

COVID-19 Response

Although the Centre is not physically open and is not receiving the same funding we normally do throughout the year, our team has continued working to make the lives of families in our programs a little easier, especially during this crisis. Transition to online programming – both with core programming and new program development – continues to take place and has been both a learning opportunity for us as a team, and an important part of supporting families and youth to overcome these unprecedented times.

Transition to Online Learning

- › 34 laptops were purchased and/or refurbished and distributed to support families with the transition to online learning. Our team reached out to families within our programs to identify their needs. While doing so, Indigenous success coordinators at schools in Winnipeg reached out for assistance in acquiring laptops to support Indigenous high school students.
- › 5 of the programming laptops were lent to post-secondary students
- › 7 programming laptops were lent out to support online programming and additional camera equipment was acquired to support programming in 2021
- › Video games consoles previously provided for STEM learning opportunities were donated to Rossbrook House to create more individual game stations and allow for social distancing.

Funding and In-Kind Support to Partner Community Organizations

- › Supporting other organizations that were able to remain open in the early part of the pandemic was an important way to assist with the increased needs placed upon organizations. A total of \$4,900 was provided to Rossbrook House to cover the costs of providing dinner in July and August for children they serve; and \$3,000 was provided to Sunshine House to cover a portion of the costs for their weekly hamper deliveries.
- › Our team volunteered as drivers for other organizations who were providing contactless deliveries to homes in the area, and helping with community feasts. We assisted Sunshine House with their community feast in mid-May – mostly with the cooking, preparing meals-to-go, and cleaning up. Our program coordinator assisted with the weekly food deliveries.

Family Supports

Hampers and personal protective equipment

- › Essential items like hand sanitizers, emergency food, etc. were purchased and provided as the need from organizations was seen, heard, and responded to.
- › Supplies and funds were provided to individuals who made 300 reusable face masks for community organizations like Mama Bear Clan, Sunshine House, and North End Women's Centre in the early weeks of the pandemic when it was still difficult to acquire.
- › Sporting equipment to support 40 families through Spence Neighbourhood Association were donated with games for families and dozens of books for young learners in late spring and early summer. ¹
- › 3 boxes of books were donated to a local book drive hosted by a local elementary school
- › Dozens of winter gear sets, such as toques, gloves, and scarves were also donated to North End Women's Resource Centre.

Youth Supports

Cultural/educational kits

- › 3 instructional videos on regalia making in Anishinaabemowin were released. Through our 2019-2020 language funding these videos were developed with Indigenous artists on how to create regalia such as Ribbon Skirts, Moccasins, and Applique. Dozens of kits were then delivered to the homes of participants to follow along with the videos. ²
- › Our team delivered educational STEAM activities as a part of WASAC's Adventure Kids Camp in continuing our longstanding partnership. Two teams were able to safely facilitate activities to 560 students as a part of their camp. Pre-Covid we would normally facilitate workshops to over 1600 students in the summer. ³
- › This summer, 50 backpacks filled with school supplies, were provided in the first week of September. Traditionally, our Indigenous STEAM Camp gets 60 kids ready for back-to-school – both educationally and with all the supplies they need.
- › 25 STEM-based learning kits for Spence Neighbourhood Association were developed, assembled and delivered in December with plans to continue in the new year. This was an excellent substitute for our regular in-person Science Explorers Program.
- › A new online radio program in Anishinaabemowin was developed in partnership with ILM, NCI, the Oral History Centre, the Academic Lead, UM, and Mazinaate Publishing. It is a 12-episode radio drama program aired every 2 weeks on NCI with a large cast of Ojibwe language speakers. Language lessons accompany each episode which is made available on www.uwinnipeg.ca/indigenous/aakoziwigamig.html



Community Holiday Dinner

- › Every year, Wii Chiiwaakanak celebrates the holidays with community by hosting an annual holiday dinner on campus. Our partners – Les Marmiton and Diversity Food Services – as well as donations and volunteers from The University of Winnipeg staff and faculty help make this a bigger event each year. The in-person event hosts 200 – approximately 120 of whom are children 17 & under – with a full traditional turkey meal, 5-8 activity stations, a photo booth, entertainment, and gifts for every child 17 & under.
- › With code red in place, the Centre and our community partners felt this was an important event that we had to make happen. Our partners came together again and helped us to deliver 200 holiday meals prepared by Diversity, 84 toys, and 80 family activity kits. Les Marmiton and so many other wonderful people donated to make this dinner happen. Les Marmiton also volunteered as drivers – helping us to deliver the meals, toys, and family activities across the city.



200

Holiday Meals



84

Toys



80

Family Activity Kits

