

**BOLD
NESS**

**THE
WINNIPEG
BOLDNESS
PROJECT**

PARTICIPATION IN THE ARTS: PROVIDING INCLUSIVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SKILL BUILDING

**PROTOTYPING FOR CHANGE
AUGUST 2018**





**THE WINNIPEG BOLDNESS PROJECT IS WORKING
TOWARDS A BOLD GOAL:**

**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN POINT DOUGLAS WILL
EXPERIENCE DRAMATICALLY IMPROVED WELLBEING
IN ALL ASPECTS OF SELF: PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL,
MENTAL, AND SPIRITUAL.**

We are working with residents and groups in this neighbourhood to test new ideas to support the wellbeing of children and families. These prototypes which we are calling Proofs of Possibilities (POPs), support a vision for change in our community. We are exploring possibilities in the following areas:

PROOFS OF POSSIBILITIES



PARTICIPATION IN THE ARTS: PROVIDING INCLUSIVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SKILL BUILDING

COMMUNITY VISION

Every child will have the opportunity to discover their gifts, develop their skills, and build self-esteem.

Arts and cultural activities support childrens' and families' personal development, sense of possibility, self-determination, and wellbeing. However, families in Point Douglas face many barriers to participating in these types of activities - activities that are needed for the development of their wholistic self. Working under the guidance of the community and in partnership with National Leasing, a local Winnipeg business, we focused on the following four supports to give families the opportunity to choose to participate in arts-based activities:

- **Identifying barriers to participation:** Working with families to understand what keeps them from participating in arts and culture events.
- **Providing for families' unique needs:** Providing childcare, transportation, and planning supports to help the most vulnerable families participate.
- **Making spaces inclusive:** Working with arts organizations to build environments that are warm and welcoming to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous families.
- **Changing perceptions:** Inviting families in Point Douglas to events and working with arts organizations to show that these events are for them.





WHY DID WE FOCUS ON ARTS-BASED ACTIVITIES?

When children and families have challenges such as lack of food, shelter, or clothing, it is easy to see arts and creativity as less important. However, the development of a wholistic sense of self includes emotional, mental, and spiritual supports, as well as physical ones. Arts and creativity are not frills, they are necessary to supporting healthy child development

New and different experiences help children grow their sense of what is possible – discovering new skills, interests, and passions. Arts-based activities also give families time together for rest, bonding, and self-care.

Participating in these types of activities leads to improved outcomes such as employment and success in school.

Improving education attainment levels and success rates is action that has been called for by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

Arts and cultural activities are opportunities that many families in Point Douglas do not have, so we worked with families to understand how we could make these activities more available to them and their children.

WHAT CREATES BARRIERS TO ACCESSING ARTS-BASED ACTIVITIES?

Feeling Unwelcome

These events can create a feeling of exclusion, and that they are not for low-income or Indigenous families. Families worry that they will face discrimination or that they will be judged for how they dress and act.

Transportation Requirements

Many families do not have access to reliable transportation particularly if they are coming from remote areas, making it difficult to attend these events.

Planning Required

Families are focused on meeting their basic needs first. They may not have the time or energy to plan to attend these events.

Costs of Participation

These types of events usually cost money, creating a large barrier for families who struggle to meet their basic needs.

Excluding Different Ages

When events are suitable only for certain ages, families must choose between bringing a younger child along or finding child care and excluding the child from the event. Families in Point Douglas strongly prefer events that welcome the whole family, but many events are not designed that way.

Focusing on Nuclear Families

Newcomer and Indigenous families may include many children and caregivers. Many entrance fees for families are designed for nuclear families, furthering the perception that diverse families are unwelcome.



PUTTING THE CHILD-CENTRED MODEL INTO ACTION

The Child-Centred Model – a way of working for positive change developed by the community of Point Douglas – helped us find the best ways to support families in accessing arts-based opportunities.

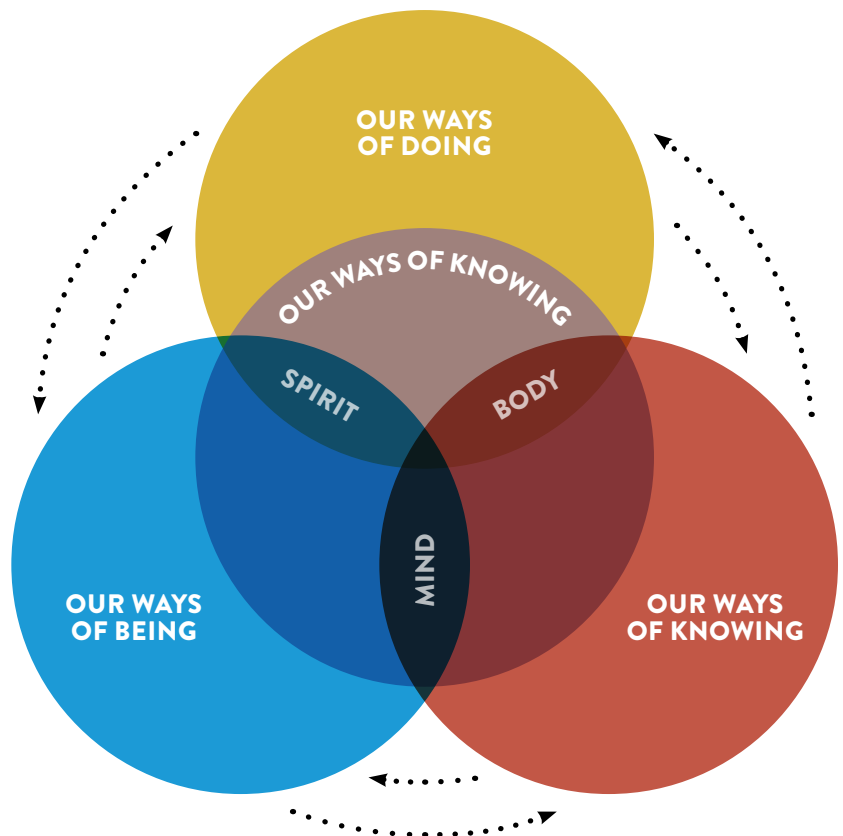
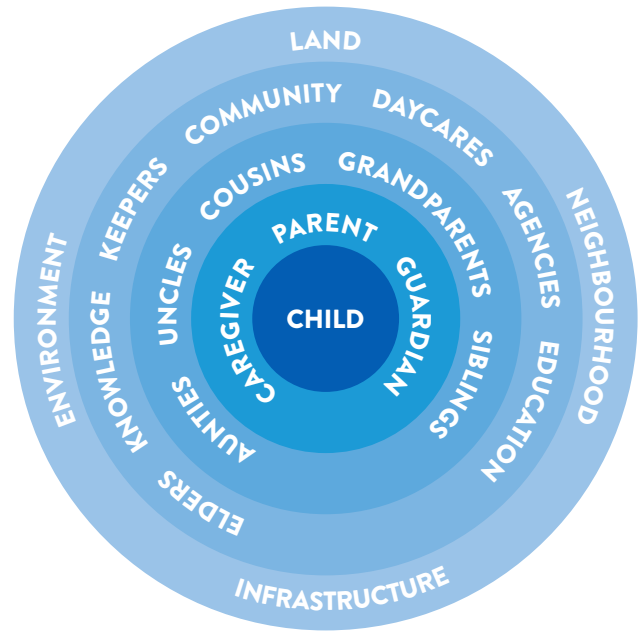
We worked to provide supports for recreation, self-care, and curiosity rather than focusing solely on basic needs.

We worked to provide the option to choose to participate rather than pressuring families to participate or shaming them for not participating.

We worked to create spaces that were welcoming to families from Point Douglas rather than assuming that they would participate simply if costs were covered.

When we work with the Child-Centred Model as our guide, we are able to support positive change for children, parents, families, and the community.

To learn more about the Child-Centred Model, read the full report at winnipegboldness.ca/childcentredmodel



“MY SON IS INTO ACTING NOW. HE LIKES ACTING. HE LIKES A LOT MORE SOPHISTICATED THINGS NOW AS OPPOSED TO YOUR TYPICAL LIKE GAMES AND STUFF LIKE THAT. I THINK HIS CONFIDENCE HAS GONE UP, HE’S NOT AFRAID TO BE IN A CROWD AND HE’S STARTING ORGANIZED SPORTS.”

— Darrin

“I WASN’T REALLY ABLE TO GO BEFORE BECAUSE, YOU KNOW, MONEY, TRANSPORTATION, I DON’T HAVE A DRIVER’S LICENSSE. ANOTHER BIG ONE IS THAT I HAVE TWO CHILDREN WITH ADHD SO THAT’S ANOTHER BARRIER BECAUSE THEY CAN GET EXTREMELEY ANGRY WHEN I TRY TO GO OUT WITH THEM. BUT THEY LOVED THE SYMPHONY. THEY LOVED THE LOUD MUSIC.”

— Mary

“THE ARTS HELP YOU TO IDENTIFY WHAT YOUR STRENGTHS ARE, WHAT YOUR WEAKNESSES ARE, AND HOW TO BUILD ON THOSE STRENGTHS.”

— Mary

“IT SHOWED HIM A SIDE OF HIMSELF, I THINK, THAT HE DIDN’T SEE BEFORE, WITH THE MUSIC, AND WITH THE PLAY. I NEVER SAW THAT OUT OF HIM BEFORE, AND NOW HE WANTS TO GO TO MANITOBA THEATRE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE. HE WANTS TO DO THINGS LIKE THAT. HE WANTS TO BE ACTIVE, BE A PART OF EVERYTHING.”

— Miranda


“WHEN WE STARTED OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH WINNIPEG BOLDNESS, WE CHANGED THE WAY WE SUPPORT LOCAL ARTS ORGANIZATIONS. IT’S GONE FROM SIMPLE SHOW SPONSORSHIPS TO PROVIDING MEANINGFUL EXPERIENCES. THIS IS DEFINITELY SOMETHING WE WILL WANT TO CONTINUE.”

— Janet (National Leasing)

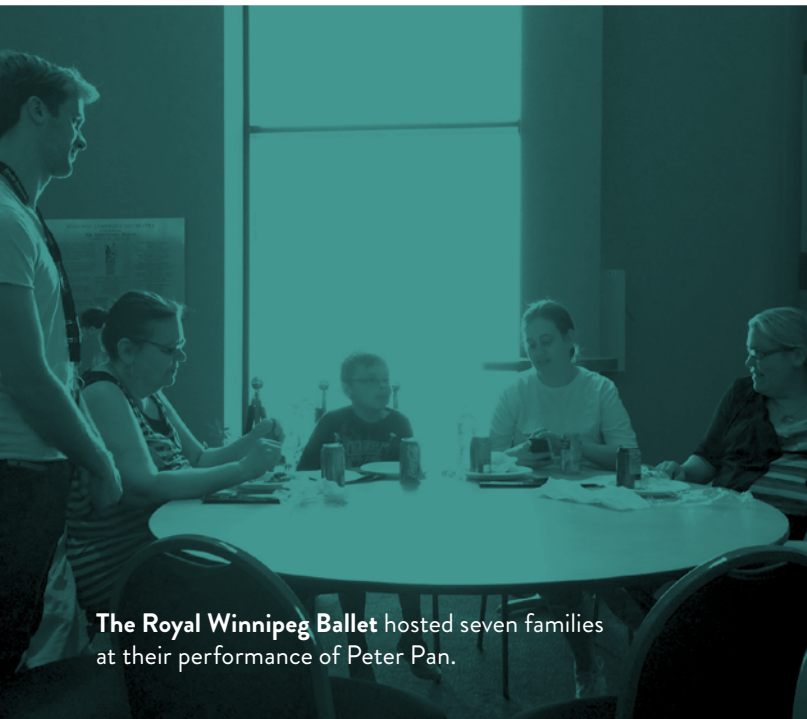


FAMILIES PARTICIPATED IN ACTIVITIES WITH MANY DIFFERENT PARTNERS...

Prairie Theatre Exchange hosted six families at the Mission: Munschpossible show. Families were treated to kid-friendly presentations and a backstage tour.




Royal MTC hosted nine families at Billy Elliot: the Musical, and six families for the play Sarah Ballenden. Families were treated to a backstage tour during Billy Elliot and on-site childcare during Sarah Ballenden.



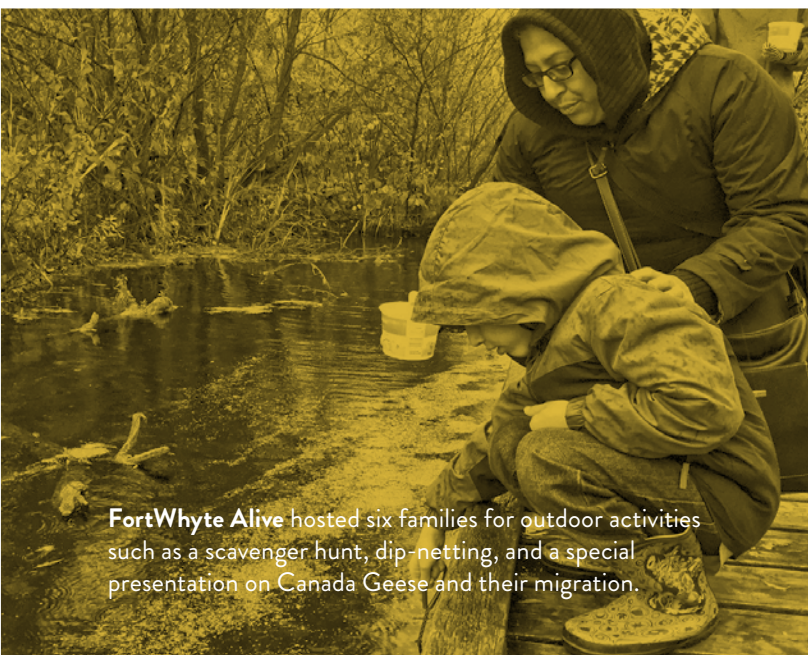
Most organizations we've talked to have the same reactions as us. They are happy to be a part of a program like this to help provide access and different experiences for these families. They are always willing to do future events with us and Boldness as well!

—Janet, National Leasing

The Royal Winnipeg Ballet hosted seven families at their performance of Peter Pan.



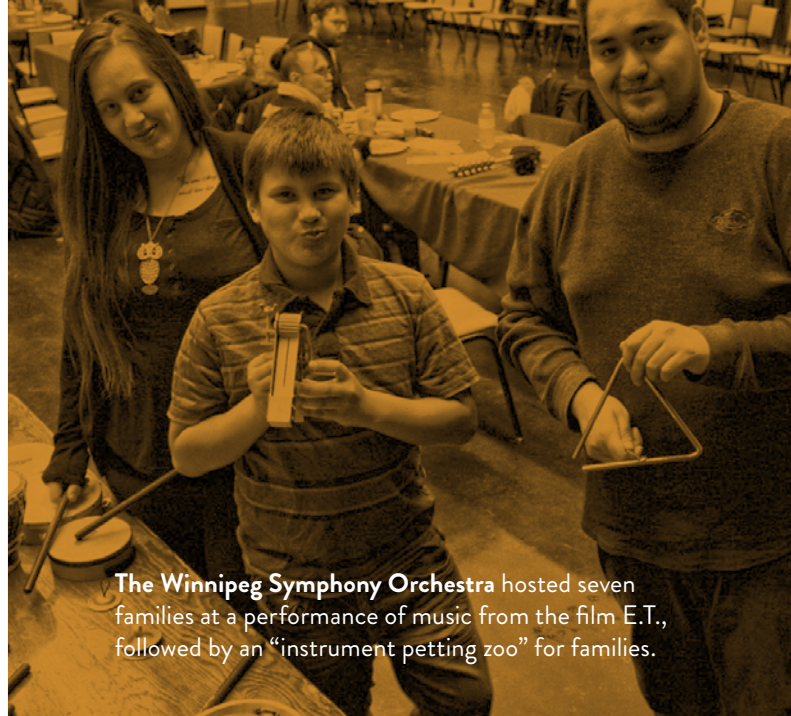
The Winnipeg Art Gallery hosted six families for a tour of the gallery and an art class.



FortWhyte Alive hosted six families for outdoor activities such as a scavenger hunt, dip-netting, and a special presentation on Canada Geese and their migration.



The Children's Museum hosted seven families at a special treasure hunt along with free time in the museum.



The Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra hosted seven families at a performance of music from the film E.T., followed by an "instrument petting zoo" for families.



The Winnipeg Zoo partnered with community agencies to host eight families at a barbecue and self-guided tour through the zoo.

This program tests your boundaries and pushes you to decide whether we want to go or not. It's something fun to get you out of the house and to get you into the arts to see what you like and what you don't like. All families in the North End, they just don't have these opportunities."

—Mary



The Canada Games Council hosted four families for two baseball games during the Canada Summer Games.



The Manitoba Theatre for Young People hosted three families for a puppetry, drum, song, and shadow theatre performance followed by a craft workshop.

SUPPORTING PARTICIPATION IN ARTS-BASED ACTIVITIES TODAY



As long as today's systemic barriers exist, there are a number of ways that organizations can work to make arts-based activities more open to families from Point Douglas

PROVIDE SUPPORTS FOR FAMILIES' BASIC NEEDS

Transportation, childcare, attendance costs, and day-to-day challenges all prevent families from participating in arts-based activities. **Removing these barriers is needed to make participation possible.**

INCLUDE THE WHOLE FAMILY

Many activities focus on specific age groups, but families in Point Douglas may not participate in activities that do not welcome all of them. **Include families of all types and provide opportunities for bonding and self-care for all family members.** Doing activities together also gives families the opportunity to discover each other's skills and potential.

MAKE FAMILIES WELCOME

Many families from Point Douglas feel that they are not wanted in arts-based institutions. Friendly staff who are welcoming, are able to respond to families' unique needs, and make special accommodations go a long way to helping families consider similar events in the future. **Making an extra effort for these families makes them feel that they belong.**

PROVIDE INTERACTIVE EXPERIENCES

While many arts-based activities are designed for passive viewers, families most enjoyed the opportunities they had to get hands-on in these trips. **Interactive experiences such as workshops and backstage tours give children more opportunities for self-discovery and for bonding within and between families.**





CHANGING THE SYSTEM FOR TOMORROW



Through this work we found that there are larger barriers that affect families and community members. We need governments, non-profits, and businesses to work together in order to:

1

CREATE SPACES AND PLACES THAT WELCOME BOTH INDIGENOUS AND NON-INDIGENOUS FAMILIES FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE.

Many arts-based institutions are made to feel exclusive and elite. Whether this is intentional or non-intentional, if we hope to include Indigenous and marginalized families, we need to shift our attitudes towards inclusion. We need to create spaces where families can feel comfortable and like they belong.

2

FUND ORGANIZATIONS THAT ARE INCLUSIVE.

It takes a special effort to include families from communities such as Point Douglas. We need funding structures that make it mandatory for arts-based organizations to include these families and provide the resources to make this possible.

3

SUPPORT PARTICIPATION BY MEETING BASIC NEEDS.

It is hard for families to focus on these important experiences when their basic needs aren't met. We need to help families meet their basic needs so that they can support all aspects of their childrens' development.

4

FOCUS ON SUPPORTING A WHOLISTIC SENSE OF SELF FOR FAMILIES

Most supports that do exist for families from Point Douglas focus on their physical needs,. While these supports are important, children and families also need supports for their emotional, mental, and spiritual wellbeing.

If you would like to learn more about the barriers that families in Point Douglas face to participating in arts-based activities, read the full POP report [\[reference\]](#), read our report on helpful ways to work with Point Douglas [\[reference\]](#), and explore our other POP reports [\[reference\]](#),



**“WE ARE THANKFUL TO
OUR ANCESTORS WHO
ENTRUSTED US WITH
THE CARE OF THIS
GENERATION, AND THE
GENERATION WE WILL
NEVER KNOW.”**

—(MacNeill, 2014, p.29)

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the development and implementation of our prototypes, including our guide groups, partners, community organizations, local residents, and the North End community as a whole.

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