

# 2022

ANNUAL REPORT

# 2023

Empowerment  
Education  
Employment  
Empowered



# Message from Board of Directors & Incoming Executive Director

Over the past few years, Taking Charge! has seen many changes, we had to close our doors for a short period over the pandemic, and pivot to a hybrid learning model. Starting September 2022 we were so excited to open our doors again to our community and be fully operational with full day programming. It is so nice for us to be in-person again helping to support our wonderful community.

While we were a bit delayed celebrating our 25th anniversary due to COVID-19, we held a celebration event on June 7, 2022, at Government House, hosted by Her Honour the Honourable Janice Filmon C.M., O.M., Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba. It was a wonderful time for us to come together with current and past staff, participants, community members, and board members to reflect on our 25 years of service. Being able to see and hear the accomplishments and stories that Taking Charge! participants shared were very impactful to all in attendance.

In January 2023, we said farewell to our former Executive Director, Jacqueline Wall. Jacqueline served the

community at Taking Charge! from 2018–2023 leading us through challenging times, creatively ensuring that we could still keep our doors open during COVID-19. We are grateful for all the great work Jacqueline did and wish her well in her new adventures.

The board is thrilled to welcome our new Executive Director, Stephanie Bevacqua. Stephanie loves to work with community-based organizations and has expertise in the areas of community engagement, relationship building, fundraising, communications, strategy, and programming. We are delighted to have Stephanie on our team and are very excited to see where she leads Taking Charge!



**Stephanie Bevacqua**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**Deb Radi**

BOARD CO-CHAIR



**Emily Cablek**

BOARD CO-CHAIR



## Board of Directors

**Deb Radi**

*Co-Chairperson*

**Arlene Skull**

*Co-Chairperson (to March 2023)*

**Emily Cablek**

*Co-Chairperson (March 2023)*

**Liz Bilton**

**Mwaka Kaonga**

**Widny Pervil**

**Bobbi Taillefer**



# Taking Charge! Personal Impact Story

*This narrative is an adaptation of a participant's graduation speech*

*\*Please note that we have changed the author's name to protect their identity.*

In Taking Charge! of Opportunities (TC!O), lives are changed, confidence is built, and individuals learn to take charge of their lives. This powerful program impacts the lives of those who participate by offering the tools and support they need to overcome barriers and achieve personal growth.

Diane's\* journey began with hesitation. Eight years before she decided to attend Taking Charge!, her mom participated in the program following a divorce. Witnessing her daughter's struggles, she encouraged her to try it. Diane did not know that Taking Charge! also serves single women with no children.

After facing personal challenges, she made her first step towards a transformative experience that would change her life. Diane contacted Taking Charge! and discovered a

welcoming and inclusive environment. She was greeted by a passionate team of people who wasted no time helping her embark on her journey.

With guidance from a dedicated career counsellor, she worked to set goals and participated in an intake assessment that set the stage for personal growth. Throughout the program, she struggled with anxiety and had difficulty embracing mindfulness. Through the Rediscovering Myself program, she learned meditation techniques and experienced a profound shift in her mindset.

## **What once caused anxiety became a source of calm and empowerment.**

The TC!O program focuses on personal development and offers practical skills. It provides computer training led by a skilled instructor who engages

participants with humour and relatable examples. No matter the skill level, all participants are supported in a way that fosters community and camaraderie, which is the real magic of TC!. Diane built a strong and supportive community with her classmates, offering each other encouragement, guidance, and laughter.

TC!O is a space where people like Diane find like-minded individuals who understand and embrace their learning experience.

Diane's story is just one example of the transformative impact of TC!O.

By contributing to Taking Charge! our supporters provide invaluable resources, mentorship, and community. Let's work together to empower individuals to believe in themselves, embrace personal growth, and create a brighter future. Your support changes lives.

# Daycare & Breakfast Program

**In the 2022/2023 fiscal year Taking Care! cared for over 130 children in our 64-space centre.**

We have 15 Early Childhood Educators who are all committed to providing a safe space where children can learn and grow while their parents are doing the same.

Fundraising has been an important part of our year and we held many different fundraising initiatives throughout the year to get parents and community involved to make a little extra for special occasions. Our most popular fundraising campaigns are Mom's Pantry, Peak of the Market and new this past years was a perogies and sausages fundraiser from Sausage Makers Delicatessen.

A special thank you to Province of Manitoba – Early Learning and Childcare for funding that allowed us to replace some worn out toys and enhance our outdoor space. Your support means a lot to us!

At our centre, we provide two nutritious snacks and a homemade lunch to all children daily. We know that our parents in the Taking Charge! program are on tight budgets and may not have the extra funds to provide nutritious snacks and lunches for daycare. We always ensure that the children are well-fed here at Taking Care! So they can be the best they can be!



## Statistics

**We served 140 participants**

**We cared for over 130 children**

**Over 80% of our participants identify as Indigenous**



# Grants & Funding

We would love to extend a thank you to all of our generous funders in 2022/2023. We wouldn't have been able to do this without your ongoing support.

## A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS FUNDERS:

Anonymous Donor

Jewish Foundation of Manitoba

Province of Manitoba

Department of Families

Education and Early Childhood Learning

# Celebrating Our Team

The team at Taking Charge! is composed of dedicated and committed individuals who have contributed immensely to the organization's success.



## Viviana Geauvreau

The Manager of Direct Client Services, played an integral role in shaping our services for over 26 years before her retirement.



## Shelley Malyk

A program facilitator and career counsellor, devoted 16 years of her professional life to our cause before retiring in 2022.



## Lieng Van

A beloved staff member, retired after almost 26 years of working as an Early Childhood Educator in Taking Care! She had been with us since the beginning and we are so thankful to have worked with her over the years.

These individuals exemplify the longevity and loyalty of our team members, serving as a testament to their unwavering dedication.

Furthermore, we recently celebrated major milestones with Warren Lafreniere, who has been an integral part of Taking Charge! for over 26 years, and Jon Slack, who has been with us for over 25 years.

These milestones not only demonstrate their commitment but also highlight the significance of their contributions to the organization's growth and impact.

As we commemorate these milestones, it is important to recognize and celebrate all team members, past and present, for their collective efforts and commitment to our mission. Together, we have achieved remarkable milestones and continue to make a difference in the lives of those we serve.

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