitoba children and families. We are incredibly grateful for the support community provided to Toba Centre in 2020/21.

RIDE FOR REFUGE

This family-friendly fundraising event helps support charities who provide refuge and hope for some of the most vulnerable people. There were 16 teams, with a total of 64 participants, who dedicated their #Ride20 fundraising efforts to Toba Centre.

FORESTER'S FINANCIAL

Members of Forester's Financial volunteered their time to create gifts for youth receiving services at our centre.

MANITOBA PRAIRIE QUILTERS

Quilters and artisans from Manitoba Prairie Quilters donated handmade quilts, ensuring every child and youth coming to Toba Centre can leave with a warm, protective quilt.

PET SMART

As part of their commitment to strengthening communities, Pet Smart supported Toba Centre by donating hundreds of plush toys for children receiving services at Toba Centre.

PROJECT LINUS

Project Linus aims to provide love, a sense of security, warmth, and comfort to children in need of a hug through the gift of handmade blankets. Project Linus "Blanketeers" created hundreds of bright, beautiful blankets to provide comfort to every child and youth using our centre.

CANADIAN RED CROSS

Provided a supply of personal protective equipment and training on how to use the equipment properly.

**RED RIVER CO-OP
COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

Red River Co-Op helped ensure children and families have nutritious snacks and refreshments during their time at Toba Centre.

STANDARD AREO

Standard Areo donated toys for children and youth attending Toba Centre.

JUSTICE CANADA

Multi-year grant funding to support current operations, as well as additional funding in response to the impacts of COVID-19 and in supporting the execution of our 2019-2024 strategic plan.

PROVINCE OF MANITOBA

Department of Families provided grant funding for the facilitation of an Abuse Investigation Pilot training program.

Toba Centre received a Manitoba Justice Victims of Crime Grant in support of our Collaborative Table of Community Agencies – Enhancing Support for Victims of Child Abuse project.

**CANADA POST
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**

Canada Post Community Foundation provided a grant to support our new Case Navigation program.



TELUS FRIENDLY FUTURE FOUNDATION

Funding from TELUS Friendly Future Foundation assisted in the creation of our virtual intake and interview platform.

THE WINNIPEG FOUNDATION MAJOR CAPITAL COMMUNITY GRANT

Multi-year funding supporting the development of our fully co-located, coordinated response to child abuse.

THE WINNIPEG FOUNDATION STABILIZATION GRANT

This grant provided funding to support the short- and medium-term financial needs of Toba Centre in the face of unexpected expenses and revenue loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

UNITED WAY EMERGENCY COMMUNITY SUPPORT FUND

Funding supporting the creation of an Intake/Case Navigator role to help increase coordination and collaboration in response to an anticipated increase in reports when COVID restrictions eased, as well as assist families in navigating the systems involved in the response to child abuse.

YOUTH IN PHILANTHROPY

A youth leadership program through the Winnipeg Foundation, Youth in Philanthropy (YiP) engages high school aged youth in grantmaking to charitable organizations based on the issues important to them and needs in their community. Thank you to the YiP Committees who chose to support Toba Centre this year:

- Boys and Girls Club
- Ecole Kelvin High School
- Glenlawn Collegiate
- John Taylor Collegiate
- St. James Collegiate
- Westwood Collegiate





We could not do what we do without the support of community groups, businesses, and individuals who generously donated to Toba Centre in 2020/21. We are incredibly thankful to each and every one of you.

2020/2021

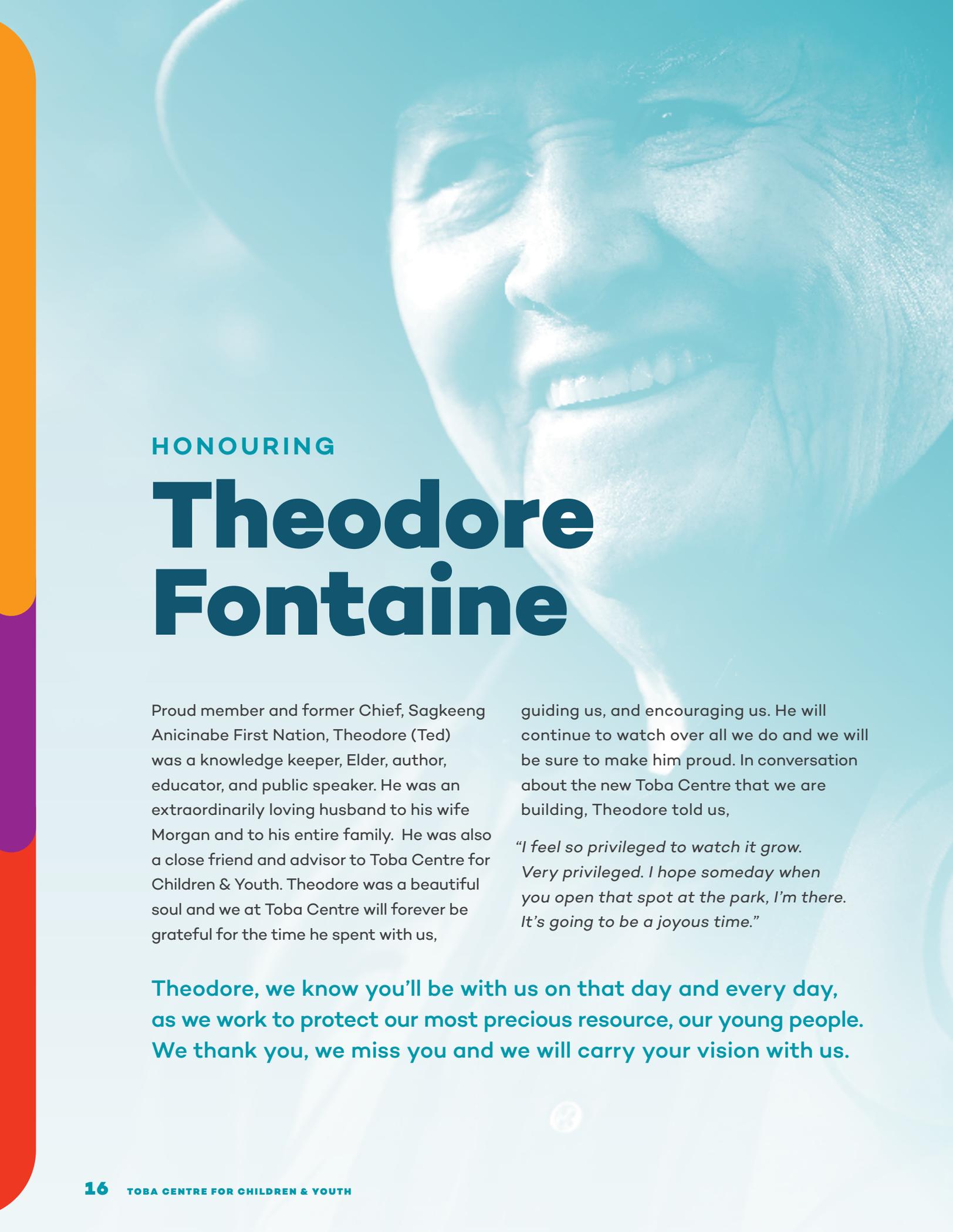
Financial Statement

Revenues	2021	2020
Provincial funding	339,200	339,786
Federal funding	284,179	200,000
The Winnipeg Foundation	87,867	69,973
The Thomas Still Foundation	—	9,582
Other grants	95,872	41,625
Donations	151,311	35,448
Fundraising	2,135	15,528
Interest income	9,209	7,938
	969,773	719,880

Expenses

Amortization of tangible and intangible capital assets	5,696	3,241
Association dues and memberships	553	686
Bank charges and interest	588	783
Board expenses	3,183	380
Computer and electronics	17,022	8,969
Fundraising	569	1,819
Grant expense	100	13,450
Insurance	7,426	6,855
Occupancy costs	73,100	73,100
Office supplies	9,039	7,160
Operations	56,088	33,671
Parking	3,767	3,420
Professional services	29,103	65,611
Public relations	150	—
Staff recruitment and hiring	—	24

Staff training and development	13,726	2,449
Telephone and internet	8,029	7,763
Toy vault	1,981	1,866
Travel	197	8,757
Wages and benefits	534,153	466,330
Website maintenance	414	2,388
	764,884	708,722
Other Income		
Canada Emergency Business Account loan forgiveness	10,000	—
Excess (deficiency) of Revenues over Expenses	214,889	11,158
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	381,428	370,270
Net Assets, End of Year	596,317	381,428



HONOURING

Theodore Fontaine

Proud member and former Chief, Sagkeeng Anicinabe First Nation, Theodore (Ted) was a knowledge keeper, Elder, author, educator, and public speaker. He was an extraordinarily loving husband to his wife Morgan and to his entire family. He was also a close friend and advisor to Toba Centre for Children & Youth. Theodore was a beautiful soul and we at Toba Centre will forever be grateful for the time he spent with us,

guiding us, and encouraging us. He will continue to watch over all we do and we will be sure to make him proud. In conversation about the new Toba Centre that we are building, Theodore told us,

"I feel so privileged to watch it grow. Very privileged. I hope someday when you open that spot at the park, I'm there. It's going to be a joyous time."

Theodore, we know you'll be with us on that day and every day, as we work to protect our most precious resource, our young people. We thank you, we miss you and we will carry your vision with us.



What's Ahead

Our 2019-2024 Strategic Plan centres around the development of a fully co-located, coordinated response to child abuse in Manitoba, enabling service providers to work together to ensure that every victim of child abuse is heard, helped, and healed.

We are well on our way. With a new governance structure and Board of Directors, a new brand and a new location identified, we are set to create the centre that our province deserves. We are grateful for the support we have received from all levels of government, including news that the Province of Manitoba would over double their contribution to our operations as of April 1, 2021. Our team has grown with the addition of a Case Navigation program, a Director of Community Engagement and an Executive Assistant. It will continue to grow. In addition to human staff, we look forward to welcoming our first facility dog this coming year. We cannot wait to introduce you to our new co-worker when we get the news and we cannot wait for the children we serve to be greeted by a furry friend.

Please get involved now. Sign up at tobacentre.ca for our newsletters. Check out the new Ambassador campaign we are launching in spring 2021. **Donate. Volunteer. Be a voice.**

While we have an enormous amount of work in front of us we are extremely encouraged by the support we are receiving and the eagerness with which our community is stepping up. It's awesome.

Land Acknowledgment

We acknowledge we are on First Nations land, Turtle Island, inhabited by First Nations from time immemorial.

For thousands of years, First Nations people—the Anishinaabe, Cree, Dakota, Dene, and Anishinew Nations—walked and lived on this land and knew it to be the centre of their lives and spirituality.

The Anishinaabe call this land Manitou Ahbee, the place where the Creator resides.

We acknowledge this became the homeland of the Métis people.

We acknowledge and welcome the many people from countries all over the world who have come to join us, Turtle Island's First Nations, in calling this land our home.

We acknowledge we are now all bound together by Treaty 1.

-TED FONTAINE

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