



RESOURCE ASSISTANCE FOR YOUTH 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

Resource Assistance for Youth (RaY) acknowledges that we operate in Treaty 1 territory, on the original lands of the Ojibway, Saukteaux, Cree and Oji-Cree peoples, and the homeland of the Métis Nation. RaY is committed to honouring the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. We are dedicated to learning, healing, and collaboration whilst we strive to provide culturally appropriate programming for all youth in a safe environment.

Land Acknowledgement



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A Message from the President

Hello Boozhoo,

My name is Andy Spence and I originally hail from Ebb and Flow First Nation where my extended family from my mother's side lives. My father's side is from Eddystone Manitoba which is a Red River Metis community. This area has a rich history of early Manitoba and signing of the Treaty 2.

As a Regional Representative for Workers United Canada Council, representing workers in their workplaces, I would like to say that it is a pleasure for me to help RaY where I can, and the work that we do, voluntarily, is a part of who I am.

This would be my first full year as the board chair and fifth year on RaY's Executive Board. I must commend the Board members for their dedication and time to oversee the governance of the operation through Kelly, its directors, and staff. The Board is always willing to help when needed.

We are able to see the great work each staff member does with such passion and dedication. RaY would not run if its staff was not such a huge part and impact of participant's lives.

RaY has transformed the lives of young people many of whom are still trying to find their way in a society that takes years and years to prepare for.

Donations, government grants and support from local businesses are what keeps our doors open, and this continued support is what allows RaY to do such important work for these young people and is dearly appreciated.

As we progress into summer and through the fall months, we will continue to always provide a safe and inclusive space for those who need it through the work of our cultural programming, housing department, mental health and addictions department, drop in, and more.

Yours Truly,
Andy Spence,
President



A Message from the Executive Director

It is that time of year again when we reflect on the year prior, report on lessons learned or any high points or accomplishments that were made. We often tend to mentally evaluate any “change”, whether that be the landscape of the youth living on the fringes without support or retrospective trend analysis on changes in the social condition.

After 21 years of writing these reports, my first reflection is that I have never been short of material to discuss. My second thought is that I have never seen the landscape so fraught with danger and lack of timely and meaningful interventions. The need and demand far outweigh the ability to support those in need.

We emerged from the pandemic much differently than when we went in. I noticed staff were experiencing fatigue, the continuous pivoting to meet demands and maintain safety, the shifts in program delivery coupled with the emerging mental health crisis amongst many of the young people had really taken its toll on all involved. The toxic drug cocktails arriving to the street have been of grave concern, particularly the drugs that are Narcan resistant. The death toll has been consistent and took far too many young people.

Ray Wired: This online platform came into being during 2022, with the ability to provide access to youth who had access to a computer but often found themselves isolated with no one to talk to. Without much advertising, we registered approximately 270 subscribers, many of whom are actively participating online through engaging with staff and finding means and ways of coping through our online workbooks.

Ebb and Flow – Treaty Two: In 2022 we met with the teachers along with Chief and Council, and were able to begin a wonderful working relationship based in mutual learning. Staff members have travelled up a few times to provide educational workshops for students from elementary to high school, and engage in proactive planning with teachers to promote timely conversations.

Community Advocacy: In 2022, the community mobilized to advocate and educate the City Council on homeless populations that had been residing in bus shelters. Joined by other prominent Winnipeg agencies, members of our team attended the chamber of City Hall and provided solid experience, expertise, and recommendations to the council members on how best to approach the situation short and long term.

People With Lived Experience (PWLE) staff: RaY is known for assisting youth, but many don’t realize we have also intentionally created space for our youth alumni who have aged out of receiving services to have an opportunity to become a part of the team at RaY. Currently we have three staff members who were former participants and now are receiving training, providing voice and direction for programming, and are climbing the ladder in the nonprofit world. They are respected peers and have been wonderful assets to the organization.

I could go on and on, but I have a 500-word limit, which is probably a good thing. I want to take this opportunity to thank supporters, donors, and volunteers for consistently working with us to provide these basic need services. Your support means so much to all of us. Thank you!

Hats off to the staff at RaY who are there day in and day out to provide youth with what they need on their terms.

Kelly Holmes,
Executive Director



the hub model

1. Responding
to Immediate
Needs

STREET
OUTREACH 

DROP
IN 

2. Addressing
Youth
Homelessness

BASIC
NEEDS 

HOUSING 

CULTURE 

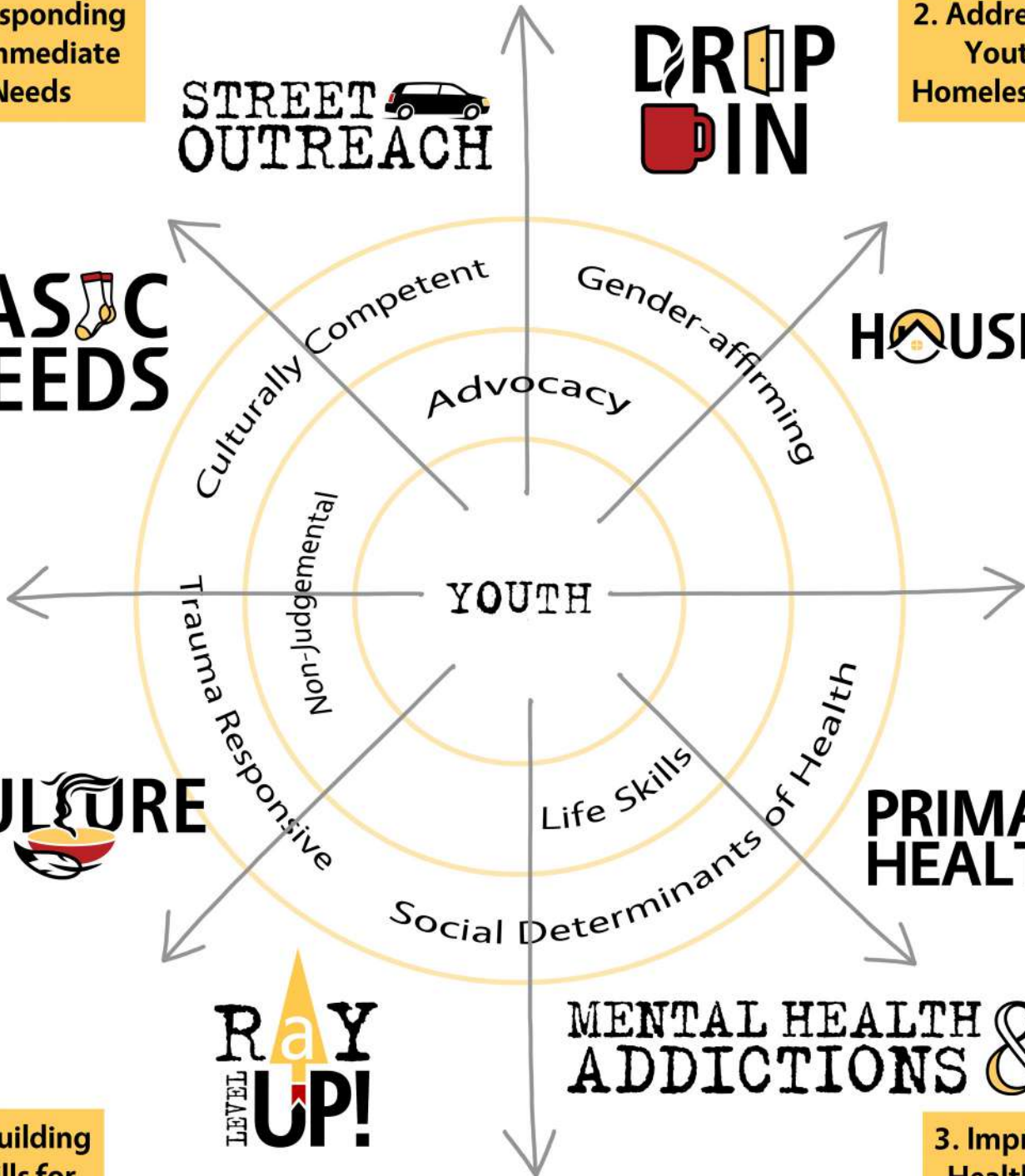
PRIMARY
HEALTH 

4. Building
Skills for
Success

RAY
LEVEL
UP! 

MENTAL HEALTH
ADDICTIONS 

3. Improving
Health and
Wellbeing



RaY operates as a "one stop shop," providing wrap-around services for youth in need. It is a single place where street-entrenched and marginalized youth can access everything they need, on their terms, to better their lives. With a key focus on the Social Determinants of Health, this fully integrated service model is one of the first of its kind in Manitoba.

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Kelly Holmes – Executive Director
Breda Vosters – Director of Grants and Information
Talia Potash – Director of Housing
Caryn Birch – Director of Education and Training
Olga Shmelova – Director of Mental Health & Addictions
Ran-Lee Rhinas – Human Resources Manager
Kerby Reimer – Director of Operations

ADMIN

Asha Harrington, Executive Assistant
Brittney Nygaard, Information Team Lead
Matthew Altieri, Grants and Information Assistant
Kenny Chee, Stats & Information Assistant
Ran-Lee Rhinas, Human Resources Manager
Nicholas Friesen, Communications & Donor Relations
Allan Bedard, Financial Controller
Dwight Samchek, Bookkeeper

IMMEDIATE NEEDS

Steve Wolfe, Basic Needs Coordinator
Scott McNicol, Street Outreach Coordinator
Brittney Nygaard, Street Outreach Worker
Tammie Kolbuck, Street Outreach Worker
Eric Schweig, Street Outreach Worker
Sierra Wowk, Peer Support Worker, Drop In
Candice Rantanen, Peer Kitchen Coordinator
Ayla Banks, Program Assistant
Hilary Beardy, Cultural Program Coordinator

HOUSING

Aaron Ghebrehiwot, Rapid Rehousing Manager
Stephanie Reinheimer, Housing First Case Manager
Meghan Fifi, Rapid Rehousing Case Manager
Apryl Aisaican, Transitional Housing Manager
Jude Bradford, Transitional Housing Team Lead
Ahmad Salem, REST Case Manager
Francis Romawac, ROOM Case Manager
Crystal Hughes, Cultural Case Manager
Moniquea Stasiuk, Rapid Rehousing Case Manager
Alex Anderson, REST Case Manager
Richard Belmonte, Housing First Case Manager
Milaine Carbotte, Housing First Case Manager

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Andrew Spence – President
Mike Zacharias – Vice President
Bruce Klassen – Treasurer
Jodi St. Amant – Secretary
Dr. Angela Clark – Director
Peter Havens – Director
Kelsey Noakes – Director
Shanlee Scott – Director

EDUCATION & TRAINING

Dominique Hodder, Level Up! Manager
Danielle Preusentanz, Life Skills Facilitator,
Casey Wall, Level Up! Case Manager
Cassandra Valmestad, Level Up! Case Manager
Adela Ramadani, Level Up! Case Manager
Richard Charpentier, Level Up! Case Manager
Laura McNish, Life Skills Facilitator
Marshall Wiebe, Growing Opportunities Case Manager
Amanda Fries, Growing Opportunities Case Manager
Lauren Kroeker-Lee, Social Enterprise Manager
Carlos Severight, RaY Works Moving Coordinator

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS

Swati Bhatt, Manager
Laura Canfield, Case Manager
Amanj Palani, Case Manager
Jessica Lord, Support Worker

From humble beginnings as the Winnipeg chapter of Operation Go Home, Resource Assistance for Youth, Inc. (RaY) has grown to a nationally recognized and award-winning agency. Our determination to provide youth with what they need, on their terms, to better their lives has redefined the way our city, province, and country approach youth care.

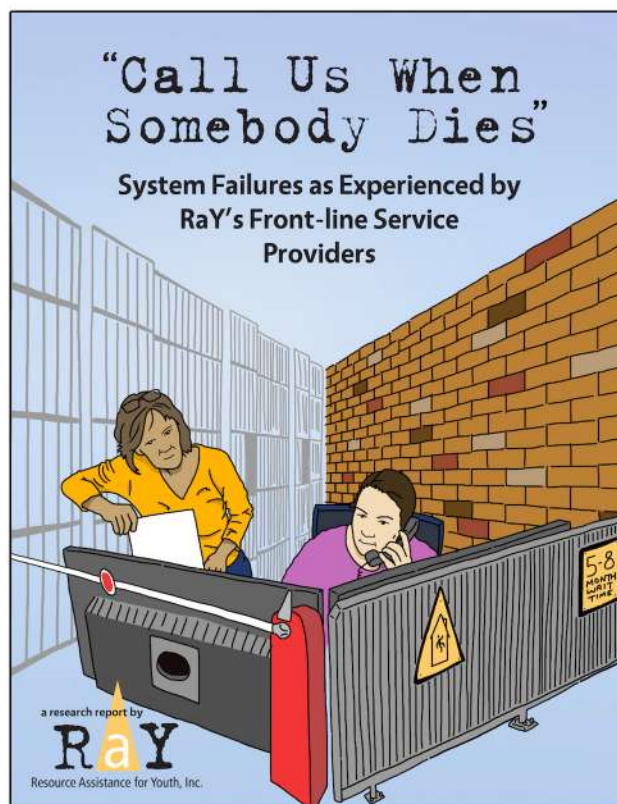
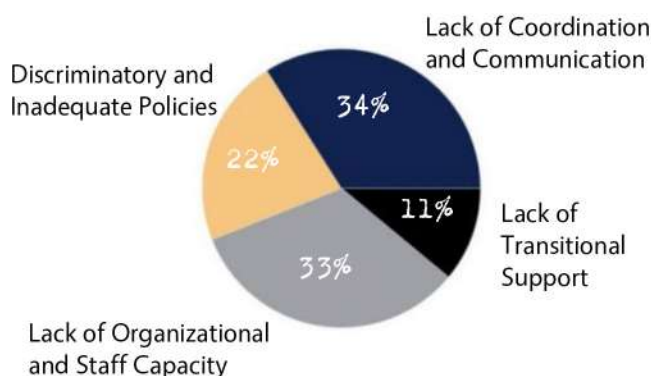


RESEARCH

In 2022, RaY published the research report entitled 'Call Us When Somebody Dies' System Failures as Experienced by RaY's Frontline Service Providers. This report explored the specific ways in which systems facilitate youth homelessness within Winnipeg, and identified the impacts these failures had on both youth participants and agency staff. Utilizing the perspectives of RaY's front-line service providers who work at the intersection of a multitude of systems, this report found that four distinct types of system failures were identified to have occurred throughout systems such as the healthcare system, justice, employment and income assistance, child and family services and more. The four main types of system failures included: a lack of coordination and communication, a lack of transitional supports, discriminatory and/or inadequate policies, and insufficient capacity.

Not only did this research project explore how and why systems are failing youth within Winnipeg, it also aimed to explore possible solutions to these failures. Front-line workers were shown the initial findings, and then shared several different ideas on how to prevent these issues. Their solutions included a centralized database that would improve information sharing and collaboration, an increase in funding so that organizations and agencies could adequately respond to a high number of services, improved education and training, an increase in mental health support for front-line service providers, and institutional policies that better reflect the reality of homelessness and addiction. Informed by these findings, RaY ultimately provided a series of recommendations that community partners and different governmental departments should enact to reduce the number of barriers experienced by marginalized youth and to prevent further system failures within Winnipeg.

Read the full report at
rayinc.ca/learn/publications/



Gone too soon.

Every year we say 'goodbye' to youth and alumni who have made their journeys onward. In the nearly 30 years RaY has been operating, it has not gotten easier for the staff and the youth left behind - those who worked, lived with, and loved these young people. It is difficult to quantify the grief and trauma that these losses leave behind, but we feel it anew every time we learn of another young person gone too soon.

These young people are sorely missed and our love is with their families, friends, support networks, and loved ones.

Jason "That Guy" King

1985 - January 2, 2022

Heather Marie Cheyanne Beardy

1995 - February 2, 2022

Corey Daniels

2000 - February 27, 2022

Rae Hill

1998 - April 28, 2022

Kyle Baker

1999 - March 16, 2022

Morgan Bibby

1992 - May 15, 2022

Jesse Squires

1995 - June, 2022

Tyrell River Chief Harper

1997 - June 23, 2022

Lealani Courchene

2001 - June 27, 2022

Raven Daniels

1994 - August 8, 2022

Karen Aqiatusuk

1983 - August 22, 2022

Zacharias McGhee

1993 - September 9, 2022

Austin Mowat

1994 - November, 2022

Tyree Cayer

1994 - December 11, 2022

Morgan Penner

1996 - December 19, 2022

Rest in Power.



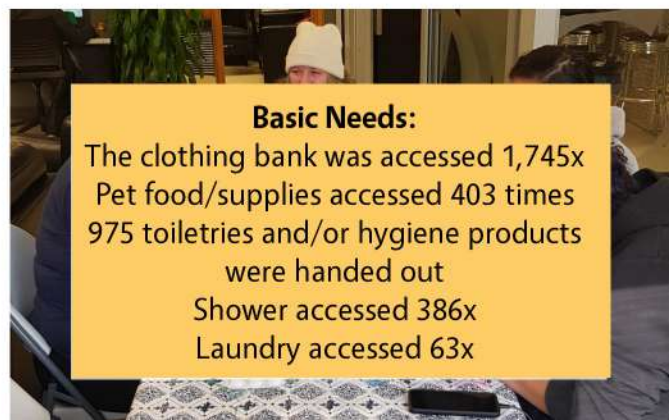
Outreach:
 12,015 interactions
 14,406 meals provided
 4,230 Narcan kits distributed
 20,264 other harm reduction
 supplies handed out



Drop-in:
 1,480 Unique Individuals
 12,904 Hot Meals Served



Throughout 2022, RaY's Drop-In program continued to offer a variety of essential services and supports to its clients, including access to food, clothing, hygiene supplies, harm reduction materials, and other necessities. This past year saw our Drop-In shift back to full inside services, after two years of fluctuating capacity rules and restrictions for safety during the pandemic. Our Drop-In team grew to include a new Kitchen Coordinator along with Drop-In Support Workers, all coming from lived experience backgrounds. With more staff and flexibility, we have been able to continue our focus on creating a sense of community and belonging for our participants, with various social and recreational activities offered throughout the year, such as games, movies, and art. The Drop-In also provided opportunities for youth to engage in peer support, volunteer opportunities, and learning. While we have seen an increase in unsafe drug supply for the folks who attend Drop-In, there has been a push for staff and community members alike to be aware and able to support in overdose responses. As the team strengthens and grows, we are looking forward to more programming and activities in the new year.



Basic Needs:
 The clothing bank was accessed 1,745x
 Pet food/supplies accessed 403 times
 975 toiletries and/or hygiene products
 were handed out
 Shower accessed 386x
 Laundry accessed 63x



The complete re-opening of RaY's drop-in services resulted in the housing team witnessing a significant increase in demand for housing post pandemic. Internal to the organization, our different departments and expert staff were able to identify individuals' exact need for the different forms of housing we have available, thus supporting successful tenure for many youth in our community.

Our enhanced focus on how our programs work together allowed for youth to move from being unhoused to a transitional unit, then into the private market, all while being supported by the same case management teams and having access to all our services and supports under one roof. For example, at any given time, the REST program was occupied by up to 60% with individuals who were also connected to our Level Up! and Growing Opportunities programs. Also, approximately 30% of REST youth have been able to successfully transition into independent living in the private market thanks to supported referrals to the Rapid Rehousing team. The high level of engagement with youth by staff this past year even allowed programming to extend beyond our regular business hours to include evening recreation and workshop opportunities.

While we have had many successes, it is also important to highlight some of our bigger challenges which include inadequate long term affordable housing in the city to address our demographics' needs. Additionally, the long wait times for entry into treatment facilities, the increased level of drug use in community, and housing options being limited to dwellings in high crime neighborhoods continue to be major barriers experienced by youth trying to address their housing needs in the private market. We are working hard to address these barriers, but we need stronger calls from everyone in Winnipeg to advocate for the creation of more housing options for low-income community members.

Rapid Rehousing:

32 Evictions Prevented
50 youth secured housing
265 Apartment viewings
214 instances of landlord advocacy

Housing First:

719 one-on-ones/ case management check ins
104 instances of EIA advocacy
Youth accessed food banks 56x

Transitional:

3448 Home Visits
51 youth connected to educational programs
8 youth began unsubsidized employment
174 instances of goal and/or life development





This year, the Mental Health and Addictions department moved the focus from the traditional clinical to the psycho-educational trauma transformation approach as a way of decolonizing the processes. This transformation encourages participants to make sense of their trauma and utilize the experience in their favour. Following these changes, the team developed and successfully implemented a new intake assessment tool.

The team collaborated with the Ebb and Flow community and successfully organized a one-day workshop series at the Ebb and Flow school. A team of 13 RaY staff went to the Ebb and Flow school and facilitated 70 workshops among the 14 classrooms during the day.

Two case managers provided mental health and addiction counseling and access to the virtual platform RaYWired under the "Victims of Crime Project" in collaboration with WE24. This collaboration ended in September 2022 as the project moved to its next stage, focusing on developing the Justice Department at RaY by analyzing the data collected over time.

The department added 47 new workbooks and 50 new activities on the virtual platform this year and supported 285 participants through RaYWired. MH&A celebrated the one-year success of the virtual platform RaYWired in October 2022 with a party, inviting participants to join us in our drop-in space.

RaY Wired:

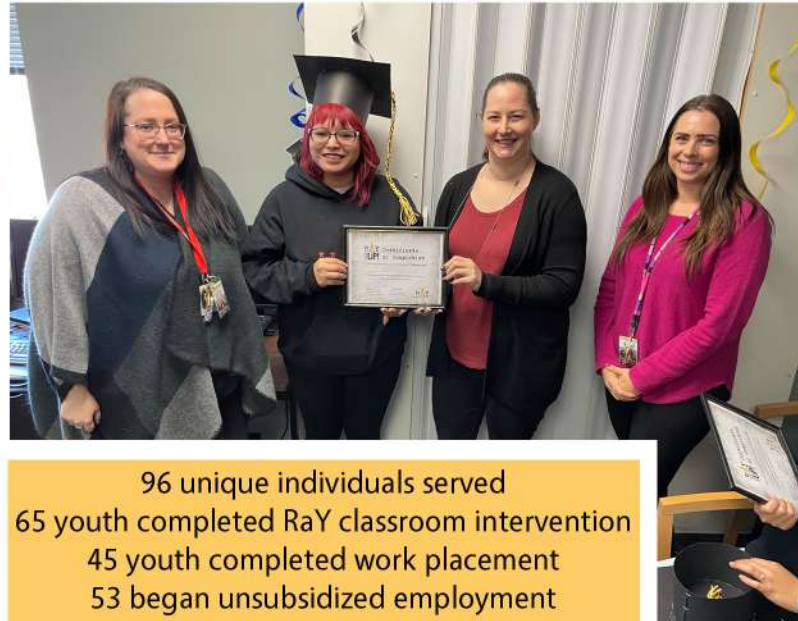
252 unique participants were assessed using RaY Wired throughout 2022 and connected with youth for local support over 50 times

Mental Health and Addictions:

217 unique individuals
183 youth were connected to RaY's Nurse Practitioner and/or other healthcare providers
130 External Referrals to partner organizations
83 home visits/ wellness checks were completed



The Education and Training department has had another successful year at RaY! In 2022 we continued to run both Launch Pad and Lift Off, and saw great success with our participants in both classrooms. Growing Opportunities has continued to adapt and expand its supports to participants at both locations. In 2022, Level Up! successfully supported 96 people. The education and training team became experts in navigating regular changes with schedules, programming and supports as we started to exit the COVID-19 pandemic. In November, 2022, the Level Up! program won the award for Leadership in Career and Workforce Development, through the Manitoba Association for Career Development.



96 unique individuals served
65 youth completed RaY classroom intervention
45 youth completed work placement
53 began unsubsidized employment



The education and training team would like to thank the entire team at RaY for continuing to do the important work we are all doing at RaY, and for supporting participants to find ways to access employment and training opportunities. Additionally we would like to thank our incredible employers and community partners for continuing to navigate supports for participants as they transition from Level Up! and venture into the world of work. We would also like to thank our funders from all levels of government who have continued to support and advocate for the education and training programs to continue.



RaY's Cultural program is a youth-led educational program that provides Indigenous, street-entrenched, and marginalized youth with a safe space to learn about Indigenous culture. In so doing, it challenges prevailing stereotypes and internalized oppression while empowering a generation of young Indigenous leaders.

In early 2022, despite still grappling with the last of the pandemic restrictions, we were able to begin facilitating group activities once more. We took youth on field trips to engage with cultural history, facilitated their attendance at ceremonies, and utilized our strong community relationships with Indigenous service providers to ensure youth had access to all the cultural supports they required. However, we did also go through a bit of a transition year in the department and had some stretches of time where we were not able to offer as robust services as we had hoped. Through this time, our staff did an exceptional job of connecting youth to external resources, activities, events and ceremonies.

We are thankful to continue to be able to learn from and work as partners with the many Indigenous organizations in downtown Winnipeg. These organizations are guiding the way for Indigenous young people to reconnect with their culture and become leaders in the community. For the 2023 year, we plan to connect even more with Indigenous led events while proudly hosting our own activities led by our highly knowledgeable cultural workers.

GROWING OPPORTUNITIES

76 youth were supported in obtaining essential identification 27 youth worked 'Odd Jobs' around RaY for a total of 915 hours



The Growing Opportunities team recently began supporting RaY Works participants with the opportunity to work with the social enterprise, and has partnered with the West Broadway Biz for more "odd jobs" opportunities, which will be starting later in 2023. Additionally, the Growing Opportunities team has started to engage participants who typically access our drop-in space with new learning opportunities, workshops and ID clinics to continue to support all RaY participants to have their needs met.





2022 was a very exciting year for RaY's moving and junk removal social enterprise.



This year we made the decision to re-name our social enterprise. Formerly known as RaY Moving, we now go by RaY Works. This name change will give us room to grow beyond just moving and junk removal, as we aim expand our capabilities to meet the needs of our community and participants.



Throughout the year we were able to offer supportive placements for five youth coming out of the Level Up! classroom. Of these five youth, we were able to successfully transition four into ongoing employment. Through mentoring, on-the-job skill training and ensuring participants remained plugged into the RaY hub, we feel like our supportive work training model is proving successful.

One priority of our social enterprise has been to continue to provide our housing program with the moving support and expertise that our team has to offer. In 2022 we were able to provide 28 free moves to RaY's amazing housing team.



Throughout the year we were very involved in the growing and inspiring non-profit and social enterprise community here in Manitoba. We worked regularly with such non-profit partners as Norwest Co-op Community Health, Thrive, and West Central Women's Resource Centre, as well as with businesses and organizations within the social enterprise community, such as CCEDNet, New Directions Property Services and Polished Cleaning Services. These partnerships help sustain our financial and social purpose and inspire us to continue to do the work we love to do.

As we look forward, we feel optimistic that the momentum of 2022 will result in continued sustainability and growth for our social enterprise department!

In 2022, RaY Works earned
\$16,647.20
 which was reinvested into
 programming for youth







2022 Youth Awards

RaY's Youth Awards celebrate outstanding achievement in the face of overwhelming adversity.

Youth recipients are nominated by staff who recognize the changes these young people have made in their lives. While all RaY participants overcome barriers on a daily basis, the recipients of our youth awards are the youth who have been able to go even further with their personal growth and reach a point where they are giving back to the community and inspiring their peers to follow in their footsteps. We are truly inspired by the bravery, resilience and perseverance each of the award recipients, and all the youth at RaY possess. The selected individuals in each category are those who most prominently exemplify the award criteria.

The Lynn Thompson Pay It Forward Award

Awarded to a deserving individual who has benefited from supports in the past and ensures that these good deeds are repaid by providing much-needed support to others.

The 2022 recipient is Natasha Murray!

The Youth Ambassador Award

Awarded to a deserving individual who has continually shared their story to shed light on the issues of youth homelessness for the benefit of future generations.

The 2022 recipient is Kaylee Ross!

The Phoenix Award

Awarded to a deserving individual who has shown incredible resilience through difficult circumstances and not only survived but emerged stronger and more vital as a result.

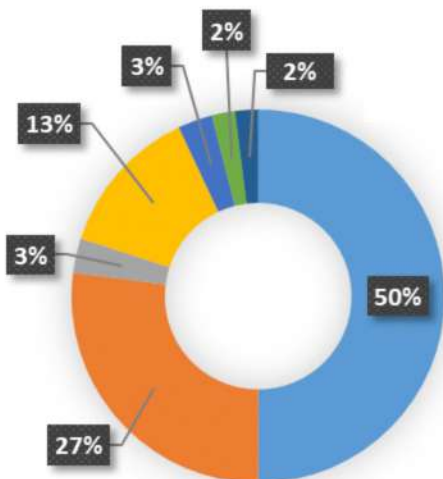
The 2022 recipient is Rayne Richard!

The Level Up! Award

Awarded to a deserving graduate of RaY's Level Up! Employment & Training Program who has enthusiastically worked to learn and apply new skills, face new challenges, and take steps forward in their career.

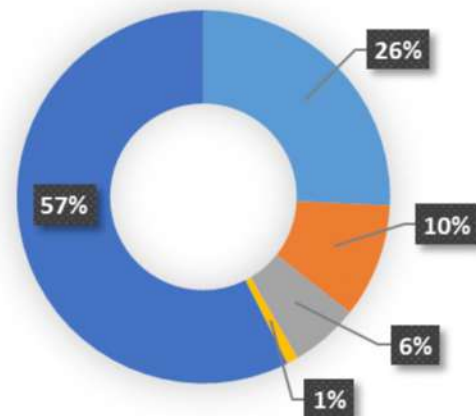
The 2022 recipient is Karlita McGillivray!

2022 Funding Sources + Expenses



Government of Canada
Government of Manitoba
City of Winnipeg
Grants and Foundations

Donations and Fundraisers
United Way
Earned Income



Programs
Administration
Building and Vehicle
Fundraising
Wages

GRANTS & ADMINISTRATION

Our administration team was hard at work in 2022, with plenty to show for it. We were able to support the growth of the agency by successfully applying for several grants from both the public and private sectors. Under the guidance of our Executive Director, the grants and finance teams have been able to masterfully manage our cash flow and meet all of our reporting deadlines, all while having to juggle the day-to-day internal tasks of our work. These efforts culminated in new partnerships as well as renewals of long-standing partnerships with many of our supporters, including all three levels of government. We are extremely grateful for these partnerships and the way they increase our capacity to achieve our mission of meeting youth where they are at, on their terms, to better their lives.



Third Party Events



While we were busy supporting young people, members of the community were out there supporting us!

We couldn't do what we do without the support of the University of Manitoba's 5 Days for the Homeless campaign, the players and organizers from Hockey Helps the Homeless, and our friends Brothers of the Fork who ride for us during the Bridge to Nowhere.



Thank you to our valued funders and supporters!



Ray

Resource Assistance for Youth, Inc.

Resource Assistance for Youth, Inc.

"providing youth with what they need, on their own terms, to better their lives."

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