



## Report to the Community

**Welcome to the eighth edition of our Connective Report to the Community!** In these last few months, while bracing for the colder temperatures and celebrating the arrival of another year, our service users and staff have continued to accomplish a lot.

This issue, we highlight the efforts of our Outreach Worker, the latest from our partners at CYFN, a resident success story from our SHARP program, a new leadership opportunity with Connective, and more!

## SERVICE HIGHLIGHT

**Featuring:** 405 Alexander's Outreach Worker

In past issues, we've highlighted the services that our valued external partners have made available at 405 Alexander, such as:

- **Blood Ties:** Regularly scheduled wellness and harm reduction programming
- **Emergency Medical Services:** Daily access to primary care needs and drug checking
- **Mental Wellness & Substance Use Services:** Weekly access to counselling and other mental health and addiction supports

While these and other providers help cover a broad range of common and critical needs, we are also proud to offer one-on-one supports via Connective's own **Outreach Worker**, Karen.

Karen knows that each person is unique, and her approach reflects that. "It's very individualized. The focus is on hearing what matters most to them. From there, we build a plan to get them what they need to navigate systems, overcome

complexities, and meet their goals."

Photo ID, for example, is a big one. Needed for everything from housing to income assistance and healthcare, lack of ID can be a major hurdle, and getting one is also not always easy.

"It's hard because our systems are built for people who have phones; who have cars; who have the executive functioning to make an appointment for 10:30 on Tuesday, and then be able to keep it."

The reality, though, is that these and countless other seen and unseen barriers make it hard for many to get what they need. Through her one-on-one approach, Karen is able to tailor her level of support to match the individual.

**"When someone shows up, they are the person I'm focusing my time on, to help them address what we can in that moment."**

### Visit Karen for help with:

- Acquiring photo ID
- Applying for housing
- Applying for income assistance
- Applying for employment
- Applying for school
- Accessing medical treatment
- Mental health support
- Travelling to appointments
- Completing income taxes

### To connect with Karen:

📍 1st floor, 405 Alexander    📞 867-689-1660    ✉️ karen.macdonald@connective.ca

\*You can also leave a message for Karen at 405's Front Desk

# BEADS AND BANNOCK

Cultural Programming at 405 Alexander



Council of Yukon  
First Nations

Recognizing the role culture plays in healing, growth, and resilience for our Indigenous residents and service users, we are honoured to partner with the Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN) to provide cultural support and programming at 405 Alexander.

Since last issue, CYFN has provided a traditional food program, regular smudging opportunities, beading and fur mitten workshops, and videos of Indigenous Elders sharing their knowledge and

stories for residents and service users to view.

CYFN has also continued their involvement in 405's Monthly Connection Meetings, arranging for Knowledge Keeper Earl Darbyshire to attend and enhance the meetings through his expertise, stories, songs, and homemade medicine tea.

One of CYFN's Cultural Support Workers also harvested and donated two caribou to support 405 Alexander, as pictured below.



## CELEBRATING CYFN'S NEW FAMILY PRESERVATION AND WELLNESS CENTRE

Just over two weeks ago, on February 14th, we were pleased to attend the opening of CYFN's new Family Preservation Wellness Centre.

The journey to this point was over two years in the making, involving a broad range of Yukon First Nations, women's groups, and community partners. It was an honour to be in attendance to celebrate this new, much needed, and first of its kind community resource.

Offering temporary housing and Indigenous-led programming for up to 32 women and children, the Family Preservation Wellness Centre helps fill a critical service gap. In addition to a safe place to stay, meals, and cultural programming, women will also be supported with their eventual transition to permanent housing.

The physical design of the Centre reflects both Yukon First Nations – with an emphasis on gathering spaces, communal food spaces, and natural light – and also the varying needs of those it will house – with separate high and low barrier living areas.

**"This Centre represents years of dedication and collaboration to create a culturally safe space for Yukon First Nations women and children in need. We look forward to opening the doors and providing a safe and supportive environment for families."**

– CYFN Grand Chief Peter Johnston

### To learn more about the Centre:



[cyfn.ca/services-2/wellnesscentre](https://cyfn.ca/services-2/wellnesscentre)



[wellnesscentre@cyfn.net](mailto:wellnesscentre@cyfn.net)



867-457-0090 | Toll Free 1-888-976-0351



# PROGRAM SUCCESSES

## Spotlight On: Supervised Housing and Reintegration Program (SHARP)

Jeremy's Story - 'Embracing the Suck'

While this newsletter has primarily focused on 405 Alexander, we're eager to begin sharing more updates and successes from across our work in the Yukon. This month, we're proud to share a story from SHARP.

Late last year, Jeremy moved back to his hometown, in Manitoba.

**"When I landed, we got a full month of blue skies. Everyday, 10-15 degrees. I couldn't have been any more grateful. It was like a welcoming."**

After months self-reflection and personal focus while residing in Connective's SHARP program, life – much like the weather – was looking warmer and brighter.

"My housing situation is stable. Financial situation is stable. Responsibilities are met and maintained." Jeremy, in short, is happy.

The road to stability wasn't easy, though. Entering the SHARP program, Jeremy was facing one of the most challenging periods of his life.

**"The basis to all of my problems, with 100% honesty, was alcohol. Drinking again. That's what led to everything, basically."**

SHARP provided him with a chance to reflect, regroup, and reset in a supportive environment.

"Knowing that there were people there that just wanted the best for me. That was instrumental. How many people get that opportunity? Not a place to screw around and just continue your old stupid ways, but to say, "Let's refill the batteries. Let's retool. Let's figure out how this is going to look."

In time, SHARP's staff team "became a surrogate family," offering a range of direct and indirect

supports, or an attentive ear on tough days.

**"Just having that there, having people honestly invested in how you're doing, was incredible."**

As Jeremy describes it, "there were a few bumps in the road", but throughout his time at SHARP he persevered, taking things one day – and one household chore – at a time.

"Taking care of the household and making that my daily mission. That's ultimately what got me through. Get one thing done a day and then let's see. Maybe some days I get two; some days I might do the whole house top to freaking bottom." This stick-to-it-ness rubbed off on others, and was deeply appreciated by staff.

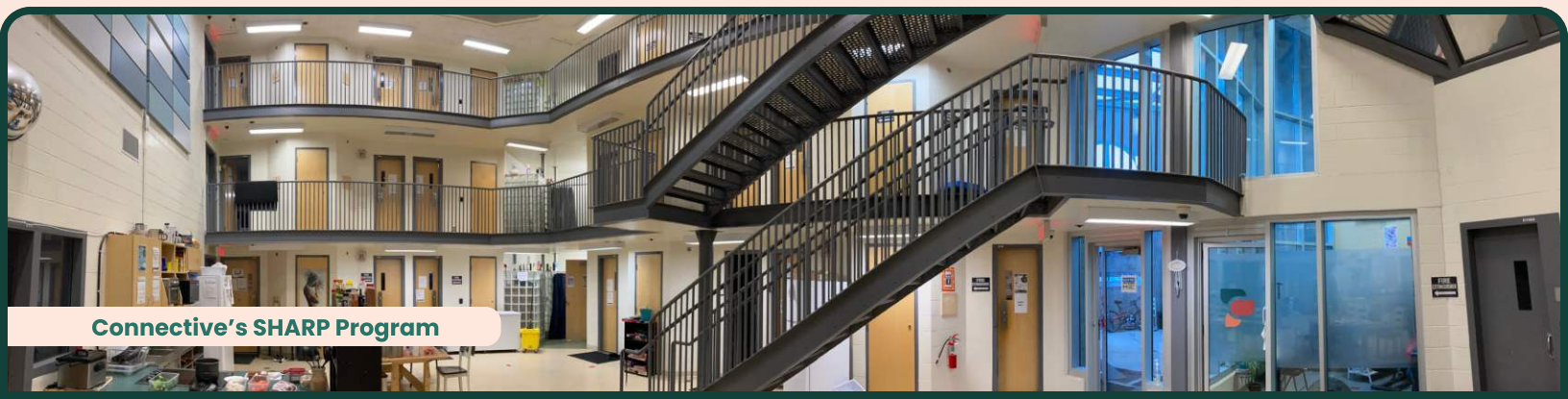
Now, back in Manitoba, Jeremy's sights are set on the road ahead, and on enjoying where he's at. With summer on the horizon, he's looking forward to restoring an old boat, and seeing the town come alive with summer crowds and vibes.

**"It's a little symbolic for me, I guess you could say."**

Hearing from Jeremy is a warm reminder of why opportunities like these are so important.

**"I've been grinning so much since I got here that my face hurts sometimes. I go for two night walks with the dog...out on the boardwalk, with just the trees and the lake and the lights...Its got this glow that's like walking through a painting."**

**And I'm just grateful for every second. To stop and take it all in sometimes. It's amazing."**



Connective's SHARP Program

# JOIN OUR TEAM!

**Now Hiring:** Director of Yukon Operations & Engagement

This month we're also pleased to share an exciting leadership opportunity at Connective! We are currently hiring a Director of Yukon Operations & Engagement, a new role that will provide strategic leadership, strengthen key partnerships, and help shape the future of our work in Yukon.

**Apply Today:** [connective.ca/careers](https://connective.ca/careers)

By supporting high-quality service delivery and fostering long-term sustainability, the Director of Yukon Operations & Engagement will ensure our work makes a meaningful difference to the community's toughest challenges.

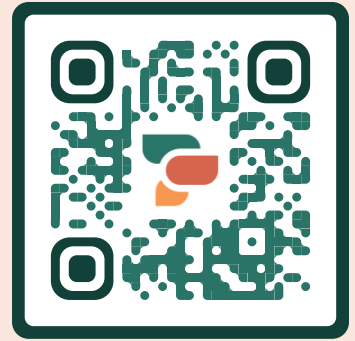
As with all roles in the Territory, hiring will prioritize Yukon First Nations applicants.

If you have any questions about the role, or require additional information, please reach out.

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

## Connective is an Equal Opportunity Workplace

To build a strong and representative workforce, we strongly encourage applications from BIPOC, LGBTQ2S+ people, immigrants, and people with disabilities or other marginalized communities.



Scan to learn more!



# THANK YOU!

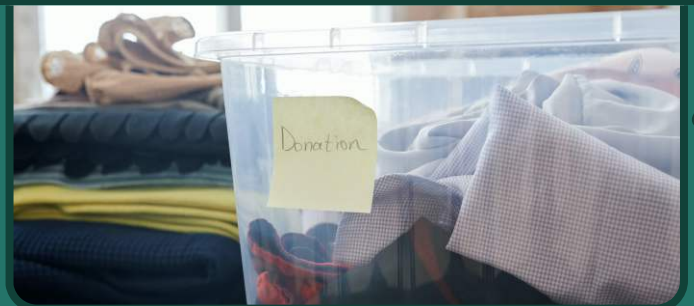
## Winter Donations




With Whitehorse temperatures regularly dropping into the minus forties, we know there are many in the community who struggle to stay warm.

In response to this extremely cold weather, we put out a call on social media and in our last newsletter for donations of winter clothing and gear. We were blown away by the community's response, and by their overflowing generosity.

On behalf of everyone here at Connective, our sincere gratitude to all who donated!



 Donations can still be dropped off at 405 Alexander, between 7AM - 4PM

### We are looking for:

- Base Layers
- Boots
- Fleece Items
- Gloves
- Jackets
- Outer Pants
- Scarves
- Toques
- Warm Socks