

Ka-Na-Chi-Hih Annual Report

2024-2025





Table of Contents



Page	Contents
4	Message from the President
6	Message from the Chief Executive Officer
8	Mission & Vision Statements
10	Board of Directors
11	Strategic Goals
12-15	Our Programs
16-17	Cultural and Land Based Programming
18-19	Clinical Programs and Aftercare
20-21	Pre and Post-Program Surveys
22	Program Statistics
25	Community Outreach and Partnerships

Message from the President

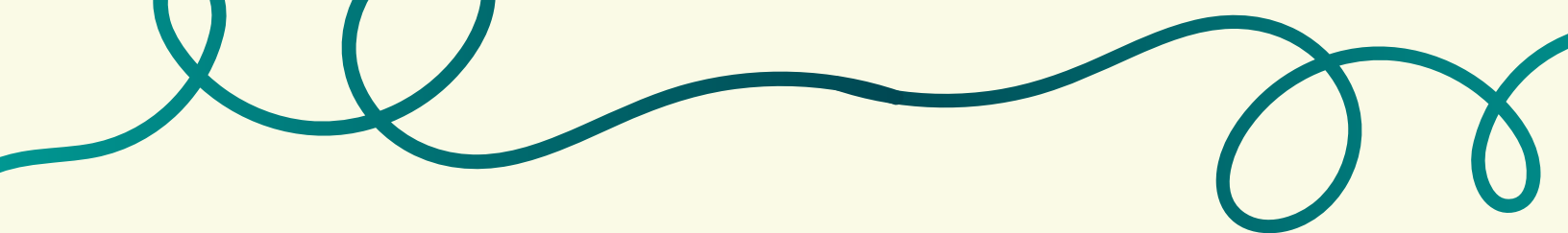


Wachay, Boozhoo, and Warm Greetings,

As we close another meaningful year in our journey, I take this opportunity to reflect on the continued growth and collective strength of Ka-Na-Chi-Hih Healing Lodge, Pelican High Peak Family Healing Lodge, and Wakenagun Youth Healing Lodge. Together, we have continued to honour the sacred responsibility entrusted to us: to create spaces of healing, cultural safety, and support for our youth and families.

Over the past year, we have seen how innovation and tradition can walk side by side. The addition of virtual programming alongside in-person care has allowed Ka-Na-Chi-Hih to extend its reach, ensuring that more youth receive the guidance and healing they seek—wherever they may be. This is the living spirit of "keeping one sacred."

As Board President, I am proud that compassion, resilience, and cultural integrity are at the core of everything we do. Our lodges continue to walk in unity, guided by a shared vision to support the wellness of mind, body, heart, and spirit for First Nation youth and families.



While we celebrate our achievements, we also remain mindful of the challenges that persist in our communities. Mental health and addictions continue to impact many of our families, and the need for culturally grounded, community-driven healing is greater than ever. As a Board, we remain steadfast in advocating for the expansion of services, long-term investment, and sustainable supports both on- and off-reserve.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I offer deep gratitude to our CEO, leadership teams, and every staff member whose dedication has brought strength and continuity to our services. Your commitment reflects the heart of our mission and the hope we strive to inspire in those we serve.

It remains an honour and a blessing to serve as Board President. I look forward to walking together into the year ahead, with humility, purpose, and continued unity.

Miigwetch, and Thank you,

Vernon Morris

President, Board of Directors

Message from the Chief Executive Officer



As we reflect on the past year, I am filled with deep gratitude for the unwavering dedication, resilience, and strength demonstrated by our staff and clients. Together, we have continued to uphold our mission of providing meaningful, culturally grounded healing pathways for First Nation youth, and families.

This year marked a period of remarkable progress and collective achievement across Ka-Na-Chi-Hih Healing Lodge, Pelican High Peak Family Healing, and Wakenagun Youth Healing Lodge. One of our most significant milestones was the successful opening of Pelican High Peak Family Healing Lodge. The launch and continued delivery of family-centered programming at this site reflect our broader commitment to holistic healing and intergenerational support.

At Ka-Na-Chi-Hih, we continued to deliver residential and outpatient programming to male and female clients through rotating cohorts. Wakenagun Youth Healing Lodge maintained its focus on serving male, female, and Two-Spirited youth, while Pelican High Peak provided dedicated healing services to families in a safe, supportive, and culturally affirming environment. These three lodges together represent the core of our healing model, grounded in responsiveness, cultural safety, and community connection.

We are proud to share that, collectively, we achieved our highest number of program graduates to date across all three sites. This speaks not only to the dedication of our clients, but also to the tireless efforts of our staff, who have guided, supported, and walked alongside them every step of the way.

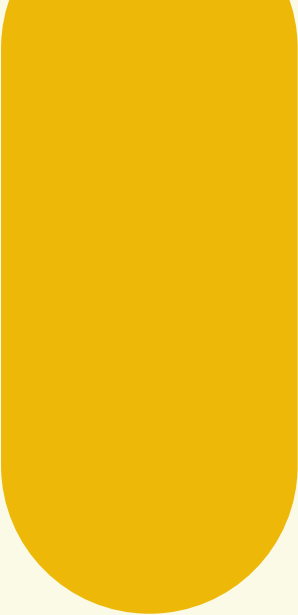
Recruitment and staffing have also been a major success this year. All three centres are fully staffed and operating at full capacity. We introduced a Centralized Intake Process Facilitator to streamline referrals and ensure waitlists are consistently maintained. Our organizational structure also grew with the addition of key roles, including a Director of Clinical Services, Mental Health Counsellors, Nurse Practitioners. These enhancements allow us to deliver more comprehensive care and provide stronger support for our frontline teams.

Another highlight was our successful hosting of the 25th annual SAAFE Walk in Thunder Bay—our largest and most impactful event to date. This gathering brought together clients, families, staff, partners, and community members in a powerful show of unity and awareness. As we celebrated 25 years of healing and service, we reaffirmed our commitment to raising awareness about polysubstance misuse and continuing the important work of education, prevention, and community healing.

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the Board of Directors for their ongoing leadership, as well as to our community partners in Thunder Bay, Sioux Lookout, and Timmins. As we look forward to the coming year, I am inspired by the strength of our shared vision. Together, we will continue to walk the healing path with humility, compassion, and purpose—always guided by the needs of the people we serve.

Angela Carter

Chief Executive Officer



Mission & Vision Statements

Our Mission

"In keeping with the sacred teachings of the creator, Ka-Na-Chi-Hih will provide a nurturing and supportive environment for First Nation youth who are embarking on their journey to wellness of body, heart, mind, and spirit."

Our Vision

"That all youth, who have been a part of Ka-Na-Chi-Hih, will have gained the strength and skills necessary to continue on their life's path with pride, dignity, respect and a strong sense of identity. They will have achieved balance in their life's long journey towards fulfillment and will be contributing members of their communities and society."





Ka-Na-Chi-Hih
Healing Lodge

The word Ka-Na-Chi-Hih means "keeping one sacred".



The meaning behind the name Pelican High Peak is the legend of Sioux Lookout. It tells the story of the battle behind the Sioux and the Ojibway. Ojibway fought back by ambushing the Sioux at a high peak of land on what is now called Pelican Lake



The meaning behind Wakenagun is that of a tamarack tree - a symbol of strength and growth. They spread their roots and stabilize themselves by weathering the toughest conditions and exhibiting resiliency, much like the youth embarking on their healing journey.

Board of Directors



Vernon Morris

PRESIDENT

Independent First Nations Alliance

Howard Meshake

VICE PRESIDENT
SHIBOGAMA FIRST NATION
COUNCIL

**Armanda
Parkinson**

TREASURER
KEEWAYTINOOK
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SECRETARY
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DIRECTOR
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COUNCIL

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DIRECTOR
MUSHKEGOWUK
COUNCIL

Allan Tait

DIRECTOR
WINDIGO FIRST
NATION COUNCIL

Strategic Goals & Objectives for 2025-2029



1

Improve Culturally Responsive Services and Supports

KEY PROJECTS:

- Home is Life project continuity and culturally relevant programming to support Indigenous homeless population in the City of Thunder Bay
- To hire cultural supports and Elders for regular programming
- Ensure cultural competence training for all new staff members

2

Enhancing and Expanding Our Continuum of Care-Integrated Treatment

KEY PROJECTS:

- Development of Outreach Services, including an Outreach Framework
- Community Awareness & Education
- Development of a marketing presentation for KANACHIIH that can be shared with communities.

3

Program Curriculum Enhancements

KEY PROJECTS:

- Integrated family treatment curriculum
- Develop treatment sessions that include family interests.
- Investigate post treatment support services, including transitional housing.

4

Adopting a Total Quality Assurance Framework

KEY PROJECTS:

- Adopting a full quality framework
- Quality and Outcome Training for Staff and Board
- Recruiting a Quality Training Coordinator

5

Expand Capital Infrastructure for Residential Programs

KEY PROJECTS:

- Land and zoning Investigation
- Secure Funding for Capital Purchase
- Investigate Capital and project management contractors

6

Develop a Dedicated, Qualified, Lifelong Learning Focused Workforce

KEY PROJECTS:

- Investigate the inclusion of more staff with lived experience through a peer training program.
- Formalize Staff Supervision Processes to include timelines, goals, and quality framework attention.
- Conduct an organizational chart/ gap analysis



Our Programs

Ka-Na-Chi-Hih Healing Lodge

7-WEEK HEALING & WELLNESS PROGRAM OVERVIEW



WEEK 1

- Clients are welcomed with a tour of the facility, complete initial assessments, and begin settling into the lodge with introductions to staff, lodge expectations, and basic life skills (cooking, cleaning, laundry).
- Initial treatment planning begins, along with connections to medical and dental care, and engagement in cultural programming through land based programming.

WEEK 2-3

- Participants take part in therapeutic and cultural programming such as Red Path, Strawberry Medicine, Traditional Parenting, and Love Builds the Bundle.
- Daily activities focus on personal goal setting, identifying community supports and aftercare needs, as well as practicing life skills and mindfulness.

WEEK 4-5

- Programming shifts toward deeper healing and reintegration planning, including continued counselling and preparation for life after treatment.
- Applications for transitional housing, ongoing supports through Home is Life, and graduation ceremony planning are completed.

WEEK 7

- Final program wrap-up, packing, and personal reflection. A graduation ceremony honors each client's healing journey, with loved ones and community present to celebrate.

WEEK 6

- Post-program assessments (DUSI, NWA) are completed. Final discharge planning is done through individual sessions and case conferences. Graduation details are finalized.



Our Programs

Pelican High Peak Family Healing Lodge

Week 1 – 3 Healing & Wellness Program Overview

Admission

- Intake, personal belongings check and inventory, put belongings that need to be in lock up for the time in program, tour of the residence, meet the staff, orientation, expectations and rules, getting settled in, family review of the 3 weeks in residence program, medication to be logged and locked up
- Meet the family therapist or counsellor and book the sessions,

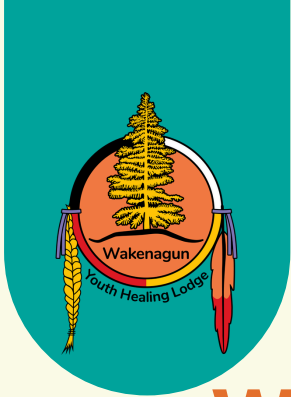
Cultural Activities

- Cultural activities include men's and women's teachings, medicine teachings, and the Seven Grandfather Teachings. Participants also engage in beading, sewing, and making their own moccasins, mittens, ribbon skirts, and shirts—fostering cultural identity and connection.

Programming

- Families engage in continued programming from Week 1, including photovoice, mental health sessions, sharing circles, outdoor activities, life skills, and increased family-focused activities. Daily case notes are maintained for each family throughout their time in residential care.
- Graduation planning is completed, including supper, certificates, and gifts. Families wrap up projects, clean and pack, and work with staff to develop an aftercare and follow-up plan with appropriate resources and supports.





Our Programs

Wakenagun Youth Healing Lodge

7-WEEK HEALING & WELLNESS PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Week 1

- Intake paperwork is completed, followed by a tour of the lodge, orientation, meeting staff, reviewing expectations and rules, completing assessments (DUSI, NWA), and beginning initial treatment planning.
- Daily routines are established, with a focus on life skills such as cooking, cleaning, and laundry, along with introductions to community supports and scheduling appointments for vision, dental, and sexual health care.
- Participants are introduced to Movement Exploration, Emotional Regulation, Sleep Hygiene, land- and culture-based programming, and meet with mental health specialists and case managers to create safety plans and coordinate appointments.



Week 2 & 3



- Youth are introduced to Physical Wellness, the Medicine Wheel, and the Seven Grandfather Teachings, while continuing with Red Path, Strawberry Medicine, land-based programming, life skills, meditation, mindfulness, and recreation.
- Programming includes classroom time three days a week and identifying individual needs such as health, legal, housing, and community supports, as well as the youth's personal goals.
- Staff support youth in completing applications for further treatment, transitional housing, or counselling, and meet with the Case Manager and Cultural Coordinator to plan aftercare and reintegration services.

Week 4 & 5

- Weekly programs continue, including Red Path, Strawberry Medicine, land and cultural activities, life skills, meditation, mindfulness, and recreational time.
- Individualized treatment plans are reviewed regularly.
- Graduation and aftercare support planning are ongoing.



Week 6

- Weekly programs continue, including Red Path, Strawberry Medicine, land and cultural activities, life skills, meditation, mindfulness, and recreational time.
- Completion of DUSI, NWA, and other assessments to support discharge planning.
- Graduation and discharge details are organized, with discharge planning reviews and case conferences as needed.



Week 7

- Weekly programming continues with Red Path, Strawberry Medicine, Traditional Parenting, Love Builds the Bundle, cultural activities, life skills, meditation, mindfulness, and recreation.
- Youth complete any missed work, review safety plans, and participate in discharge treatment planning with staff.
- The program concludes with packing, cleaning, and a graduation ceremony celebrating each youth's achievements alongside their loved ones.



Land Based and Cultural Programming

Cultural Programming Highlights



Our cultural programming is guided by the principles of Hope, Belonging, Meaning, and Purpose to support holistic healing for youth and families across all centers. These are some highlights of our cultural programs, though the list is not limited to these experiences:

- Ceremonies include cedar baths, sweat lodges, and full moon gatherings foster spiritual connection and healing, while daily smudging and sharing circles follow the Grandfather Teachings, adapted to individual cultural backgrounds.
- Youth and families engage in creating regalia, sacred bundles, and crafts, strengthening cultural identity, with traditional foods included in meal planning and preparation to promote belonging.
- Seasonal land-based activities encompass medicine picking, cedar harvesting, and teachings on the lunar cycle and natural elements, alongside integrated language lessons highlighting names, songs, and stories.
- Programming encourages youth and families to recognize and apply their personal gifts meaningfully within their communities.
- Cultural teachings are woven into daily routines with guidance from Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and Healers, ensuring cultural safety and relevance at every site.





Land-Based Programming

These are some of the highlights of our land-based programs across all centres, though the list is not limited to these experiences:

- We take clients to the School of Indigenous Learning for cultural and land-based education, supporting connection to heritage and knowledge.
- Youth engage in seasonal activities such as tipi building with ceremony, firewood gathering, fishing, snowshoeing, and trail clearing to foster responsibility and community ties.
- Medicine walks teach identification and harvesting of sacred plants like sweetgrass, cedar, sage, juniper, red willow, and birch bark for traditional crafts.
- Traditional survival skills including fire-building, trapping, snaring, skinning animals, and preparing pelts promote resilience and deepen cultural understanding.
- Forest Therapy sessions, nature-based games, and curriculum-linked outings grounded in the Grandfather Teachings encourage mindfulness, teamwork, and reinforce traditional values.

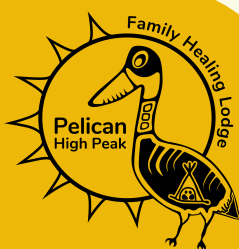


Our Clinical Programs



Ka-Na-Chi-Hih Healing Lodge

offers a wide range of culturally informed clinical programming. Services include the Red Path, Strawberry Medicine, Cultural Healing Program, Traditional Parenting, Emotion Regulation Teaching, Aftercare, and Counselling. These programs are delivered with a strong foundation in Indigenous knowledge and practices.



Pelican High Peak Family Healing Lodge

provides comprehensive clinical services that mirror those offered at Ka-Na-Chi-Hih. This includes Parenting Skills, Emotion Regulation, Cultural Healing Program, Grief Programming, Equine-Assisted Therapy, and Counselling. The lodge integrates traditional and therapeutic approaches to support individuals and families on their healing journey.



Wakenagun Youth Healing Lodge

also delivers the full scope of clinical programming, offering Parenting Skills, Emotion Regulation, Cultural Healing Program, Grief Programming, and Counselling. Consistent with the other centres, Wakenagun's services are rooted in cultural values and designed to promote holistic healing.



Aftercare Program

Aftercare is a vital part of recovery. At this is only offered at Kanachihih Healing Lodge in Thunder Bay. After completing the 7-week in-patient program, our ongoing support helps individuals stay on track and build a healthier future. In aftercare, we provide a variety of individualized, group and culturally grounded supports, including but not limited to:

- Drum night
- Traditional Parenting Program
- Life skills development
- Housing navigation support

To ensure continued engagement, we bring services directly to clients by offering both transportation and tailored support to meet their needs. These group sessions create a welcoming and supportive space where individuals can:

- Share challenges
- Access tools and resources
- Learn coping strategies
- Celebrate progress

Our aftercare sessions are deeply rooted in culture and tradition, led by Elders and knowledge keepers, and complemented by clinical staff who provide essential therapeutic support. This combination helps individuals reconnect with purpose, strengthen their spirit, and build meaningful relationships that foster a sense of belonging.

These continued supports help participants stay grounded, motivated, and resilient long after treatment ends. At our healing lodge, we are committed to walking alongside each individual on their healing journey, ensuring they are supported every step of the way.

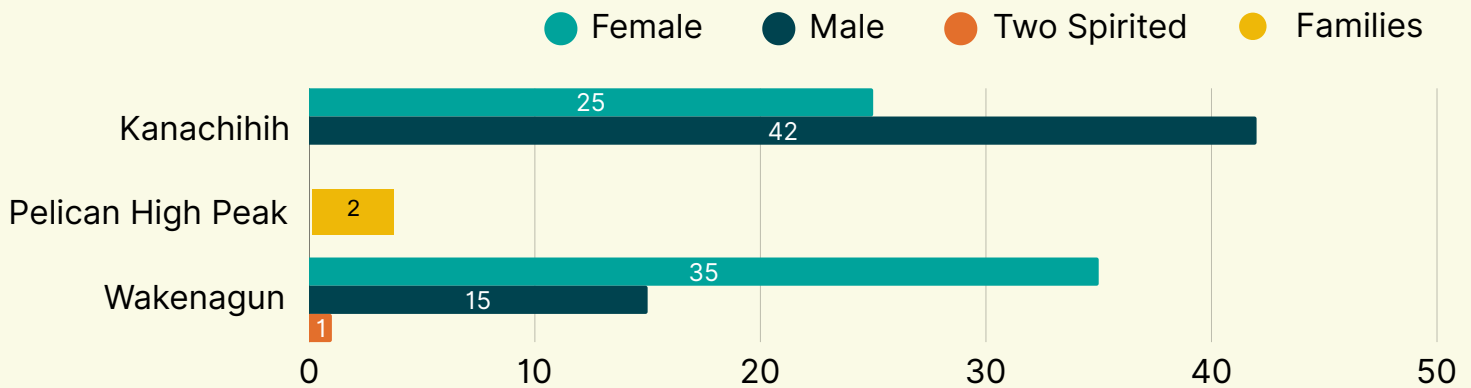


Statement from a Client

Through the programming and support at Ka-Na-Chi-Hih, I continue to succeed in my daily life and recovery. Access to basic needs like groceries and transportation has made my life easier and less stressful. The ongoing support has been crucial to my healing.

"I came to Ka-Na-Chi-Hih feeling broken and hopeless after a relapse. They gave me the tools I needed to succeed in both my recovery and life."

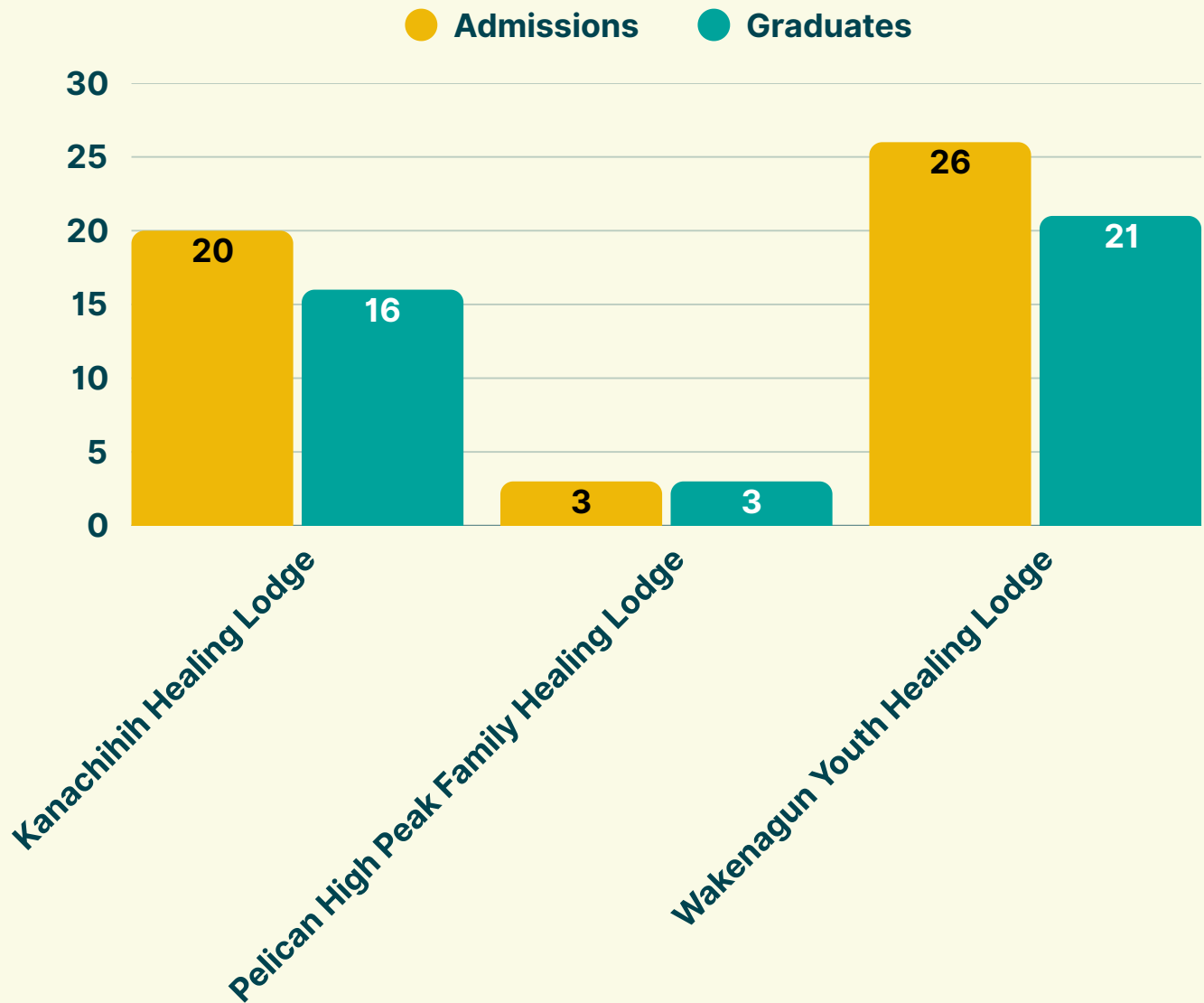
Waitlist for Healing Lodges as of MARCH 2025



Graduated Client -Origin Communities

- Aroland FN, ON
- Attawapiskat FN, ON
- Big Trout Lake FN, ON
- Biinjitiwabek Zaagin Anishinaabek, ON
- Chippeas of Nawash FN, ON
- Cochrane, ON
- Constance Lake FN, ON
- Couchiching FN, ON
- Eabametoog FN, ON
- Fort Albany FN, ON
- Fort Severn FN, ON
- Fort William FN, ON
- Geraldton, ON
- Ginoogaming FN, ON
- Gull Bay FN, ON
- Iskatewizaagegan 39 FN, ON
- Kapuskasing, ON
- Kashechewan FN, ON
- Keewaywin FN, ON
- Kenora, ON
- Kingfisher Lake FN, ON
- Lac La Croix FN, ON
- Lac Seul FN, ON
- Long Lake #58 FN, ON
- Marten Falls FN, ON
- Mattagami FN, ON
- Mishkeegamang FN, ON
- Moose Factory FN, ON
- Moosonee FN, ON
- Naotkamegwaning FN, ON
- Niisaachewan FN, ON
- Pic River FN, ON
- Pikangikum FN, ON
- Poplar Hill FN, ON
- Red Gut FN, ON
- Round Lake FN, ON
- Sault Ste. Marie, ON
- Sioux Lookout, ON
- Sudbury, ON
- Taykwa Tagamou Nation, ON
- Thunder Bay, ON
- Timmins, ON
- Washagamis Bay FN, ON
- Wauzhusk Onigum Nation, ON
- Webequie FN, ON
- Weenusk FN, ON
- Wiikwemkoog FN, ON
- Berens River FN, MB
- Buffalo Point FN, MB
- Skownan FN, MB
- Chisasibi, QC
- Kebaowek FN, QC
- Temiskaming FN, QC
- Mushuau Innu, NL
- Sheshatshu FN, NL

Admissions and Graduates



Total Number Of Graduates 2024-2025



Female: 7
Male: 9



Families: 3



Female: 11
Male: 7
Two Spirited: 3

Evaluation Survey 2024-2025 Data Summary

During 2024 - 2025, 14 individuals completed the evaluation survey. Out of these 14 individuals, 5 identified as female and 9 identified as male.



23.5 Average age

Kanachihih

Majority of individuals had an understanding of how connecting with the land can support health and wellbeing at the end of the program.

58.5%

79%

79% of participants planned to continue to build their confidence when they return home as a priority.

If individuals could share one thing that they learned or explored while in the Ka-Na-Chi-Hih program with someone starting their journey, what would they share?

"I would share that you should give 100% to all the programing."

"Traditional crafting, I absolutely fell in love. It brought me so much healing and happiness."

"Focus on your spiritual health and the rest will fall in place."

42%

42% of participants planned on learning more about their culture and connecting with the land when they return home as

100% of individuals could identify how their body reacts to stress

100%

What do you want people to know about you, your journey, and your time spent at Ka-Na-Chi-Hih?

"It has taken me 7 years to be able to get help, and I finally feel like I will be a better person. Ka-Na-Chi-Hih is a great program."

"That I found my path to the creator and now practice my traditional culture."

"I'm a King. I am going to try my best to stop drinking and getting high. I value the time I spent here, it has helped a lot. I loved the space I got in my room. The support I got here from workers and finding my ground where I stand."

96% of individuals reported knowing what trauma is upon completion of the program

Evaluation Survey 2024-2025 Data Summary

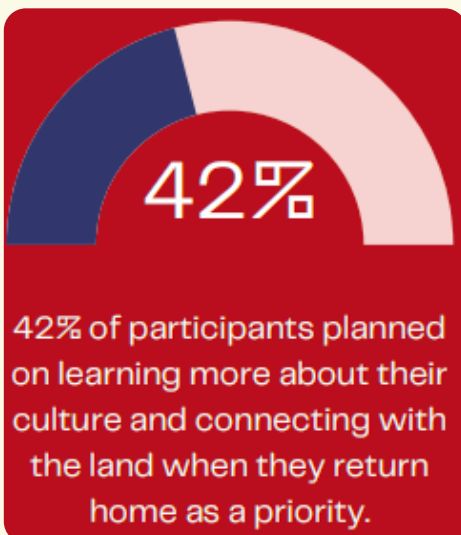
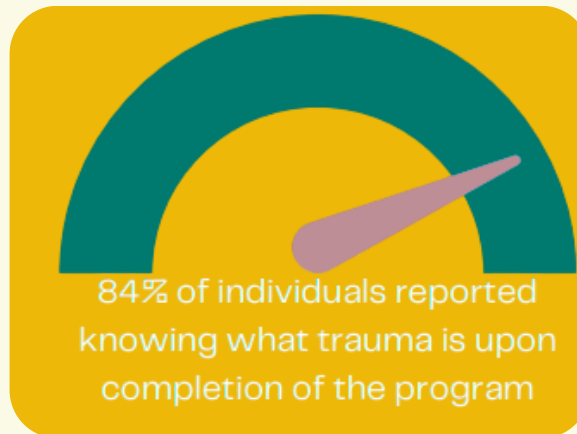
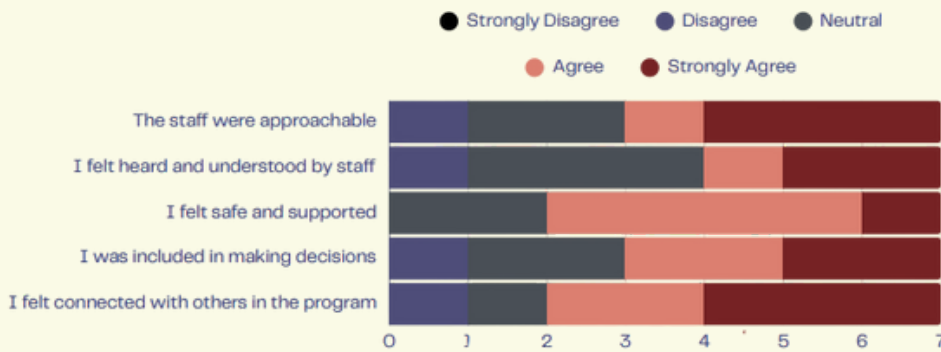
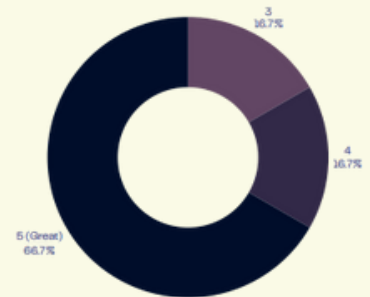
Wakenagun

During 2024-2025, 7 clients completed the evaluation survey. Out of these 7 individuals, 6 identified as female and one preferred not to answer.



15 Average age

How would you rate the information that was shared with you during your time at the healing lodge?



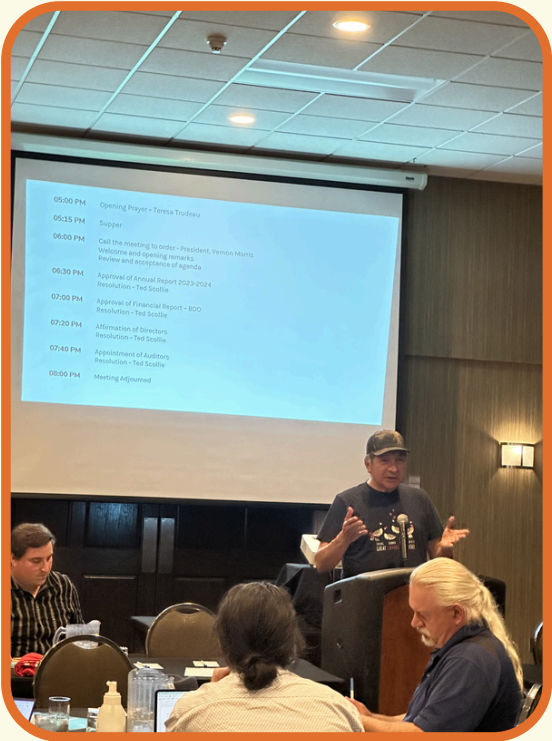
What do you want people to know about you, your journey, and your time spent at the healing lodge?

"I want people to know that I've changed my ways of reacting to things from a negative way to a positive way."

"The people you hate at the beginning, you'll love at the end."



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2024



25TH ANNUAL SAAFE WALK 2024



Community Outreach & Partnerships



Community Engagement & Outreach Events Attended by Ka-Na-Chi-Hih

- United Way Fair – Attended by approximately 125 people
- Valhalla Job Fair (with Human Resources) – Reached approximately 500 attendees
- Intercity Mall Outreach Table – Engaged with approximately 50 people
- Pikangikum Career Fair (with Human Resources) – Reached approximately 150 attendees
- Fort William First Nation Career Fair (with Human Resources) – Engaged with approximately 100 people
- Mattagami First Nation – Beaverfest – Estimated attendance of 300+
- ODSP Presentation – Delivered to a group of approximately 20 participants
- Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre (TBRHSC) – Community Partners Table
- Participated in partnership event focused on mental health and addictions support
- Dryden High School Powwow – Engaged with 223 individuals at our booth
- Missanabie Cree First Nation Gathering – Presentation delivered to approximately 80 attendees
- St. Joseph's Care Group – Participated in session on Defining and Embedding Two-Eyed Seeing into Organization-Wide Quality Programming
- Intercity Mall Outreach Table – Engaged with an additional 22 people (separate event from earlier entry)
- Indigenous Health Service Providers Gathering – Reached approximately 350 participants





Our Website



**70 Wellington St
Sioux Lookout, ON P8T 1E1**



**1700 Dease Street
Thunder Bay, ON
P7C 5H4**



**5310 Highway 101
West
Timmins, ON P4R 0B5**