



A Summary of the Braiding Knowledge for Safe Communities Symposium

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Executive Summary

The Braiding Knowledge for Safe Communities Symposium took place on December 13-15th, 2022 at the Grey Eagle Resort and Casino in Calgary, AB. The Symposium was hosted by the Prince Albert Grand Council (PAGC), which is a tribal council located in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. The PAGC serves 12 First Nations and 28 communities with approximately 44,000 members.

The focus of the event was to strengthen communities and to address issues such as escalating violence, drugs, homicides, gangs, inadequate health support, and other forms of safety issues. Attendees at the symposium included grassroots people, traditional knowledge keepers, experts, and experienced professionals.

The purpose of this report is to summarize 'what we heard' at the symposium and to provide themes based on what was discussed by the speakers throughout both days. The summaries were compiled based on notes taken during the presentations and through transcripts created from audio recordings of each speaker. Harold Horsefall attended the first day of the symposium and Chris Fry attended the second day.

Summary of Symposium Day 1

Joseph Tsannie, Vice Chief PAGC

The purpose of the Prince Albert Grand Council Braiding Knowledge 2022 conference is to pick your brains. We are here to build a road-map to Community Safety. Our Chiefs have given us the task to talk with you, to ensure that you have input into making our communities safe. We currently have many challenges in our communities. We do also have many challenges working together with the RCMP and the communities to find common solutions.

Our communities are dealing with multiple problems. Problems like drug and alcohol abuse, family violence, youth violence and gang violence. We see twelve-year old boys and girls staggering around due to substance abuse. Bootleggers are selling booze to kids.

Then there is the Gerald Stanley/Coulton Boushie case. There are many more incidents within our community; not just with the justice system. Our office receives many calls from the community, including calls where the RCMP are just not doing their job. So, our twelve Chiefs gave us our marching orders to look into self-administered policing; to look into Community Safety Plans.

We would like to have our people working in the justice field. Our largest resource, our young people, are looking for opportunities. But why do we not have our people working as RCMP officers, lawyers, doctors, and whatever it is that we need? We are at the point where we can look at self-administered policing.

Another challenge that we face is that we do not have a road map on what self-administered policing looks like. We are hoping that this conference, the Prince Albert Grand Council *Braiding Knowledge* conference/symposium can help discern what self-administered policing looks like. We want to continue to engage people and develop a roadmap as to what self-administered policing looks like for our 50,000 Nation members. We do not want to work in isolation, we want to bring our communities together.

We ask that our non-Indigenous partners come to the table openly and honestly. If we are not open and honest, and we are hiding things, then any relationship built will not work. It doesn't matter how hard we work, it just won't work. At the end of the day, we are all here to make our communities safe.

We cannot heal our people if we do not address the trauma. The trauma from Residential schools; the trauma from violence; the trauma from substance abuse. I am thankful that the RCMP is here with us today. We need to work together to change the story for our children.

Community safety is the 'before' of an incident. Community safety is about identifying threats. What is happening in our communities? How are we failing in our communities? Please

participate in this engagement and please do not hold anything back. We need to identify the challenges and then we need to address those challenges. Thank you for being here with us today.

Themes: *Community safety 'before' an incident.* This address set the tone for the day's presentations. Tsannie exhorted the audience to speak openly and honestly about the trauma and trauma-cycle facing Indigenous people so the problem(s) could be consciously addressed. Tsannie wants to build community safety, before an incident occurs.

Elder AJ Felix

I was a judge for 25 years. I did the Cree circuit court for two years and I didn't like what I saw, so I quit. I did not like the laws and what they were doing to my people. I quit the circuit, but I did not quit the bench. I stayed on the bench for 25 years; there were ten of us first inaugurated, but nobody else stayed on the bench.

I have been a Treaty 6 helper for 45 years. I was one of the first helpers that came along and tried to initiate action with our Treaty that was signed 150 years ago. I cannot help but feel that our partner that we signed Treaty with put us on the back-burner. In fact, our Treaty partner didn't even teach their community about the Treaties. The university professors found out about Treaty 20 years ago. I have been a Treaty man for 45 years and I have not witnessed my Treaty being honoured.

We are all dealing with this system that is racist against our people. The police force does not like Indians. When we signed Treaty, they said that they were going to protect us, to defend us. Neither of those things happened. Instead, we were spread across the Country. We were put into small pots, into small communities. We were told that this was for our own good, so that we could be independent and that the police would help us if we had any problems with settlers. We have problems and we have not been helped.

The settlers knew what to do with us. They knew that if they segregated us into tiny groups, that we would never rise. They knew that we would never make our way into the federal and provincial constituencies, and that we would never be elected into those offices. They also knew that if they destroyed our Buffalo, that they would starve us. They knew that if they gave us infected blankets, that they would shorten the Treaty payee list.

I was a happy kid, growing up in Sturgeon lake, Saskatchewan. Then one day, a truck pulled up to take me away to Residential school. My mom was crying. My dad turn his back away from the truck; us kids were loaded into the truck like cattle. A Priest told my dad that the Roman Catholic Church will gave us a new dad; that the nuns would be our sisters, that they would be my new mom. Then an RCMP officer told my dad "if you don't send your kids to Residential school, you will go to jail".

So my parents suffered through loneliness while us kids were away. Before the 1960's, alcohol was not allowed on the reserves. During that time, no Treaty Indian could walk into a bar and buy booze. No Treaty Indian could consume alcohol in town. But then, all of a sudden, it was like the government thought "let's allow them liquor". Then all hell broke loose.

There was a police force that provided order. But it was like they were told "don't get too close to those Indians, our police forces protect *our people*, not Indian people". Those police forces are still here. Those police forces are still doing *their* jobs.

Our people that became RCMP officers did not last long in the force. They found racism in the force. Which makes me think that over the next couple of days, we will need to work together. We need your people; we need white people to help us to create a justice system that is just. I need to be asked "where are the problems in your community"? I need to be involved.

We want our own system. The current system is not working for us. Involve us in the creation of a better system. We need to work together on a plan. Our young people are dying from the sickness that trauma has caused. The jails and prisons are full of our Indian people. There are over 35,000 Indian children in care (taken from their parents) across Western Canada right now. Our people need help to get their language back, to get the language back that society has taken away. Our spirituality, our kinship, all taken away. We want it back. We need it back.

Theme: *Racism*. Felix stated that the current system is not working for Indigenous people. The treaties have not been honoured, and so the resulting set-of-affairs and relationships are not conducive to solving problems. Indigenous people are over-represented in the prison systems and more than 35,000 Indigenous children are in the social welfare foster care system. This system is not working.

Hilary Peterson, Sessional Lecturer, University of Saskatchewan

Indigenous people should have our own justice systems. Indigenous people also have the right to our own justice systems. Indigenous people face a host of issues in our communities. Our own justice systems ought to have been implemented many years ago, but they have not been. I would like to talk about why we should have access to our own systems and why we need support.

In 1763 the Royal Proclamation was signed, recognizing that Indigenous Nations were sovereign nations. Settlers to this land recognized this. Indigenous Nations as sovereign nations has been written into law. An excerpt from Treaty 6 reads that "we promise to obey and abide by the law. And that we will maintain peace and good order between each other".

I would argue that the excerpt entails that we, as Indigenous people, have jurisdiction over criminal law in our communities. We should be handling criminal law in our communities. We have the legal ability to administer criminal law. Furthermore, we need to be supported in administering criminal law in our communities.

Under the Constitution Act of 1982 and in section 25 of the Canadian *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, Aboriginal rights and freedoms are not affected by the Charter. Aboriginal rights are guaranteed, despite any laws moving forward. Under Treaty 6, we have continued to have that right. Moreover, section 35 of the Constitution states that existing Aboriginal Treaty rights are recognized and affirmed. Indigenous people in Canada have never been conquered, and so the potential rights embedded in these claims are protected by section 35. The honor of the Crown requires that these rights be determined, recognized, and respected. Therefore, the right to our own justice systems, our own court systems are the rights that need to be recognized, respected, and supported.

However, instead I would like to talk about the 1917 first introduction of Canadian law to Indigenous peoples. In the northern territories, there was a murder trial of two individuals. In that case, the Crown prosecutor stated that that Indigenous people are not living in the modern day; and that they would be brought in contact with, and will be taught, the white man's justice. From that introduction of Canadian law upon Indigenous people in 1917 to today's date, that same idea continues.

Canadian law today is not working for Indigenous peoples and communities. Those of us in the room today know that it is not working. So, what do we do if the systems are not working for us? What do we do if the law is not working for us? What are the issues? What needs to be done that has not been done to solve those issues? In this room, we do not need to rehash these issues, we just need implementation and support.

I would argue that what is stopping traditional law/practice from being implemented is infrastructure. We currently have Cree Circuit court, but that court follows Canadian law in every way. We have not set up the court to apply Indigenous law as the federal government has jurisdiction over these courts. For example, if we are setting up Indigenous law, do Canadian laws still apply? There are many issues of jurisdiction, and it will be complicated to figure out, but that does not mean that the steps need not be taken.

Themes: *Indigenous law (jurisdiction)*. Peterson asserts that Indigenous people should have their own justice systems. That the right to Indigenous law is guaranteed by Canada's foundational law. Instead, Indigenous people have the 'white man's' law inflicted upon them and this is status-quo. Peterson further stated that while jurisdiction may be complicated to figure out, that does not mean that it should not be done.

Christine Moran, Assistant Deputy Minister of the Indigenous Secretariat

I am here today to talk to you about recognizing First-Nation policing as an essential service. The federal government and the Assembly of First-Nations (AFN) have been asked to co-develop a legislative framework to recognize First-Nations policing as an essential service. We

have been delivering this service to communities with a program. That program is limited in terms of scope and in terms of funding flexibility.

There have been very loud calls for the recognition of policing as an essential service, and especially so because the program is discretionary in nature. Because of this, people are getting frustrated. Organizations like the Prince Albert Grand Council are frustrated because there is not enough space in the program for them to transition into their own policing model.

The program is over-subscribed. Even if we could add to the program, we have to recognize that we are still delivering this through a program. So, we decided to engage with First-Nations. I would like to share 'what we heard'.

We had three questions going into our engagement. However, I wanted to point out that we are relying on input and advice from the First-Nations Chiefs of Police Association, and we are also relying on the First-Nations Police Governance Council. Our three questions were: 1) funding; 2), the role of First-Nations, the Provinces and Federal levels in policing; and 3), we asked about what the definition is, of an essential service.

We witnessed unanimous consensus that the program *First-Nations Anywhere Policing* is inadequate to support police services. In places where police services existed, the structure and form are unfit for purpose. We heard that we need to move away from that. We also observed that many people are growing frustrated by the amount of time that it has taken to get to these conversations.

We recognized that policing is one small element on the spectrum of community safety. There are many things that influence community safety. Then, moving out of policing and into the prosecutions/corrections model, what are the roles of First-Nations, the Provincial and Federal government? All that said, we do have the scope to be able to look at a different model with First-Nations policing.

Defining an essential service, then funding and creating that avenue is a way to give practical effect to a self-government commitment. As an essential service, we heard that whatever it looks like, it must not be a program. The funding for an essential service must also be adequate, stable and predictable. Furthermore, as an essential service, we heard the definition of essential service must include the ability to provide service 24hrs a day, 7 days a week.

In terms of roles and responsibilities, we are looking at compatibility with Provincial and Federal legislation. We are not seeking to make major alterations to the way that police derive their authorities, rather we are looking to ensure that we are complementing existing frameworks. From an operational perspective, the police need to derive their authority effectively so that they can act from an authority whereby they would be recognized by others.

We do not want to create something that is so distinctive, so different, that is not recognized as policing. We do not want to create something that is not commensurate nor substantially

equivalent because First-Nations should not be second class. We want non-Indigenous and Indigenous officers alike to have the same authorities, training, ability, and discretion.

Lastly, we received a lot of negative feedback in communities that do not have self-administered policing. In those communities, community members' feedback was based on their experience with the RCMP. We recognize that a healthy, respectful, and constructive relationship is required to drive a community towards safety. However, there was a lot of frustration from communities that have RCMP policing versus communities that have self-administered police forces.

We feel that the problem is that it is a program that is funding First-Nation police services. We have heard that, and we are trying to fix that. We also heard that Indigenous officers are not being treated equally to their non-Indigenous counterparts. We really need to make sure that there is equity within the forces.

Themes: *Discretionary spending.* Moran stated that Indigenous policing is an essential service. However, she also observed that there is a lot of work to do in terms of jurisdiction at the provincial and federal levels. Moreover, her office has received feedback from First Nations people outlining negative experiences between Indigenous people and the RCMP. Moran's office has heard from Indigenous people and is working towards a solution.

Angella Vallely, Community Safety Planning, Cowichan Tribes

The Aboriginal Community Safety Planning (CSP) initiative supports Indigenous communities to identify risks to community safety and develop their own safety plan. We address those risks. We believe that the success of our initiative is that it is led by the community with guidance and support from Public Safety Canada officials. Moreover, we are grounded in the understanding that healing is an integral part of the journey.

The community driven approach of the CSP's ensure that the resulting safety plans addresses the priorities identified by the community that are specific to their circumstances during the CSP development. The community also identifies their strengths, assets, safety, and wellness goals. This way community members can prepare for their role in the journey towards a healthier and safer community.

Community safety planning not just writing a plan. It is a long-term process that starts by looking at where the community has been, reflecting historical impacts. Community safety planning involves a community coming together to plan how to heal by sharing values, goal setting and achieving those goals. When the CSP is developed, community members understand the priority challenges and the assets that can respond to these challenges. Community members feel better equipped to talk with partners about solutions.

We have secured funding and we also have gained additional partners. We have two pots of money: 1) is for CSP facilitators to go into community; and 2), is to support the implementation

of those safety plans. A fundamental component in implementing community healing is to address the high amount of trauma that our communities continue to experience. Implementing a CSP must address trauma, as well as addressing on-going crime and victimization occurring in our communities.

We feel that it is integral to our success to work in partnership with our communities. We do not impose things on our communities. The communities must be willing to work with us. Community safety planning is a community-led process as it is based on community voice. Our staff captures that voice, and we roll it all up into our community's safety plans.

We engage broadly and transparently with our communities. This ensures that our CSP's are reflective of the entire community's voice, and that the plan's addresses identified areas of that community. This broad engagement promotes awareness of plan-related participation activities and identifies gaps. We recognize that there is usually a core community group who forms the 'meat and potatoes' of the plan. However, we also see vulnerable areas and the community then begins to plan for those areas.

Community safety planning is a strength-based process. We do not want to reinvent the wheel, instead we focus on the good work that is already happening in a community. We go through an asset mapping exercise. This exercise identifies which programs are in place. What infrastructure is currently in place. Because gaps come to the surface during this process, our communities can approximate a cost as to what it would take to address a gap.

We have also seen improved relationships with the RCMP. When are working on a Community Safety Plan, RCMP officers attend the sessions. The community and the RCMP have the freedom to have 'frank' discussions. These discussions lead to improved relationships. The relationships must be fostered, but there is an improvement.

Theme: *Community Safety Planning; Collaboration/Partnership.* Valley stated that her office helps to create community-driven and community-led, community safety plans. Her office feels that they are successful owing to the authentic partnership model that they use. Her office also engages broadly with their communities to ensure that all voices are heard. Her office builds relationships, and these relationships make for a community safety plan that works.

Jen Mateush and Matthew Mirasty, Public Safety Saskatchewan

We are presenting on behalf of Public Safety Canada. The relationships are complex when it comes to policing. To get to First Nations policing, the First Nations communities, the government of Saskatchewan and the RCMP must create a Community Tri-partite Agreement (CTA). The First Nations Inuit policing program and the File Hills have CTA's. File Hills has a CTA for self-administered policing.

The First Nations Inuit policing program was created in the 1990's. It was created with the goal to provide professional dedicated responsive policing services to approximately 451 First Nation

and Inuit communities across Canada. In Saskatchewan, there are 33 Community Tripartite Agreements: 36 First Nations [reserves] that encompass 45 communities. These communities receive designated RCMP policing services.

The File Hills First Nations Police Service (FNPS) is the only CTA that has self-administered policing. The five member nations of the File Hills FNPS are Okanese FN, Carry-The-Kettle FN, Peepeekisis FN, Star Blanket FN and the Little Black Bear FN. The vision statement of the File Hills FNPS is to implement and maintain a level of policing that is culturally sensitive to First Nations Values.

There are some important elements to CTA's. Sections seven, eight, nine and ten of the terms of agreement have implications as to the roles and responsibilities of the RCMP. Sections twelve, thirteen and fifteen outline the roles of the First Nations. Community policing requires a collaborative approach between the community and with the police service to be successful.

Creating a Community Consultative Group (CCG) is critical to the collaborative effort. CCG board members discuss with RCMP members as to community challenges. An outcome of the discussions is, ideally, mutually agreed upon solutions. CCG's are a bridge for new officers in the community. Ensuring collaboration between the CCG and the police service help both parties to achieve the community's safety and security objectives.

Not all community work is police work. We, as Public Safety Canada also work with communities to develop Community Safety Officer (CSO) programs. CSO's can conduct smaller investigations into items such as prosecutions, adjudication and etc. We have been piloting a CSO program, however, the program still maintains the same policy procedures and legislative oversight as previous iterations of community safety programming.

Community Safety Officers (CSO) allow for police officers to focus on more complex Canadian safety and serious criminal enforcement activities. CSO's must be recognizable by citizens in the province; they must have a uniform that identifies them as officers. Often, CSO's are hired from the community's that they will be deployed in. This is great, as young people interested in a career in law enforcement have begun to look into the CSO program.

Once a CSO is fully trained, they receive a Special Constable appointment. As a Special Constable, the officers carry pepper spray, a baton, and handcuffs. They are not armed with firearms. CSO's can assist with criminal charges that are less than \$5,000. They can secure crime scenes; they can attend to motor vehicle collisions that have no injuries and they can service subpoenas and summonses.

As a CSO, the tasks of the officers are determined by their employer. This is to ensure that community needs are being met. Typically, communities have common shared safety/security concerns. There are many different views on how to deal with those issues. A CSO gives the community a tool on how to address their concerns.

There is one self-administered First Nation Police Service in Saskatchewan. There is growing demand for community to be able to address its own safety/security concerns on the community's own terms. Not all community safety items need policing. The CSO program, while not a full-blown policing program, is still a critical part of community safety and represents a critical aspect of community safety.

Theme: *Community safety.* Mateush and Mirasty outlined the basic process when working with Public Safety Canada. They outlined how they have contributed to advancing community safety in Indigenous communities through the creation of tripartite agreements. Moreover, while Indigenous policing is recognized as critical, Mateush and Mirasty also shared information about the Community Safety Officer program.

Jan Fox, Executive Director of REACH Edmonton

I am going to talk about the balance between law enforcement and prevention when creating community-based safety and well-being plans. I often find that when a tragedy occurs in your [Indigenous] community, people often respond with "we need more police". While a police presence is important, I also think that a long-term balance between enforcement and prevention are important in strengthening communities.

I have worked for over 30 years in federal corrections. I saw first-hand the over-representation of Indigenous people in the federal corrections system. I would see how cultural values and spirituality were often brought into the jails. But I did not feel that was the right place as, by the time someone is in corrections, it is often too late.

Community safety is about relationship. I was pleased to hear the previous presentations on community safety, community safety plans and the community safety officer program. Agencies often find ourselves working in Indigenous communities, but right next to those communities are non-Indigenous communities. Community safety involves all communities, not just Indigenous communities.

There are critical factors involved with community safety. Sincere and authentic community engagement is important. The worst case is when, for example, government goes into a community to 'engage', and then community members would be told 'this is what is going to happen'. In that scenario, community members do not feel engaged; the engagement was not authentic. We are all responsible for community safety and we all have roles to play.

The 'who' that we engage is important. It is not advisable to always go to the same people. However, talking with Elders, Knowledge-Keepers, Chief and Councils, and people with lived experience is usually a good starting point. Moreover, it is best to meet people where they are. Don't bring people into our boardrooms, meet community where community is.

Co-development is critical. The phrase “nothing for us without us” comes to mind. We so often see bureaucracies developing something and then imposing that something onto the community. When you do that, you lose long-term sustainability.

For example, eight years ago, I worked on a gang prevention strategy. The program we created was very prescriptive and when we took it to the Indigenous community to partner with us, they responded “no, it’s just not what we want”. They walked away from our program. We need to be cognizant of, and inclusive of, the communities that we want to work with.

Community safety needs to be community led and community driven. The best solutions [to a problem] lie within the community itself. The community does not need to be told what ‘the problems’ are, they know what the problems are. Community often needs help building the capacity to address their problems. The co-development of a community asset map often yields incredible results.

Playing the ‘funding game’ also presents its own challenges. Often, funders want to know “what is the social return on investment”. This can be challenging because community solutions do not necessarily lend themselves to quantitative analysis. For example, quantitative analysis does not account for the importance of traditional Indigenous spiritual practice, nor can quantitative analysis account for the experiential learning of community member’s development.

There are challenges to addressing community safety. Community safety is about relationships building. Building relationships on equitable grounds. Co-developing community safety solutions is critical. Community knows where their challenges are and often, community needs help building up its capacity to address the problems.

Accounting for the social return on investment is challenging. How does one account for traditional Indigenous spirituality or on the development of community members? Financial challenges aside, building the capacity of community is critical for long-term sustainability. Community safety is a long-term goal with the maxim “nothing for us without us”.

Theme: *long-term sustainability, authentic engagement, relationship-building.* Fox elaborated on the delicate balance between law enforcement, prevention, and community safety. Fox claimed that authentic and sincere engagement was required to build lasting partnerships. Lasting partnerships are dependent on high-quality relationships. While there are challenges when it comes to evaluating whether a program was successful (qualitative vs quantitative analysis), it was very clear that ‘nothing for us without us’ is the key to long-lasting community wellness.

Amy Siciliano, Public Safety Advisor, The City of Halifax

I am responsible for overseeing the implementation of the municipality’s public safety strategy. As a follow-up from our recent tragedy involving mass casualties, the municipality of Halifax

wanted to know what could be done differently. Our conversations revolved around 'what else could have been done in the community to keep the community safe'. For example, what were the strengths that the community could have built on and what were the gaps that needed addressing.

My role has been about how to steer the ship in a different direction. Working with communities to see what other tools are in the toolbox besides policing. Police are often at the center of responsibility in the conversation on public safety. However, we have heard over and over that it is the community that is at the center of public safety; you can't have community safety without the community. My job has been to help other folks make this realization.

As a person who works in a municipality in public safety, it can be a very frustrating place to work; we see the effects of disinvestment in our communities. We see the results when there is systemic racism at work. I see doors closed, and then I see many other doors that are open, like the criminal justice system, and we watch it catch the failures of the other systems. It is frustrating because we, municipal workers, do not have control over the other doors due to jurisdiction issues.

However, there is a paradox. We are the gatekeepers of the criminal justice system because we fund the police. That is one thing that we do control. But we do not control the many other things that feed the system. I believe, however, that my role at the municipality is to implement solutions to the crime and violence facing our communities. I believe that we need to invest in our communities and address the complex roots of violence in the way that policing just cannot do.

I would like to talk about social infrastructure. Social infrastructure is about investing in community. Investing in the physical and social elements of communities that bring its peoples together. Social infrastructure is about building relationships.

The African Nova-Scotian community makes up 14% of our provincial prison population. The African Nova-Scotian (NS) community makes up 3% of Halifax's population. One item the African NS community told us about were the 'police checks'. Our police would stop and check African NS citizens, over a non-criminal incident, in order to do some intelligence gathering.

A later report by Scott Oertli validated what the African NS community had told us: the Halifax police were checking black youth for no reason. Our police Chief publicly apologized for the street checks and the street checks are now banned. That said, in Halifax we are patrolled by both municipal police and the RCMP; the RCMP who also conducted 'police checks' did not apologize for their checks.

In Halifax historically, because of racism, black settlers were pushed to the margins of our municipality. Black settlers were denied titled to their lands. Without title, they could not secure a mortgage, nor sell their houses nor access housing grants.

The City of Halifax destroyed their community, called Africaville. The result today is that the relationship between Africaville and The City of Halifax is strained. Undesirable infrastructure was built on Africaville lands: the prison was built there, infectious disease hospitals, the dump and later, rail lines. If you look at the map of Halifax, you will see Africaville in 1905's map, but it all but disappeared in the 1945 map.

A conscious effort was made to reduce the resources available to the community. There was no running water. There were no city services, such as garbage removal and the like. Then by the end of the 1960's, Africaville was declared a slum and unfit for habitation. Africaville's land-base was expropriated by the city and the residents were moved into public housing.

In 2010, forty years later, The City of Halifax apologized to the residents of Africaville. This move was Halifax's foray into more appropriate ways of addressing violence and community safety through a program called ceasefire. The funding of \$5 million was provided by Public Safety Canada in partnership with The City of Halifax. The program was an evidence-based public health approach to community violence.

Community violence was treated not as something that enforcement can solve. Instead, community violence was treated like a disease infecting the community. The goal was to address the root cause of community violence, at its source. An outcome of the program was that it created violence interrupters.

Violence interrupters were credible messengers. As credible messengers, they had developed really good relationships with the community. They knew when something violent was going to happen and the credible messengers, or violence interrupters, were able to interrupt and stop any community violence from happening in the first place. We then would wrap supports around the folks who were at risk of becoming involved in violence. As this process proceeded, a culture shift changed the values within the communities with respect to the norms associated with community violence.

Helping communities meet their basic needs reduced violence. Meeting community where they are at and working with them to address what is found addressed their basic needs. Community needs like building playgrounds reduced the crime rate. We also found that employing the young men of the community also contributed to crime prevention/reduction.

We trained community members to create safety protocols in their own neighborhoods. We do not call it a program; we call it a relationship-based model. We have community mobilization teams that work with the communities that need the support. Their goal is to strengthen resiliency, building social infrastructure and assisting with getting resource access. Relationship building with impacted communities and building their capacity reduces community violence; or increases community safety.

Theme: *Investing in community; social infrastructure.* Siciliano stated that social infrastructure as community investment is critical in establishing community safety: community violence increases when basic needs are unmet. Siciliano shared how The City of Halifax has done the

opposite of investment when Halifax marginalized black settlers in Africaville. She also shared how her current work is working to restore the relationship rift caused by The City of Halifax.

Summary of Symposium Day 2

Joan Breland, PAGC Health

Joan is part of the Health and Social development team; she is one of the Associate Directors and helps to manage the Holistic Wellness Centre. The program is based on a holistic living therapy model, which means that they work with the community and tailor programs based on the needs of the communities. The programs are guided by the elders that participate in the program. Their clients are the PAGC member First Nations.

The programs that are offered include:

- Mental Health and Addictions
 - Responds to crisis
- Embrace Life Program
 - Embracing life app available that can be downloaded on your phone
- Honoring Our Traditions (HOT) program
 - 10-day program offered to communities
 - Gambling addictions, colonialism, self-esteem, identity
 - Land-based teachings with elders
- Suicide Education Awareness
- Domestic and Intimate Partner Violence
 - Presentations on lateral kindness in the communities and provide examples of what it looks like
- Youth Empowerment Program
 - For youth from the ages of 12-17
 - Tuesdays to Saturdays
 - After school program where the youth are fed supper
 - Learn about themselves, positive and safe interaction with others
- Healing on the Land program
 - Multitude of land-based programs
 - Hired youth workers from the communities
 - Camps for youth
- Residential Treatment Centre
 - Currently constructing a new building
- Marie Adele Wellness Centre
 - Mental health therapists are available 365 days a year

Some of the challenges that they are currently facing are gangs and where kids are acting out. The youth think that it is cool to be part of a gang and it is the alternative that they know. To

teach the youth about a different alternative other than joining a gang, they are hoping to get them engaged in hope, health, and happiness. It is important to hear the voices of the youth.

Cocaine and crack are now being used in the communities recently and there is work to do to clean this up. There are many challenges ahead, but communities need to keep persevering, finding answers, and getting the right programs in place to make meaningful change.

Many children are forgotten because they are doing so well. It is important not to forget about the youth that are doing well and to offer things such as music programs. Sometimes there is too much focus on the problems and there should be positive and appealing programs for all youth.

Healing on the Land video was shown, and it is a combination of the communities that they work with. It is about a camp provided along the northern lakes. It is a camp that promotes joy, laughter, learning, and teaching for the youth.

Theme: *Land-based learning* – this was discussed throughout the presentation based on a way to heal from learning about the land and becoming connected with traditional ways of living and knowing. There are many challenges that communities face including gangs or drugs and reconnecting with the land is away to overcome some of these challenges.

Grand Chief Brian Hardlotte, PAGC

Chief Brian provided remarks to thank all the attendees and dignitaries for attending the symposium and contributing to the important work that needs to be completed. Grand Chief emphasized the importance of working together to reach the common goal of building safety plans for the communities. Agencies such as health and education are not always working together, and they need to start working more collaboratively. Grand Chief thanked the RCMP for the work that they have been doing with community members that need help such as those who are assaulted or homeless. Grand Chief thanked Eddie Head, who was hired by the James Smith community to help with developing the process of community safety and the Grand Council will need to support him where they can.

Grand Chief thanked both the federal and provincial governments for their support and the letter of intent that was signed in the Fall. The executive wants to see results, they do not want to just have meetings, but they want to see results from the meetings.

Theme: *Working collaboratively* – It was emphasized that to effectively develop a community safety plan the different agencies in organizations need to work together to reach common goals. It is critical work that is being done and to achieve results, everyone needs to work effectively together.

Shirley Henderson, FSIN Vice-Chief Dutch Lerat

Shirley is a member of Montreal Lake Cree Nation where she also served on Council for 22 years. Some of her portfolios included Health, Police Management, and Justice, which were very hard areas to work in. There are many struggles that the communities have including lack of support and funding. Shirley first became involved in missing persons cases 20 years ago when Tamra Keepness from Regina went missing. She was a 6-year-old girl that went missing and they never did find Tamra. Last year Shirley got to meet her family to try and bring some closure to her disappearance. They presented the family with a Star Blanket, and they were very emotional from this. Shirley felt that there needed to be more awareness brought to the public. They started to have a walk and there were as many as 300 people that attended to support the families and friends of missing and murdered women. They wanted to get more men involved so they later changed the name of the walk to Our Brothers and Sisters Memorial Walk. After 10 years they were going to stop the walk, but the families wanted them to keep going. It was a way for everyone to talk to one another and talk about what has happened.

The Women's Commission consists of 14 members one from each of the communities and they bring issues of women's crisis in their communities forward. They work together with all the programs of the PAGC. At one time the communities were safe, you didn't have to lock your doors and worry about who is coming into your yard. We need to go back to that.

Theme: *Community Awareness* – There are ways to bring everyone in the community together to raise awareness about safety issues and MMIWG. Shirley and her community utilized memorial walks and community events to bring awareness about missing and murdered women and girls, which also helped community members to work together. The women's commission was also an effective way to bring women's issues forward and raise awareness.

Chief Joyce Mcleod, Montreal Lake Cree Nation

We have a crisis the communities currently, and it is important for the leaders to be here and hear what is coming. In terms of the title of the Symposium – Braiding Knowledge for Safe Communities, it reminds Chief of the braid in sweetgrass and all the traumas that people face such as gangs, addictions, incarceration, day schools, and residential schools and how those traumas are blended like a braid in sweetgrass.

In Montreal Lake, it is no different than any other communities, most of the people are affected by addictions. During Christmas time, the Council is going to be taking Community Response Team (CRT) training. Most of the Chiefs and leaders do not have the CRT training and it is needed especially when they are dealing with people that are facing addictions. The leaders in the communities must respond to everything, there have been three RCMP standoffs in four months and these types of things were starting to get normalized. There was one death during

one of the standoffs. When a leader receives a headdress, there is great responsibility that comes with it, and much is expected of you.

Five members have been murdered and all of it has been gang related. The Major Crimes Unit is out there every day, and they are working on all the cases and none of them have been solved yet. Sometimes they are short-staffed. One of the community members was burnt alive in a gang related murder. These are all the types of the things that the leaders must deal with in the communities.

Communities cannot use Band Council Resolutions (BCRs) to force gangs out of the communities because they are not enforced, and it is just moving a problem to the cities. It is important to work together with the mayor of Prince Albert. Using BCRs is not the answer.

Montreal Lake Medical Detox recently opened in the community, but the province will not help with funding because of the use of the word medical.

A lot of the urban members also need support, they move to the city because of a lack of housing and because they want their children to train in sports. Land based learning is also a great tool to go back to your roots, back to your culture, back to your language. Programs such as PAGC cadets and boxing can help the youth to learn the skills to be a good leader. We need to continue to work with the children that way. Community members are lacking in education, and they need to have access to upgrading. People on social assistance or those that are incarcerated, many of them do not have their grade 12. Education is the buffalo of today.

Theme: *Crisis* – many of the communities are dealing with crises, which are caused by the traumas that community members continue to face. Some of the crises include substance abuse, violence, and gangs. A way that community members can start to overcome having to deal with all these crises is to work further on education. Education, in several ways, can help to inspire hope for the youth and to provide ways for other community members to have the tools to overcome challenges. Community policies and BCRs have not worked in the past in dealing with crisis issues such as drugs and gangs, it has only been a temporary solution or moved issues elsewhere.

Shirley Woods, PAGC Health

Shirley focused on programs and mental health supports. The intent is to start at pre-conception or in infancy with the programming because every child's life is sacred, and each child has a purpose and a child's life is a gift from the Creator. They start early very young in developing mental wellness.

For the Public Health Nursing program, they provide services for all twelve First Nations. They provide mental health support daily and pre-natal programming through home visits. They do screening for depression for mom's every time that they come into the clinic with their babies.

In their communities a lot of the mothers fail the screening, and the challenge is who they refer them to. It is difficult to connect them to the right person to get some help.

Nurses are often members of the communities which helps to develop trust with the clients. There are parenting and cultural programs and nurse navigators in the hospitals. There are two nurse navigators because there are great challenges when members go to the hospital and the nurse navigators are a PAGC employee and they can meet with women before going into delivery. They can also help during and after labor. There has been a recent infant death and the baby probably shouldn't have been discharged.

The Prince Albert hospital is getting a large renovation and the PAGC is a partner in the work that is being done. They are helping to advise on the design of the building and the model of care. There have also been discussions with First Nations on workforce planning and getting youth into health professions as well as getting members employed in the building of the hospital.

The home care nursing program provides palliative care services and a lot of social programming for gatherings to bring people together so that they are not isolated. There are also home health aid services, which provide drop in visit and personal care services. There are communities that have 24/7 care provided, the nurses must have additional authorized practice.

There are three dieticians; diabetes is very prevalent in the communities. They offer programs such as group cooking classes and gardening, which is more of a mental health support program.

They offer supportive programs such as alcohol, tobacco, and drug cessation programs. There is also a lot of Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) testing that is done in the communities. Other programs include dog bite prevention, physical activity, COVID vaccines/testing, and expanded treatment for STIs. There are very high rates of STIs in the communities. There is trauma informed and cultural support programming such life skills and education. There are events such as PAGC cultural gatherings, walks throughout the year.

The Maternal child health program works both pre- and post-natal, which is a volunteer program. There are parenting supports and been trying to engage fathers into the programs. The program is based on seven grandfather teachings. Books by Indigenous authors are given out to children to promote literacy and there are other services provided such as breast-feeding support. Medicine gathering has also been recently incorporated into the programming. The Daycare Headstart program to build the foundation for learning so that children are ready for school.

The Environmental Health Officers (EHO)s provide training and education in food safety, wastewater, WHIMIS, inspections, and emergency response. There are a lot of challenges in delivering all the programs that they offer. Since drugs have been introduced, people are now

feeling scared working in the communities. People do not want to work alone. There is a lack of security in some of the buildings. Some of the communities do not have a RCMP presence, roads can be bad, poor cell service, dog issues, and a lack of escape plans for staff in a violent situation. Other challenges include inadequate post-secondary funding, over 60 youth did not get funding this year. There are staffing challenges and many of the staff have the same traumas as the rest of the community.

The biggest challenge in the community is the increasing use of drugs in the communities. Spreading of STIs, gangs and mental health are other huge challenges.

Some of the things that are working well include the relationships, working well together, regular meeting with Health Directors, and good understanding of the communities. Relationships is their greatest strength.

Theme: Health Support – health support needs to be provided to community members at a very young age and needs to be available throughout a person’s life. Health support can be provided in many ways including mental, pre/post-natal, substance abuse, infections/diseases, and diabetes. It is critical that the health support workers feel safe in the work that they do and are supported by the communities.

Marilyn Buffalo, CEO Nechi Institute

Marilyn has been the CEO for four years and is a member of the Samson Cree Nation. One of the things that is missing today is the use of traditional parenting. The children don’t listen and there are very good reasons why children are no longer communicating with their parents. There is also a disconnect with the elders.

Policy planners and community leaders have not done the work that should be done, there is lots of catching up to do. There are also a lack of the resources and people that are properly trained. The training of the youth needs to take place, the infrastructure needs to be developed and we must not be afraid of change.

We need equity – we need to be equal. We should not have to beg for dollars.

Marilyn showed a video of her son Joe Buffalo, which is one man’s story – which sheds the light on what we can do to address the needs of young people. The video is called *Surviving the Horror of Residential School Through Skateboarding*, which is available on YouTube.

Social safety planning is usually focused solely on protections and not on interventions and preventions. Cultural support workers need to look at the issues from a holistic wellness perspective. There must be a safety plan in place when a front-line worker is on call, they should never respond to a call unassisted. The officers need to work in a cohesive manner to address issues without having to draw arms.

Ancestors were not allowed to have ceremonial gatherings, so people went underground. There needs to be more laughing, cry more, sharing circles, sweat lodge, come out of our shell, and shake hands with a young person.

There are 15,000 alumni across Canada of the Nechi Institute. The vision of our ancestors is that First Nations become self-governing and establish structural frameworks. Administration needs to be addressed and overhauled and there needs to be more support for healing and the root causes. Working with addictions is not for the weak, it is very demanding 24/7.

The criminalizing of children needs to stop, once a child is labeled hopeless, they will not rise. Our system was developed so that every teacher must assess a child and label them. Indigenous people are the population that is at highest risk across Canada. Our elders are our number one resource, they are our professors.

Nechi trained 80 counselors during the pandemic, and they have moved the programming online. The first course is spirituality and grounding, that includes a whole week of ceremony and dealing with your inner trauma. The second course is based on self-awareness, where you challenge you. Finally, the last course is family dynamic – how does addiction affect the entire family. Once you are more balanced within yourself you can work in the community. Colonization and the history are also covered.

Lateral violence starts in the home, there's a reason why people act out. The core issue needs to be addressed as early as possible. Programs can help young people to be taught how to deal with the trauma. Lateral violence is happening a lot now on social media and the issue of lateral violence is very deep and becomes progressively worse. Every teacher should become aware of lateral violence and parents need to be held accountable.

Theme: *Learning and Teaching* – The Nechi Institute is an organization that has been helping Indigenous people to overcome trauma. The programming was developed to meet the needs of Indigenous people and it utilizes its teachings from a holistic wellness perspective. Elders and youth are very important components of learning and teaching and Marilyn emphasized this in her presentation.

Sgt. Donna Zawislak, RCMP

Sergeant Donna has 21 years of service with the RCMP and 15 years of it is in the Major Crime Unit. One of the challenges of the job is that most interactions are usually negative, but they want to get better at what they do.

The calls for service and seriousness continue to increase, but the RCMP are there to react and respond to any crisis. Everybody wants to feel safe, including the police officers. Below is the timeline of the Major Crimes Unit:

- 1998 – the Major Crimes Unit was established. Prior to this there were no specific units that were trained to deal with these types of issues. Prior to 1998 it was handled by the general duty constable and there was a lack of training at the time.
- 2002 – there are well over 100 historical files in Saskatchewan.
- 2004 – creation of the Historical Case Units.
 - 5 people in each unit.
 - The number of cases were very challenging.
- 2009 – The missing person coordinator position was added.
- 2021 – Saskatchewan received funding for a Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) position, which was a result of the federal inquiry.
- The Historical Case Unit is amalgamated into one office.

What are they currently dealing with:

- 2022 – From January to date there have been 29 homicide investigations that were reported.
- 2021 – 30 homicide investigations that were reported.
- Saskatchewan has one of the highest rates of homicide per capita.
- The unit of 10 people are currently carrying 160 investigations.
- 41 homicides that are unsolved.
- 20 suspicious deaths.
- 7 missing person homicides.
- 58 long-term missing persons.
- 25 suspicious missing person files.
- 7 unidentified human remains.
- They are lacking the resources to solve the cases because they are dealing with new investigations.

For missing person investigations, there are 2,317 missing people, 979 of them are Indigenous in 2022. There is better documentation kept today for cases, in the past members weren't properly trained. There is one designated Missing Coordinator that is the gatekeeper to where the files go. They review over 2,000 files and the numbers continue to increase. Some communities have Rangers that assist with the searching. There is no need to wait 24 hours until someone is missing, the sooner the better. A missing persons investigative guide has been created along with an intake and risk assessment form. Also, a missing person partnership committee has been established that contains representatives from various agencies. They met with family members and missing people and make recommendations and suggestions, participate in media strategies, and identify areas where people have repeatedly run away.

The MMIWG position provides meaningful recommendations for MMIWG files and reports findings/issues to the national level. In 2009, the Missing Person and Presumption of Death Act was established and later amended in 2019 to provide an additional investigative tool to police agencies to locate missing people. With an application, police can access personal information to locate a person. Police post information to the public on the SACP.ca website regarding

people that have been missing for six months or longer. The National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains has a database that houses information. As well, with consent family members can upload their DNA to assist with identifying human remains.

Some of the challenges that the RCMP are dealing with is that police are sometimes expected to deal with issues that they are not trained for. They are currently reactive versus proactive, for example, they deal with drug overdoses but do not have time to deal with the core issues such as who is bringing drugs to the community. They are lacking resources; they have less members that are dealing with more and more violent calls. There is often a withholding of relevant information because of guarded families, drugs, and gangs. They are worried that they are going to put someone in jail and a fear of retaliation from gang members or community members.

Youth and adults are straying away from families and getting involved in gangs. Gangs become a core support group and there is no cooperation from gang members. Police usually receive false information. These challenges are not meant to be critical of communities, police want to do a better job.

Theme: *Missing Persons* – the RCMP was historically not well equipped to deal with the issue of missing persons in Saskatchewan due to a lack of resources and training. While there are more resources currently, there is still a large gap that needs to be filled. To address the current issue of an increased number of missing persons in Indigenous communities there needs to be more work done by both the RCMP and communities and it needs to be done collaboratively.

Cpl. Tyler Zyrmiak, RCMP

Tyler has been with the RCMP for 15 years and dealing with street gangs for 8 years. There has been a need to focus on more things other than enforcement and suppression. The Investigative Support Unit is a brand-new unit that was built to meet the needs of the communities.

Human trafficking has been prevalent in Saskatchewan, they are cycling girls through many communities, and it has been getting worse and worse. The Police's knowledge isn't where it needs to be, but there is more proactive work being done such as a 2-day human trafficking course.

Gangs have been recruiting through preying on the vulnerabilities of the youth. There is a gang strategy that contains four pillars: intelligence, prevention/education/awareness, enforcement/suppression, and gang exiting/intervention. Partnerships is the solution, and the first step is being a better partner. Junior police officers don't have experience with gangs, so they now attend a 2-day gang workshop. Day 2 includes someone that was involved in gang life who talks to officers, it is the most impactful part of the training.

On January 23 they will be rolling out a provincial gang exit line that is operating 24/7 and will be a resource for those that want to exit gangs. The exit line will understand the roadblocks, develop a list of organizations in communities that can be a support. The line will be added to 211 and will not only support the individual but also family members calling. Some of the factors that prevent people from exiting gangs include housing or addiction. Street gangs and drugs go hand in hand, drug trafficking is a significant source of income. Meth is the primary drug of choice and drug addiction is often a factor for individuals looking to exit gangs. Firearms trafficking is also becoming more prevalent.

The current trends are that there is increased criminality spreading into northern communities, it is no longer localized and constrained to a certain community. Even if a gang leader is in jail the gang still flourishes. There is often internal violence and homicides between street gangs and they even seeing some gangs from BC lower mainland. Gangs are obtaining firearms from break and enters, and shootings are skyrocketing. A lot of gang members want to get out but can't, to get out of a gang you need to get beat up by the rest of the gang members without defending yourself. There is increased recruitment through people being blessed in through family or by completing missions such as crimes or break and enters. 85 percent of gang members are male and over 80 percent are Indigenous. In 2021, almost half of the homicides are gang related.

In terms of solutions, there needs to be the building of trust and enhanced partnerships. Police can't just focus on enforcement, but they need to focus on all four pillars that was mentioned earlier. There also needs to be more focus on our youth, we need to be there for the young kids because they are being recruited at 10 years old. Gang involvement needs to be treated like an addiction. Restorative justice might be a helpful solution where people sit around a table, and they better understand what a person needs in their lives. It can divert individuals from jail, we need to find communities and courts that would be willing to do this.

Theme: *Gangs* – the issue of gangs is growing in Indigenous communities in Saskatchewan and the RCMP is using tools and strategies to try and combat the issues of gangs. There are many criminal activities that are associated with gangs including human trafficking, drug use and trafficking, arms trafficking, and violence. There has been some work to develop further resources to suppress gangs in Saskatchewan such as training and staff, but further resources are still needed.

Carla Frohaug & Anna Dinsdale, Government of Saskatchewan

The video titled 'Changing the Story' with the late Harold Johnson was shown. The video is currently password protected but Anna or Carla will try to make it available.

Carla and Anna work for the Community Safety and Wellbeing Branch for the Government of Saskatchewan. The department is responsible for several portfolios including interpersonal violence and abuse, family information liaison unit, victim services, community mobilization,

and community innovation and restorative pathways. Their branch can provide restorative justice support and northern alcohol strategy work. The northern alcohol strategy helps to empower local communities to change the story about alcohol in northern Saskatchewan. They are working on recruiting a champion from PAGC. Alcohol is a factor in 48% of intimate partner violence, 47% family violence, and 39% community violence. Canadian First Nation's number one challenge is alcohol and drug abuse. Hospitalizations caused by alcohol are highest in the northern part of the province. As people's incomes rise, they drink heavier, but hospitalizations are lower.

You need a whole toolkit when it comes to alcohol misuse including the following:

- Prevention and health promotion – talking about low-risk drinking, education, and awareness.
- Connection and intervention – wellness centers and treatment options.
- Community Safety – reduce impaired driving.
- Access and availability – alcohol free family events.

There is a balance of regulating and deregulating alcohol. If there are too many regulations in place then a lot of harm can occur, but a lack of regulation can also cause increased traffic accidents, increased dependence, or increased injuries. Alcohol harm can decrease if we all work together. There is evidence based approached to substance use training in Prince Albert that focuses on clinical approaches, trauma informed care, land-based healing, motivational interviewing, interactive case study activities, and collaborative approaches to community interventions. This training will be available online in 2023 to communities at no cost.

Restorative justice can help to contribute to healthy communities, there is a lot of great work happening in many PAGC communities. There are ways to broaden the use of restorative justice and to measure success along the way. Restorative justice may be able to prevent sending community members to jail.

Theme: *Alcohol* – Alcohol abuse is destroying many Indigenous communities in northern Saskatchewan. It leads to many issues including violence, injuries, and health issues. There needs to be resources and programs put in place to raise awareness about the effects of alcohol abuse and ways for community members to receive treatment and support. A holistic perspective needs to be utilized when dealing with alcohol abuse in communities and it needs to be developed with the community needs in mind.

Dr. Herman Michell, PAGC

The following questions were given to groups to discuss, take notes, and share back to the larger group:

- What are things that we need specific to the PAGC?
- What are your ideas on community safety plans?

- What needs to be integrated into a holistic community safety plan model?

Below are the points shared by each group:

- Group 1
 - FN communities already have community response plans, a lot of work to rewrite the work that has already been done. Can build on them and expand it.
 - Lack of assessment cultural tools.
 - Goal is to prevent crisis before you need it
 - Programs need to communicate out to the membership
 - Lack of community champions – inter-agencies not sharing
 - Equity wages to get staff
 - Existing staff not required to do extracurricular activity
 - Strong support of chief and council
 - Need to share more of the successes and share them out to other First Nations communities
- Group 2
 - Contingency planning
 - Adaptable
 - Natural disasters, violence, pandemics
 - Develop roles and responsibilities
 - Saskpolytech developed curriculum for the CSO program
- Group 3
 - Consultation/engagement with the community
 - Prevention programming and services
 - Modules/training to build knowledge and capacity in the community.
 - Community strengths/asset mapping exercises.
 - Youth involved in messaging – example podcasts
- Group 4
 - Land-based education
 - Trauma training
 - Rights of passage
 - One generational solution
 - Elder monitoring program
 - Family cultural camp/nights
 - Parenting program
 - Culturally responsive programming
 - Interagency approaches

Themes Listed

- *Alcohol* – Alcohol abuse is destroying many Indigenous communities in northern Saskatchewan. It leads to many issues including violence, injuries, and health issues.

There needs to be resources and programs put in place to raise awareness about the effects of alcohol abuse and ways for community members to receive treatment and support. A holistic perspective needs to be utilized when dealing with alcohol abuse in communities and it needs to be developed with the community needs in mind.

- *Community Awareness* – There are ways to bring everyone in the community together to raise awareness about safety issues and MMIWG. Shirley and her community utilized memorial walks and community events to bring awareness about missing and murdered women and girls, which also helped community members to work together. The women’s commission was also an effective way to bring women’s issues forward and raise awareness.
- *Community safety ‘before’ an incident.* This address set the tone for the day’s presentations. Tsannie exhorted the audience to speak openly and honestly about the trauma and trauma-cycle facing Indigenous people so the problem(s) could be consciously addressed. Tsannie wants to build community safety, before an incident occurs.
- *Community Safety Planning; Collaboration/Partnership.* Valleyly stated that her office helps to create community-driven and community-led, community safety plans. Her office feels that they are successful owing to the authentic partnership model that they use. Her office also engages broadly with their communities to ensure that all voices are heard. Her office builds relationships, and these relationships make for a community safety plan that works.
- *Community safety.* Mateush and Mirasty outlined the basic process when working with Public Safety Canada. They outlined how they have contributed to advancing community safety in Indigenous communities through the creation of tripartite agreements. Moreover, while Indigenous policing is recognized as critical, Mateush and Mirasty also shared information about the Community Safety Officer program.
- *Crisis* – many of the communities are dealing with crises, which are caused by the traumas that community members continue to face. Some of the crises include substance abuse, violence, and gangs. A way that community members can start to overcome having to deal with all these crises is to work further on education. Education, in several ways, can help to inspire hope for the youth and to provide ways for other community members to have the tools to overcome challenges. Community policies and BCRs have not worked in the past in dealing with crisis issues such as drugs and gangs, it has only been a temporary solution or moved issues elsewhere.
- *Discretionary spending.* Moran stated that Indigenous policing is an essential service. However, she also observed that there is a lot of work to do in terms of jurisdiction at the provincial and federal levels. Moreover, her office has received feedback from First

Nations people outlining negative experiences between Indigenous people and the RCMP. Moran's office has heard from Indigenous people and is working towards a solution.

- *Gangs* – the issue of gangs is growing in Indigenous communities in Saskatchewan and the RCMP is using tools and strategies to try and combat the issues of gangs. There are many criminal activities that are associated with gangs including human trafficking, drug use and trafficking, arms trafficking, and violence. There has been some work to develop further resources to suppress gangs in Saskatchewan such as training and staff, but further resources are still needed.
- *Health Support* – health support needs to be provided to community members at a very young age and needs to be available throughout a person's life. Health support can be provided in many ways including mental, pre/post-natal, substance abuse, infections/diseases, and diabetes. It is critical that the health support workers feel safe in the work that they do and are supported by the communities.
- *Indigenous law (jurisdiction)*. Peterson asserts that Indigenous people should have their own justice systems. That the right to Indigenous law is guaranteed by Canada's foundational law. Instead, Indigenous people have the 'white man's' law inflicted upon them and this is status-quo. Peterson further stated that while jurisdiction may be complicated to figure out, that does not mean that it should not be done.
- *Investing in community; social infrastructure*. Siciliano stated that social infrastructure as community investment is critical in establishing community safety: community violence increases when basic needs are unmet. Siciliano shared how The City of Halifax has done the opposite of investment when Halifax marginalized black settlers in Africaville. She also shared how her current work is working to restore the relationship rift caused by The City of Halifax.
- *Land-based learning* – this was discussed throughout the presentation based on a way to heal from learning about the land and becoming connected with traditional ways of living and knowing. There are many challenges that communities face including gangs or drugs and reconnecting with the land is away to overcome some of these challenges.
- *Learning and Teaching* – The Nechi Institute is an organization that has been helping Indigenous people to overcome trauma. The programming was developed to meet the needs of Indigenous people and it utilizes its teachings from a holistic wellness perspective. Elders and youth are very important components of learning and teaching and Marilyn emphasized this in her presentation.
- *long-term sustainability, authentic engagement, relationship-building*. Fox elaborated on the delicate balance between law enforcement, prevention, and community safety.

Fox claimed that authentic and sincere engagement was required to build lasting partnerships. Lasting partnerships are dependent on high-quality relationships. While there are challenges when it comes to evaluating whether a program was successful (qualitative vs quantitative analysis), it was very clear that 'nothing for us without us' is the key to long-lasting community wellness.

- *Missing Persons* – the RCMP was historically not well equipped to deal with the issue of missing persons in Saskatchewan due to a lack of resources and training. While there are more resources currently, there is still a large gap that needs to be filled. To address the current issue of an increased number of missing persons in Indigenous communities there needs to be more work done by both the RCMP and communities and it needs to be done collaboratively.
- *Racism*. Felix stated that the current system is not working for Indigenous people. The treaties have not been honoured, and so the resulting set-of-affairs and relationships are not conducive to solving problems. Indigenous people are over-represented in the prison systems and more than 35,000 Indigenous children are in the social welfare foster care system. This system is not working.
- *Working collaboratively* – It was emphasized that to effectively develop a community safety plan the different agencies in organizations need to work together to reach common goals. It is critical work that is being done and to achieve results, everyone needs to work effectively together.