

**FIRST
PEOPLES
JUSTICE
CENTER OF
TIOHTIÀ:KE-
MONTREAL**



2022-2023

WORDS FROM THE DIRECTOR

SHÉ:KON / ATELIHAI / BONJOUR / HELLO

Now that the Justice Center is wrapping up yet another successful year of programming I'd like to take a moment to acknowledge all the community support, reinforcement and encouragement from our Board of Directors as well as the collaboration from our amazing partners. Without their support we would not be where we are today.

As I reflect on this year's endeavors it's important to express my admiration to the justice team for using the vision and mission statement of the Center as inspiration to provide our community members quality client care. At times the undertakings prompted the team to think outside the box and to push past the challenges as the successes of our clients continues to be of paramount importance. The 2022-23 fiscal year has primarily focused on establishing a strong administrative team to strengthen the areas of finance and human resources. This included welcoming a new administrative assistant in the fall, who began training to become our in-house bookkeeper. In the Spring of 2022 a second management position was created to assist with funding opportunities and administration. As a core management team formed, the plans to relocate, welcome new staff and develop on-boarding tools were able to move forward in a good way.

The team visited a few promising locations together, however our heritage home was only secured in November 2023 and we moved into our new office space and expanded our services. Our vision to ensure that fair, safe justice services made easily accessible to Indigenous Peoples was beginning to come to fruition. This quickly evolved into what I now refer to as the Justice Services 2.0 version; a hybrid justice service developed to meet the needs of our Peoples navigating through the justice system in Tiohtiá:ke / Montréal.

Through the Restorative Justice program years were devoted in developing the PAJA program and the opportunity to smudge in the courtrooms prior to court proceedings. January 24th was a cornerstone for Indigenous Justice as we expanded our space in the Municipal Court and began our opening of the PAJA court sessions with a smudge and beautiful words from an Elder. We continued our successes with receiving support from Justice Quebec and Justice Canada to fund a full time Gladue writer and aftercare worker as well as a Victims Services coordinator. The new addition of our Elders, which I like to refer to as our "Council of Guardians", pulled all of our programs together. With our expanded administration and office support staff, the Justice Team was completed.

Witnessing daily how the needs of our clients are put in the forefront in a meaningful and culturally holistic manner with a passionate and energetic approach is an enlightening experience. I am delighted to be part of this amazing journey and I am dedicated to the continued growth and expansion of services offered at the First Peoples Justice Center as well as the judicial services provided in Tiohtiá:ke / Montréal. As the leader of the Justice Center, this is the motivation that inspires me to advocate for resources that will ensure continuity of programs and services.

I look forward to our continued relations as we strengthen our support for social justice, equality and the collective wellness and cultural re-connection of our Peoples on Turtle Island.

Skén:nen / in Peace

Ellen Filippelli

Executive Director
First Peoples Justice Center of Tiohtiá:ke / Montréal

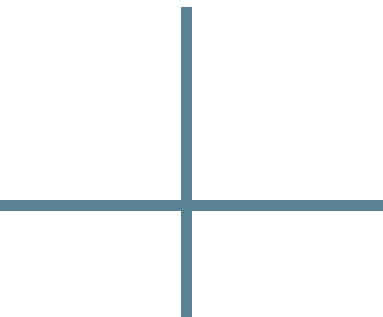




WHO WE ARE

The First Peoples Justice Centre of Tiohtià:ke/Montreal (FPJCM) is a registered charity that provides services for Indigenous community members living in Montreal who are involved with the justice and carceral systems. The FPJCM was incorporated in 2014 after being born in 2013 from the Cabot Square Project, a community initiative that was led by the Justice Working Committee of the Montreal Indigenous Community NETWORK. A few years later, in early 2017, we opened our doors for service provision. Since then, the FPJCM continuously strives to provide culturally-adapted, holistic services.

Our work is directly informed by the realities of the community members we support. Throughout program development and delivery, our team strives to advocate for structural change within the justice and carceral systems to move towards initiatives led by and for Indigenous communities.

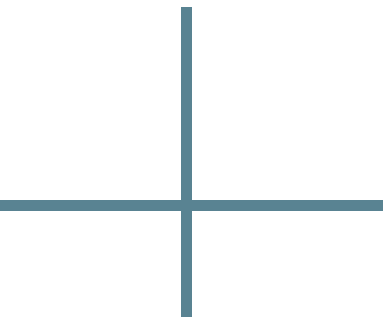




MISSION AND VISION

The First Peoples Justice Center of Tiohtià:ke/Montreal vision is to have strong Indigenous communities that have access to Indigenous community-led justice processes rooted in decolonization, healing, respect, and Indigenous law.

Our mission is to support, inform, and empower Indigenous people navigating the justice system and to offer holistic and culturally appropriate justice services to the diverse Indigenous population living in Montreal. To create alternative Indigenous community-led justice processes rooted in Indigenous values in partnership with the Indigenous community in Montreal.



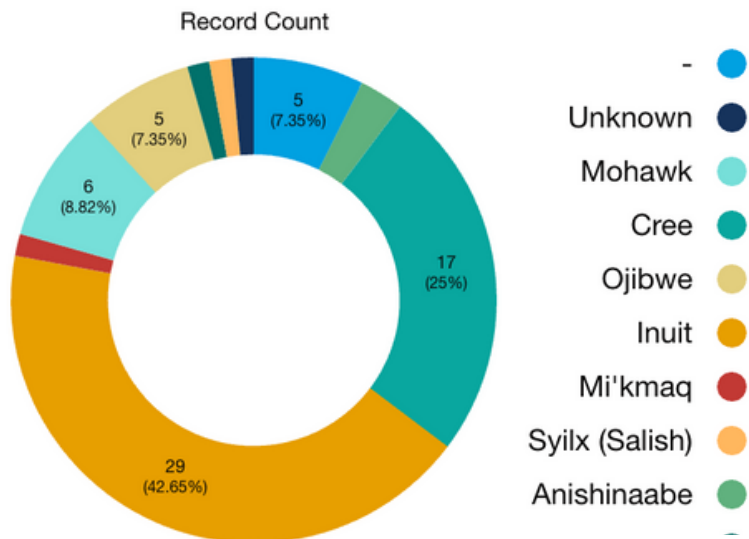
OUR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Between April 1st, 2022 and March 31st, 2023, there was much growth for the First Peoples Justice Center of Montreal/Tiohtià:ke. Several postings were circulating to fill coordinator positions (Victim Services, Community Services and Gladue Writer). Finally in the fall of 2022 and winter of 2023, three new team members were on-boarded consecutively. The Victim Services Coordinator was hired in November, followed by the Gladue writer in December and lastly a coordinator to supervise community service and compensatory hours in February. Our core services, along with these new additions have continued throughout the year, the FPJCM team offered Indigenous specific alternatives measures, services for those who have been harmed, help with reintegration post-incarceration and supervision of compensatory or community hours. We worked closely with Elders, Knowledge Keepers and community partners to offer cultural programs, sharing circles, land-based activities and workshops.

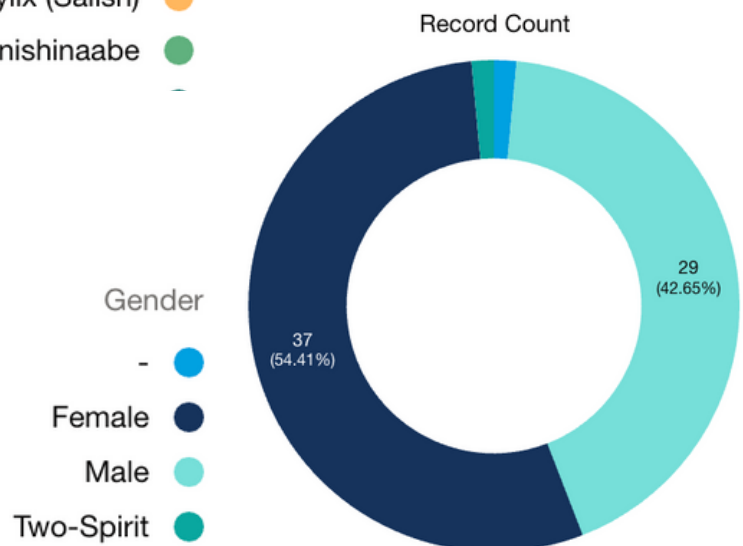
OUR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

As an organization working in Montreal, there are many Indigenous community members that have been served by our programs and services. Tiohtià:ke's urban Indigenous community reflects the diversity of Turtle Island's First Peoples and their languages. The majority of our clients are Inuk and First Nations, with a slightly higher percentage of First Nations representation this year. Consistent with last year's demographics, our most represented communities amongst First Nations are Cree, Mohawk, Mi'kmaq, Algonquin Anishinaabeg, Ojibwe, among others. Almost an equal number of men and women between the ages of nineteen (19) and seventy-five (75) have accessed our services daily, and we have served several people who identify as two-spirit. This year, we supported approximately one-hundred and six (106) community members on an individual basis.

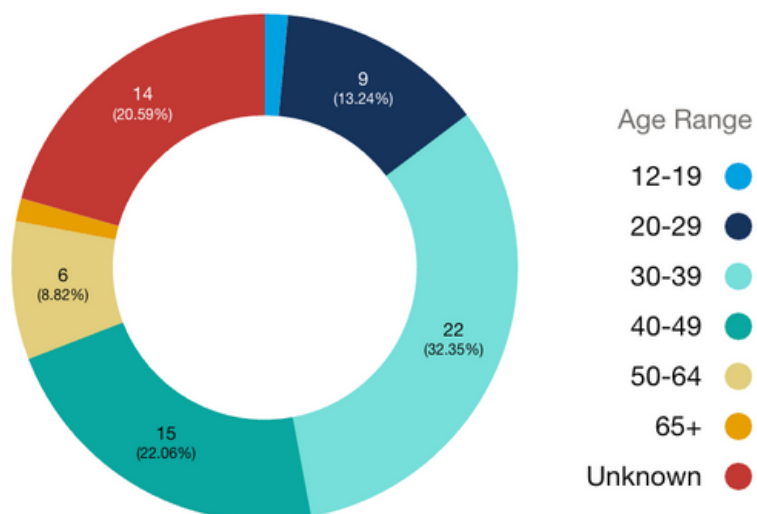
Clients by Nation Affiliation



Clients by Gender



Record Count



RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

The Restorative Justice program - one of the FPJCM's very first initiatives, has grown in reach and numbers throughout the last couple of years. Our Restorative Justice Coordinator, Amy Edward, supports Indigenous individuals developing healthier conflict resolution mechanisms to better cultivate harmony in their community and relationships. As of February 2022, the reach of the Restorative Justice program expanded due to the introduction of the Indigenous General Alternative Measures program at the Municipal Court of Montreal (GAMP-MU-A). After years of development, drawing inspiration from other Indigenous diversion and restorative justice court programs across Turtle Island- notably Calgary, Ottawa and Toronto.

Over the summer of 2022, the FPJCM met with representatives of the DPPC to continue the adaptation of the GAMP by elaborating guidelines that outline how Indigenous community members can access diversion. In 2023, the goal is to formally launch the GAMP in collaboration with DPCP and other judicial actors at the Palais de Justice.

Since offering this program, the FPJCM has grown its connections with partner organizations, such as the Native Para-Judicial Services of Quebec (SPAQ) and Equijustice, to facilitate the process of receiving referrals for the GAMP-MU-A. The FPJCM continues to express the importance of "a circle of care approach" support style, meaning that the intervention workers accompanying a community member - with the individual's consent- all come together to provide cohesive, collective follow up support.

GAMP referrals have been increasing since September 2022, with a total of twenty (20) individuals accessing the GAMP through the Restorative Justice Coordinator, of which fourteen (14) have finalized and six (6) are active. Of the twenty-one (21) GAMP participants, twelve (12) have finalized the program successfully. There have been one hundred sixty-four (164) recorded interactions between the Restorative Justice Coordinator and GAMP participants. Through the Restorative Justice program, four (4) Peacemaking circles were facilitated. The circles involved community members who had caused harm along with those who received harm.



JUSTICE SUPPORT / PAJA

The FPJCM continues to act as a bridge between the justice related needs of community members and appropriate legal services. This entails assisting individuals who need access to representation or information spanning family, housing, criminal, civil and administrative law. All program Coordinators, with the support of Community Programs Manager, provide assessments with the objective of helping community members identify their legal needs and refer them to the appropriate resources.

This year, justice related support has been provided to thirty-five (35) community members either through interventions, casework or accompaniments in the context of the Programme d'Accompagnement Justice Autochtone à la cour municipale de Montréal. The PAJA, which was founded in partnership with the FPJCM, is supported by a strong presence of Indigenous community organizations, including the Native Parajudicial Services of Quebec (SPAQ) and the FPJCM, in order to ensure that the voices of community members are amplified throughout their court process.

The Restorative Justice Coordinator, along with the Wellness Counselor attend every PAJA court date to assist with GAMP referrals and the coordination of the community members. The Victim Services Coordinator also attends on occasion to receive referrals for individuals who have received harm.

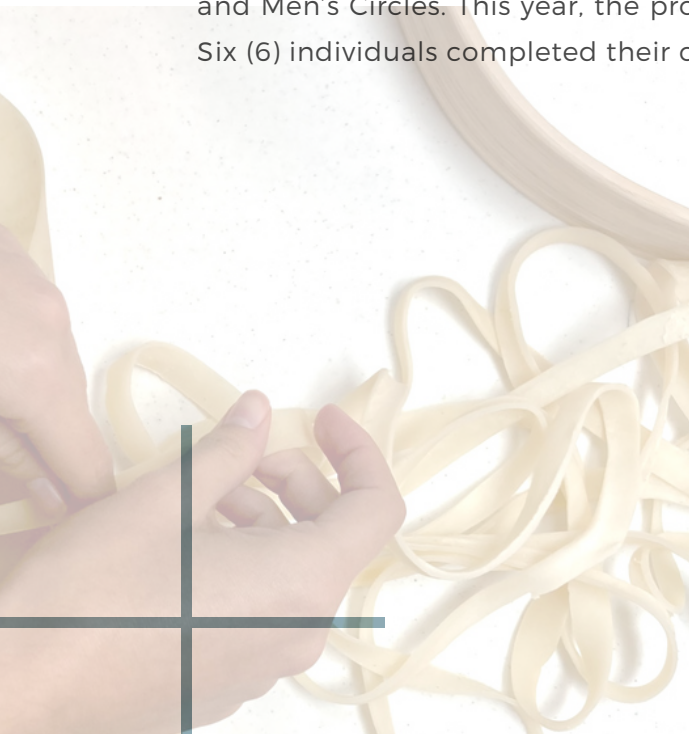
An internal committee meeting was attended in the summer of 2022 and areas requiring improvement were identified, such as to incorporate cultural elements. In June 2022, the FPJCM contributed to a demonstration of smudging for municipal court partners in order to deepen their understanding on the importance of culture and ceremony. The demonstration was held with an Elder and SPAQ with the goal of integration smudging into PAJA court dates. In January 2023, smudging within PAJA court dates was incorporated and recognized as an important step in Indigenizing judicial spaces, an objective the Justice Center has been working towards since 2017.

COMMUNITY AND COMPENSATORY HOURS

In February 2023, the FPJCM welcomed Norman Riel to the team to begin coordinating the Connection to Community program. Corey Thomas oversaw the program previously and moved to focus entirely on the Transition Program. The Connection to Community program allows for creativity and culture with the goal of supporting individuals who have compensatory, community work hours or alternative measures to complete.

Currently, the FPJCM is in dialogue with representatives from the Ministry of Justice Quebec to explore the possibility of becoming a referral agency equivalent to the YMCA for Indigenous community in Tiohtià:ke. This would allow for efficient and culturally relevant service when it comes to the establishment of compensatory hours agreements. The next steps involve compiling a list of organizations willing to become collaborators to host Indigenous community members in completing their hours.

Norman has organized a number of activities, including several Drum Making workshops and Men's Circles. This year, the program served twenty-three (23) community members. Six (6) individuals completed their community hours successfully.



TRANSITION

As of winter 2023, Corey Thomas, who was previously coordinating both the Transition and Community Services programs, moved towards focusing entirely on supporting individuals post-incarceration. The Transition Program is for Indigenous community members being released from detention who are looking for support with their objectives and reconnecting with their community.

The reality remains that people exiting prison have very limited supports upon being released, including materially. In February 2023, the Transition Coordinator contributed to reducing barriers by preparing twenty (20) kits for individuals being released from extended periods of incarceration. These transition kits provide the essentials required for an individual to remain connected and to navigate the city. Basic items, including hygiene kits, a cell phone, a tablet, gift cards and a blanket are homed in a suitcase, which is gifted to the person during their first appointment at the FPJCM post-incarceration.

Before this first appointment, the Transition Coordinator collaborates with lawyers, the Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer, and probation officers from the Correctional Service Canada to welcome individuals back to the community. Once referred to the program, individuals have access to wellness planning, culturally-adapted in-person supports, group programming and referrals to services for housing, employment, healthcare, access to Elders as well as cultural activities. The Transition Coordinator supported eighteen (18) individuals exiting the carceral system. These close follow up services include housing subsidies, food security and other materials that individuals may need to establish themselves in the community.

Last year, the Transition program was able to build upon our partnership with The Montreal Indigenous Community NETWORK, which allowed the FPJCM to begin assisting individuals attain residential stability through funding. We've also further solidified partnerships with Corrections Services Canada, Projets Autochtones du Quebec and The Open Door Montreal.

VICTIM SERVICES

As of August 2022, the FPJCM sought to replace Deseray Rich, the previous Coordinator for the Victim's Services program. At the time Tealey Ka'senni:saks held the important role of Knowledge Keeping for the FPJCM, mainly through facilitating circles for adoptees and opening PAJA at the court. In August 2023, Tealey's responsibilities broadened to include one-on-one sessions to community members with a special attention to Victim Services. Tealey also animated bi-weekly Women's Circle along with art and culture based workshops on a regular basis.

The FPJCM circulated the posting and over the course of the fall, the Manager of Community Programs, Danielle Beaulieu, assisted in ensuring that the needs of program participants continued to be addressed in collaboration with the team. During this time, the FPJCM was actively looking for a space to call home as the offices at the Native Friendship Center of Montreal could no longer accommodate our fast growing team. With this challenge in mind, the FPJCM delayed hiring until November 2022 when Sheri Pranteau joined the FPJCM team as the Coordinator of the Victim Services Program.

Within a few months of joining the team, Sheri took on the freedom bundle project within the scope of Victims and Survivors of Crime Week 2022. These kits aimed to facilitate access to safety for those needing to flee family or conjugal violence. The bundles, a large suitcase containing a ready-to-use cellphone, tablet, hygiene products, a blanket and gift cards were prepared and readily available for survivors transitioning towards a safe place. Distributing the freedom bundles also allowed the Coordinator and Wellness Counselor to create a place for individuals to speak their truth, communicate without fear of judgment and seek the four directions support, Spirit, Emotion, Body and Mind, as they exit the trauma and enter the realm of healing and balance.

The Victim's Services Coordinator also attends PAJA court dates on a regular basis to be available for alternative measure processes and/or any individuals who have received harm. She has also received training through the conjugal violence program at the municipal court of Montreal. Connections with judicial actors at the Palais, including crown prosecutors, developed further in the Spring of 2023.

A total of twenty-nine (29) victims received services between April 1st 2022 and March 31st 2023. The support received covers a range of services, including accompaniments to file police reports or to the hospital, victim impact statements and class action related follow ups.



GLADUE AND AFTERCARE

With the Executive Director of the FPJCM, the Ministry of Justice of Canada held a news conference ([available here](#)) on June 9th, 2022 announcing their support for the Justice Center's efforts to address the overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in the city's criminal justice system. The announcement was made by the Minister of Justice of Canada, David Lametti, joined by Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Marc Miller. Elder Tom Dearhouse opened and closed the space with good words, and the ED of the FPJCM was actively consulted throughout the planning and dissemination process. Ellen Filippelli expressed that our organization is dedicated to providing services and programs inspired by Gladue principles, and the FPJCM is elated to be receiving stable and perennial funding to support the Gladue writing services for years to come.

In December 2022, the FPJCM celebrated the arrival of a full time Gladue writer after an extended hiring period. Jocelyne Couture, who was already trained as a Gladue report writer in Ontario was added to the CAJ list of accredited writers. Following training on FPJCM's internal procedures and the guidelines provided by the Ministry of Justice for reports being written in Quebec, referrals began being received in January 2023. As part of her training, Jocelyne visited different organizations in Montreal and interviewed service providers to get a better understanding of services available to community members. The first Gladue report completed was submitted in March 2023. Aftercare services were included in the individuals recommendations set out in the report.

A week-long Gladue training was facilitated by Taiga Vision and hosted in-house in our new office space. Five (5) FPJCM program coordinators, a Makivvik team member, and a nurse from Kanesatake now have a deeper understanding not only of the Gladue and Ipeelee Supreme Court Decisions, but also on how to amplify the stories of Indigenous individuals facing the courts.

In April 2023, the Knowledge Keeper/Wellness Counselor began taking on the role of coordinating the Elder's room and the calendar of cultural activities being held by the FPJCM. This approach to aftercare is large in scope, recognizing both a one-on-one approach along with a collective vision of healing.

CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING

The FPJCM has facilitated a number of activities and events promoting culture and healing within the community. The spring of 2022 saw the launching of two mutual support groups at the FPJCM. The first, in continuation with the year before, eight (8) Adoptee Support Groups were held by the Knowledge Keeper/Wellness Counselor. The second, a new initiative for FPJCM, was two series of Wellness Groups facilitated by the Restorative Justice Coordinator along with Onen'tó:kon. Both series ran for several weeks a total of seven (7) times, covering topics like conflict resolution, substance use management, healthy relationships, among others.

The FPJCM team welcomed the summer season with well attended community BBQ's on two occasions and outings to both the Kahnawake Pow Wow in July and the Kanesatake Pow Wow in August. On September 29th, the FPJCM had a special BBQ with the theme of Every Child Matters where many program participants, community members both Indigenous and non-Indigenous gathered at Mont-Royal park to mark this important event.

In terms of land-based activities, the FPJCM invited women to join for a Moon and Harvest Gathering in October in Kanehsatake where several participants met to learn traditional harvest teachings. October was also when the FPJCM began offering Parka Making, our facilitator, Maddie Yakka put on a dozen workshops over several months. In November, Norman Riel, our Community Services Coordinator animated a drum making workshop and Jason Sikoak facilitated a creative art session. A second drum making workshop was also given in March.

Every week, the Knowledge Keeper/Wellness Counselor offered up space for community members to partake in cultural activities promoting healing, such as beading or sewing. Tealey also held many one-on-one sessions for individuals needing emotional and spiritual support. The medicine bundle program, recurring from the year before, was ongoing with increased individuals accessing medicines such tobacco, sage, cedar and sweetgrass.

FINANCES

The Justice Center's finances have continued to grow in the 2022-2023 fiscal. We are very grateful for the continuous support of Justice Canada, Justice Quebec, Indigenous Services Canada, Heritage Canada, Makivvik Corporation and The Montreal Indigenous Community NETWORK. In addition, this year we commenced partnership with three new funders: the Secrétariat aux relations avec les Premières Nations et les Inuit, Correctional Services Canada and TD Business Banking Community Relations. Our work would not be possible without their support and we look forward to their ongoing financial encouragement in developing our programming and fulfilling our service mandates.

As a registered charity, the Justice Center received generous donations from The Grand Fondation du Montreal, CN Retirement Pension Fund and individual donations through our partnership with CanadaHelps.org. We would like to extend our sincerest thanks to all those who have donated. Over the years, it is especially donations that have allowed for the Justice Center to directly invest in our mission to create positive change. Your belief in our cause is a powerful force that propels us forward. Our deepest gratitude for your incredibly generous donations and ongoing support!



Financial growth since 2016

