

# Youth Employment in Canada

Standing Committee on Finance



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## Dauphin Friendship Centre

In 1974 the Dauphin Friendship Centre (DFC) incorporated as a community based, non profit, charitable organization that was established to address, and is still directed by, the needs of our community. We are 1 of 11 Friendship Centres in Manitoba and 1 of 119 Friendship Centres across Canada. The Dauphin Friendship Centre is governed by an elected Board of Directors and employs 24 full time and 8 part time staff. The Dauphin Friendship Centre has 40 years of experience providing programs directly to youth, low income clients and urban Aboriginal peoples, serving over 3,800 clients in 2012-2013 alone.

The primary objectives of the Dauphin Friendship Centre are:

- To encourage and assist service agencies, voluntary organizations, private industry and all levels of government in advancing and maintaining the well being of Aboriginal people.
- Promote wider understanding of the culture and heritage of Aboriginal people.
- Promote and develop local community leadership.
- Provide worthwhile social, educational and recreational activities to further brotherhood and understanding between Aboriginal and Non- Aboriginal people.
- To remain nonsectarian
- Assist in the development of community action groups to tackle specific issues.
- Deliver quality social, cultural, and recreational programs and services to our stakeholders based on their long term requirements and needs through new and innovative ways to foster active and positive relations within the community.

### Our Mission Statement

“To enhance the quality of life for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the community by working together to provide quality programs and services to meet the needs of our membership and the community at large.”

### Youth Programming Mission Statement

To assist youth by providing opportunities to learn and develop life and leadership skills through social, educational and cultural activities that will prepare them for the future.

## Dauphin Friendship Centre Results Based Services

With over 25,800 youth client points of contact in 2012-2013, the Dauphin Friendship Centre provided services to over 1,400 youth under the age of 24 in that year alone. We provide services to all clients who walk through our doors, be they First Nation, Métis, Inuit or non-status, as well as the 20% of our clients that are non-Aboriginal. We receive funding from federal, provincial and local levels of government, foundations,

corporations, private sector donations and through fundraising efforts. Our program delivery experience has seen our involvement with multiple generations of families. The success of this participation is seen every day through the families who are employed, returned to school, volunteering and generally adding to the positive quality of life in our community. Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal clients come to us as the first point of service in our urban setting as they know they can receive the assistance they need or be referred to the appropriate agency that is directly responsible for providing these services. What makes our Friendship Centre, and many Centres across Canada, a unique service delivery organization in our region is that we provide wrap-around services such as Partners for Careers, Healthy Baby, Adult Literacy, Prairie Mountain Health Aboriginal Human Resource Program, Dauphin At Risk Teens, Immigration Settlement Services and our Parent Child Program. These wrap-around supports are crucial in helping our clients successfully take part in the labour market. Our Friendship Centre, as is with many others around the country, provides wrap around services that our clients require leading to the efficient delivery of programs, which is one of the highlights of why Friendship Centres are so successful.

## **Dauphin Friendship Centre Youth Program Delivery Experience**

The Dauphin Friendship Centre is a community leader and successfully operates a Youth and Family Centre and many youth programs in the City of Dauphin. We have a complement of qualified staff that has training in many areas pertaining to working with and engaging youth in a positive learning environment. We also offer several youth based cultural programs and our Summer Camp program provides activities that focus on education, encouraging physical activities and employment enhancement.

The following programs provide quality services addressing the changing needs of local youth:

- Little Steps Head Start Program
- Youth Skills Development Program
- Dauphin At Risk Teens (DART) Program
- Cultural Connections with Aboriginal Youth (now under the Urban Aboriginal Strategy)
- Healthy Baby Program
- Parent Child Program
- Food for Thought – Hot Lunch Program
- Educational and Recreational Sponsorship Program
- Laverne Morrisseau Scholarship/Student Bursary Program
- Coats for Kids

- Angel Tree
- Dauphin's Book Bag Program
- Cinderella Program

## Dauphin Friendship Centre Community Program Delivery Experience

The Dauphin Friendship Centre provides and houses many other programs and services. Although not specifically targeted towards youth, many youth still use our other programs as we believe that having all programs accessible to youth helps them develop the economic resiliency needed to take part in the labour market. These services include:

- Laverne Morrisseau Adult Education Centre
- Family Group Decision Making Program
- Partners for Careers
- Lower Income Housing
- Emergency Assistance Program
- Community Liaison Programming
- Christmas Hamper Program
- General Programs (craft night, Christmas Dinner and Dance, Family Christmas Party, community BBQ, Aboriginal Solidarity Day activities, etc.)
- Healthy Together Now Program
- Community Access Program (Computers)
- RIDE (Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere) Program
- Prairie Mountain Health Aboriginal Liaison and Recruitment Program
- Aboriginal (Saulteaux and Michif) Language Classes
- English as an Additional Language Classes

The Dauphin Friendship Centre Board of Directors continues to set youth as a priority ensuring youth are being heard and that their needs are being considered. This can be seen in the new Youth and Family Centre that was built in our community in 2007 and the property development that started around our Centre in 2010. Our board includes our youth program in their long term goals as they feel the youth in our community are their future. We also have a board member who is delegated as a youth representative. This board member is someone who has a vested interest in our youth program as their children are involved in our programs and is employed as a Parent Liaison Worker by the Mountain View School Division and deals directly with youth and families needing a wide variety of services and community supports from our organization.

## **Career Development Support Program Delivery Experience**

Through innovative program and funding development over the past 15 years the Dauphin Friendship Centre has provided employment related programming including resume and cover letter development, employment search workshops for clients, interview preparation assistance, assistance completing post secondary school applications and assistance completing bursary and scholarship applications. Staff travel to 12 rural communities in the South Parkland area to ensure equal access to services, in both rural and urban areas in our region. Our program partners with the Assiniboine Community College in Dauphin Manitoba and is allocated space at their campus to assist their students with their employment needs. We also partner directly with Education Counsellors from 12 local high schools to better facilitate the exchange of labour market information, post secondary education information and training opportunities that would benefit students. Our program participates in regional and provincial Career and Job Fairs and has arranged local and provincial training opportunities to encourage positive labour market and employer relations. In the 2013 – 2014 program year 118 youth were assisted with finding employment or accessing training for further their skills. Staff has created the Mentor with Me program which matches high school students with work placements which results in the students receiving a credit towards graduation, but more importantly links them with potential career opportunities. We are the only Friendship Centre in Manitoba to host an office for our local regional health authority, who is attempting to encourage local youth, especially Aboriginals, to engage in employment opportunities in the health sector.

## **Employment Training Program Delivery Experience**

With five community partners the Youth Skills Development program provides youth facing multiple barriers to employment the opportunity to enhance existing and develop new skills that will facilitate their integration into the labour market. The 24 week program provides group based and individual training in a classroom setting, brings the students to meet with employers and see actual work environments and then the students participate in a work placement where they can put their skills to practical use. The success of the program lies in addressing the many barriers that youth face and providing them with the tools they need to obtain and retain employment after the completion of their program intake. Accessing different community programs and services within our Friendship Centre is required as many of the youth have barriers that they must still work to solve after the program is complete. However we provide them with the tools, knowledge and support they need to overcome these barriers, and provide follow up services to encourage their continued growth and assist them further when required.

## At Risk Youth Program Delivery Experience

Studies indicate that in every community a small number of youth commit a disproportionate number of the crime and that in the absence of effective intervention the same offenders are likely to continue to display poor behaviour and criminal activities as adults. The Dauphin At Risk Teens (DART) Program functions as a key component in the effective implementation of services for at-risk youth in our community especially youth who are “falling through the cracks”. Agencies including RCMP, Child and Family Services, Community and Youth Corrections, Addictions Foundation of Manitoba and the Mountain View School Division have benefited from the dissemination of information, which previously had not been shared between agencies. This program focuses on crime recidivism prevention, employment readiness training, individual and family support sessions, school reintegration and effectively addressing improper behaviour in youth. Youth and their families can be involved in the program for many years making certain they have continued access to a wide variety of supports that ensure successful participation in Canadian society. This is a distinct program developed based on community need and is unique to our Friendship Centre and is located in our building due to our being seen as a community leader in youth programming.

## Youth Employment Strategy Enhancement Recommendations

Dauphin Friendship Centre Recommendation #1: Inclusive of youth related employment programs is the need for literacy and essential skills training, social innovation in program delivery, achievable outcomes, access to wrap around services and an existing infrastructure to address all the needs of youth using the successful, proven and existing Friendship Centre infrastructure

Dauphin Friendship Centre Recommendation #2: That the federal government review the historical success, program implementation and capacity of existing organizations, such as Friendship Centres, and uses the successful Dauphin Friendship Centre model ensuring a results based program and that community partnerships are in place to enhance program and client success.

Dauphin Friendship Centre Recommendation #3: That a national youth employment strategy is adequately resourced and offers multi-year funding to ensure urban Aboriginal youth have access to programming that addresses unemployment, lack of access to post secondary education and facilitates access to a full range of employment and life skill related services.