



ZHAWENJIGEWIN G'DO- ABINOOJIMNAANIG A'GCHI- MIINGOOIWIZWIN

"Kindness Is A Powerful Gift
For Our Children"



**Annual Report
2024-2025**



NOGDAWINDAMIN
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

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Message from the President and Interim Chief Executive Officer

Leila Macumber, Board President, and Karen Kennedy, Interim Chief Executive Officer

On behalf of Nogdawindamin Family and Community Services, we are honoured to present our 2024-2025 Annual Report, entitled “Zhawenjigewin G’do-Abinoojiimnaanig A’Gchi-Miingooiwizwin—Kindness Is a Powerful Gift for Our Children.” This theme reflects the spirit of our organization's achievement of its vision. Innovating together for our future is a true testament to this year’s journey of collaboration and transformation that has grounded our work.



Over the past year, we have embraced innovative strategies to better serve our children, youth, and families. In partnership with our First Nation communities, we have developed new approaches to recruiting and supporting alternative care homes, ensuring that children remain connected to their culture and community. These efforts are already making a positive impact, and we are enthusiastic about continuing to build on this momentum.

We celebrated significant achievements, including the grand openings of new buildings across the North Shore funded by Indigenous Services Canada and the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal Order 41. These spaces will provide safe, culturally grounded environments for our families and community members. The agency has assisted with 42 projects and secured \$23,250,637 in funding to support the mobilization of projects to date under the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal Order 41. Additionally, in their second year, our Post Majority Care team has supported 95 youth across the region with over \$3.1 million in funding to support their transition into adulthood. We were privileged to host members from Indigenous Services Canada and the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, who witnessed firsthand how we weave culture into every aspect of our service delivery.

This year also brought challenges, particularly with modifications to Jordan’s Principle funding. Through close collaboration with the First Nations and community partners, we worked diligently to minimize the impact on families, ensuring continuity of essential services. Our commitment to advocacy, reciprocity, and creative problem-solving has allowed us to adapt and continue meeting the needs of those we serve. By enriching our relations with mainstream partners, we are responsible for ensuring culturally sensitive and trauma-informed approaches are met with respect and mutual trust by signing new partnerships, including Sault Area Hospital and North Shore Health Network.



We are deeply grateful to our dedicated staff, whose passion and resilience drive our mission forward. As Interim Chief Executive Officer, Karen Kennedy has led us through transitions, and her unwavering commitment has secured new opportunities and facilitated a united, supportive organization.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to advancing health, well-being, and self-determination for our communities we serve. We will continue supporting the devolution of prevention services, championing the Child Well-being Law, and working alongside our partners to create lasting and positive changes.

Thank you to our communities, partners, and staff for your trust, collaboration, and unwavering commitment. Together, we are building a brighter future for the next generations.

G’Chi-Miigwech,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Leila Macumber".

Leila Macumber, Board President

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Karen Kennedy".

Karen Kennedy, Interim Chief Executive Officer

Our Board of Directors and Communities of the North Shore Tribal Council



Batchewana First Nation - Chief Mark McCoy
Board Secretary/Treasurer - Chief Mark McCoy

Garden River First Nation - Chief Karen Bell
Director - Lee-Ann Gamble



Thessalon First Nation - Chief Joseph Wabigwan Baa
Vice President - Wendy Pekalski

Mississauga First Nation - Chief Brent Niganobe
Director - Laura Mayer



Serpent River First Nation - Chief Wilma-Lee Johnston
Director - Chief Wilma-Lee Johnston

Sagamok Anishnawbek - Chief Angus Toulouse
Director - Mckenzie Toulouse



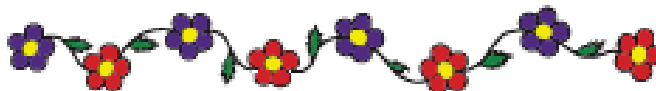
Atikameksheng Anishnawbek - Chief Craig Nootchtai
Director - Chief Craig Nootchtai

Nogdawindamin Family and Community Services
President/Director at Large - Leila Macumber



Our Outgoing Board of Directors

We want to acknowledge our 2024-25 outgoing board members for their commitment and dedication to our organization: **Vivian Naponse** (*Atikameksheng Anishnawbek*), **Nicole Eshkakogan** (*Sagamok Anishnawbek*), **Steve Meawasige** (*Serpent River First Nation*), **Gloria Daybutch** (*Mississauga First Nation*), and **Brandi Ferneyhough** (*Thessalon First Nation*). **Miigwech Kina Gagoo Miigwewin**



Our Elders Council – Naadmaagejik

Nogdawindamin is very privileged to have the ongoing support and guidance of our Elders' Council. Each First Nation appointed the 7 Elders. The Agency has utilized their expertise and experience to assist in enhancing service delivery. The Elders are consulted regarding planning events, language, and cultural practices. They are a big part of our many events, including cultural ceremonies, Alternative Care appreciation, Pow Wow, and Social and Culture Camps. Our Elder's council provides our Anishinaabe names for our programs.



Carol Hermiston Aaniin. Omagakii ikwe nindizhinikaaz, Migizi ndoodem Batchewana First Nation ndoonijibaa. Anishinaabe ndaw. I am seventy-two years old and I have lived in the area of Batchewana all my life. I am the third oldest of eight children and my parents were Ann Nolan and William MacLean. I worked as Community Health Nurse for thirty years in Batchewana First Nation and Garden River First Nation. I have been married for fifty-two years and I have a son, a daughter, and three grandchildren. I am a Woman's Traditional Dancer and I love to go to as many Pow Wows as I can. It is an honour to be involved in the Elders Council for Nogdawindamin. I believe that we are the caretakers of our people. It is important to remember who we are, how we got here and what our responsibilities are.

Emma Meawaslge is a member of Serpent River First Nation. She is 84 years young and spent 4 years in St. Joseph Residential School (Spanish), she is fluent in the language and is also an Elder for the North Shore Tribal Council.



Rose Mary Plne was born in and represents Garden River First Nation. She attended Hamilton Hospital for 2 years and also attended St. Joseph Residential School (Spanish). Rose Mary has 3 sisters, 1 brother, 5 children (3 boys and 2 girls) as well as 7 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren.

Mary Qulsess Simon was born a member of Eabametoong First Nation & attended high school in Kenora as a boarding student. She worked for 40 years as a Personal Support Worker and she now lives in Thessalon First Nation. She has 1 sister, 2 brothers, 2 male children, has raised 3 stepchildren and a niece, and has 7 grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren.



Gertrude Nootchtal was born on October 13, 1945, and is from Atikameksheng Anishnawbek. She attended Whitefish Lake Day School, St. Joseph Residential School (Spanish), Sudbury Secondary High School and Cambrian College. Raised by her grandparents, she has 2 sisters, 3 brothers, 1 son, 3 grandchildren, and 1 great-grandchild.

Grace Mantowabi was born on July 15, 1945 and represents Sagamok Anishnawbek. She attended Mount St. Joseph College. Her father's name is Louis Toulouse, her mother's name is Henrietta Eshkokogan, and she has 9 siblings, 2 children, and 5 grandchildren.



Willard Pine was born on June 3, 1939, and lives in Mississauga First Nation. He lived with foster parents, Dave and Maggie Morningstar, and attended reserve school until grade 8 and trade school to grade 10. He has 9 siblings, 9 children, 23 grandchildren and 34 great-grandchildren. He has served a term as Chief of Mississauga First Nation and now serves on T.E.K. Elder's Committee and Nogdawindamin Elder's Council.



Photo: Elders Council, from left to right – Rose Pine, Gertrude Nootchtai, and Mary Simon



Partner Agencies



Mamaweswen, The North Shore Tribal Council (NSTC) represents seven First Nations (FN). The North Shore Tribal Council Secretariat is the corporate arm of this collective of First Nations. It is responsible for the delivery of services to our member First Nations and their community members.



Our vision aptly describes how the Maamwesying North Shore Community Health Services Board oversees both N'Mninoeyaa Aboriginal Health Access Centre and the Baawating Family Health Team to deliver quality primary and therapeutic health care to all individuals in its member communities, as well as, the urban aboriginal population residing in the City of Sault Ste. Marie.



Provincial organization mandated to build a better life for all Indigenous children through promoting the delivery of culturally-based services to Indigenous children, families, and communities. ANCFSAO acts as a resource in assisting its member agencies towards the provision of high-quality, community-based child welfare and family well-being services to Indigenous people through education and training, policy development and analysis, and research and advocacy.

Prevention Services

Nogdawindamin offers a comprehensive suite of prevention-focused programs that serve to support family and child well-being while lessening the risk of involvement with the child protection system. Prevention services are delivered in an integrated fashion across three levels: primary (community), secondary (family), and tertiary (individual level).

Over the past several years, an assessment of both prevailing child welfare risk factors and family needs has led to the creation of specialized prevention supports, including the Neonatal Caring Services, Behavioural Therapy Model programs, and Mental Health Services. As part of a wholistic approach to prevention, Nogdawindamin is also working closely with its First Nations communities.

Anishinaabe Aadziwin (Looking After Native Culture & Way of Life) – Cultural Services

The Anishinaabe Aadziwin program had another busy year of programming in 2024-25. The program completed 1564 referrals during the year and provided 8200.97 hours of direct service and 4689.75 hours of indirect service.

Anishinaabe Aadziwin Service Volumes, 2024-25

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL
Referrals	551	502	219	292	1564
Direct Service Hours	1560.33	1983.29	2492.6	2164.75	8200.97
Indirect Service Hours	944.5	958.05	937.9	1849.3	4689.75

The Anishinaabe Aadziwin team organized numerous cultural events throughout the year. The program continued accepting referrals and requests from external communities and partners. The team constructed an additional teaching lodge at the St Kateri Outdoor Learning Center with Huron-Superior Catholic District



School Board in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. In the Spring, 13 youth participated in the Fasting Camp, which was held in Mississaugi First Nation, and seven youth completed their first Fast. Upon completing their Fasts, they were gifted with an eagle feather to help them along their journey.



A pow wow was held in Batchewana First Nation, attracting more than **200** participants, **45** dancers, **4** drums, and **13** vendors. Cultural Services provided a lending table with regalias and ribbon shirts for those who did not own one. A young dancer donated one of her dresses to the lending table for others to enjoy. Our team partnered with Greater Sudbury Police for their annual Moose Hunt Camp; sadly, no moose were harvested this year.



In the Summer months, Mukwa Adventures hosted our Youth Culture Camp, and we had 16 youth attend. This year was the 30th annual ANFESCO conference, which was held in Toronto, Ontario. The Agency brought the sacred bundle, and the Anishinaabe Aadziwin staff supported with the sun rise ceremonies, grand entry, awards banquet, give away, and closing prayers.

Fall activities included the Youth Harvest Camp, which had 13 participants. It was a successful hunt, and one moose was harvested. The youth learned how to call, skin, and process the meat. In October, there was the Fall Staff Fasting Camp; one staff member and one community member went out for a two-day Fast.



The Fall Pow Wow occurred in Atikameksheng First Nation, with 200 participants, 13 dancers, four drums, and five vendors. The Anishinaabemowin Conference was also a successful event this year and was offered in the East and West regions. Regular sessions of the Anishinaabe Aadziwin Pathways training program also continued to be offered. Since the program's inception, 548 Nogdawindamin employees have been trained in Pathways.

Specialized Services

The Volunteer and Driver program provides transportation for children and families accessing Nogdawindamin services. Due to the unique informality of support, drivers develop positive and trusting relationships with the children and families we serve. Drivers transport children, youth, and families to scheduled activities, events, appointments, and parenting time visits, including visits from biological parents requiring transportation.



“I have been a driver for the Agency since October 2017. I have had a multitude of experiences with kids and parents. The bright spot or the highlight in this field is getting to know each child and developing a positive relationship with them as they navigate through the separation from their parents and siblings and the relocation and changes that happen along the way. I’ve witnessed these children’s resilience and strengths”.

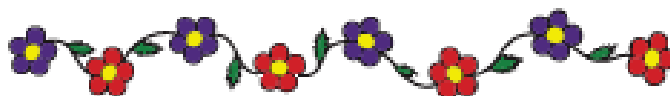
All drivers provide transportation across the North Shore from Sault Ste. Marie to Sudbury, including Goulais River, Garson, North Bay, Espanola, and Manitoulin Island. There are 13 casual drivers across the region and six volunteers. In 2024-25, the Drive Program completed **2437** drives across the region and transported 16 parents and 59 children.

Anishinaabe Audzit (Our Way of Life) – Family Well-Being

Family Well-Being is an intensive early intervention program that supports families in minimizing identified risk of involvement in Child Welfare, mitigating protection concerns, and supporting family reunification. The program assists families in achieving sustainable outcomes by

Family Well-Being	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Referrals	50	50	61	45
Families Supported	96	103	107	135
Active Goal Plans	86	86	78	60

delivering culturally appropriate support and interventions to attain effective skills and strategies for independence, resiliency, and crisis diversion. Workers are now utilizing the North Carolina Assessment tool to assist staff with determining areas of strength and concern within the family unit to create goal plans.



In Fall 2022, a family was initially reluctant to participate in services. After several months, the family engaged with the worker, who provided intensive support over nine months, focusing on budgeting, parenting, and housing maintenance. The children were successfully reunited with their family in a ceremony attended by loved ones. Continued support included counselling for the mother and an Elder connection for the father. The family welcomed their eighth child, and the mother is nearing completion of her Developmental Service Worker course. The Family Well-Being file was closed in August 2024, with no further referrals needed.

The Family Well-Being Group Program was developed to address common areas of concern identified by Child Welfare and Family Well-Being workers. Group programming helps participants learn new skills and build on their family's unique strengths. It also provides a safe space for participants to share their experiences, learn from one another, and foster friendships. Programming can be facilitated virtually, in person, in a group setting, or in a 1:1 session. Available topics include, but are not limited to, Traditional Parenting, Nobody's Perfect, Healthy Relationships, and Red Path: Living Without Violence. Group Program staff are trained and certified to facilitate programming, and they ensure sessions are culturally grounded.

Family Well-Being Group	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Total Group Participation	397	271	382	258
Unique Participants	103	106	120	105
Total Number of Group Sessions	93	66	71	59

Mino Madzwin Youth Justice Program

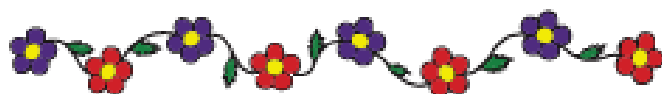
Since 2008, Nogdawindamin Family and Community Services has offered a diversion program to Indigenous youth aged 12-17 through the Mino Madzwin Youth Justice Program. The Program is recognized as an alternative measures program under the Youth Criminal Justice Act. Participants complete assigned modules (spokes) that include Substance

Mino Madzwin	Opening Balance	New Enrollment	Discharged	Ending Balance
Q1	17	2	6	13
Q2	13	3	7	9
Q3	9	7	2	14
Q4	14	3	5	12

Abuse, Prosocial Skills, Anger Management, and Family and Community.

Upon completion of the computer-based program, youth are deemed to have fulfilled the required sanctions

imposed by the court and will have their charges withdrawn. Additionally, the worker supports the youth with worksheets on healthy relationships, healthy boundaries, and assists the youth with employment and education.



Waankii Yendam – Youth in Transition Program

The Youth in Transition (YIT) program provides culturally based support to youth transitioning from the child welfare system into adulthood and independent living. The target group are youth between the ages of 16 and 24 who are members of the North Shore First Nations and living within the Nogdawindamin jurisdiction. The youth in the program work 1:1 with their YIT workers to develop a successful path to independence. The program offers support in the following areas: housing, education, employment, financial literacy skills, cultural support, advocacy, links to community resources, healthy relationships, and life skills.

“I am sorry to put all that on you man. Thank you for all your help. It was a pleasure bro. I'm glad people like you are still working for children and youth. Without it, there would be no chance for children like me. So for that I thank you beyond what words can encapsulate.”

- Service User -

Education Liaison Program

The Education Liaison program's goal is to be responsive to the diverse educational needs of our children and youth in care, under customary care agreements and voluntary youth services agreements (VYSA), to provide support to improve the academic outcomes of children and youth. The Education Liaison Worker navigates school boards from Sault Ste. Marie to Sudbury to

resolve student learning issues, such as school transitions, assessments, suspensions, and

Education Program	Opening Balance	New Enrollments	Discharged	Ending Balance
Q1	28	1	5	24
Q2	24	4	4	24
Q3	24	2	5	21
Q4	21	0	10	11

special education needs. The Liaison Worker also coordinates school meetings and ensures that access to culture is incorporated into learning. The Education Liaison Program began the year supporting 24 learners and, before decreasing slightly thereafter, the program provided support to 11 students at year's end.

Training Department

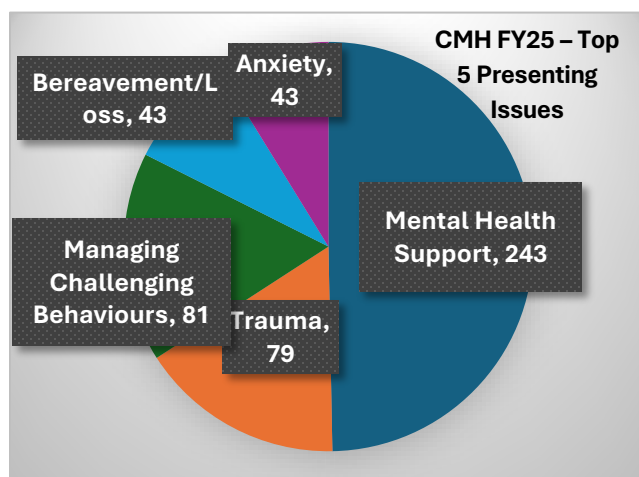


The Training department consists of two Staff Trainers and one Trainer Coordinator. The Staff Trainers develop and deliver training to equip staff with the necessary skills and knowledge to perform their job effectively. They also participate in train the trainer opportunities to reduce reliance on external trainers and save on training costs.

Available training includes but not limited to, Therapeutic Crises Intervention, Mental Health First Aid-First Nations, North Carolina Family Assessment Scale, Heart and Spirit, Forensic Interviewing, Car Seat Training, Indigenous Authorized Worker Training, and Triple P Parenting. Staff Trainers also meet with the First Nations along the North Shore to assist with any training needs identified by the community. We also provide a community training catalogue to interested First Nations seeking internal training opportunities.

Children's Mental Health

During the 2024/2025 Fiscal year, Children's Mental Health Services served a total of 392 clients across the region, ranging in age from 0 to 17, with an average age of 11 years old. Children's Mental Health offered a variety of programming in both individual and group settings. Counsellors met with clients in office, school, and community settings to meet the unique goals of each individual. Clients seeking mental health support could engage in holistic services, intricately woven using Western and traditional approaches. The Aaniish Naa Gegii: The Children's Health and Well Being Measure, ACHWM, is offered to clients ranging in age from 8 to 18. This specialized assessment tool allowed both client and counsellor to determine the next steps for treatment planning. The tool generates a thorough, visual representation focusing on Mental, Emotional, Physical, and Spiritual well-being. The ACHWM highlighted many clients' need for enhanced emotional and spiritual support. To this end, CMH counsellors followed up with referrals to the cultural services team. Collaboration and connections were encouraged in the culture and community, resulting in a greater sense of cultural identity for clients and families.

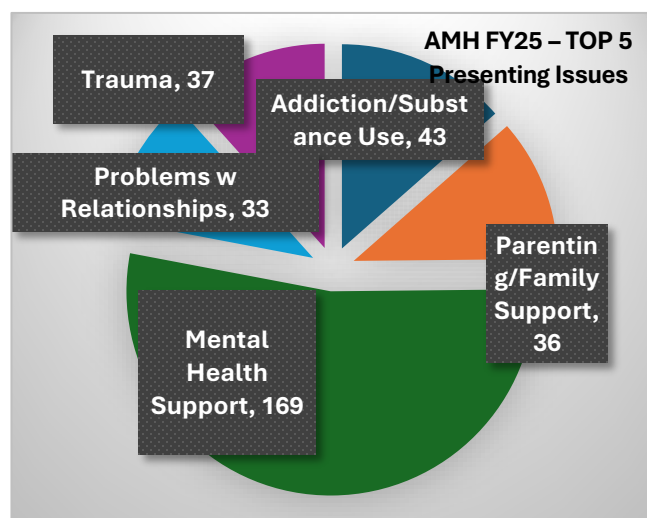


Client Story: 18-year-old Male, file opened for severe anxiety, lack of motivation, and negative thought patterns. This young man has been attending online classes to obtain his tools, he has received his driver's license, and is now moving out on his own. Has built on his relationships with his family. He has gained the tools to manage his thoughts and anxiety and is seeking employment and applying for college programs. He has sent message updates that he is doing well, and when struggling, he will hear a counsellor's voice and use his tools to regulate and make healthy decisions for his wellbeing.

Adult Mental Health

Within the current fiscal year, AMH serviced 207 clients. Service volume peaked in October at a case load of one hundred twenty (120) clients.

One major success for our team during the current fiscal year is the growing collaborative relationship with the Neonatal team (NN) and AMH. NN supports Anishinaabekwe who are pregnant or have children under the age of 18 months. This population was identified as ideal AMH clients (early intervention can optimize long-term client outcomes and prevent child welfare concerns before they occur). In May of 2024, AMH began expediting services to this population (files are typically assigned within two business days) and prioritizing them as high risk. During 2024, AMH and Neonatal developed a powerful interdepartmental relationship and effectively worked together to promote positive outcomes for mothers and babies.



AMH also worked to increase interdepartmental collaboration more broadly. We recognized that our clients will often avoid discussing (or minimizing) their involvement in the child welfare system, which made it challenging to directly address child welfare risks in service delivery. For that reason, we emphasized our internal processes for collaboration, including information sharing, case conferencing, and service coordination, and successfully enhanced our service delivery model.

Client Story: *Through collaboration with the client's sons' behavioural therapists, the clinician identified that father and son shared similar presentations, both in their struggles and strengths. With a clear understanding of the behavioral team's successes with the son, our AMH counsellor could design her interventions in ways that deliberately mirror his son's learning (father and son were learning complementary skills). At the same time, from a strength-based perspective, their shared love of hockey and music seemed to represent an exception to their struggles, a rare point of connection.*

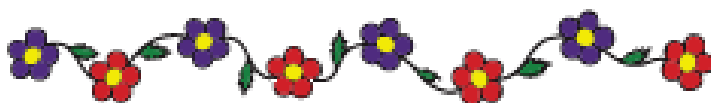
Ministry of Health Funding for Children's Mental Health – MOH CMH

MOH CMH serviced 45 clients during the fiscal year 2024/25. Referral sources varied from outside CAS, Algoma District School Board, Larimar Homes, and self-referrals. This mental health service is for all Indigenous children within Nogdawindamin's jurisdictional area for children aged 0 to 18 years.

The MOH CMH team had several staff vacancies to fill throughout the fiscal year, and only achieved a full staffing complement as of June of 2025. These vacancies were located across the North Shore. As a result, the program was off to a slow start due to staff vacancies. Networking was achieved with all internal and external services for referrals.

The team received its first self-referral in February 2024, from a 16-year-old Indigenous male who moved to Sault Ste. Marie from an outside community. He resides in Nogdawindamin's catchment area and has worked with his Mental Health and Addictions counsellor on his established goal plan.

The team supported Nogdawindamin's annual Mental Health and Addictions Conference, "Building Your Bundle to Strengthen Your Journey, " at the Delta Hotel in November. Staff have also been participating in clinical and cultural training and building capacity to offer specialized services such as Theraplay, EMDR, and level one DBT.



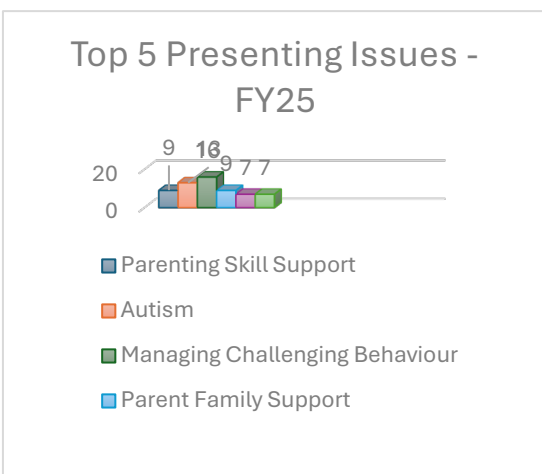
Wellness Clinic

The Wellness Clinic is a specialized mental health service that offers medical and psychiatric services. A consulting psychiatrist and two registered practical nurses provided children and youth with individualized treatment plans and follow-ups.

Activities included psychiatric consultations, mental health nursing assessments, psychotropic medication reviews, recommendations to Jordan's Principle, and admission into a hospital for high-risk youth. The Wellness Clinics were held once per month in either Sault Ste. Marie or Sudbury, with an average of 40 clients being seen and followed a month.

Wellness Clinic Presenting Issues - Top 5 for FY25	Count
Medical Care/Psychiatric Care/Psychotropic Medication	57
Mental Health Support	26
Managing Challenging Behaviours	18
Emotional Regulation	15
ADD/ADHD	13

Behaviour Program



The Behaviour Program provides Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) services for children and youth with developmental and behavioural concerns. Services are family-driven, with services offered at times and locations of the family's choosing.

The Program combines mainstream and traditional approaches to care for children, youth & families. The Behavioural team works closely with culture to incorporate cultural values and practices. Parent and caregiver coaching is employed to help empower families and improve home environments, keeping

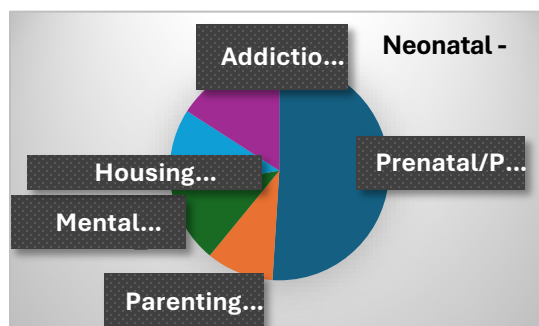
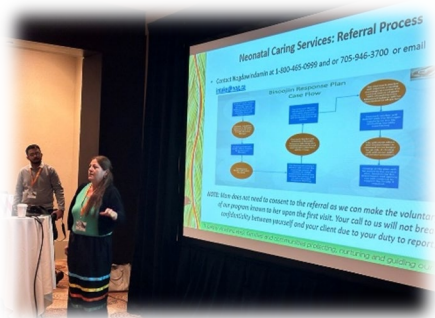
children with their natural caregivers. The Behaviour program saw 80 clients in the last fiscal year. Many of the clients met their Behaviour goals.

Success Story

Three young children in care—two aged 6 and one aged 8—successfully transitioned to attending full days at school by the end of the school year. With the support of Behavioural Therapists, each child received individualized interventions: one child with Autism benefited from intensive learning and language supports, while the two siblings, both having experienced trauma and neglect, received school readiness and emotional regulation support. Ongoing collaboration between therapists, school teams, and caregivers contributed to smooth transitions, with positive feedback from both CIC Workers and Alternative Care parents.

Neonatal Caring Services

Neonatal Caring Services continues to offer support and services for high-risk pre- and post-natal women and families, to reduce the number of binoojiinsag entering care by wrapping services around the family. Sixty-eight mothers received services over the last year.



NOGDAAWENMISHIN: Take Care of Me

The earliest possible interventions are implemented, and low-threshold supports are given to First Nation women experiencing high-risk pregnancies as a result of substance use. Supports are provided throughout the pregnancy and up to 18 months post-natal directly in the home, in the hospital, at the Baby Lucious Neonatal Hub, and various community partner agencies. Supports vary based on individual goals and needs. Outreach Workers are focused on individual needs, harm reduction services, and supports rooted in the First Nation culture. The program provides, but is not limited to;

- Cultural supports and teachings, including access to an on-site Elder in Residence.
- Service navigation for addiction support services in the community.
- Assist with accessing food, clothing, and basic needs.
- Circle of care – work with families, partners, and networking to support wellness, an integrated safety net.
- Assistance with securing housing, including independent living supports.
- Emergency and transition shelter – 2 on-site furnished suites with security service.



The Baby Lucious Neonatal Hub

Central access point for all Neonatal Caring Services offerings. Welcoming drop-in environment for women to access various services including;

- Cultural Services (on site Elder in Residence)
- Binogiins Boutique
- Lending Library (provides families with items related to sleep, safety and feeding)
- Access to Outreach Worker
- Baby Cuddler Program
- Weekly programming in partnership with various agencies
- Educational Opportunities
- Community Service Navigation



Success Story

Mom was approximately 20 weeks pregnant at the time of referral to the Neonatal Caring Services program, with heavy use of fentanyl upon discovery of pregnancy and throughout pregnancy. Mom was willing to work with Neonatal Caring Services Binoojiin Response in planning for her binoojiin. Mom met regularly with her Neonatal Outreach Worker, participating in Binoojiin Response Planning, and attended most of her prenatal appointments with the support of her Neonatal Outreach worker.

Mom consistently took methadone for one week throughout her pregnancy, and inconsistently throughout the remainder of that month. Mom used her voice to come up with a plan for her binoojiin; Mom identified that she was not ready to begin living a substance-free life or attend residential addictions treatment prior to the birth of her binoojiin. Mom selected her aunt as a caregiver for her binoojiin, since binoojiin would not be able to come home with mom in this scenario. This plan was shared with the hospital and all collaterals and supports to ensure they were aware of mom's wishes for her infant. Mom, mom's aunt, uncle, support from mom's First Nation, and other internal agency support workers participated in planning circles for mom and her binoojiin. Mom delivered her infant safely approximately 6 weeks early, and Mom's plan for her aunt to be the primary caregiver was honoured by the hospital and child welfare. There was no intrusive intervention by child welfare, and the Neonatal program continues to support the mother in her postpartum and recovery journey.



Child Protection Services

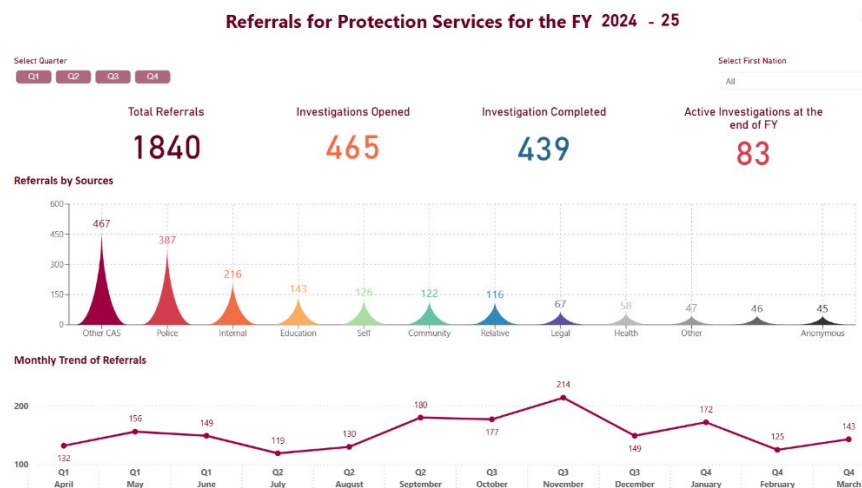
Child Welfare

The Child Welfare department continues to collaborate with First Nations across the North Shore to incorporate culture, sense of belonging, and traditions into Service Delivery while respecting and addressing each community's unique needs.

Intake and Investigation

During the year, Nogdawindamin processed 1840 referrals, 159 more than the previous year. These referrals led to the opening of 465 investigations, which was 133 higher than the 332 investigations that were opened during 2023-24. A total of 439 investigations were completed during the year, with 83 files remaining active as of March 31st, 2025.

The chart below shows a breakdown of referrals received during the year. Almost three-fifths of referrals (59 per cent) originate from three sources: other Children's Aid Societies, Police Services, and internally from Nogdawindamin employees. All referrals are followed up and assessed using a standardized tool to determine if an investigation is necessary. Communities are also notified when referrals are received.



Ongoing Protection Services

The overall number of ongoing files served in 2024-25 remained comparable to past years, with an average of 136 monthly files open. The number of ongoing files gradually increased over the course of the year, with **144** files remaining open as

of March 31st, 2025. In all, 228 files were served during the fiscal year.

Legal Services

The Agency ended the year with **73** files by March 31, 2025, representing a steady increase from the previous year however, Nogdawindamin continues to put significant effort into reducing legal interventions where possible.

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
6	5	7	7

New Legal File Openings by Quarter

Out of Home Placements

185

**Children in Out of Home
Placements**

For the year ending on March 31st, 2025, Nogdawindamin had 185 children in our out-of-home placements. This is a decline in children from the end of the 2023-2024 fiscal year (257 children receiving support). Our approach focuses on each child's mental, emotional, physical and spiritual well-being.

Ready Set Go

Through the Ready Set Go program, Nogdawindamin supports youth ages 18-23 years, with financial assistance for housing and other independent living needs as they prepare for the transition to adulthood. Youth are supported by many internal services such as culture, youth in transition and children's mental health. As of March 31st, 2025, Nogdawindamin was supporting 47 youths through the program.



Voluntary Youth Service Agreements (VYSA)

Voluntary Youth Services Agreements (VYSA) are available for youth aged 16 or 17, who cannot be adequately protected at home or in their current living situation, have no other safe options with family or friends, and need an out-of-home placement. The service supports youth who are experiencing physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, and/or abandonment, or/at risk of any of these things. The service supports youth who have left home because of concerns about safety or risk of harm at home, or if the youth are homeless. The number of youths on VYSA agreements is two youths continuing to be supported as of March 31st, 2025.



Alternative Care

Over the fiscal year 2024-2025, enhanced recruitment efforts have been made to open more homes across the region. The need for alternative care homes is rising, especially homes that provide culturally grounded, safe, and loving environments. We achieve our vision through wraparound support, traditional teachings, and community-driven practices. Nogdawindamin has a variety of services to help strengthen families and caregivers, ensure children stay connected to their identity, and promote healing through services.



The agency continues to have the Alternative Care Appreciation events and regional Christmas parties for our alternative care families. At the same time, team members busily host barbeques in each of the First Nations in collaboration with the community, creating a fun day for all. The team hosts annual golf tournaments to raise awareness and funds.



77

Approved Alternative Care Homes |
FY24-25

Children in Extended Care Review

The Children in Extended Care Review took place from November 18 to November 22, 2024, with 33 children in extended society care and 1 adoption probation file reviewed. The auditors shared that Nogdawindamin was in full compliance with its plans of care and safety plans for a second year in a row. The auditors noted that our safety plans are detailed and encompass assessments, medication reviews, and the use of supports.

Overall, the outcome was successful and positive with the following highlights:

- Compliance scores of 100% for child/youth provided the opportunity to have contact with their home community, extended family, and or First Nation.
- Scores of 100% for First Nations bands were notified of placement, place of safety requirements met, and permanency planning reflects exploration of options.
- Annual medicals were 97% and annual dentals were 90.9%

Ganawejigaazogamik – Children’s Residences

The agency is committed to providing culturally safe homes for young people in out-of-home Placements who have exceptional needs. Nogdawindamin has acquired three homes and one apartment in Sault Ste. Marie and one home in Greater Sudbury. As of March 31, 2025, 12 youths were being served in the agency’s residential homes.

Three of the homes had a full licensing review, and overall compliance was high. The Ministry auditor noted that the agency is recognized for going above and beyond to support our youth in collaboration with the Circle of Care team.

Parenting Time

Nogdawindamin’s parenting time team helps arrange visits between children in care and their parents, or extended family, in environments that are both safe and healing-focused. The goal is to strengthen parental skills and meet goals that are set collaboratively, forming stronger connections, assisting the parents to feel more supported and valued, to support the path back toward family reunification. Currently, the agency offers Parenting Time services from four (4) sites across the region. Where appropriate, Parenting Time can also occur at alternative locations, such as the family’s residence or in the community



Kinship Services

Kinship Services, also known as kinship care, provide a safe and stable living environment for children who cannot live with their parents. Kinship caregivers can be extended family members like grandparents, aunts, uncles, or close family friends, neighbors, teachers, or anyone with a relationship with the child.

In the fiscal year 2024-25, Kinship Services supported 115 Kinship Caregivers. The program sustained an average of supporting 60 homes per month. Between April 1, 2024, and March 31, 2025, the Kinship Services program supported 145 children in Kinship Placements, with a monthly average of 86 children. Of the 145 children, 45 closed last fiscal year due to permanency achieved for children and youth, which may include reunification, custody, and family plan (children no longer need protection).



With the support of Jordan's Principle, Nogdawindamin Family and Community Services could continue financially supporting North Shore First Nation families who enter Kinship arrangements until March 31st, 2025. The support of Jordan's Principle will not continue the financial support as Nogdawindamin has not received confirmation for the group claim that has been submitted. Without a funding source, Nogdawindamin is not able to continue the payments. Nogdawindamin understands that the benefits have had a significant and positive impact on our kinship homes, and the loss has been felt. Our Kinship Services team will continue to work closely with caregivers to ensure they continue to be supported.

A youth from Batchewana First Nation is working with his Circle of Care team, Post Majority Care, and Community Living Algoma to transition to his new home in Sault Ste. Marie. It has been a long journey for him, but he has also made many gains in that home over the last two years. He has learned many new daily living skills, has become more social and outgoing, and has developed a deep connection with his Culture, after initially reporting that he was not ever going to be open to Culture.

He has shared that his goal is to become a Cultural helper or mentor. He has credited the fantastic support of Nogdawindamin's Anishinaabe Aadzwin team, particularly the staff in the East, who have truly gone above and beyond to support him.

Jordan's Principle



First Nation	# of Children
Atikameksheng Anishnawbek	18
Batchewana First Nation	44
Garden River First Nation	16
Mississauga First Nation	17
Sagamok Anishnawbek	22
Serpent River First Nation	8
Thessalon First Nation	25
Other	9

Nogdawindamin Family and Community Services Jordan's Principle Case Managers worked closely with families to advocate for funding to address service gaps. During the year, Jordan's Principle Case Managers obtained 314 new approvals supporting 158 children. The team was able to expense \$3,960,172 during the fiscal year. Since the inception of the Jordan's Principle program at the Agency, Jordan's Principle Case Managers were able to advocate and receive approval for 3903 requests in the amount of \$31,013,467. This coming fiscal year, we will foresee some challenges with Jordan's Principle program as it undergoes federal changes to the application of substantive equality, with the potential to impact requests and create delays moving forward, addressing needs for children and youth.



Post Majority Support Services

Nogdawindamin Family and Community Services Post Majority Care Services Case Managers supported 95 youth across the region with \$3,106,540 in funding to support their journey transitioning into adulthood. As we support their stability to further engage within the program, rent and groceries are the largest support requests by youth and young adults. Moving forward, the program will be impacted by the Ontario Final Agreement, where at a point in time, the program's scope will transition to be delivered at the First Nation level. Sagamok Anishnawbek currently delivers Post Majority Support Services for their eligible youth and young adults, where referral processes have been established to ensure youth are connected to their programming.

Capital Projects – CHRT 41

Nogdawindamin Family and Community Services has collaborated with the North Shore First Nations to advance numerous major capital projects under the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal Order 41. The Agency has supported 42 projects and secured \$23,250,637 in funding to support the mobilization of projects to date.

First Nation	# of Projects	Funding Secured
Batchewana First Nation	4	\$ 144,240.02
Garden River First Nation	1	\$ 120,000.00
Internal	12	\$ 3,057,107.81
Mississaugi First Nation	10	\$ 15,478,673.24
Sagamok Anishnawbek	2	\$ -
Serpent River First Nation	7	\$ 678,359.90
Sudbury	2	\$ -
Thessalon First Nation	3	\$ 3,741,181.37
Waabinong	1	\$ 31,075.00



First Nation project engagement is provided at various levels, from support and guidance to project management of capital projects. Moving into the next fiscal year, the capital project management team will continue to support First Nation and internal projects.





Collaboration with the Koognaasewin Project Team



KOOGNAASEWIN
Child Well-being Law

2025-26 fiscal year.

In 2018, the North Shore Tribal Council passed a resolution recognizing the need to restore Anishinaabe jurisdiction over child welfare. This led to the establishment of the Koognaasewin project, a multi-year initiative focused on developing a new child welfare law for the North Shore First Nations. Incepted in 2021, Koognaasewin has developed a five-year workplan with objectives mapped out into the

Human Resources

The Agency began the year with **410** employees and ended the year with **465** employees.

Key initiatives supported by the Human Resources department included:

- Representing the Agency at numerous career and job fairs throughout the region
- Continued Agency-wide training on Workplace Violence and Harassment
- Phase 2 of Management training

In January 2025, the HR department introduced the Not Myself Today Program, a Mental Wellness program developed by the Canadian Mental Health Association, to all staff. This program demonstrated the Agency's commitment to employee mental health by providing staff with tools and resources to understand mental health better.

During the 2024–2025 fiscal year, the *Wellness Committee* continued to promote holistic well-being through a variety of initiatives. Highlights include a Digital Detox and Sleep Challenge, as well as the distribution of a Wellness Kit to each office. These kits featured items such as journal prompts, adult colouring books, crossword puzzles, and many more tools designed to help staff de-stress and clear their minds. To further promote personal wellness, the committee contributed monthly submissions to the agency newsletter, providing information on a variety of topics including heart health, nutrition, spring cleaning, wildlife safety, and seasonal affective disorder. By sharing timely and relevant wellness tips, the committee aimed to support and educate staff throughout the year. Lastly, in a joint effort with the *Health and Safety Committee*, each office bathroom is now stocked with moon-time supplies, supporting staff well-being in a practical and inclusive way.

The *Social Committee* hosted two events in 2024: the Summer Staff Event on July 31, 2024, and the Holiday Staff Gathering on December 12, 2024. The Summer Staff Event took place in Mississauga First Nation and had 158 staff attendees, where staff were able to participate in various summer activities such as a Cultural Craft, Euchre Tournament, Baseball Tournament, and Anishinaabe Bingo. The Holiday Staff Gathering took place at the Machine Shop in Sault Ste. Marie and had 153 staff attendees. Staff were able to enjoy a Traditional Christmas dinner, games, and live entertainment by the band “Double Down”.



Toy Drives

This year, we partnered with Canadian Tire and Gateway Casino for a Toy Drive, bringing many smiles and gifts to Children in Care. We have also continued our Toy Drives with Walmart in Sault Ste. Marie. Our Alternative Care Recruitment Team also supported the Christmas Cheer to support families in the Algoma district in December.



Nogdawindamin Family and Community Services – Statement of Financial Position

NOGDAWINDAMIN FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES


Statement of Financial Position

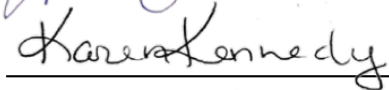
March 31, 2025, with comparative information for 2024

	2025	2024
Assets		
Current assets:		
Cash	\$ 36,009,279	34,666,695
Accounts receivable (note 2)	3,148,516	6,531,207
Prepaid expenses and deposits	53,994	44,442
	39,211,789	41,242,344
Capital assets (note 3)	5,954,415	5,259,939
	\$ 45,166,204	46,502,283
Liabilities and Net Assets (Deficit)		
Current liabilities:		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities (note 4)	\$ 12,282,307	9,334,606
Due to funder (note 5)	29,300	2,078,657
Deferred revenue (note 7)	26,697,269	29,572,598
	39,008,876	40,985,861
Deferred capital contributions (note 8)	1,690,398	-
Net assets (deficit):		
Unrestricted net deficit	(107,077)	(99,154)
Reserves (note 9)	309,990	355,637
Investment in capital assets	4,264,017	5,259,939
	4,466,930	5,516,422
Commitments (note 12)		
	\$ 45,166,204	46,502,283

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

On behalf of the Board:

 Director

 Director

Nogdawindamin Family and Community Services – Statement of Operations

NOGDAWINDAMIN FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Statement of Operations

Year ended March 31, 2025, with comparative information for 2024

	2025	2024
Revenue:		
Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services	\$ 27,509,947	\$ 25,898,720
Department of Indigenous Services Canada (note 10)	41,324,529	35,176,612
Ministry of Health	2,731,623	1,596,748
Alternative care	423,276	424,068
Children's special allowance	1,084,904	1,039,391
Disability tax credit	12,510	13,203
Other	2,120,230	2,277,288
	<u>75,207,019</u>	<u>66,426,030</u>
Expenses:		
Salaries		
- Staff	34,540,407	29,998,443
- Benefits	8,811,161	6,904,678
Boarding	5,186,637	4,676,719
Building occupancy	3,185,886	2,696,512
Client personal needs	7,772,050	4,106,664
Cultural program	236,711	436,928
Financial assistance	251,535	496,289
Health and related costs	610,827	640,790
OCBE expenses	409,585	348,880
Office administration	519,358	492,165
Other	508,142	608,683
Programs expenses		
- Internal	1,854,144	2,104,115
- External	5,794,303	5,785,654
Professional services - client	2,105,120	1,416,314
Professional services - non- client	236,956	118,032
Promotion and publicity	156,171	158,440
Repairs and maintenance	-	54,342
Technology	618,004	386,063
Training and recruitment	306,998	289,577
Travel	2,382,879	2,426,459
Expenditure recovery	(488,021)	(427,916)
	<u>74,998,853</u>	<u>63,717,831</u>
Excess of revenue over expenses before amortization	208,166	2,708,199
Amortization of capital assets	1,257,658	1,296,260
(Deficiency) excess of revenue over expenses	\$ (1,049,492)	\$ 1,411,939

Nogdawindamin Family and Community Services – Partnerships

On December 10th, 2024, Interim Chief Executive Officer, Karen Kennedy, and President and Chief Executive Officer, Ila Watson of Sault Area Hospital, and members of both senior teams came together in a ceremony to sign the official protocol that will enhance overall service delivery for both organizations. A similar signing ceremony was held on April 09th, 2025, with Interim CEO, Karen Kennedy, and North Shore Health Network CEO, Tim Vine. Both protocols will ensure Indigenous knowledge and customs are respected within their organizations while working with our community members along the North Shore. Tobacco was given to each organization to symbolize the ongoing working relationship and commitment to one another to provide outstanding service.



Acknowledgment to our Funders

On behalf of the Nogdawindamin Family and Community Services Board of Directors, we would like to acknowledge the ongoing support of the Federal Government (Canadian Human Rights Tribunal Orders and Jordan's Principle), Provincial Government (Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, and Ministry of Health—Child and Youth Mental Health), and Children's Aid Foundation of Canada.

Acknowledgment of our Donors

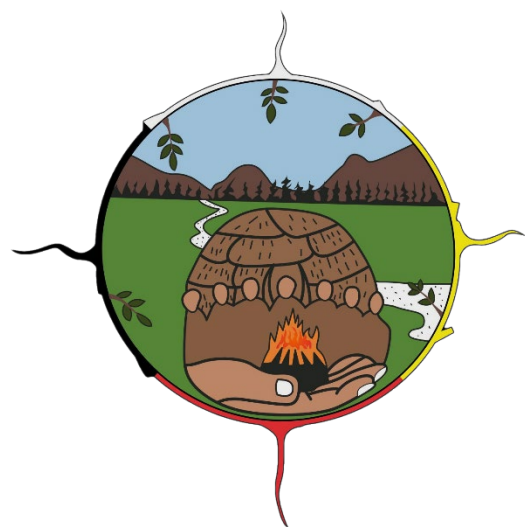
Deep appreciation is extended to the dedicated staff, partners, and vendors whose generosity and commitment enable the delivery of programs and events that positively impact those the Agency serves. Their contributions play a vital role in improving the lives of children in our communities. Our staff has donated **\$27,605.23** to Alternative Care Families.

Shadows of the Mind | Dumanski Office Interiors | The Car Lot | PUC Services | Jeffrey Broadbent Professional Corporation | Rector Machine Work | Spadoni's Furniture | S&T Group | Luke & Dell | Smash Designs | Canada Helps

Provide Your Feedback!

Nogdawindamin Family and Community Services would like to know what you thought of our 35th Annual Report and how it could be improved. Scan the QR code below to complete a feedback form on the report. Your input and comments will assist us in developing a more effective document in future years.

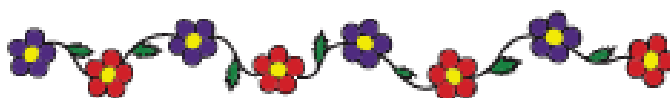
Nogdawindamin's 35th Annual
Report Feedback 2024-25



Explanation of the Logo

The out ring represents the circle of life and the four directions. The river and mountains represent the hardships we face; we all have mountains to conquer and rivers to cross in order to succeed. The Sweat lodge or wigwam represents Nogdawindamin, the headquarters of all the reserves along the North Shore. The seven men or women represent the reserves involved, and through communication, we realize what each other has to offer. The fire stands for what Nogdawindamin has to offer: warmth and light. In

the days of old, the fire was a gathering place where stories were told, and the people discussed solutions to everyday problems. The hand represents the support we all need, a helping hand to carry us the extra mile, to aid in accomplishing our goals and objectives.



“Healthy Anishnawbek families and communities protecting, nurturing, and guiding our children.”

@nogdawindamin