



# 2024

FIRST LIGHT

# ANNUAL REPORT







# OUR MISSION

To deliver transformative programs and services that empower, uplift, and support Indigenous communities and nations in ways that promote good relations between all. Through advocacy, research, and social entrepreneurship, we foster inclusive environments that unite Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, promote social well-being, and drive sustainable change. Guided by principles of trust, respect, and friendship, we aim to build a brighter future where Indigenous Peoples thrive and flourish, leaving a profound and lasting legacy for generations to come.



**7** LOCATIONS

**90+** STAFF



St. John's is home to a rich, diverse, and vibrant urban Indigenous community. Located on the ancestral and unceded territory of the Beothuk, the lands and waters in and around the City have traditionally served as a gathering place for the Mi'kmaq. The broader region of Newfoundland and Labrador continues to be home to diverse Indigenous Peoples, including First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. We honour and pay respect to the past, present, and future caretakers of these territories.





# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Member

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Dear Community Members,

As we celebrate 41 years of dedicated service, we reflect on how far First Light has come and the exciting future that lies ahead. This year, we are more committed than ever to our vision of being a leading force for positive holistic change in St. John's and surrounding areas, with a focus on recognizing urban Indigenous sovereignty and empowering all Indigenous Peoples.

Our ongoing restructuring reflects this vision, as we work to align all of our locations and teams toward one shared goal: to empower, uplift, and support our community through transformative programs and services. By uniting our efforts under this collective purpose, we can better deliver the kind of advocacy, holistic services, and social entrepreneurship that drive sustainable change. This process will ensure that our work fosters strong relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, building inclusive environments that promote well-being and good relations for all.





I would like to take this opportunity to extend my deepest thanks to our incredible staff and the Board of Directors for their unwavering commitment and hard work. Your dedication has been instrumental in making this transition a success and ensuring we remain true to our mission.

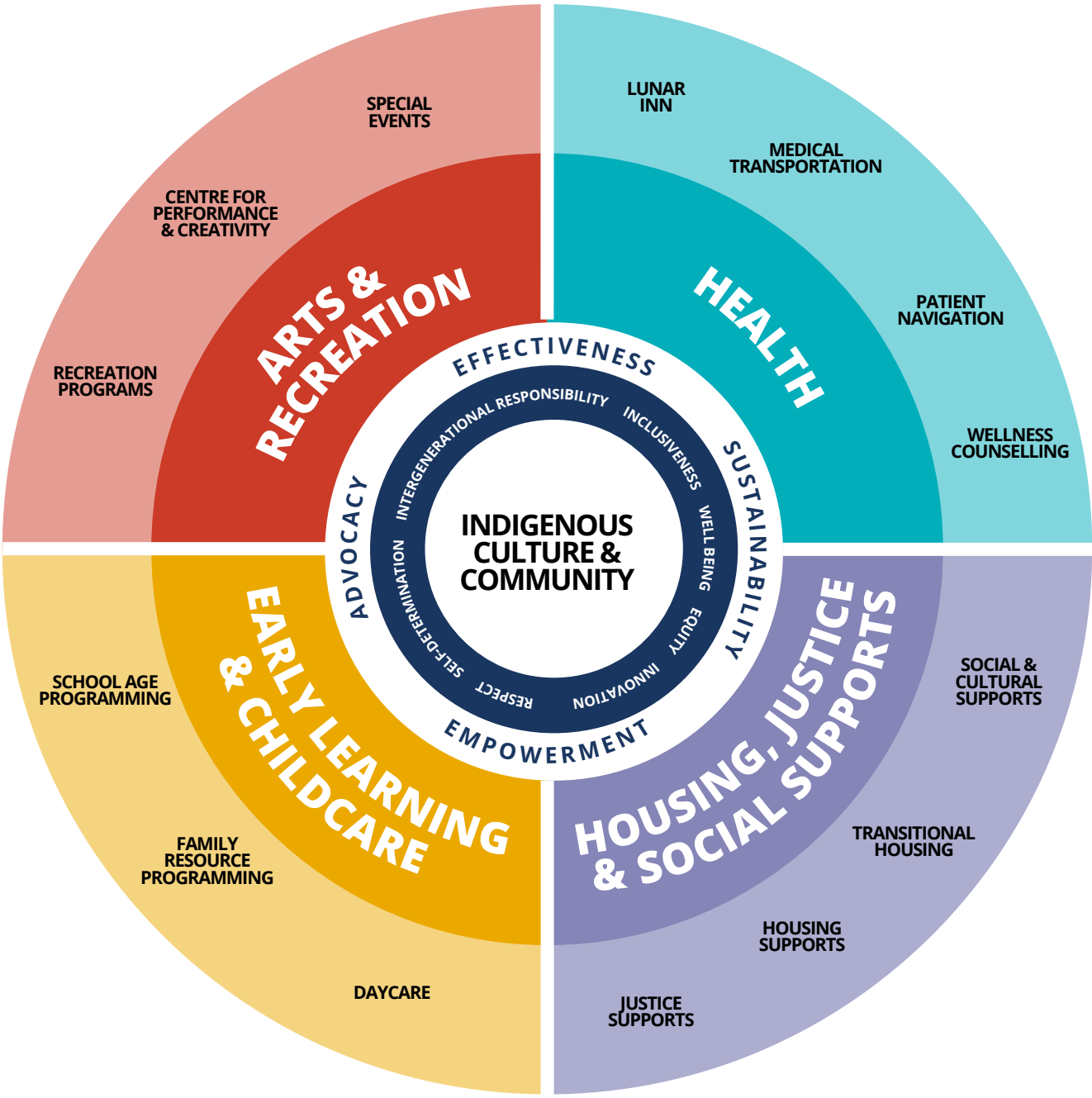
Looking ahead, I am filled with optimism about the opportunities to continue making a profound impact. Together, we are creating a brighter future where Indigenous Peoples can thrive, flourish, and leave a lasting legacy for generations to come.

Thank you to our wonderful community, staff, volunteers, funders, and Board of Directors for your support over the past 41 years. We are honored to walk this path together, with trust, respect, and friendship at the core of all that we do.

Warm regards,

*Stacey Howse*

Stacey Howse  
Executive Director





## Guiding Our Path: Rooted in Community

At the heart of First Light's vision is the Strategy Wheel—a guiding force that keeps us grounded in Indigenous Culture & Community. This compass ensures every step we take aligns with our mission to protect and celebrate Indigenous heritage, while strengthening the threads that connect our community together.

Radiating from this centre are four quadrants that form the backbone of our core services: Health, Arts & Recreation, Early Learning & Childcare, and Housing, Justice & Social Supports. Each quadrant reflects our commitment to the well-being of our community, embodying cultural continuity, holistic health, creative expression, early learning, and support grounded in the strength of our relationships.





**ELDERS IN  
RESIDENCE**

**1,419**

moments of  
learning and support





**PEER SUPPORT**

**1,381**

shared moments of  
connection & healing

**CULTURAL SUPPORT**

**920**

shared moments of  
connection & healing





**4,671**

connections through  
community programs





**CENTRE FOR  
PERFORMANCE  
& CREATIVIY**

**556**

events welcomed

**8,195**

guests connecting through  
art, stories & performances





## PATIENT NAVIGATORS

# 6,337

connections made to guide and support patients on their healing journeys



## JUSTICE SUPPORTS

# 1,064

connections made, offering support and guidance within the justice system





## HOUSING SUPPORT

**31**

people found a  
stable place to live

**2,521**

connections wove  
together stability, care,  
& belonging



**142**

guests found  
comfort & care over

**314**

nights during their  
medical stays







**MEDICAL  
TRANSPORTATION**

**17,602**

rides helped

**27,103**

passengers reach essential  
medical care & support





SPIRIT  
SONG  
FESTIVAL



**1,563**  
attendees



**25**  
events



**55**  
artists



NATIONAL  
INDIGENOUS  
PEOPLES DAY

**1,000+**  
attended celebrations





**17**

staff  
trained in  
ASIST

**28**

Naloxone  
training  
completed

**32**

Naloxone kits  
provided







**52**

daycare and school-age childcare spaces, offering a safe and caring place for children to thrive



**107**

youth supported in finding work or continuing their education



## ORANGE SHIRT DAY

795

shirts sold to support  
reconciliation efforts

200+

people gathered for the  
Rally for Reconciliation







**99** training sessions helped

**1,517** participants deepen their knowledge of Indigenous cultures



**LEARN MORE**



**28 of 42**  
CALLS FOR CHANGE

currently have work underway to  
advance truth & reconciliation in St. John's



## Reconciliation Report 2024: Steps Taken, Miles to Go

This 18-month update on truth and reconciliation in St. John's follows the 42 Calls for Change from ***Our Shared Vision***. The report highlights key achievements, including the formation of two Action Circles on justice and health, and a strengthened partnership with the City of St. John's.

Despite gaps in public education, limited resources, and the need for full recognition of urban Indigenous rights, our collective resilience drives ongoing efforts. First Voice remains committed to systemic change, focusing on K-12 curriculum redevelopment, stronger police oversight, and aligning policies with international Indigenous rights.

**READ THE REPORT**



[firstvoicenl.ca](http://firstvoicenl.ca)





**282,533**

digital connections bringing  
community together



## Connect with us!



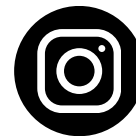
[firstlightnl.ca](http://firstlightnl.ca)



[info@firstlightnl.ca](mailto:info@firstlightnl.ca)



(709) 726-5902





LAND BAK





FIRST LIGHT

St. John's Friendship Centre