



# Manitoulin Family Resources

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Mindemoya, ON  
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General Administration  
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Violence Against Women  
Prevention Program  
Local: 705.377.5160  
Toll Free: 1.800.465.6788

Children's Services  
705.368.3400

EarlyON Child  
& Family Centre  
Little Current ext. 236  
Mindemoya ext. 247

Little Current Child Care  
ext. 234

Home Child Care  
ext. 235

Mindemoya Child Care  
ext. 223

Help Centre & Food Bank  
ext. 242

Email Address  
[info@mfresources.net](mailto:info@mfresources.net)

Website  
[www.mfresources.net](http://www.mfresources.net)

## Annual Report April 2021 - March 2022

## Land Acknowledgement

Manitoulin Family Resources wishes to acknowledge that we are located in the Robinson-Huron and Manitoulin Island Treaty Territory and that the land on which we operate is the traditional territory of the Anishinabek Nation, specifically Odawa, Ojibway, & Pottawatomi known as the Three Fires Confederacy.

### MISSION STATEMENT



To support individuals and families by providing resources, advocacy, and education through the agency's three program areas of Children's Services, Violence Against Women Prevention, and Food Security.

## Message from the Board of Directors

Aanii Kiinewaya, to Manitoulin Family Resources 2022 Annual General Meeting.

The Manitoulin Family Resources Board of Directors would like to thank everyone who has joined us for our third virtual AGM. We would like to begin by introducing the board starting with our newest board members MJ (Mary-Jo) Gordon, Rebecca Wright, Margit Alberti, and Suzanne Norris. Our remaining board members are Jillian Peltier, Les Fields, Yana Bauer (Secretary/Treasurer), & Leanne Bentley (Vice-President). The growth on our Board reflects our progress with the agency itself and of the continued success of our team as we all work towards the goals set in our strategic plan.

This past year will be remembered as a year of continued transition and change. During this period, it is important to take the time to acknowledge “special” moments as we adjust to our new normal, as the world around us begins to shift from pandemic protocols to post pandemic realities. Some of those special moments are:

-  The day we broke ground for the new food depot.
-  Our annual Christmas food basket campaign.
-  Connecting with children and families in our Children’s Services programs
-  Supporting individuals through the Violence Against Women prevention programs.
-  The welcoming of new staff and welcoming back of volunteers.
-  Turning on our camera’s during zoom meetings.
-  Friday updates from our Executive Director, Marnie Hall

We the Board would like to honour and note our gratefulness for the support and dedication of our staff and their continued passion for what they do, “day in and day out”. Also, to those individuals who continue to work behind the scenes providing their time and support throughout all our programs. A big “Gchi Miigwetch” to you, our volunteers as well.

While the Board has its responsibilities to the agency and our funders, it is our Executive Director, Marnie Hall, and the administration staff who do all the work. They secure the funding and have continued to work through the transition and change that the global pandemic has brought.

In closing, we would also like to thank our many funders who understand the challenges we faced throughout this transition and have come through over and above over the past year to ensure that both programs and projects stayed on track and progress was achieved. The support we have received from our governing agencies is much appreciated. Thank you not only from the board but from the community as well.

The future of Manitoulin Family Resources continues to grow through the dedication, perseverance, and determination of the staff, volunteers, and stakeholders involved.

We as a Board are hopeful and determined to bring strategies to the table that will ensure continued success in our program development and bring support to the individuals and families of our region.

In Supporting the needs of individuals and families,

Valerie O’Leary, Board President

Leanne Bentley, Vice President

On behalf of Manitoulin Family Resources Board of Directors

## Executive Director's Annual Report - Marnie Hall


On behalf of the management team, I would like to welcome you to this year's Annual General Meeting of Manitoulin Family Resources. It is a privilege to share with you my reflections on the work of the agency, staff, and volunteers of the 2021-22 fiscal year. This evening's presentation represents our work of a second full year of working through the covid-19 pandemic. Preparing the report for the AGM turned out to be a greater challenge than we had anticipated. While we are proud to share some of the highlights and achievements of the agency and its programs of this past year, I would be remiss to not share that these are reflections on a very difficult year. It was hard, to say the least. It drew on everyone's reserves to support our clients, our programs, and one another to reach this point and, on behalf of the Board and myself, for that I say thank you.

The reality is that year 1 and year 2 of pandemic operations blur together when I first look back, but looking deeper there are some significant areas of contrast. In year 1 we accomplished things we never even envisioned; emergency child care, virtual Early ON, virtual and remote counselling, building renovations, an emergency homeless shelter....year 2 began to show the true impact of the pandemic adjustments on our community members. Ever-rising numbers in the opioid crisis, in homelessness, in admissions to VAW shelters, in human trafficking, in food bank usage....a workforce shortage, a child care shortage, a housing shortage....the emotional and physical demands have left us a little battle-scarred, and it's important for that to be acknowledged tonight.

We have also, however, had ongoing support throughout and that kept us going. To our funders, including the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board, the Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services, Ontario Health, Food Banks Canada, FeedOntario, Women's Shelters Canada, and the Canadian Women's Foundation, thank you for providing funding and flexibility as you could to support our attempts to support others. To the Program Supervisors and staff of each of those settings, thank you for advocating on our behalf so that we could best meet the needs of our clients. You have had our backs as we have continued on the frontlines throughout all of this and that has often made the impossible possible.

On a more local level, we would also like to acknowledge the support we received from our community partners, including the Manitoulin Health Centre and Assessment Centre, the Indigenous Health Services of Mnidoo Mnising, Public Health Sudbury and Districts, local police and emergency services and, specifically, Dr. Maurianne Reade. From having clients needing to isolate be tested, to having staff vaccinated, to delivering our services to those most vulnerable in a way as safe as possible for others....we could not have continued to deliver all that we did, throughout, without the help of many others.

There were days that we laughed and days that we cried; some of the best days held moments of both. Those experiences are mirrored by the irony of living in one of the most beautiful areas while being made painfully aware of the great needs of our most vulnerable citizens. Whether it's providing child care, providing food support, or providing shelter and physical safety, the work that we do is work of the heart. We care as we do and we give all we can, and we will use this upcoming year to replenish our own reserves, as the only thing harder than watching someone come in from sleeping outside in the winter, is watching them have to return to it. This is a reality for too many in our beautiful region, and it will be up to all of us as to how we support those most in need in the months ahead. How we, collectively, tend to the needs of the most vulnerable will define our post-pandemic community.



To the Board of Directors, thank you for your ongoing dedication to the agency and the people we serve, and for your faith and trust in the staff and myself. You have travelled with us down roads we never anticipated exploring, and you let us be there for others who needed us. You listened and guided, and demonstrated both courage and patience. Your support is appreciated.

To the staff and volunteers who have held strong to the frontlines throughout all of this, we truly, truly thank you. You gave of your hearts, and gone above and beyond at every request. You have literally helped thousands of people in the most meaningful of ways, and I am very honoured to be known as your Executive Director.

Sincerely,

Marnie Hall  
Executive Director

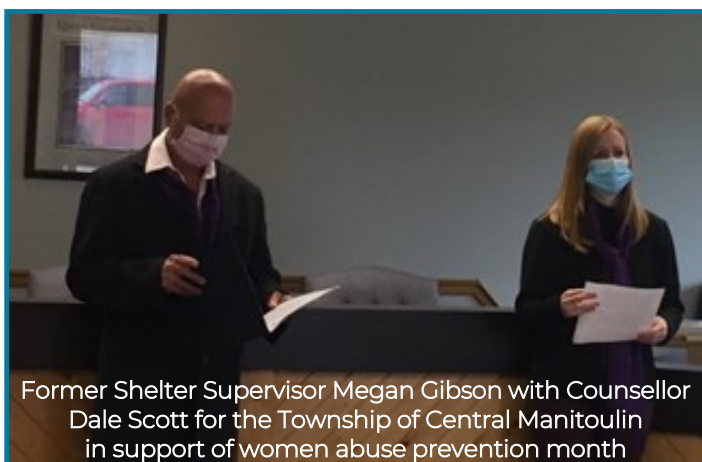
## Violence Against Women Prevention Program

The work of the VAWP departments of Manitoulin Family Resources continued on all fronts this past year, in spite of significant hindrances. VAW shelters were hard hit by the pandemic, in every way. The start of this year saw the completion of renovations funded through the Social Services Relief Fund via our local DSB were completed, allowing our shelter to return to full operation as a 10 bed shelter.

Provincial Emergency measures orders from the start of the pandemic remained in place as we headed into this year. This meant that shelter staff were required to work under strict conditions to support infection prevention and control efforts of public health directives. In addition, all VAW shelter staff were under redeployment orders, meaning anyone could be asked to take on any job as needed to support shelter operations. The VAW sector is one of the very few that operated under emergency orders for the entirety of their duration in the province. It was through the will, determination, and commitment of staff that we were able to meet the staffing needs and minimize the risk of outbreak in our setting. The dedication of staff to ensure that women and children fleeing dangerous situations had a shelter that remained available to them has been inspirational.

Our Outreach counsellors not only made themselves available to assist with the staffing of our shelter, but they also continued to provide services to clients in community. They worked from office, worked from home, worked from satellite offices, and delivered both sessions and public education through virtual methods. When community transmission of Covid was running high, the Outreach team was able to deliver both a December 06 Remembrance ceremony, and a week-long Women's Wellness event to highlight International Women's Day. Both events were very well-received, and have created options to consider for future public education.

With additional funding that was available during the pandemic, the VAWP Program was able to secure temporary satellite offices in community for counsellors, purchase therapeutic apps and resources for clients, hire a social media and community engagement worker, and form a partnership with Stacey Roles and Associates for additional therapeutic resources for clients requiring wraparound services to deal with the most complex traumas. We are very pleased that all of these developments will remain in place for this next year.



Former Shelter Supervisor Megan Gibson with Counsellor Dale Scott for the Township of Central Manitoulin in support of women abuse prevention month



Raising of the flag to end gender-based violence



## Children's Services Program — Diana St-Pierre, Children's Services Program Director

It's been a busy year in Children's Services as we continued to maneuver through the pandemic into the endemic. Staff and families are definitely feeling the burnout of the constant changes of the last 2 years.

We started the year entering back in to Emergency Child Care for School Age Children as schools closed in the spring and, again, in January of 2022. Unfortunately, due to staffing we were unable to accommodate all children who needed to access this service, but worked diligently to accommodate those we could with very little notice. Staff showed true commitment to families again and again during these times. Our own staffing complement was hit hard with COVID just after Christmas, forcing us to close some classrooms for a short time until staff were out of isolation.

Early ON Programs continued to offer virtual programming with a gradual reopening to outdoor, in-person programming, and offering activity kits to families to access learning opportunities at home. This hybrid approach is allowing us to remain connected to families in a variety of ways, each suited to the needs of the family.

Mindemoya Child Care went through a renovation throughout the summer, moving the program into school space for a short time. This renovation gave us our own kitchen within the centre and a new sleep room area for our infants. At the same time Little Current Child Care underwent some renovations to our portables, which also moved their program into the school space for summer. We are very thankful for the partnership with the Rainbow District School Board for providing this to us.

As we moved into the fall, the Ministry announced that all programs would be back to normal, but from the inside it was anything but normal. We continued to experience many staff absences and departures, due to isolation period requirements and burnout. This was the start of a very long waitlist for families with very few staff to cover ratios. We continue to work on staff recruitment and retention to maintain our current staff and recruit new staff. The waitlist remains, but we are beginning to make progress.

We ended the year in March by participating in a District wide event "Rejuvenating Our Wellness", as well as bringing all Children's Services' staff together as a group to do some work on wellness and healing; this had been our first time together in 2 years, and was well over due.



Exploring our Community



Water sponge sensory play and exploring

## Emergency Food Assistance Program — Nikki Thompson, Food Security Program Coordinator

Despite the lockdowns, changing protocols, and uncertainties of the pandemic, the food bank has continued to support the growing number of individuals and families in need of emergency food assistance.

In May 2021 we were privileged to have Dan Xilon, the Executive Director of Sudbury Food Bank, pay a visit and personally deliver a load of food from their distribution warehouse. SFB continued to supply the food bank with 1000-2500 lbs of food each month, allowing the program to distribute a wide variety of dried and canned goods to individuals and families. We were thrilled to learn that the partnership with SFB would continue through until March 2023.

This year we continued to feel the disappointment from community members regarding the closure of the thrift store. We received frequent calls and visits from people wanting to shop, but even more from people wanting to donate clothing and household items. Yet, we also saw tremendous patience and understanding from those reaching out when we explained the reasons for remaining closed. The excitement around the new build is increasing each day, which speaks to both the ongoing issues of affordability and the asset this program is to the community.

Deliveries of food to individuals in isolation were made possible by MFR Housing Support staff and other local agencies. The thrift store continued to supply shelter and food banks clients in need with clothes and household goods.

With plans for renovating the existing food bank site beginning to take shape in October 2021, staff and volunteers packed up extra food and shelving from the food bank and moved it over to Pro-Gas in Mindemoya which acted as a temporary food bank location. When plans for construction got delayed however, it quickly became too much to manage. The team made the decision to move everything back to the existing food bank until the new food bank site was complete.

We are so grateful for the help of our small group of food bank volunteers who have shown up each week to pack hampers, ensuring no one went without food. They have continued to adapt to changing protocols in order to maintain health and safety, and have shown great resiliency amidst challenges.

With the help of our dedicated volunteers the program ran a successful Christmas campaign, supporting over 1000 households. Again this year, the campaign operated over a 2 week period, with a limit of 10 individuals per building to support Covid protocols.

Construction on the new build is nearing completion. We hope to begin operating the food bank out of here this summer, with the thrift store soon to follow.



## Covid-19 Expansions: Housing Support Program and Social Services Relief Fund Updates

As a follow-up to federal funds that became available to support those most at risk during the pandemic, a series of Social Services Relief Fund opportunities became available. The Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board was instrumental in assisting with sourcing funds to enhance the service delivery options of Manitoulin Family Resources. While the initial closure of the MFR thrift store was due to the declaration of the pandemic and the inability to physically distance in the space, the ongoing closure was also due to the expanded space required for additional food bank needs. The pandemic confirmed what we had started to suspect in the years prior: our “new” food bank and thrift store that opened in 2014 had already outgrown its space.

As a result of ongoing discussions and applications, our local DSB and, in turn, MFR, was awarded funding that secured the development of a new food bank and thrift store, to be built on adjacent property. Ned Martin, a long-standing consultant of the agency, was awarded the position of Project Manager of the “New Build”, and we were most pleased when our local contractors held the successful bids.

In May of 2021 we prepared for the demolition of the old “Depot”, the original food bank and thrift store that was a repurposed portable, purchased in 1992. We “broke” ground in June, and are looking forward to the food bank’s transition to operations in the new site in the coming weeks. The return of the thrift store operation will follow shortly thereafter, adding a much needed and very “missed” shopping experience to the local community.

We offer our most sincere gratitude to the local contractors and services who have worked with us on this project, including those working under our General Contractor Steve Hill and those of the Council and Township of Central Manitoulin. This has been a task greater than any of us could have ever envisioned, but one that will prove its value and worth in every day of its operation.

Further rounds of Social Services Relief Fund distributed through the District Services Board allowed for additional community supports during these challenging months. On a temporary basis Manitoulin Family Resources has been able to offer a Homeless shelter (for those with no means of accommodation during the pandemic), a Supportive Isolation Centre (for those who are Covid-positive and without a safe space to stay and isolate), and create a Housing Support program with staffing positions to help people attempt to find housing or, preferably, assist them to avoid losing housing. Each of these undertakings involved a learning curve on our end, and the willingness of others to assist us with their development and success. To the motels that housed our makeshift “shelters”, to the hospital that assisted us with laundry services, to the staff that stepped into ground breaking programs, thank you for ensuring our most vulnerable were safe. To our local District Services Board, Fern and Donna, none of this could have been done without your support.

Nothing could have prepared us for the needs we came to see firsthand during these months. Seeing the gratitude on the face of someone for the fact that they will sleep inside and in a clean bed after a shower, sitting with someone while they tell you that their greatest hope would be to have a home of their own, delivering meals and spending time with someone who is recovering from covid after having had to live outside and eat the garbage left by other people, bringing someone into a safe space knowing that, ultimately, they will have nowhere to go but back out again...these are the most humbling, and most heart-breaking, of moments.

We have met the challenges that came to us during Covid as best we could; the challenge now will be to determine how we can best create better options for those in our communities in the years ahead.



## Thank you to the 2021-2022 dedicated staff of Manitoulin Family Resources

Ainslie Michaels	Makenna Lentir
Amanda Roy	Marina Verboom
Ann Auxier	Marnie Hall
Barbara Brethat	Marissa McReady
Bethany Williams	Mary Collins
Brendan Allen	Mary Laidley
Cassie Moggy	Maureen Eadie
Charlotte Wagar	Megan Gibson
Chris Smith	Michelle Pyette
Crystal Robinson	Mikaila Kennedy
Dawn Patrick	Morgan Leblond
Deanna Lewis	Ned Martin
Debbie St. Onge	Nicole Jol
Denise Leblanc	Nicole Spry
Diana St-Pierre	Nikki Thompson
Jackie Smith	Patricia Hurst
Jennifer Smith	Pete Van Volkingburgh
Jessica Pelland	Rheanne Green
Jody Corbiere	Rhonda Middaugh
Kaelyn Moor	Sabrina Ferguson
Kaitlyn Sorbara	Shay-Lynn Gordon
Kennedy Leblanc	Shelly Wright
Katrina Wilhelm	Susan Wilson
Laszlo Vernarsky	Suzanne Norris
Leslie Moore	Tracey Jefkins
Linda Gilchrist	Tracy Van Horne
Lindsey Varey	Trevor Nehring
Madisen McAllister	Tyler Hore
Madonna Aeschlimann	Viktoria Vernarsky