

ANNUAL REPORT

2020 - 2021



The Journey of Indigenous Women's Leadership

Ontario Native Women's Association



ONWA Teepee, 2021

"We were warriors. We came together with a singular purpose... to fight for our rights as Indigenous women, our right to be treated as equals. Although we faced opposition, often from all directions, and lost a few battles along the way, we persisted. Now after 50 years we are entitled to claim our victory and reclaim our rightful place as equals in our families, communities, and nations."

- Jeannette Corbiere-Lavell

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Our Vision

At the Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA) we will support women to take up their leadership roles in the family and in the community.

ONWA will support women's leadership. To do that we have to ensure that our voices are heard. We have to start by listening to each other first.

- To reclaim our voices we must have knowledge. Much of the knowledge we need to be strong leaders is rooted in the cultural teachings.
- To hear our own voices we must silence our pain and trauma and find a place for it in our lives that does not hurt us.
- Our self-esteem needs to be reclaimed.

When we speak we will have a grounded, balanced, strong, and kind voice.

To achieve our leadership roles we have to break the cycle of abuse that is part of our families and communities. To do that we will, through all of our actions and words, not carry forward the abuse.

We will speak the truth because we will know what the truth is. We will be forgiving and move forward after our truth has been shared. We will not use the colonization behaviours we have learned to hurt others. We will believe in our truth and respect it.

We will expect board members and our Executive Director to reflect this vision of behaviour. When they do not behave in this way we will gently ask them to realign their behaviour.

We will be focused in our work and not exhaust the staff or board. We recognize that any issue we chose to work on, with focused resolve, will support women to move forward in all issues, because all issues are interconnected.

In being leaders in our families our focus must be on the children:

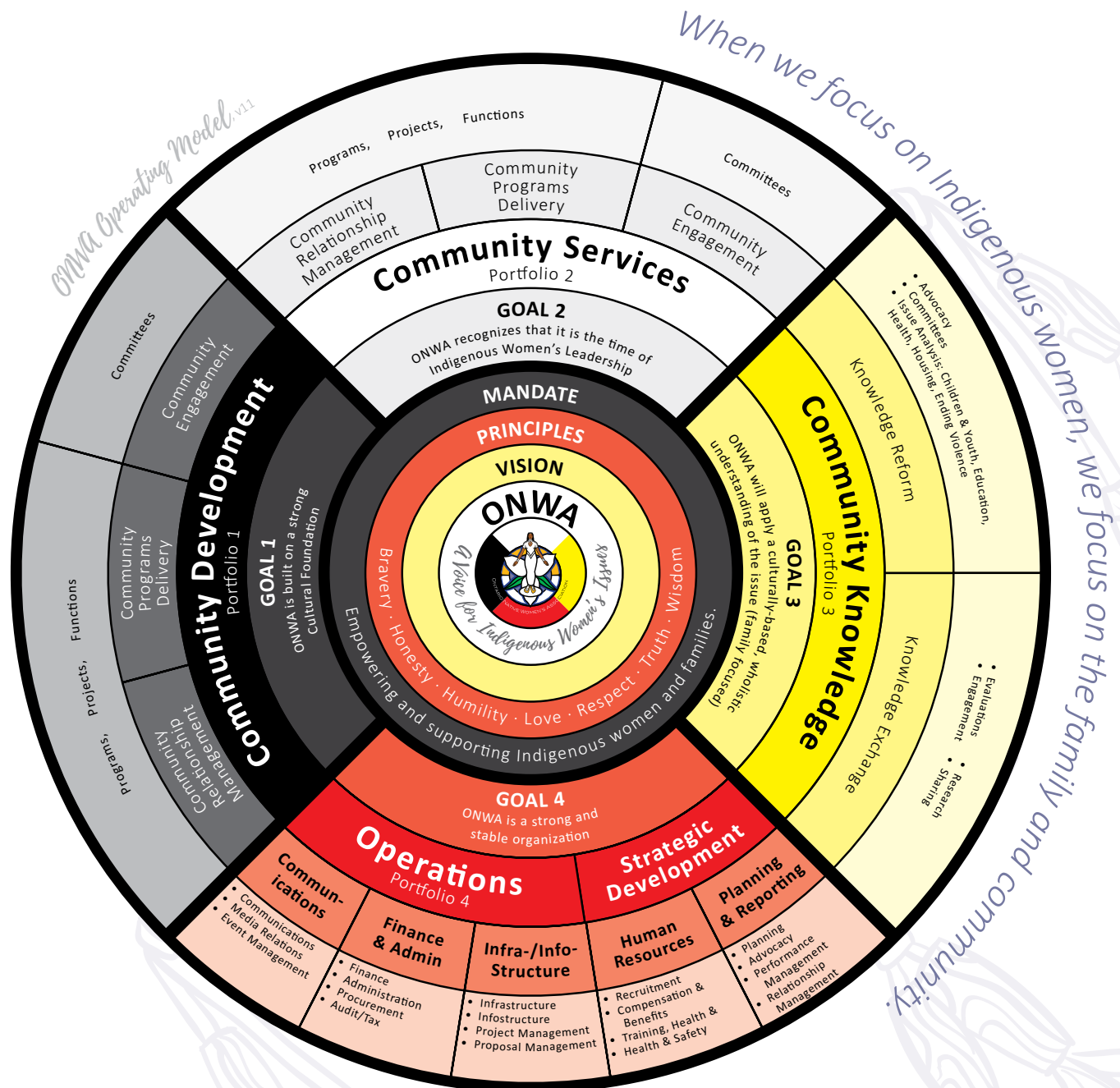
- We take up our role for the children and address the child welfare system. We will build a child welfare system that is transformed and recognizes that the shattered, hurt parent needs love, care and attention, just as her children do. We will create new ways of healing families that are based on the cultural teachings. We help each woman change her life for the better.
- We take up our role for the youth and deal with the youth suicide. We will be good teachers and guides for our youth and make space for them in our work.

We will trust in ourselves and in each other that we can realize this vision. We will love and care for each other.

Our Organizational Structure

At ONWA, we do not see one person as more important than the other, but rather, we focus on each of our responsibilities as part of the whole. We come together in unity and work towards one vision.

ONWA's Operating Model (below) places women at the centre surrounded by our vision, principles, and mandate. Four key portfolios encompass four key goals for our strategic picture to empower Indigenous women's leadership.



President's Message



It is with a profound sense of gratitude that I look back on these last 18 years of learning, and working for Indigenous women. Serving on the Board of Directors of ONWA has been one of the great honours of my life. As I step down from my role as Board President, we are

celebrating 50 years of supporting Indigenous women and their families. We have come a long way to reach this point where we are reclaiming our traditional decision-making roles in our communities.

Carrying the legacy of leadership from my mother, Jeanette Corbiere-Lavell, it has been my mission to support and advocate on behalf of Indigenous women's rights, always working toward the empowerment of Indigenous women and their families. In doing so, I hope that I have honoured her and those who have walked with me and mentored me on this journey.

Throughout the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic we continued this work, serving more than 100,000 community members and nearly 32,000 program participants. From disseminating PPE and administering vaccines to providing housing and virtual support programs, ONWA pivoted and continued to offer a variety of adapted services, continuum of care practices, safety strategies and programming throughout the year.

When I first became President of ONWA, I was newly married and a young mother, and I had just been accepted as the first Aboriginal Trudeau Scholarship recipient. At that time ONWA was focused on addressing the high level of violence experienced by Indigenous women, specifically domestic violence and the missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls (MMIWG) from all of our communities.

Our work towards ending violence against Indigenous women and girls has remained at the forefront. This year was exceptionally challenging with pandemic restrictions. We still worked to support families of MMIWG through group-based healing activities, direct family supports, and helping a family during a very controversial court proceeding. Our Indigenous Sexual Violence Awareness Training team developed partnerships with 11 Indigenous agencies, ensuring a strong network to maintain a coordinated services approach. Vigils and gatherings will continue be carried out using virtual methods and we'll incorporate in-person gatherings as it is safe.

We continued our work to reunite and keep families together, providing services to community members across Ontario.

In all of my work, I aim to be educator, teacher and guide. As I support our sisters on their own journeys – to find answers, explore education, establish families and careers – my goal has been to help our women to reclaim their voices and legitimacy in their own lives. I will continue this work in my role as Director for First Peoples House of Learning at Trent University, as the mother of three girls, and a proud member of the Wiikwemikoong First Nation.

We must continue to be brave, to speak our truth and never shy away from naming the issues that are important to us and advancing our work towards solutions. There can be very lonely moments where internal strength and clarity of focus are required to be able to speak truth to power. Yet, we must stay vigilant and continue advocating for restoring balance in our lives our families and the communities we live in.

It has been an honour to serve and walk with you.

Chi Miigwetch,

Dawn Lavell-Harvard

Executive Director's Message



This year, we celebrate 50 years of ONWA and our Indigenous women's movement (1971-2021). We are now the oldest and largest Indigenous women's agency in Canada!

The Indigenous women's movement is one of the most difficult and most rewarding. It is based on the fact that the wellbeing of a community can be measured by the safety of Indigenous women in that community. Together, we continue to stand strong, demanding systemic change for ourselves and future generations.

ONWA's journey began from the lack of safety and normalized violence towards Indigenous women, within Indigenous communities and across Canadian society. We recognize that Indigenous women have experienced colonization differently. Telling this truth is a crucial part of the story. To begin to reconcile with Indigenous women, we must begin with healing an individual, within the family, and then within our communities.

ONWA's programs provide safe, responsive and culture-based services that meet their needs while staying with their own support systems: children, family, and community. Community members know ONWA's trauma-informed, wholistic programs are a safe place to begin their healing journey and helping Indigenous women realize their inherent strength. We acknowledge the resiliency of Indigenous women who courageously continue to reclaim their voice, their spirit, and their leadership.

COVID-19 showed us a need to expand our services to help meet the essential needs of over 125,000 community members across Ontario. ONWA provided essential services from safety planning and PPE to developing a centralized intake department for quick responses, and connecting over 400 Indigenous women to housing across the province.

ONWA established the Mindimooyenh ("one who holds the world together") Vaccination Clinic, which administered more than 10,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccines to the urban Indigenous community in Thunder Bay. Indigenous women planned and organized these mass clinics in under one week, with a collective goal of vaccinating our community and ensuring that we included our culture and traditional teachings throughout the entire process.

ONWA continues to address the over-representation of Indigenous children in the child welfare system, supporting family unifications and reunifications, birth alert preventions, and the obstruction of children apprehension by a child welfare agency. We provided devices for virtual visits when Children's Aid Societies didn't allow visits due to pandemic restrictions.

During the pandemic, support and service requests for those impacted by domestic, sexual, and criminal violence increased 83% across Ontario. Indigenous women have the right to live safely, free from fear of exploitation and violence. ONWA's *Fostering Community Safety: Digital Bundle Series* creates awareness about sexual violence, human trafficking, and gang involvement. The future digital bundle outlines practical knowledge and teachings to show how to build inner strength and move towards healing.

We are humbled to continue to work with Indigenous women as we prepare to launch our next Strategic Picture. ONWA's next 50 years will focus on reclaiming, restoring, reconciling and recognizing Indigenous women's leadership. We look forward to working with you to restore balance so that we realize, as one Moccasin Walk Campaign participant said, "there is medicine all around me."

In unity,

Cora-Lee McGuire-Cyrette



Our Work

A Reflection of Indigenous Women's Work: 50 Years in Review

When we speak of Indigenous women's work, ONWA understands that it has always been about family. Some of us grew up in the arms of the women who came before us, some of us are lucky enough to be raised as those that would carry on this work. ONWA's 50th anniversary meant adapting to the sudden uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic by continuing one of its founding objectives; supporting Indigenous women and their families. Traditionally, Indigenous women held decision-making roles to guide communities through unfamiliar times. Although colonization attempts were made to falter the inherent roles of Indigenous women, ONWA displays graceful resilience as it supports Indigenous women as leaders to create safe spaces for their families and communities.

ONWA's formation grew out of political activism that supported Aboriginal rights but was unaccepting when it came to discussing family violence and gender discrimination in the *Indian Act*. As Indigenous activism reached a peak in response to the Liberal government's *White Paper* of 1969, there was an increasing demand to protect the inherent and contingent rights of Indigenous peoples through the maintenance of the *Indian Act*. Indigenous women were left out. For Indigenous women, a loss of inclusion in collective rights was not just a threat; it was an active reality based solely on who a woman chose to marry.

Discrimination in the *Indian Act* and an increase in family violence caused more and more women to be pushed out of their communities into urban centres. Provincial matrimonial property laws had no application on reserves leaving women with few alternatives but to flee their own homes upon experiencing family violence. Band councils, which up until 1951 had excluded women from running in elections entirely, rarely created ways to protect women. Dire conditions faced by Indigenous women were ignored. Knowing that real action had to take place, Indigenous women founded ONWA in 1971. With the



ONWA Annual General Assembly, 2019

needs of Indigenous women at the forefront, ONWA created Beendigen, the first culturally safe shelter for women fleeing from abuse in Thunder Bay. ONWA forced the world to pay attention to violence against Indigenous women when it released the *Breaking Free* report. As the first report to offer statistical evidence of violence in Indigenous families, *Breaking Free* shocked people to take family violence seriously when it revealed that 80% of Indigenous women had been abused or assaulted. *Breaking Free* called for legal assurances so that women and their children could stay in their homes upon experiencing family violence, something that didn't become law until 24 years later. Even then, ONWA ensured that the perspectives of Indigenous women were heard before lawmakers.

While family violence contributed to the increasing off-reserve population, so did the *Indian Act* which ultimately forced a woman who married out of her community to leave her home. ONWA recognized this as a threat to the cultural wellbeing of families as well as a threat to the inherent role of women as community leaders. Collective advocacy with the help of a small few male allies encouraged the slow journey of the

ridding of gender discrimination in the *Indian Act*. Bill C-31 repealed s. 12(1)(b) of the *Indian Act*. After a few decades, Bill S-3 would resolve lingering discrimination. To prevent future discrimination, ONWA successfully advocated for constitutional protection under s. 35, ensuring that Indigenous rights apply equally to both men and women.

At the turn of the 21st century, ONWA carried on their work by reporting on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, sexual violence, and human trafficking. Today, ONWA has expanded by developing 28 programs across Ontario to address the various needs of Indigenous families, including child welfare navigation, health, justice, housing, human trafficking, and sexual violence. ONWA and Indigenous women continue to lead by protecting communities, responding to COVID-19 by ensuring the vaccination of entire Indigenous households.

In a 50-year reflection, ONWA continues to work with Indigenous women to ensure we make a new story for those generations yet to come.

48

Programs

8K

8,057
Community
Programming

55K

54,845
Direct 1:1 Services
for Community
Members

32K

31,879
Program
Participants

128K

127,855
Total Community
Impact

409K

408,655
PPE Distribution

* K = Thousand

A year in COVID-19

In March of 2020, the world packed up and went home. It's hard to believe, but we did and there we stayed. At ONWA, we packed up our offices and made our spaces in our homes for our work. None of us at the time could have imagined that over a year later, that we would still be here, slowly making our way back to our offices. In retrospect, we are reminded of how we shifted our work from face-to-face, in-person workshops or training to being contactless and virtual. Gone were the days of gathering; to talk, share, laugh and love. We canceled our 4th Annual *She Is Wise* Conference, thinking that we would be postponing it until July of 2020 at the latest. Our keynote speakers and workshop facilitators were all very understanding knowing how important it was for us to keep everyone safe. Safety for community members and staff became a priority, not that it wasn't always a priority, but this was a different danger, one we had not experienced.

The need for food, cleaning supplies, medicine became essential. The need was so great that ONWA opened our mandate to ensure all Indigenous people that needed support had it. We provided Go Bags and programming to support Indigenous families in urban, rural, on and off reserve communities. Staff worked long hours purchasing and packaging various types of Go Bags to help community members get through. While other organizations closed their doors, ONWA remained virtually open, ensuring that critical programming such as crisis, housing, mental health, addiction, anti-human trafficking work continued. ONWA staff continued to provide services, but they did so over the telephone, via email and/or contactless drop off visits, checking in on families through a door stop check-in.

That's the story of ONWA and COVID-19. Like the women before us, we stood together and carried the work that needed to be done to ensure Indigenous women's safety.

And we continued to stay at home. Our world became about personal protective equipment, hand washing, protecting each other and staying safe. What once was a very personal, familial workplace became about masking up, being sanitized, and standing six feet apart.

Critical to this work was the creation of ONWA's first centralized intake office that provided community members a number to call, a place within ONWA that ensured that community member's needs were met when they needed services. Virtual programming, contactless services and community development supports were all done through a centralized intake that supported immediate and brief needs of community members.

All portfolios of the organization shifted to ensure ONWA focused on telling the story of Indigenous women's needs to both the provincial and federal governments. We spoke to the impact of COVID-19 on Indigenous women and their families. We spoke to how we as an organization were supporting those needs. That's the story of ONWA and COVID-19. Like the women before us, we stood together and carried the work that needed to be done to ensure Indigenous women's safety.

She is Wise magazine
Read or subscribe at:

www.onwa.ca/she-is-wise-magazine

NEW! Edition 4: 2021 Spring/Summer

Balance: Indigenous Men Supporting Indigenous Women's Work

"Aniin! I'm loving the spring/summer 2020 ONWA magazine I just got in the mail today! It's my dream to write for an Indigenous-owned magazine like this. It's just so inspiring flipping through these pages and seeing all this writing and work done by my relations and sisters! I love magazines to begin with but when it's an Indigenous magazine like this, it just feels so good to read!"

- Quote by community member on social media





“Mindimooyenh” literally means “one who holds things together” in Ojibwe. It is a term that embodies Indigenous women’s responsibilities, recognizing the pivotal role and hard-earned wisdom (regarding life’s passages, such as contending with sickness and disease) that they exercised within their families and communities.

30

Mass Clinics

12K

11,739

Total Doses

6.1K

6,108

First Doses

5.6K

5,631

Second Doses

3.3K

3,290

Pfizer

8.4K

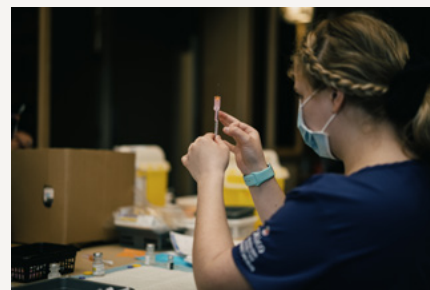
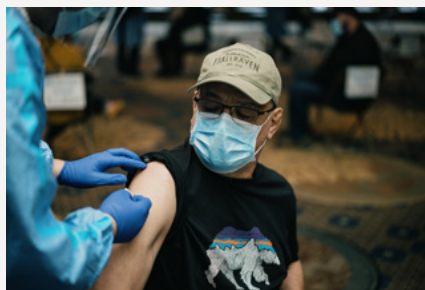
8,441

Moderna

Mindimooyenh Vaccine Clinic

The Mindimooyenh Vaccine Clinic began on March 9, 2021 as a result of lack of timely access to vaccines for urban Indigenous people. ONWA quickly came to realize early in the vaccine rollout that the urban Indigenous population was not being identified in Phase One. ONWA sat at the provincial urban Indigenous vaccination table and the Thunder Bay District Urban Indigenous table lead by Thunder Bay Health Unit. The Mindimooyenh Vaccine Clinic was organized and lead by a primary partnership developed by ONWA and the Dilico Family Health Team. Other team members included Anishnawbe Mushkiki, Sioux Lookout Health Authority, Beendigen Inc, Northern Ontario School of Medicine, and the Thunder Bay Public Health Unit.

The Mindimooyenh Clinic vaccinated and recovered community members in cars with sleeping babies, outside on a bench, at the start of the day with lights on low for those with



sensory issues as well as laying down on a cot due to anxiety. To help with the fear of vaccination, ONWA produced two short videos outlining the vaccination clinic process and what to expect from the clinic. Both videos were shared to ONWA's social media and to ONWA's website to help people understand the vaccination process to help alleviate anxiety around the vaccination process.

The Mindimooyenh Vaccination Clinic's vision was create a safe wholistic venue and provide quality, safe access to vaccines. In our first month of operating the clinic, 8 clinics provided COVID-19 vaccines to 2,623 community members. The Mindimooyenh Clinic encompassed an "all hands on deck" approach that included nurses, doctors, Elders, frontline workers, managers, organization leadership and youth who worked together to achieve the best health care experience for all. The Mindimooyenh Vaccination Clinic was a leader in using a safe, wholistic culturally-responsive approach to providing the vaccine. Doctors who supported the clinic learned about wholistic traditional approaches that focused on patient care and included traditional medicines. The Indigenous vaccine staff focused on vaccines, side effects, screening, and efficacy. Each community member who passed through the clinic was offered traditional medicines, showed how to properly mask, how to properly sanitize their hands and was sent home with an Indigenous-themed face mask, snack bag, reading, and other resource material. The Mindimooyenh Vaccination Clinic became a place of learning, supporting and caring for community.

Survey results regarding how safe community members felt from exposure to COVID-19 was 99.42%. Highlights of what they liked about the clinic included: that it was well organized, culturally safe, friendly people, smooth operations, spacious, friendly workers that explained clearly, caring workers, safe precautions and social distancing, lots of PPE, sanitizers, and cleaners visible washing chairs.

99.93% of the community members responded that the clinic provided a safe space for them to access the vaccine. Community members felt that the Mindimooyenh Vaccine Clinic was culturally supportive by providing medicine bundles, access to medicine, Indigenous staff who provided offerings such as sweetgrass and tobacco.

ONWA hosted an information session that included a Question and Answer period to address the issue of vaccine hesitancy. This was a virtual session and was accessible throughout the province. The panel included Indigenous partners such as Anishnawbe Mushkiki, Shkoday Aboriginal Headstart, Dilico Family Health Care, and Matawa Health Co-op. The speakers panel included Dr. Isaac Bogoch, Indigenous youth, Indigenous health managers, an Indigenous doctor, Indigenous vaccine leads, Elders, cultural coordinators and traditional healers. This session was livestreamed on Facebook as well as recorded for those who could not attend.

LIVESTREAM

2,567

Video Views

64

Peak Live Viewers

Community Services

40.4K

40,421

Individual Services

403

**Indigenous Women
Housed**

Provincially
During Pandemic

1.3K

1,312

Virtual Programs

18K

17,957

Participants

721

Virtual Programs in
the Justice, Sexual Assault, &
Domestic Violence Sectors

37K

37,003 Contacts with
Indigenous Women Needing
Additional Support

3.7K

**3,725 Outreach
Contacts** for Indigenous
women at significant risk

ONWA's essential Community Services portfolio pivoted and continued to offer a variety of adapted service delivery, continuum of care practices, safety strategies and programming throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Our programming ensured an opportunity for community to share, restore, build wellness, and align together to create pathways to safety and healing that met the needs of a significant number of Indigenous women and their families. Using both a virtual platform and land-based therapy (always following safe distancing and public health measures), ONWA was able to increase individual and community access to reconnect and receive services, traditional teachings, interventions, medicines, and ceremonies throughout this precarious year.

Community Services utilized a day treatment approach within all our service delivery. Of importance, is for community members to not have to leave their support systems, children, family, and/or community to receive services. Service options included crisis response services and supports for immediate needs, system navigation, case management, addiction, and specialized programming. Through this multisectoral collaboration, we supported holistic community-based joint action with the goal to further improve the social determinants of health affecting the wellbeing of Indigenous women, their families, and community across the province of Ontario.

Centralized Intake

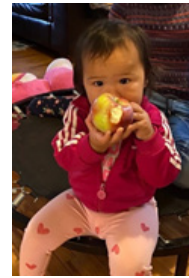
In response to the world pandemic, Community Services developed a provincial centralized intake department using a coordinated access and

*"Chi Migweetch! The work
you do helps us reclaim
what has been lost to us."*

D.S. Mental Health and Wellness
Participant

Community member lost her housing, and this was considered high risk as she required housing to keep her children in her care and safe. With advocating and support we were able to quickly and successfully help her secure emergency housing.

Centralized Intake Participant



New Community Member Enjoying Fresh Food Fridays Produce
community member's get masks from ONWA Medicine Bag Workshop

response approach. Indigenous women and their families were having difficulty accessing services. This new system now ensures a quick response to meet community members needs.

ONWA recognizes that the COVID-19 pandemic is a crisis on top of existing issues that Indigenous women, their families, and communities face daily. This community coordination method assists to eliminate waitlists and gaps in services, ensures safety planning is a priority, and provides advocacy and support to access services. By adapting the intake process, individual and family needs were provided quickly using a well-established network of ONWA sites, Chapters, and other community partner organizations throughout the province.

Entrapped in a domestic violence situation, a community member reached out for support. Intake was able to begin safety planning which resulted in her successfully leaving an unhealthy relationship and begin working on the next steps to support her wellbeing.

CENTRALIZED INTAKE

20.9K

20,885
Immediate Services

35K

35,103
Brief Services

7K

6,956 Short/Long-term
Case Management

40.4K

40,421
Intake Services Provided

Intake received a call to support a couple who were homeless, experiencing health issues and residing in an encampment. Using a collaborative approach, we were able to provide emergency housing, traditional medicine, Go-Bags, safety planning, advocacy, support, and system navigation resulting in the couple receiving independent housing within two weeks.

Go Bags



Cleaning Go Bag



Fresh Fridays Go Bag



Go Bags

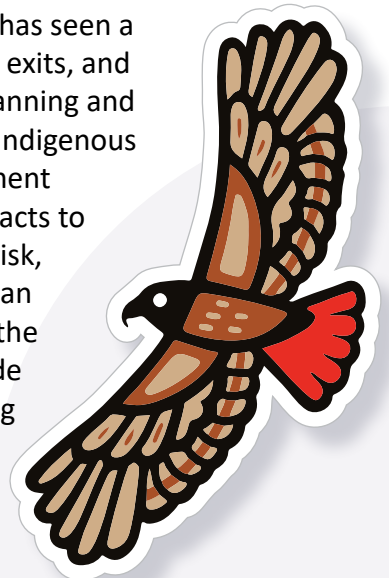
ONWA evaluated community needs at the beginning of the pandemic and it showed that receiving food security, PPE, safety, and health supplies were an issue due to stores going into lockdown and curbside pick up. Not everyone had the ability to use credit cards to purchase everyday items needed and hoarding in the retail stores provided shortage of many items including hand sanitizer, masks, and even toilet paper and cleaning supplies. This initiative was a huge success across the province.

Go-Bags created based on community needs:

- **Food Security:** nutritious food, themed recipes to make family dinners and lunches for children
- **Moon Time:** hygiene products and toiletries
- **Cleaning:** disinfectant, gloves, dish/laundry soap, garbage bags, household cleaner, toilet paper and paper towel
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) kits:** gloves, dispensable and cloth masks, hand sanitizer
- **Traditional Medicine:** sage, cedar, tobacco, sweetgrass, and a smudge Bowl
- **Family Health:** Pedialyte, soup, thermometer, pharmacy gift certificate, baby products were determined at time of request
- **Fresh Fridays:** fresh fruit or vegetables
- **Themed Go Bags:** family learning, games, cultural practices, ceremony, and land-based therapy

Courage for Change

The Courage for Change program has seen a 37% increase in human trafficking exits, and over a 23% increase in pre-exit planning and intensive case management. 279 Indigenous women accessed addiction treatment with over 3,725 street-based contacts to Indigenous women at significant risk, entrenched, and survivors of human trafficking. During the pandemic, the Courage team continued to provide street outreach services contacting over 60 community members. During one of those outreach services, our team successfully supported two youth exits.



The Courage program supported 12 survivors in securing and maintaining sustainable housing. This highlights the need for a provincial housing program replicating the Nihdawin Housing Program housed in Thunder Bay, Ontario. Using a multisectoral approach allows for the program to build our anti-human trafficking strategy and expansion based on current best practices and existing models.

Babaamendam Trauma-Informed Program

During the pandemic, our trauma-informed program staff continued to meet on virtual platforms and in-person with Indigenous women and their families. Of importance throughout the pandemic was to ensure vulnerable persons were seen as violence was more prevalent and becoming a hidden concern. The program supported 178 Indigenous women to navigate the justice system and sectors for sexual assaults, domestic violence, and violent crimes. Staff completed 505 safety plans which ensured safety and healing were a priority.

When other services became part of the provincial lockdown, Community Services took a business-as-usual approach to address our community members needs, ensure services and programming were available, and to create safe spaces to assist in addressing their trauma.

An Indigenous mother involved in child welfare for over three years was supported to find housing as part of her service plan. She was able to have her children returned to her care, is loving her new space, and she now works for an Inuit organization in Ottawa.

“This group has shown how grief impacts us not only emotionally but wholistically and how we can heal together as a community.”

- Mental Health & Wellness Participant

Mental Health and Wellness

The COVID-19 pandemic and resulting economic recession continues to affect Indigenous women's mental health and created new barriers for those already struggling with a mental illness and substance misuse. Through virtual platforms, the mental health team created safe spaces for programming where 316 specialized workshops were facilitated for anxiety, depression, and isolation and 425 cultural interventions were provided. The program ensured community stayed connected. This shows in the 7,186 community contacts with individuals experiencing mild to significant mental health and addictions service needs.

BABAAMENDAM TRAUMA-INFORMED PROGRAM

84%

Increase in intakes and brief services since the start of the pandemic

66

Healing and wellness programs were facilitated with over **610** participants

225

Indigenous healing and intervention programs were facilitated with **492** participants

229

Families received advocacy and prevention services that assisted with **41** child welfare reunification plans

Youth successfully registered and completed post-secondary diploma programs and one youth is currently employed in full-time!

"My life is actually heading somewhere. Two years ago I was at my lowest. I never thought I would be able to stay clean. Here I am two years later, working full time and living my best life." -C.D.

"Thank you for providing a safe place where we can listen, share, and feel all the emotions that we feel." -R.M

"Many thanks for the opportunity to share in this time and event with everyone." -K.C

"Thank you everyone for sharing. Your courage and truth give me strength." -S.B

"Thank you Audrey for doing this critical work for women and others."

"Meegwech! the songs, and laughter lifted my spirits :)"

" You've helped me understand my addictions, the why and how and now I can focus on my recovery freely and not being stuck in the past." -S.F

"I'm taking care of me. You've shown me that self-love reminds me of who I was before addiction. I have given 14 clean urine screens, never thought I would but I did it because I love me!" -S.W

"Thank you for having this safe space to talk about the pain we encounter when we experience loss."

"This group has shown how grief impacts us not only emotionally but wholistically and how we can heal together as a community."

"It is nice to have an open non-judgmental space to talk about ourselves and learn how addictions and mental health are connected."

"I learned how to cope and work through my triggers to help support me in my recovery."

"We enjoyed the Elder's teachings and knowledge of the rattle and drum."

13 Moons/Healing through the Seasons: Traditional Mental Health and Land-Based Program

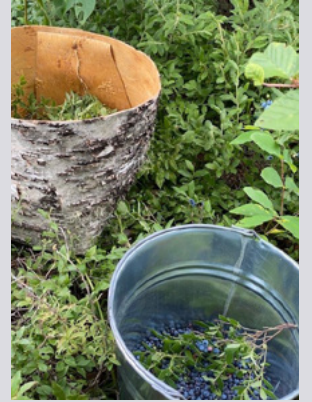
The seasons did not stop nor did our commitment to healing, land-based therapy, ceremonies, and cultural teachings. Using virtual platforms and in-person sessions, our programs continued throughout the year with 23 separate workshops with 755 participants. Miigwech to all who attended, supported, and participated in these amazing sessions!

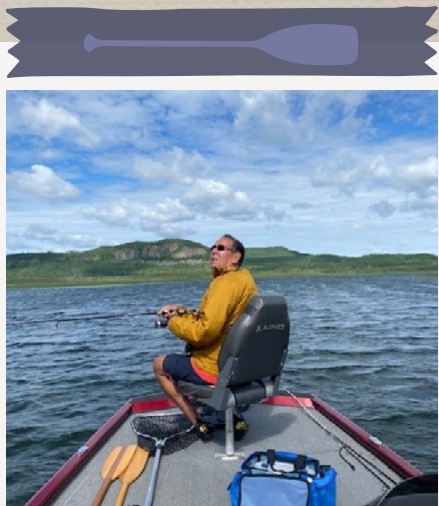
Our land-based coordinator wrote: "I received very positive feedback from community members who are appreciative of being able to join ONWA Zoom virtual gatherings. We had visitors all the way from Paris, France! Everyone loved the storytelling and requested to have this programming more often!"

Doula Training

Community Services received specialized Indigenous full spectrum doula training with facilitators Melissa Brown RM, BMW, Indigenous midwife, and Candace Neumann, Indigenous doula. The training was provided at five ONWA sites using a virtual platform. The four-day program trained 20 ONWA staff to provide physical, behavioural, and emotional support, Indigenous practices and holistic healing, and advocacy and systems navigation for Indigenous women and their partners during and after the birthing process. Guest Speaker Cecil Sveinson, discussed the vital role of fathers in the family unit and provided guidance using traditional teachings, ceremony, and Indigenous worldviews, knowledge, and methodology.







49

Online workshops or learning sessions were delivered

103

Student participants in online sessions

101

Parents and/or caregivers participating in online sessions

1,222

Resources shared directly with parents, caregivers, and children

referrals increased by 79% and specialized workshops were developed to provide trauma, codependency, and family violence essential support services.

Education Resource Development

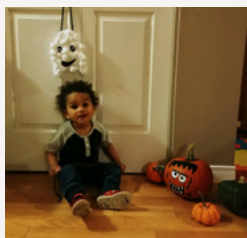
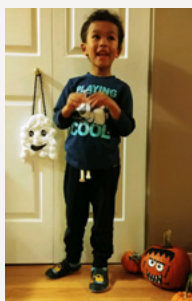
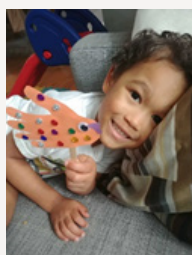
The Education Resource Development program was designed to support parents who are working from home with children or have children attending online schooling during the COVID-19 pandemic. The program continues to deliver culturally relevant supports to parents and students with resources, supplies and learning tools.

Gladue Writer and After Care

Gladue writers and aftercare workers continued to find ways to connect with, safety plan, empower, and support Indigenous women who had matters in the criminal court system during the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff provided tablets and cell phones to Indigenous women to ensure they could appear in court virtually as well as conduct Gladue interviews from a virtual setting. Important to note, 91% of the women identified with historical involvement in child welfare, residential school system, and/or the 60's scoop. The program provided impactful Gladue reports and letters which resulted in an increase of community-based sentences. This form of restorative justice offers more opportunity to keep Indigenous women in a safer environment and to foster healing from their community and culture. The program eliminated 515 custody days including pre-sentence custody which was a significant cost saving for the province.

Community Wellness Program

During the pandemic, requests for support and services for domestic, sexual, and criminal violence increased 83% across the province. Community Wellness workers engaged with Indigenous women and their families using comprehensive culturally safe continuum of care practices and land-based programming. With this significant increase in violence, prevention-based services, active communication, safety planning, and creating safe spaces were a priority. Addiction support services and



The Four Agreements – A Parent's Perspective:

- 1) **Be Impeccable With My Words** - speaking positively to our children in all situations as much as possible even at times that they are having behavioural issues to try to acknowledge their frustration and my parental concern for trying to help them work through it
- 2) **Don't Take Things Personally** - so important as a parent to realize that our children are their own people with their own thoughts and plans for their day and recognize from their perspective we are often interrupting and changing how they had thought the day would go
- 3) **Don't Assume** - looking deeper and asking questions that require more than a yes or no answer from your children to help determine the root of the problem rather than simply reacting to what appears to be the problem and don't assume that their frustration has the same reason every time. Ask and listen to what they have to say
- 4) **Do My Best** - knowing that our best fluctuates from day to day we should allow our children the same respect that their best will change from day to day based on so many outside factors and internal physical factors and doing our best encompasses acknowledging our shortcomings to our children and trying better the next day

"We are doing our best as parents to support our children, including gaining more knowledge and access to resources attending this session. We are not alone as parents and have similar struggles." -N.S.

"Looking at the curriculum and having it explained and broken down helped make a lot of sense of my kids' education." -C.S.

"The language session was great, provided a range of online resources to explore following the session paired with informative storytelling and how to use the resources to encourage and help young language learners." -K.A.

"The opportunity to make medicine pillows with my daughter was fantastic. During this time, it was great to connect, reflect and learn together. Having the opportunity to participate in cultural activities virtually is such a blessing during COVID. Very much needed and greatly appreciated." -K.A.

Indigenous Healthy Baby Healthy Children (IHBHC)

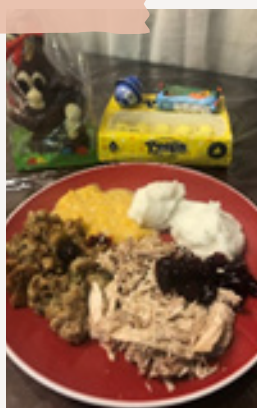
The IHBHC program engaged with families throughout the pandemic providing an increase of 80% in prevention and early intervention strategies and services and 64% in health supports. The heart of the IHBHC programming was to assist with 749 cultural interventions, support for 507 families with child welfare reunification planning, and facilitation with 150 participants in the Indigenous parenting program. Safety was a constant priority throughout the pandemic and staff ensured Indigenous women and children were seen and received essential services. Food security, traditional and western medicines, health needs, safety planning, safe spaces by access to affordable housing supports and land-based therapy, increased opportunities for healthy development, welcoming new births to the community, and providing wrap-around supports were part of the service objectives, access, and coordination.

The program worked with a family to develop a plan of care, set goals, and plan the steps in achieving family reunification. We were able to ensure the closing of the protection file while making safety and access visits an overall priority.

Tablets and cellphones were built into safety planning, advocacy for education, building plan of cares, and assisted with virtual visits when Children's Aid Societies would not allow access visits due to COVID-19 restrictions for children in care and kinship out-of-care placements.

Indigenous Victim and Family Liaison (IVFL)

Throughout the pandemic, IVFL had a 93% increase in prevention-based services. Justice systems navigation saw 81% of Indigenous women and their families needing this specialized support. Domestic and sexual violence cases increased even when the world shut down. We supported 54 women with specialized



"The Gladue program really helped me a lot. I am very grateful that Gladue was available for me and that it's available to other First Nation, Inuit and Métis women.

I never knew about Gladue and what it was until my support worker told me about it. I am very pleased with all the support I have been receiving from the start of the process and the aftercare support too. I hope that other women reach out and use the program too."



Bannock 101 and Crock Pot Sessions have been successful with community members throughout the province. Connection creates cohesiveness with families, their mental health, communication with others, and in these precarious times, these programs supported vulnerable families with healthy, financially friendly meal planning options.

Weekly programming has been a way to check in how everyone is coping through the lockdowns and stay-at-home orders. Community members feel the programs are a safe place to share their experiences and struggles with each other.

"Thanks! I really enjoy the groups and meetings. It is helping me so much with the post-partum part of everything. I feel like I am a part of something, and it is giving me a sense of belonging. I just really appreciate all the different programming, and I love it." -M.W.

"I enjoyed participating in workshops, being a single mother during the pandemic, it is really great having others give advice, ways to cope, and receiving the medicines were very helpful. Thank you." -L.F.

"I look forward to more programming as these programs have been helping me with my emotional, physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing. I am very thankful for the programs; they have a positive impact on my way of thinking about life and how there is so much more if you just get out there and seek the programs that are in arms reach." -M.W.

"I am starting to feel comfortable talking and I'm starting to open up more. The workshop was excellent. I really needed this. I felt like I was alone, but I know I am not the only one feeling these feelings I have. Thank you – I have started my journal." -S.K.

"I really enjoyed the workshops. I love doing things where I can learn new skills to improve my mental health. Also, learning the cultural aspect was great. Growing up I was not exposed to or taught too much and have a very basic knowledge. Now as an adult with my own children I have a strong desire to learn as much as I can." -E.L.

"Thanks to ONWA, the supports that they provided, and the workers they have, they are able to do my grocery shopping to make sure I am provided with the essentials I needed." -L.L.

ONWA was able to ensure I was getting the diet needed for my specific needs and to stay active as an independent woman in my own home. I am unable to do my own grocery shopping anymore due to COVID-19 and being compromised." -L.L.

The medicine bag workshop was a great success. One community member was so grateful to learn the medicines and the teachings. She told staff that she now practices smudging in her home with her new baby.

"I really learned a lot of ideas on how to parent my son. This was so easy to understand and helped me with my son in many ways."

"ONWA has been my support and is much appreciated. I am so glad to receive four medicines that are much needed at a time like this, and I require them. Way to go ONWA, especially the frontline workers who work diligently to deliver much needed items. Miigwetch."

"I just wanted to again say thank you for everything. Still overwhelmed with a lot of emotions. You're amazing and wonderful. ONWA's support really helped me."

"I wanted to let you know I really appreciate what I got today, especially the bundles of medicine. That is what I really needed, and I really appreciate it."

"I just wanted to thank all of you for your help and support this year. It has meant a lot to me and my family. It has been so much help I honestly don't know what or how I would have been if ONWA wasn't helping me and my kids. I really appreciate what you do and have been doing for me, my kids and other families."

"I enjoy learning how to cook for myself." -M.S.



needs post-sexual assault and to exit domestic violence situations. IVFL provided immediate support services to 717 women, 108 cultural interventions, 124 safety plans, and of priority was to ensure connection to our community members. Staff saw and had direct contact with 1,903 survivors of violence during this year. During the pandemic, this program provided housing services to eight families fleeing domestic violence and advocacy for 17 Indigenous women involved with the child welfare system to have access visits, reunification planning, and file closures.

Nihdawin Housing

This program saw a 93% increase in intakes and brief services since the start of the pandemic. The Nihdawin housing program safely and creatively housed 34 community members and supported 10 families in being rapidly rehoused. The team ensured connection was a priority and had over 3,000 community contacts to individuals experiencing chronic or episodic homelessness. The team has supported 94 Indigenous women with child welfare involvement to receive advocacy, 193 safety plans, and early intervention and prevention services that supported 47 reunification plans and 6 family reunifications.

Youth in Transition and Youth Housing Programs

During the pandemic, the Youth in Transition program continued to support youth 16 to 24-years-old while our specialty Youth Housing program worked specifically with youth aged 16 to 17 years of age to find safe affordable housing. There was a 78% increase in prevention-based services in both programs and 77% of the youth had post-child welfare involvement. Justice systems navigation supported 25 youth and 135 advocacy supports were provided to youth with 27 community and family reunification



plans. Post-secondary education and training supports were in place for 30 youth to build skills needed for transition to adulthood, 84 Indigenous programs were provided to youth to build connection to community and Elders, and 206 youth participated in these traditional programs. The programs guided youth to improve outcomes, build cultural capacity, and learn from life skills training.

Ska-Be

The Ska-be (Helper) program had a 92% increase in intakes, immediate, and brief services since the start of the pandemic. Cultural interventions, teachings, traditional and western medicine, health services, and land-based therapy was provided to Indigenous elderly women to support their health, wellbeing, and independence. Go Bags services were provided by contactless delivery. This significantly improved keeping this vulnerable population safe. Programming focused on healing from historical trauma and oppression. Staff ensured individuals were being seen, connected to technology supports allowing them to continue access to medical services, participated, and built connections. There was over 250 support contacts made during this period.



"Fitting to me that ONWA has taken on the responsibility and nishnaabe kweg are leading the effort to care for all of us and bringing us back together again."

"At this time the food bag and medicines is helping me and my son. COVID has changed our lives and the world as we use to know it. A huge meegwetch from I and Isaiah."

"Would just like to take this opportunity to say thank you to this wonderful organization in making sure I received my food go bag in Wawa, Ontario!"

"It was so easy to speak with the workers at ONWA. They were kind, efficient and made me feel welcome and important over the phone, and they returned my call in a very short period of time. Miigwetch from my heart and soul! Thank you again for the gift of the four medicines. It is so much appreciated in these tough times. :)"

"Thank you for sharing your teachings around how we connect with the land during the seasons."

"I have never felt so supported and had someone help me so quickly." -IVFL Community Member

"Thank you for everything you have done by helping me in such difficult systems and advocating for me and my voice. There are butterflies around us. That means our ancestors and spirits are with us. I am being heard... good things are happening." -IVFL Community Member

"I have been homeless for 5-6 years, in and out of shelters, experienced violence, in trouble with the law and had so many hospital visits. You don't know how close I was to giving up on everything." Tearfully showing gratitude, this Community Member thanked their family support worker, within two days of being in the program they were moving into their own apartment.

Community Development

5K

**4,849 Participants at
147 Community Events**

14K

**14,424
People Served 1:1**

116K

**116,361 Awareness
Campaigns Reach**

3K

**3,481 Workshop Participants
at 357 Workshops**

2K

**2,246 Participants at
136 Regional Meetings**

3K

**3,346 Participants at
92 Traditional Activities**

5K

**5,292 Capacity Building
Activities**

4K

**3,627 Resources Provided
26 Resources Developed**

343

Program Partners

ONWA honours our membership, our Chapters and Councils, that reflect who we are as an organization. We are the leaders, the helpers, the doers in community. Our membership helps us to identify issues that affect Indigenous women. The Community Development service delivery approach recognizes that Indigenous women are the experts in their lives. Indigenous women know the needs of their community and are also key to identifying solutions needed.

Due to COVID-19, Community Development has been able to reach out through multiple platforms to educate, train and build capacity. Unique training videos have been developed to ensure that community can view them as needed. COVID-19 limited our face-to-face contact and increased our ability to connect virtually.

Community Safety

Community Capacity Coordinator

During the time of the pandemic, the community capacity coordinator mobilized the community through a variety of avenues. The coordinator ensured the Thunder Bay Urban Aboriginal Advisory Committee continued to meet and were informed of the ever-changing landscape of the global pandemic.

The coordinator supported the work of the Community Partner Approach to COVID-19 Working Group. The group met 24 times over the 2020-21 fiscal year with a special focus on developing and delivering a COVID-19 community response to address the needs of urban Indigenous peoples. The coordinator delivered presentations on behalf of this working group to the Indigenous Food Circle, Indigenous Medical Transport Working Group and was a panelist at the Thunder Bay Area Food Strategy Annual General Meeting speaking to the urban Indigenous Response to COVID-19.

To ensure the safety of the community, the coordinator provided 1,375 items of Personal Protective Equipment



and assisted with the Mindimooyenh Vaccination Clinic planning and delivery. The coordinator supported community members with registering for their vaccine appointments, arranging transportation and educating them on the importance of the vaccine.

Community Safety Liaison

The Community Safety Liaison program is designed to raise awareness and build capacity for service providers that deliver direct supports to people involved and or at risk for gang involvement. The program supported the successful exit of a gang-involved community member and continues to provide support for an ongoing case.

The program hosted 14 Indigenous Gang Awareness training sessions and engagements. These sessions were comprised of 173 frontline workers and community members with the focus of building capacity on identifying risk factors for gang involvement, parallels between gangs and human trafficking, and reducing the stigma associated with gang participation.

The liaison completed three regional engagement sessions with Indigenous front-line service workers. These engagements were essential to help shape the development of additional culturally specific trainings that focus on routes to gang involvement and healing supports from gang involvement. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the transition to online spaces, the liaison initiated the beginning phase of building a digital training bundle focused on fostering Community Safety with an emphasis on highlighting the intersectionality of gang involvement, human trafficking and sexual violence was birthed. The digital Community Safety bundle will be available in the new year.

INDIGENOUS ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING LIAISON

519

Survivors Engaged and Supported

2,333

Community Members Supported

1,696

Participants Trained

92

Service Provider Organizations Received Training

118

Community Engagement & Awareness Activities

Indigenous Anti-Human Trafficking Liaison

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the Indigenous Anti-Human Trafficking Liaison (IAHT) program engaged and supported 519 survivors this year as well as provided training and education to 1,696 individuals. The IAHT liaison also shifted their work from capacity and relationship building to directly supporting community members by distributing 750 Anti-Human Trafficking Go Bags and providing system navigation supports.

Through the pandemic, the IAHT program continued to maintain our relationship with police by presenting to senior officers, building their capacity on how to access ONWA's services for Indigenous women that are at risk of exploitation.

After the IAHT liaisons identified a need for more capacity within the team around community safety, a specialized Guns and Gangs training was held virtually to help the liaisons recognize and respond to at-risk and entrenched Indigenous women.



Sunset Women's Aboriginal Circle BFFV Program – Growing Micro Greens for families, ready for harvest and delivery.

"I just wanted to thank you for our food hamper! I started crying because I did not expect to get that much stuff! I appreciate all your help through this pandemic, it really means a lot to my little family!"

BFFV Program Participant



BFFV Program

57

Families Reunified

109

Children Reunified with their Families

248

Families Supported in the Prevention of Child Apprehension

466

Children Prevented from Apprehension

The BFFV program provided cars seats for a set of twins aged 9 months. Now they can have more time to connect with extended family and not rely on Child Welfare to provide transportation. They are so happy to see and spend time with their family.

The highlight for the IAHTL program was the launch of the Anti-Human Trafficking Learning page showcasing information through a narrated presentation, videos, and documents for download. The learning page has 2,805 page views. This page is available at: www.onwa.ca/learning-resources-ht

Ending Violence Against Indigenous Women

Breaking Free From Family Violence Program (BFFV)

Over the past year, family unification and reunification has been nurtured through trauma-informed wholistic supportive services that helped Indigenous women on their healing journey realize their inner strength and reclaim leadership roles in their families. The program's family support workers provided unique services designed to be responsive to the emerging needs of Indigenous women and their families throughout the pandemic which improved outcomes for over 2,000 families. Through the challenges in services delivery experienced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the program

*"My family appreciates
all you and your team do
for the community"*

BFFV Program Participant

Survey Question: What did you
find most helpful about the
BFFV Program and Worker?

**"...Closing my Family
Services File. Allowing my
family to grow"**

BFFV Program Participant

Sunset Women's Aboriginal
Circle BFFV Program



was able to support 248 family unifications, 57 family reunifications, the reunification of 109 children with their families, the prevention of 59 birth alerts as well as the prevention of 466 children from being apprehended by a child welfare agency in Ontario.

Indigenous Sexual Violence Awareness Training

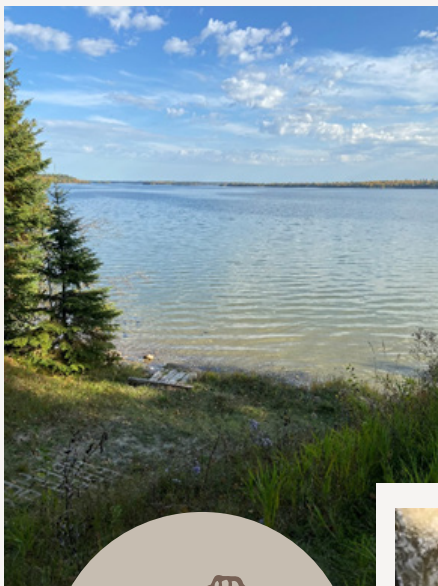
The Indigenous Sexual Violence Awareness Training coordinator developed partnerships with 11 Indigenous agencies including Violence Against Women centers and sexual assault centers across the province. Partnerships ensure a strong network maintains a coordinated services approach to meeting the needs of Indigenous women. Training addressed gaps, trends, and community challenges regarding sexual violence. Eight workshops were facilitated on Sexual Violence Awareness with 99 participants at locations across the province. Four regional activities: for each of the four ONWA regions, a meeting was held with frontline staff to assess their training and resource needs and community members' needs around sexual violence awareness.

Health Programs Annual Report

Indigenous Diabetes Education Program (IDEP)

The IDEP supported communities through the pandemic with educational prevention workshops via the zoom platform as well as with wellness packages. Educational programs focused on sustainability, growing your foods, healthy eating, importance of physical activity, mental wellbeing, traditional medicines, and traditional crafting. The traditional practices set the stage to provide education on basic foot care, effective blood glucose levels, heart disease, kidney disease, pre-diabetes, and gestational diabetes.

The diabetes program hosted a Nourishing our Bodies series done in partnership with Mamaway Wiidokdaadwin Indigenous Interprofessional Primary Care Team. The workshop series focused on sharing information with indigenous youth with all the teachings originating from the medicine wheel. Each month had a new focus which walked the youth through a series of educational presentations paired with traditional



*Cedar Tea
Making and
Nature Walk
via a Zoom
meeting walk
to refresh the
senses.*



The beading kits provided to Breaking Free From Family Violence program changed some women's lives. A mom-to-be learned how to bead with the kits provided to the program. She became so good at it, she is making earrings and selling them now. She is making some extra money for herself and giving her such a sense of accomplishment and pride.



recipes and games. The group truly enjoyed the hands-on activities presented each session.

The diabetes program launched a COVID-19 and diabetes presentation presented to both our youth group as well as a provincial workshop via Zoom. The presentation focused on how people with diabetes experience COVID-19, how to plan in case of infection, effective hand hygiene, mask wearing, how to prepare for isolation if needed, how to use PPE and cleaning effectively. Along with this workshop, instructional videos were developed and posted to social media and ONWA's website explaining proper technique for masking, gloving and hand washing. These instructional videos were also shared with communities experiencing outbreaks.

Indigenous Women's Health Program

The Indigenous Women's Health program was launched in 2021. The program was rolled out in three ONWA chapters: Georgian Bay Native Women's Association, Niagara Chapter Native Women, and Sunset Women's Aboriginal Circle. The Indigenous Women's Health Program is an expansion of the Indigenous Diabetes Education Program to ensure an increased presence in education and training.

Indigenous Responsible Gambling Awareness Program (IRGAP)

With at-home restrictions and social distancing becoming the new norm, many people turned to internet usage and other forms of entertainment such as internet gambling. The IRGAP program provided workshops which included valuable gambling prevention material but, more importantly, introduced healthy ways to connect back to traditional activities and customs.

The IRGAP and IDEP programs partnered to launch the provincial *Seeds to Table*

"I think it is important to know about our culture and to have the teachings that go with the type of activities that the program(s) involve."

"It was good that my mom and I were able to do the program together and we both learned something new and enjoyed it. What I really liked is that the program was not limited to only one age group. It was something that anyone at any age could do. It was fun and easy to understand and follow. I also liked the fact no one laughed at my questions and took the time to answer them. I would do the program again with my mom."

"More youth my age need to start eating healthier. Kids today eat and drink too much sugar. I would recommend this recipe to friends and family."

"Very helpful and encouraging to live a healthy life with diabetes."

MOCC WALK Campaign

The MOCC walk was reinvented this year to include a virtual platform. The virtual platform encouraged safe socially-distanced movement in a time of uncertainty. Participants were encouraged to move creatively with weekly challenges which included living room pow wow dances, nature walks and weekly themes such as creative outfits.

"Walking connects me to Mother Earth and makes me realize there is medicine all around me."

"I am still walking...on Saturday I was able to see a great grey owl on a branch overlooking a grown-in beaver pond. We watched each other for about 10 minutes. Would not have had that opportunity if I hadn't gone for a walk."



19K

Over 18,864
Total Hours Walked

1K

1,107
Participants

Aboriginal Responsible Gambling Awareness Program

40	Moccasin Game Participants
24	Double Ball Participants
42	Fall Feast Participants
70	Spring Feast Participants
40	Firekeeper Participants
32	Moose Hide Tanning Participants
45	Youth Cultural Teachings Participants

Ska-Be (Helper) Program

1,821	Participants Received Home Care Supports
49	Elders Supported Preventing Transfer to Long-term Care Facilities
47	Group Activities with 501 Participants
9	Community Events with 973 Participants
23	External Partnerships Developed



campaign. Participants learned the importance of food security and sustainability that included gardening.

Participants received gardening kits with

information on planting and

caring. The program partnered with

community service branch offices in Timmins, Hamilton, Sioux Lookout, Ottawa and Kenora. The campaign reached 75 participants per session.

IRGAP and IDEP ran a youth project in the community. Both programs partnered with the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board to provide a virtual cultural camp, sharing traditional gaming practices like the moccasin game and the double ball game. The workshops shared stories and skills, such as how to provide respect for animals, how to work with hide and how to sew with sinew.

The cultural teachings were helpful in grounding and healing community members during the pandemic. Participants were excited to have received the teachings and gained a sense of pride in themselves.

Youth Life Promotion

The Youth Life Promotion program provided workshops, mentorship, and programming activities to 257 youth provincially. A weekly youth group was held through the summer and



"I'm so grateful for all that you do for us/me."

"I love attending the programs at ONWA. It gets me out of the house."

"We don't know what we would do without you...but you need to take care of yourself, too, my girl."

"I know I can always count on you."

"I hope we have you 'til the very end. And we both know what that means. 'Til my dear husband passes you are a gift sent from heaven."

"Ska-Be is the best program for us!"

into the early fall. Youth were introduced to many traditional and cultural activities to help build their bundles. These activities included feather painting, moccasin game, diabetes awareness blue bracelets, medicine bags and birch bark earrings, rattle-making, beading, healthy lifestyle techniques, traditional teachings by Al Hunter and a writing workshop by Richard Van Camp. Youth were engaged and returned week after week.

The Youth Mentorship program shifted to a COVID-19 response by learning through a mentor to assemble Go Bags for community members. They supported the delivery of Go Bags. The youth have been necessary as we moved through the COVID-19 pandemic. There has been an increase of poverty and violence resulting in more community members needing supports such as groceries, PPE, shoveling elders' driveways, and preparing sacred medicines packages. The program created one full-time position and 18 part-time positions. One youth is being mentored 1:1 with a traditional healer.

The youth were provided the opportunity to access workshops on COVID-19 related procedures which included proper hand washing, proper application, and removal of PPE. Many of the youth were part of the Mindimooyenh Clinic in Thunder Bay providing support to elders, helping support community members in the recovery area, preparing snack bags as well as preparing traditional medicines.

Ska-Be (Helper) Program

The Ska-Be program delivers in three sites: Thunder Bay, Georgian Bay Native Women's Association, and Niagara Chapter of Native Women. The program was critical to elderly or community members with a disability to ensure they had increased health and home care services to help support their independence and wellbeing, especially during the pandemic.

The Ska-Be teams recognized early in the year that elder community members were struggling with loneliness, isolation, boredom and lack of internet knowledge and service during the pandemic. We saw a drastic increase in lack of mobility due to canceled social activities which kept elders active and busy. The focus of the program quickly changed from in-person visits and care to contactless supports which focused on supplies, activities, programming, and PPE kits. Community members were assisted in accessing health services, grocery shopping, cultural teachings, medicines, and advocacy.

Ska-Be workers serviced 49 permanent clients with 1,502 1:1 supports. Ska-Be workers organized and advocated for community members and accompanied them to medical appointments via taxi and then met them at the appointment to ensure they arrived safely. They provided contactless community supports that included dropping of supplies and groceries, cleaning supplies, PPE packages and virtual programming supplies.

Holiday Pins Kits



Remembrance Day Pins Kits



Indigenous Women's Leadership Programs

Building Indigenous Women's Leadership

Program Workshops

The focus of the Indigenous Women's Leadership program for the past year has been supporting ONWA membership on identifying needs that have arisen because of the pandemic and assisting to find solutions and provide direct support where possible. Go Bag supports were provided across the province where requested.

Program workshops provided during the COVID-19 pandemic were the following: Leadership: The Four Agreements, Life Balance, and Mala-making. These workshops were provided to encourage self-care through mindfulness techniques during the pandemic.

Program Campaigns

The *Ten Days of Teachings* campaign for Mother's Day garnered 25 submissions from our membership and community members. Participants shared teachings they received that they felt were meaningful and wanted to pass on to others.

The SHERO-kwe campaign showcased 29 submissions from participants who wanted to



Women who attended Life balance and self care workshop:

"I will use the medicine wheel tool provided."

"I can bring this to other volunteers I work with."

"It was a very good presentation."

"ONWA supports community in many ways."



share women they knew to be their SHERO-kwe. “SHERO-kwe” comes from the combination of the words: shero (a woman defined by another as hero) and kwe (an Ojibwe term for someone who identifies as woman). This event was held to honor International Women’s Day and bring to light the strong Indigenous women in our lives that we are grateful for.

“My SHERO-kwe is my mother Jeannette Corbiere-Lavell. As a child, I thought everybody’s mom went to the Supreme Court and led protests against the government in between baking pies and running the farm all on her own. She really is my hero not just because she gave me voice and taught me how to stand up against injustice. She gave voice to generations of Indigenous women and their children and grandchildren who otherwise would have been excluded from our nations if she hadn’t spoken up,” shared Dawn Lavell-Harvard, ONWA Board President.

Program Resources Shared

The Indigenous Women’s Leadership coordinator assisted the development of the virtual drum book, providing weekly COVID-19 updates to membership including resource information and activities specific to COVID-19.

She is Wise Capacity Building

Much of the focus for the She is Wise Capacity Building program was to support ONWA’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The

5th Annual Poetry Night

This year marked ONWA’s 5th Annual Poetry Night held virtually for the first time through Zoom where poets, storytellers, writers, musicians and spoken word artists helped raise awareness of violence against Indigenous women and girls. ONWA was honoured to feature poets Al Hunter and Dr. Duke Redbird this year and guest musical performances were provided by Jasmine McGuire and Jamie Labrador. Province-wide submissions were gathered for ONWA’s annual publication *Strong Hands Stop Violence* poetry book which highlights poetry written by Indigenous women. For some, the Poetry Night was not only their first time attending but also the first time to write poetry and to share their story with others. 67 participants gathered online for a single provincial event while the collective art project *Strong Hands Stop Violence* rolled out by way of an art kit provided by contactless mail to those who registered including ONWA branches and chapters. The event was held to observe the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

Artwork by
Jordis Duke



"The sense of relaxation and being centered with yourself."

"A grounded space."

"I loved this session. It was calming."

"I can do the beading workshop with the youth/mothers now."

"It can be used to educate students or to take time for myself."

"A great reminder that you are important as well and to take care of yourself."

"The activity was great. As I strung each bead onto the string, I felt such a positive energy."

MALA BEAD SELF-CARE WORKSHOP



Capacity Building coordinator shifted supports to Community Services by supporting programming workshops and preparing Go Bags for community members. The Capacity Building coordinator supported the Mindemoyah Vaccine Clinic.

The Capacity Building coordinator supported the *She is Wise* Conference by providing an art activity and breakout session. The Feather Art painting activity participants were able to paint and create together as a healing activity. Participants spoke to the simplicity of the activity and how it helped to make something and that they would do more painting to support their wellbeing. The Mala Bead Self-Care workshop was helpful for participants to learn self-care and balance.

Social Services Relief Fund

The Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF) Phase 2 is funded by the Ontario Aboriginal Housing Strategy. Through this funding, ONWA provided funding to six Chapters and Community Services to provide housing and rental arrears and housing supports to community members throughout the province of Ontario. This phase of the funding provided community members assistance with cell phones and tablets for emergency and virtual programming. This program provided PPE to community members and supported 78 individuals provincially who were at risk of homelessness, needed to isolate due to the pandemic and access programs and services.





Barry & Laurie Green

Barry Green and Greenrock IMPACT Program Provide Vital Support this Past Year

With over 30 years of experience in the Canadian multi-family sector, Barry Green is responsible for the oversight of operations, family office, and philanthropic divisions of the Greenrock organization.

Barry co-created Greenrock's IMPACT program, which responds the vital real-time needs of residents and community members through a variety of annual initiatives, volunteer programs, and donations.

With support from the *Barry & Laurie Green Trust*, Barry is deeply committed to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.

Over 40 Canadian charities were awarded financial support from the *Greenrock Charitable Trust* to assist during the first wave of the pandemic. ONWA deeply appreciates having benefited this past year from Green Rock's generous support.

"Laurie and I, and our IMPACT team at Greenrock are truly appreciative for

everything that ONWA's does. All of us across the Province are so fortunate to benefit from ONWA's leadership, and I am honoured and proud to stand with ONWA and help support their incredibly important work." -Barry Green

Greenrock COVID-19 Relief Funding - May/June 2020

\$25,000

Greenrock residents also voted for several charities across the Province to receive donations through the company's annual holiday donation program. ONWA was one of five charities with the most votes to receive a \$20,000 donation.

Greenrock IMPACT Resident Donation - December 2020

\$20,000

ONWA looks forward to continuing to build our friendship and working relationship with Barry and Laurie Green as well as the Greenrock organization. For this we say Chi Miigwetch.

Policy, Research, and Evaluation

The Policy, Research and Evaluation (PRE) portfolio are the storytellers of ONWA. The portfolio applies an Indigenous Gender-Based Analysis to the issues facing Indigenous women and their families. PRE aims to tell the stories of Indigenous women's lives in Ontario by identifying, examining, and detailing the issues of concern to Indigenous women; and, thereby, developing strategies, policies, and advocacy approaches that focus on local, regional, provincial, and national activities to improve the quality of life for Indigenous women and their families.

Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services (OAHS)

ONWA works collaboratively with OAHS and its direct member organizations to address off-reserve Indigenous housing policy capacity, issues, needs, and gaps in Ontario. ONWA's focus provides housing policy analysis and recommendations informed by an Indigenous Gender-Based Analysis to support Indigenous women and their children in securing safe, affordable, and culturally-appropriate housing.

The housing policy analyst facilitated ONWA's participation in the Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF) Phase 2 funding for operational and capital projects that support individuals at risk of homelessness and those impacted by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic across the province.

Georgian Bay Native Women's Association (GBNWA) - SSRF Phase 2 Capital Project

The GBNWA, with capacity support from the ONWA, secured \$1,160,000 to acquire four affordable and supportive housing units. These homes are a long-term solution that will help to lessen homelessness in Penetanguishene, Ontario. Through this, Indigenous women and their families living in unsuitable conditions or escaping violence will have access to safe, culturally-appropriate housing, supports, and services to better their safety, health, and well-being. GBNWA's project is expected to be complete by December 31, 2021. The accomplishment stands to lead the way for more Chapter's to create Indigenous-women's specific housing developments.

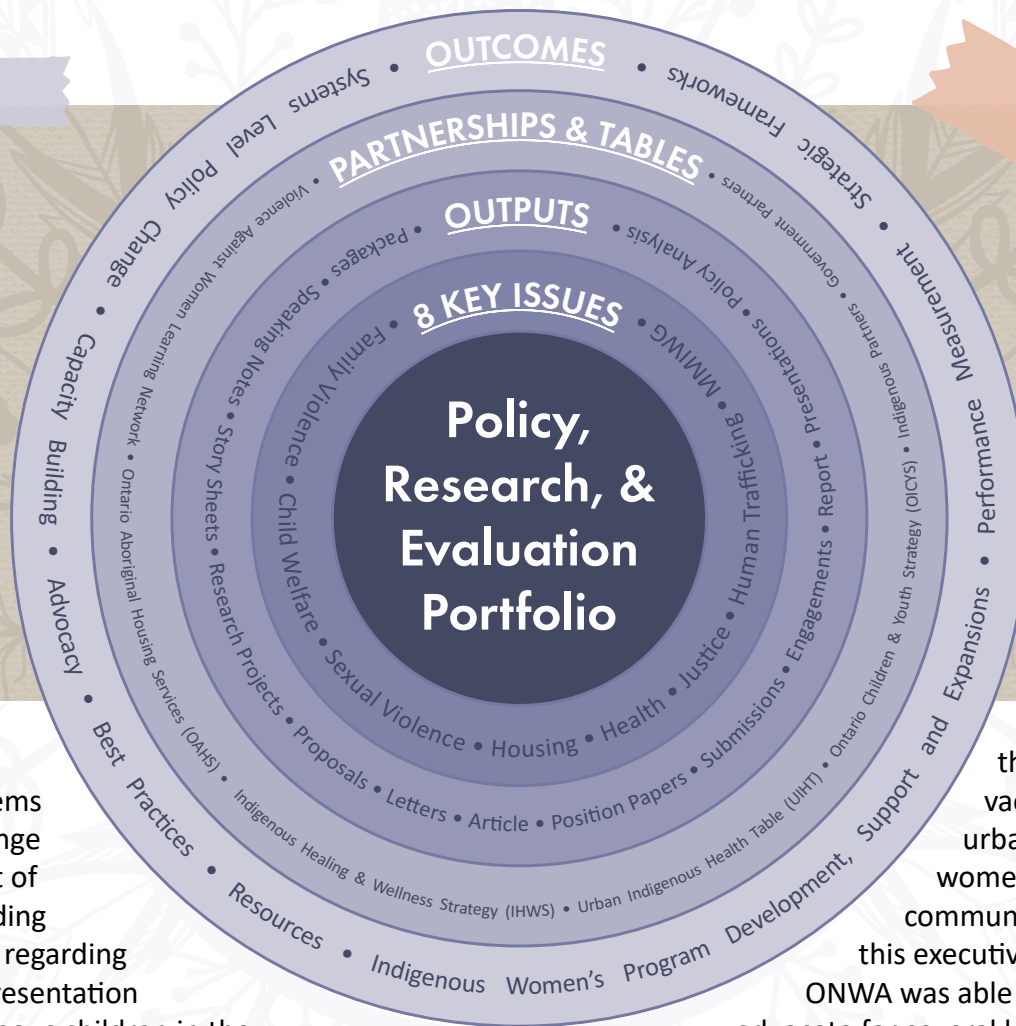
Ontario Indigenous Children and Youth Strategy (OICYS)

ONWA works collaboratively with partners of OICYS, to improve services to meet the needs of Indigenous children and youth. ONWA advocates for Indigenous women and their families through the advancement of key policy recommendations on issues such as child welfare re-design, youth justice, violence, and human trafficking.

Ontario Strategy to Re-Design Child Welfare

On July 29, 2020, the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services announced the Ontario Strategy to Re-Design the Child Welfare





System. This systems level change is a result of longstanding concerns regarding over-representation of Indigenous children in the child welfare system. The re-design plan is being informed and co-developed by the Ontario Indigenous Children and Youth Strategy partners. The re-design plan identifies a distinct shift to focus on prevention and early intervention community-based services, where child protection is a last resort. Through this co-development process, ONWA advocates for Indigenous women and their families including making key recommendations about issues particularly impacting Indigenous women such as ending birth alerts and increasing gender-based services for Indigenous women to help prevent child welfare involvement in Indigenous families.

COVID-19 and the Urban Indigenous Vaccination Sub-Table

In early 2021, ONWA was invited to provide expert advice to the Ontario government on

the COVID-19 vaccine rollout for urban Indigenous women, families, and communities. Through this executive level table, ONWA was able to successfully advocate for several key policy changes including:

1. **Ensuring that Indigenous women and families, including their household members, could access COVID-19 vaccines as part of the Phase 1 priority group.** Recognizing the importance of family and community for urban Indigenous people, ONWA successfully led advocacy for a family-unit vaccine access policy for urban Indigenous people in Ontario. Taking a family-unit approach has been integral to increasing vaccine uptake and confidence, and it has also helped ensure that community members return for second doses.
2. **Ensuring vaccine access for all Indigenous women, families, and communities on the product monograph schedule.** Recognizing that Indigenous people have unique, compounding COVID-19 risk factors regardless of whether they live on

or off reserve, ONWA advocated strongly for an exemption from Ontario's policy to extend the vaccine dose interval to 16 weeks. As a result of many analyses, meetings, and letters written, including a letter to the National Advisory Committee on Immunization, ONWA was part of the successful effort to influence that policy change, which in turn improved equity and fair vaccine access for urban Indigenous women and families.

ONWA continues to engage with the Urban Indigenous Vaccination Sub-Table and other local vaccination planning tables to provide expert advice from an Indigenous gender-based lens as vaccines roll out in Ontario.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, ONWA has kept our community and partners current on the COVID-19 situation. ONWA's policy team developed daily briefings detailing provincial and national updates for our leadership team, sites, Chapters, and community partners. Briefings are now being provided weekly and are also posted online. We have received significant positive feedback on these briefings, as community has been grateful to have access to accurate, clear information all in one place.

Indigenous Women's Advisory Council

The Indigenous Women's Advisory Council was created in 2020 to provide input on violence prevention actions and the development of the Ontario Response to the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls. The council is made up of 11 members representing First Nations, Inuit, and Métis within Ontario. The members of the council are leaders on violence prevention who provide input on issues impacting their



communities such as human trafficking and child, youth, and family well-being. The council is co-chaired by ONWA's Executive Director Cora McGuire-Cyrette and Ganohkwasra Family Assault Support Services.

Part the council's mandate was to support the development of Ontario's strategy in response to the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. ONWA played a lead role in advising Ontario in the development of its strategy. The strategy *Pathways to Safety* was launched on May 27, 2021. ONWA considers Ontario's strategy to align well with what Indigenous women have been asking for. It advocates, however, that the plan must remain accountable to Indigenous women and their organizations, and that any proposed investments in Ontario's response are met and upheld with particular focus on the immediate safety needs of Indigenous women, and healing for Indigenous women, families, and communities.

The Indigenous Women's Advisory Council also developed a placemat that is a companion to Ontario's response. The placemat illustrates the structure and recommendations of Ontario's MMIWG response while also incorporating cultural elements.

Due to the council's success and the numerous priorities identified in the *Pathways to Safety* report, the council's mandate is anticipated to extend beyond 2022 to focus on strategy implementation and instituting accountability measures.



Indigenous Women's Safety Table

In December 2020, ONWA established a table of Indigenous women across the country to hold the federal government accountable during the development and implementation of the National Action Plan by the very people the National Action Plan is supposed to be about – Indigenous women and girls. The table consists of Indigenous women with knowledge and expertise on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. The Indigenous Women's Safety Table meets every month to summon the collective expertise of the membership, to provide direction on what Indigenous women's safety looks like from the perspectives of Indigenous women.

Post National Action Plan release, this table is well positioned to provide meaningful guidance on the implementation phase of the National Action Plan across Canada. This table is now considering how best to proceed with holding the federal government accountable to Indigenous women's safety within the current political context.

She is Wise Research Project

ONWA's *She is Wise* research project is now in year three of five. The project will result in a blueprint highlighting wise practices to support communities, agencies, and organizations to address sexual violence against Indigenous women. The blueprint is guided by Indigenous women's voices and stories and adheres to the belief that Indigenous women are the experts of their own lives who hold the knowledge and experience needed to address the issues they face.

To steer the project, a formal project advisory committee has been established. The committee is a consultative body that brings together Indigenous women with diverse backgrounds of knowledge and unique skill sets to ensure that the project is effective in meeting the varying needs of Indigenous women. Chaired by ONWA, the committee is comprised of 10 members and continues to meet regularly.

ONWA developed an internal survey that was delivered from March to May. The purpose of the survey was to gather information from staff to determine their level of confidence in supporting Indigenous women who have experienced sexual violence as well as gather input on sexual programming and supports. The survey tool has now closed and the data will be analyzed.

The next phase of the project includes identifying Indigenous women community leaders and role models.

Heart Work: Experiences of Indigenous Women Entrepreneurs

In early 2021, ONWA undertook a small study to explore the experiences of Indigenous women entrepreneurs in Ontario during the COVID-19 pandemic. The women who participated in this research had very little formal business training but were successful in harnessing their talents to pursue their own businesses.

The report *Heart Work: Experiences of Indigenous Women Entrepreneurs* speaks to the strength and creativity of Indigenous women entrepreneurs and makes recommendations for further supports for Indigenous women business owners. Public release of this report is anticipated for Fall 2021.

Our Growth

Operations

Operations is responsible for realizing the fourth organizational structure goal: ONWA is a strong and stable organization. Operations is committed to achieving operational excellence by providing structural services across portfolios through info-structure, infra-structure, marketing, opportunity management, risk management and quality assurance. Operations is committed to influencing operational excellence by creating culturally-safe and engaging spaces at ONWA's provincial branches.



19

Number of Opportunities

23M

\$22,983,304 Value of Opportunities

52%

**\$11,911,190
7 Agreements**

25%

**\$5,797,714
2 Pending**

20%

**\$4,619,400
6 Archived: No Bid**

3%

**\$655,000
4 Archived: Lost**

Opportunity Management

Opportunity Management supports ONWA in its strategic pursuit of funding opportunities helping to ensure the organization's financial viability and sustainability. During the 2020-21 fiscal year, there were 19 opportunities worth \$23M, of which \$12M (52%) were successful agreements. This is over and above ongoing operating agreements and does not include any COVID-related funding received.

Finance

The Finance Department is a vital support pillar within ONWA. It helps to ensure fiscal responsibility and accountability across the organization. Finance takes data and turns it into useful information to help our leadership make strategic proactive decisions that are clear and transparent. The finance department completes all payroll, accounts payable, and completed financial reporting for 60 projects. Finance continues to grow and meet the growing needs of ONWA.

ONWA continued to experience significant growth during the 2020-21 fiscal year for the period of April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021. Our total revenue from all sources has seen a growth of 38% to almost \$22 million. ONWA completed the audit for this period remotely with no issues and a clean audit report.

60

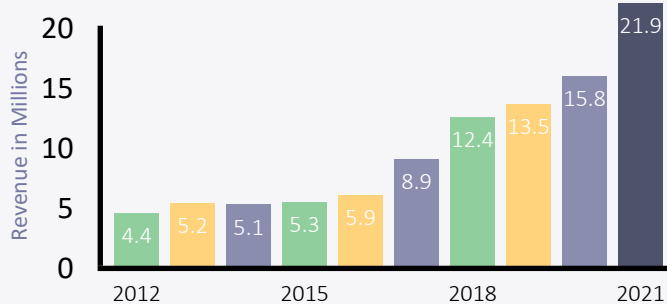
Projects

Administered by ONWA

22M

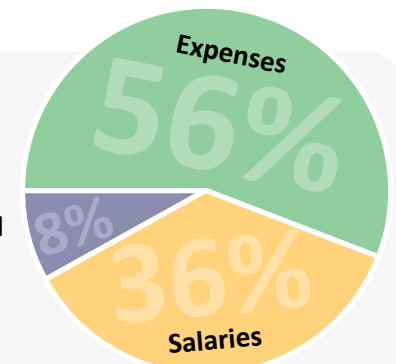
Total revenue

for 2020-21 fiscal year



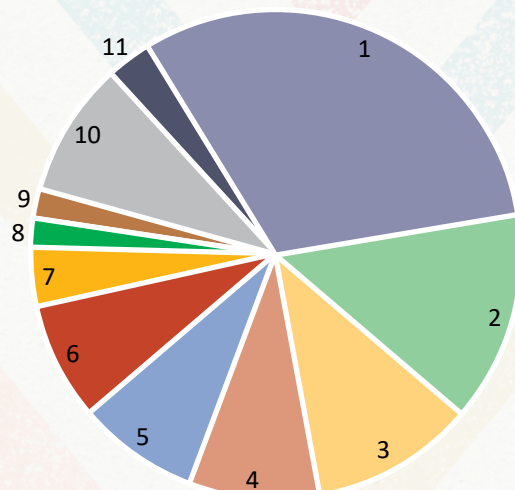
Growth in Funding 2012-21

Operational Support



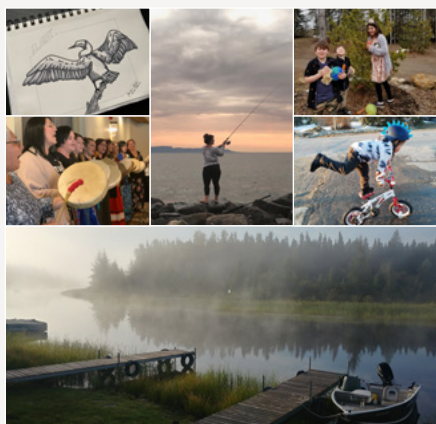
Expenditure by Service 2020-21

REVENUE BY SOURCE



1. Ministry of Community and Social Services 32%
2. Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care 14%
3. Ministry of Attorney General 11%
4. Indigenous Services Canada 9%
5. Ministry of Indigenous Affairs 8%
6. Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services 8%
7. Métis Nation of Ontario 4%
8. Thunder Bay Indian Friendship Centre 2%
9. Ministry for Women and Gender Equality 2%
10. Admin Fees 9%
11. All other revenue 3%

14 Days of Gratitude



285 Submissions

April 2020

10 Days of Teachings



27 Submissions

June 2020

Who is your SHERO-kwe?



30 Submissions

March 2021

Marketing and Communications (MarCom)

Working in partnership with all ONWA portfolios, MarCom connects the brand with people, places, experiences, and events. MarCom helps promote Indigenous women's voices across communities by telling their stories and supporting Indigenous women to reclaim their inherent role as community leaders.

The 2020-21 fiscal year presented an opportunity to re-imagine the way ONWA connects to community, stakeholders, and each other. Given the reality of the COVID-19 pandemic, ONWA quickly shifted how programming and services were offered; continually evaluating and adapting approaches.

During the 2020-21 fiscal year, we launched the *Reconciliation with Indigenous Women: Changing the Story of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2020)* report which included a virtual press conference; released two editions of the *She Is Wise* magazine; delivered a virtual 49th AGA; held our first livestream events; expanded our website with multiple interactive resources, including a virtual Drum Book; delivered entirely new promotions; and more!

456M

Overall Media Reach (approx.)

96K

95,643

Website Total Reach

2.4M

2,361,903

Social Media Total Reach

453M

453,061,063

News (Television, Radio, etc.) Total Reach

"I respect ONWA for all the awareness and advocacy they do for women and their families. A voice to be reckoned with." -S.M.

Website
www.onwa.ca

845 Posts

1,672 Followers

109,365 Discovery/
Reach

Instagram
@onwa_official

LinkedIn

1,718 Followers
902 New Followers

3,231 Visits

51,669 Impressions
1,767 Reactions
1,398 Clicks

Facebook
@ONWA7

11,364 Page Followers

19,450 Page Views

1,563,969 Post Reach
(Organic and Paid)

11,082 Likes
12,585 Shares
40,258 Reactions

Twitter
@_ONWA_

1,040 Tweets

4,236 Followers
847 New Followers' Visits

8,888 Profile Visits

636,900 Impressions
436 Mentions



Working from home



Working from home

Infostructure

Information systems play a very important role in the effective and efficient delivery of services in any organization. This past year was filled with major technical challenges for many IT departments and ONWA was no exception. We had to pivot very quickly in order to continue providing quality services for our community members. This meant that we had to procure, distribute, and adopt new information technology very quickly.

Fortunately, ONWA had made significant investments in this area prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. This allowed us to quickly transition to a 100% remote service delivery model when needed. Our investments in migrating to cloud systems and software as a service made it easier for our employees to work from anywhere.

Our ONWA team was very quickly able to transition to digital collaboration, meeting and other communication tools so that there was almost no downtime when shifting to remote service delivery. There were many challenges in the beginning but our staff rose to the challenge and adapted very quickly.

Of course, there are significant cybersecurity challenges that come with the shift of 100+ employees working from 13 secure office networks to 100+ working from 100+ home environments. Improved cybersecurity systems and additional cybersecurity training for our staff and board were necessary. We continue to improve our cybersecurity awareness on a regular basis.

Not only were we able to pivot quickly with these new technical challenges, we were able to grow during this time, bringing two new offices online and recruiting many new team members.

While our people are our most valuable asset, empowering our people with the best tools for the job means that we can better help those before our community members and their families who need us.

Human Resources (HR)

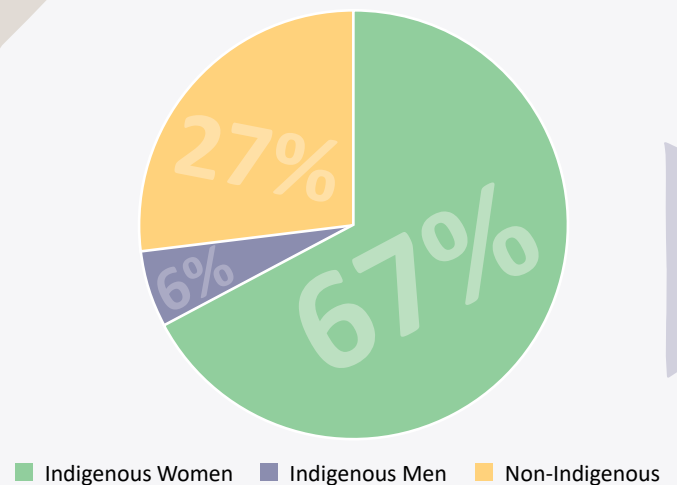
Our Purpose

This year we as an organization rose to the challenge of change. To meet the urgent and unexpected needs of the organization due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, HR quickly pivoted to respond, develop, support, and implement a wide range of COVID-related measures and provide assistance.

Keeping our teams safe and informed is paramount. We are all in this together and working collaboratively with one another, listening, and understanding our needs, was crucial to develop services to support our vision and people across the province.

HR embarked on rapid learning of best practices and provided guidance to employees on any COVID-19 related matters. We worked to create a Return-to-Work Plan and Return to Work Employee Training Guide that includes a variety of new policies and procedures including an accommodation process and COVID-19 risk assessments. We revamped our employment agreements to include working from home and provided extensive training where appropriate.

ONWA Demographics



As guides and advisors, HR works to foster an engaging, positive, and informed team while identifying and responding to the changing needs of our diverse internal and external stakeholders. We work to ensure culture is at the forefront of what we do by incorporating our teachings of love, humility, truth, wisdom, bravery, honesty, and respect.

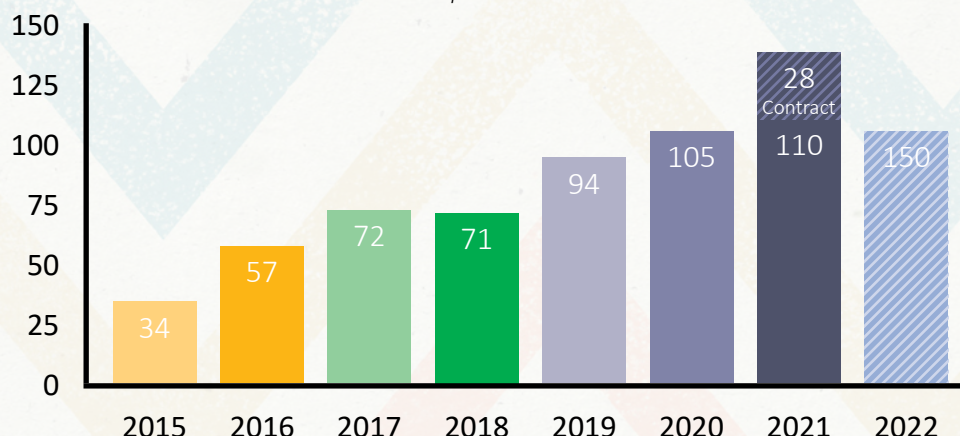
Our Workforce

We are proud to show most of our workforce represents the community members we serve. 73% of our workforce being Indigenous peoples and 67% of these being Indigenous women.

Recruitment continued despite the COVID-19

Number of Employees

April 1 to March 31



pandemic. As ONWA uses a web-based applicant tracking system through our HRIS, it was simple to transition this function to working from home. Our team continues to grow. HR recruited 28 contract workers to facilitate our vaccine clinics on top of current recruitment demands. For fiscal 2020-21, we increased our staff by approximately 20% and project an increase of 35% in staff for fiscal 2021-22.

Our Recruitment

HR enhanced our recruitment strategy across the province by introducing radio, increased publications, and additional social media platforms. We embarked on key partnerships with Leaders International, Indigenous Link, and LinkedIn to assist with filling key roles.

We more than doubled our views when compared to the previous year for all jobs posted on our human resource information system and increased applicants by approximately 75%.

Onboarding and orientation are conducted virtually to ensure employees are set up for success.

Our Employee Development

Keeping our workforce informed and training them about COVID-19 occurred at the onset of working from home. HR worked to develop a training plan that provided all ONWA employees with the information and guidance they needed to support them and their teams to work from

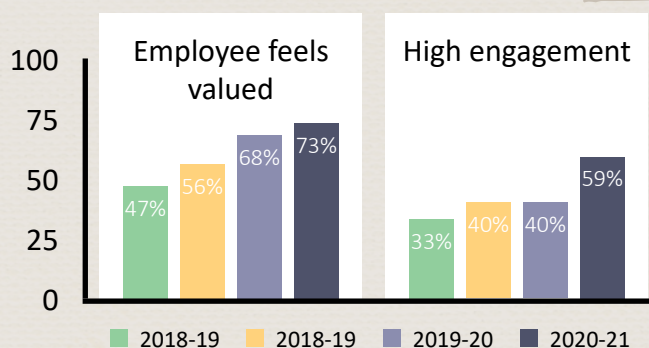
home. The plan included safety in the pandemic, mental health at work, communication, and leadership training.

We focused on our management team to develop their leadership capacities by partnering with Schulich-York University. A combination of 16 managers and directors participated in Management 1 and Management 2 training with a group of seven managers and directors completing the Schulich MINI MBA program.

To offer further development, the annual performance assessments continued and are designed to encourage a focus on a joint manager/employee commitment to employee development, employee engagement, and employee success. These form part of our policies and are used to guide us in salary reviews — pending funding — and are conducted through our HRIS.

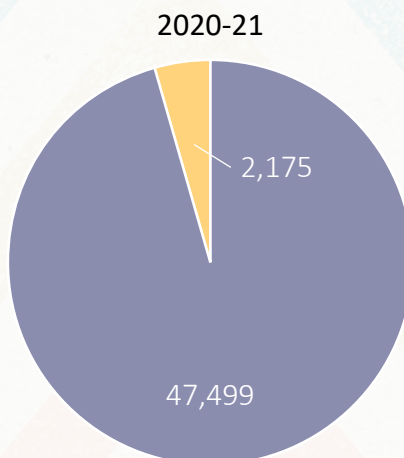
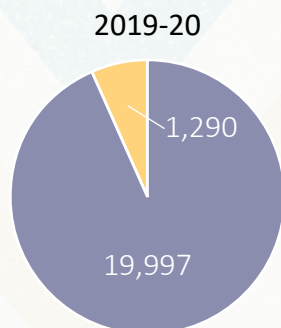
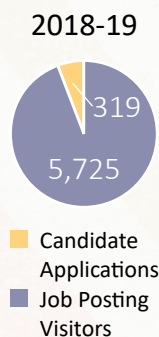
ONWA uses the *Four Agreements* to guide our

Criteria



Recruitment Results

as of March 31



employees in their everyday work responsibilities. Through annual reviews, we can measure employee engagement. ONWA employees communicate to us they have a high sense of feeling valued. We see higher engagement levels.

Annual salary reviews are awarded based on the employee's annual evaluation. Any employee who qualified for an annual salary review moved through their salary band to the next level based on their performance and provided funding was available. Each manager meets with individual employees for a discussion and development plan to outline what employees are doing well and where they need to improve.

In 2021-22, ONWA will continue to work on engagement and will provide an engagement feedback mechanism throughout the year (eNPS – employee net promoter score). As ONWA continues to increase services and expand the team, the information collected will assist us in our continued growth and development as we can measure employee satisfaction and loyalty.

Our Wellness

The pandemic has created a feeling of isolation, loneliness, and mental health challenges for some people. At ONWA we have a comprehensive benefits program that is well rounded and works to guide our employees and their families, in their time of need. This year, we saw an increase in the use of our *Employee and Family Assistance Plan*

as it rose from 6% to 9% when compared to the national average of 3%.

We want to ensure our employees have services to support them and their families during this time of uncertainty and while working from home. With lockdowns in full force and the reoccurring message of staying at home, we wanted our teams to safe. We worked with our benefits broker and were happy to provide new services:

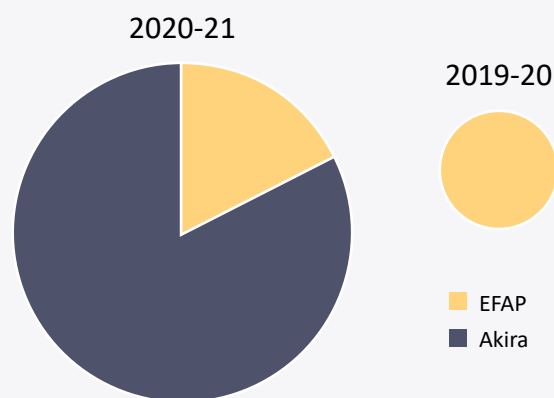
- **Akira:** Access nurse practitioners online for immediate health care needs and guidance. 42% of our team accessed Akira.
- **PeopleConnect:** Access counsellors online on a variety of subjects.

HR scheduled virtual benefit information sessions to ensure all employees were versed in these new features. We added virtual information sessions on the organization's pension plan.

Our Key Accomplishments

- Transitioning all HR functions to at home and keeping our people safe.
- Increase in staff by 20%, increase in engagement levels by 19%, and enhancements of benefits.
- Increased employee development.
- Administration of COVID-19 related duties including leaves, accommodations, guidance, tracking, return to work processes, training, health and safety, creation of new policies and procedures and legal requirements.

Usage of Wellness Services



Sites

Fort William First Nation

Head Office

Corporate & Financial Operations

Greenstone

Satellite Office

- Community Health Outreach
- Indigenous Healthy Babies Healthy Children
- Mental Health and Wellness

Hamilton

2 - Satellite Offices

- Babaamendam (Trauma-Informed)
- Gladue
- Indigenous Healthy Babies Healthy Children

Kenora

Satellite Office

- Breaking Free from Family Violence
- Community Wellness
- Courage for Change (Anti-Human Trafficking Crisis Response)
- Indigenous Healthy Babies Healthy Children
- Indigenous Victim and Family Liaison
- Mental Health and Wellness

Napanee

Satellite Office

- Babaamendam (Trauma-Informed)
- Indigenous Healthy Babies Healthy Children

Ottawa

Satellite Office

- Babaamendam (Trauma-Informed)
- Breaking Free from Family Violence
- Courage for Change (Anti-Human Trafficking Crisis Response)
- Gladue
- Indigenous Healthy Babies Healthy Children
- Mental Health and Wellness

Sioux Lookout

Satellite Office

- Ending Violence Against Indigenous Women
- Indigenous Healthy Babies Healthy Children

- Mental Health and Wellness
- Youth in Transition

Thunder Bay

Satellite Office

- Aboriginal Diabetes Education
- Aboriginal Responsible Gambling Awareness
- Addictions Aftercare
- Babaamendam (Trauma-Informed)
- Breaking Free from Family Violence
- Centralized Intake
- Community Wellness
- Courage for Change (Anti-Human Trafficking Crisis Response)
- Ending Violence Against Indigenous Women
- Grief Services
- Indigenous Anti-Human Trafficking
- Indigenous Healthy Babies Healthy Children
- Indigenous Victim and Family Liaison
- Indigenous Women's Leadership
- Mental Health and Wellness
- Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Family Support
- Nihdawin
- Ska-Be (Helper)
- Urban Aboriginal Strategy
- Youth in Transition
- Youth in Transition Housing Supports
- Youth Life Promotion (Mentorship)

Timmins

Satellite Office

- Babaamendam (Trauma-Informed)
- Breaking Free from Family Violence
- Courage for Change (Anti-Human Trafficking Crisis Response)
- Mental Health and Wellness

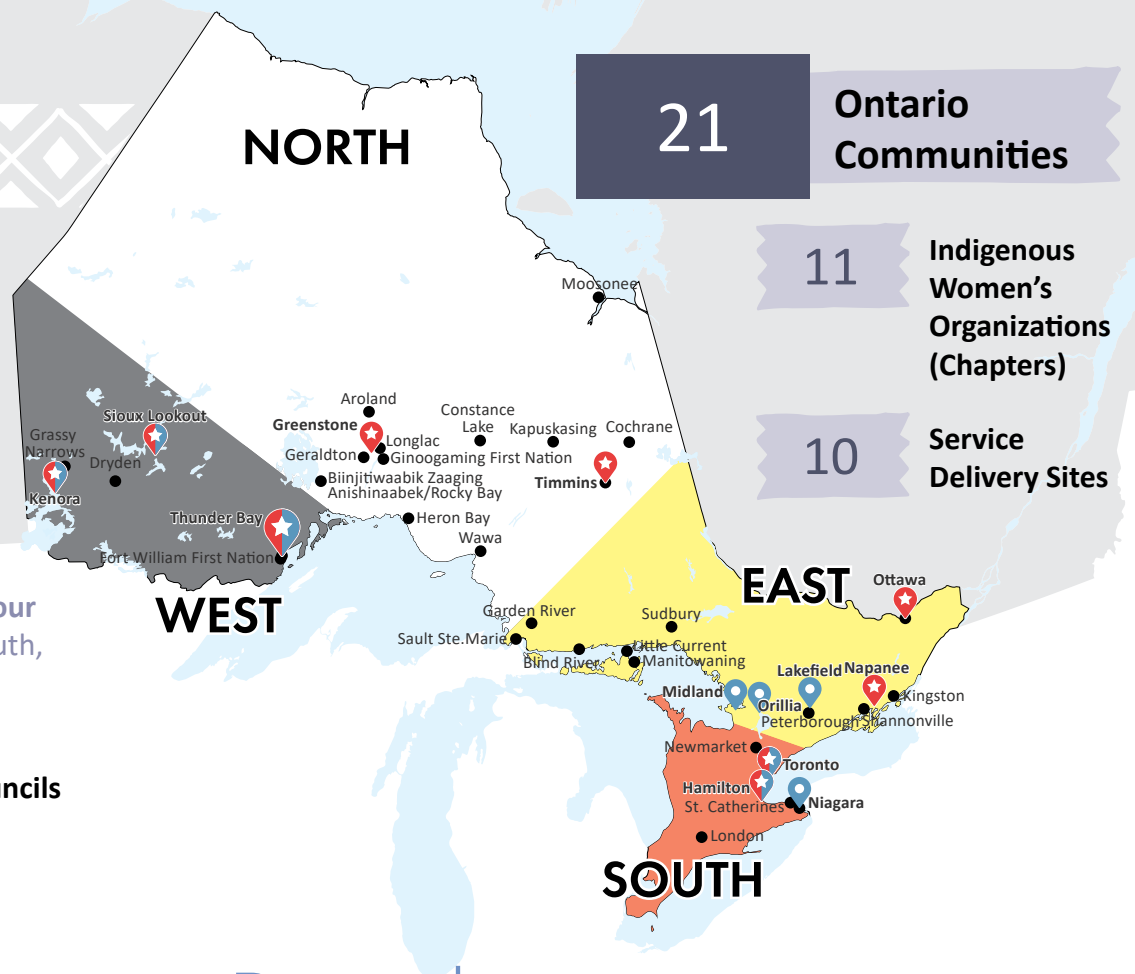
Toronto

2 - Executive Office & Satellite Office

- Community Safety Liaison
- Courage for Change (Anti-Human Trafficking Crisis Response)
- Mental Health and Wellness
- Youth in Transition Anti-Human Trafficking

Represented in four regions: East, South, West, and North

28 Councils



Governing Board

ONWA has a policy-making board committed to creating an open supportive environment with respectful communication. The board is comprised of 12 Indigenous women representing each of the four regions, including an honorary member. A regional Grandmothers' Council, who are non-voting members of the board, provide advisory and mentorship support to the Board of Directors. The following chart outlines ONWA's governance structure:

Board of Directors - CURRENT REGIONS (2020-2021)			
Eastern Region	Southern Region	Western Region	Northern Region
Dawn Harvard President	Krystal Brant Secretary	Tana Troniak Director	Roberta Wesley Vice President
Ashley Lamothe Director	Gloria Alvernaz-Mulcahy Director	Audrey Fisher Director	Betsy Connor Treasurer
Autumn Cooper Youth Director	[Vacant] Youth Director	Kayla Meekis Youth Director	Shanayah Echum Youth Director
Holly Hughes Grandmother	Suzanne Knapp Grandmother	Catherine Everson Grandmother	[Vacant] Grandmother

Honourary Members

- Jeanette Corbiere-Lavell (Manitowaning)

ONTARIO NATIVE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Empowering Indigenous Women Throughout Ontario

A Voice for Indigenous Women's Issues



www.onwa.ca



@ONWA7



@_ONWA_



@onwa_official



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