

Research. Dissemination. Advocacy. Community.

**Child Trauma Research Centre**

**2023**

**IMPACT REPORT**



Child Trauma  
Research Centre  
UNIVERSITY OF REGINA



**ACKNOWLEDGING THE LAND:**

*and our Treaty Responsibilities*

While most of our work happens or is taken up in Treaty 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 10 Territories, the University of Regina is situated on Treaty 4 lands with a presence in Treaty 6. These are the lands of the nêhiyawak, Anihšînāpēk, Dakota, Lakota, and Nakoda, and the homeland of the Métis/Michif Nation.

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a sunset sky with soft, warm colors. In the lower-left foreground, there is a silhouette of a child sitting on a bicycle with a basket on the front. In the center-right, there is a silhouette of a girl standing with her hands on her hips, looking towards the left. A large, semi-transparent green rectangular box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing white text.

## **SUPPORTING THE UNIVERSITY OF REGINA'S STRATEGIC AND RESEARCH PLANS**

**The University of Regina has named well-being and belonging as an area of focus in their 2020-2025 Strategic Plan, and has committed to promoting mental health and wellness research by prioritizing research activities at existing health-related research centres, such as the Child Trauma Research Centre, in their 2021-2025 Research Action Plan.**



# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Communities,



**Dr Nathalie Reid**

Director  
Child Trauma Research Centre  
(CTRC)

The Child Trauma Research Centre (CTRC) has grown exponentially since its establishment in March 2020. With our research chair, post-doctoral scholar, research coordinator, and research assistants, we actively work to shape the world in which we hope to live in through multi-disciplinary and strength-based research and knowledge mobilization.

We look forward to continuing to grow. Exciting projects that have occupied us this year include:

- trauma-Integrated Practices (TIPs) for... Series
- inquiring into the impacts of climate trauma on children and youth;
- supporting public safety personnel families;
- inquiring into the impacts of culturally relevant food security on the health and wellbeing of refugee and newcomer children and families; and,
- creating a microcredential in trauma-informed/sensitive pedagogies and practices
- interrupting the cycles of intergenerational trauma early intervention and prevention

I also feel extremely privileged to serve my community by sitting as a Board Member on the City of Regina's Community and Social Impact Regina municipal corporation, as a research partner for the Saskatchewan Roughriders Foundation, and as a member of the Strategic Advisory Committee for the Brainable program.

We thank everyone who has supported our work and our growth, and look forward to the exciting things ahead.

Be well, stay well, become well,  
Nathalie



# LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Community,



**Dr Lise Milne**  
Research Chair, Child Trauma  
Research Centre (CTRC),  
University of Regina

In 2022 I was honoured to join the Child Trauma Research Centre (CTRC) as the inaugural Research Chair in Approaches Supporting Child and Youth Health and Well-Being (2022-2025). Over the past 15 months, I have continued to work alongside Dr. Reid and the wonderful CTRC team on many projects that are in alignment with the CTRC's strategic research focus priorities. Examples include:

- a trauma-focused prenatal prevention group program aimed at interrupting the inter-generational cycle of trauma
- a project highlighting policies and practices to support child protection services organizations in responding to cases of intimate partner violence
- three projects with Canadian child welfare organizations on supporting group care workers to provide trauma-informed care, and to support their own well-being.

We are thrilled to work with McGill University on developing a satellite physical and digital lab space - The Child and Youth Trauma Research Incubator (ThRIve). Slated to open in 2024, the lab will be part of a pan-Canadian network aimed at creating conducive environments for collaborative, community-based research to be nurtured and amplified at the institutional level.

Within the greater community, I was elected Board Co-Chair of the Saskatoon Sexual Assault and Information Centre, and continue as a Steering Committee member for RESOLVE Saskatchewan and Academic Representative for the RESOLVE regional council.

I would like to sincerely thank you for supporting the work we do, and for enabling us to extend our reach across Saskatchewan, Canada, and beyond.



# OUR MISSION AND COMMITMENTS

## Our Mission

The Child Trauma Research Centre works to actively shape the world in which we wish to live. The CTRC conducts innovative, strength-based, and trauma-integrated research to develop policies that enhance well-being for children and youth, and the adults in their lives. The CTRC focuses on supporting children, families, and communities to bridge the gap between research and real-world impact. Through multi-disciplinary, cross-sectoral research, the CTRC provides research capabilities to support efforts to address the social determinants and impacts of childhood trauma in Saskatchewan, the Prairies, Canada, and globally. Through research and knowledge sharing best practices, the CTRC aims to reduce the negative long-term health, social, emotional, and economic effects of childhood trauma. It is our motivation to transform the field of child trauma research through strength-based approaches, fostering hope, compassion, and meaningful change.

## Our Commitments

### Research

We **conduct** ethical, multi-disciplinary, and relational research  
We **emphasize** strength-based, trauma-integrated research aimed at understanding and addressing trauma  
We **promote** positive change to end cycles of trauma

### Dissemination

We **provide** focused, responsive, relevant, and consumable research  
We **prioritize** accessibility through clear language to engage different audiences  
We **maximize** reach and impact to develop meaningful and collaborative relationships

### Advocacy

We **advocate** for program and policy enhancement  
We **work** alongside those in vulnerable contexts to promote understandings of childhood trauma  
We **translate** research and community programs to bridge the gap between research and practice

### Community

We **build** strong connections and partnerships in the communities we serve  
We **optimize** community engagement by involving community members and stakeholders in our research  
We **leverage** collective resources to ensure best practices in shaping the direction of our research



2023

*New Projects*



# 2023 IN REVIEW | NEW PROJECTS

Along with continuing the projects begun in prior years, the CTRC began 6 new projects in 2023.

## **Shifting the Focus: Shaping the Content for an Educator Wellbeing Course**

This project seeks to create a community of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) who will gather to shape the content for an 8-week educator wellbeing course. This course will then lay the foundation for a larger proposal (2024 SHRF Establishment Grant) to implement and evaluate the educator wellbeing in Saskatchewan to a) better understand the impacts of attending to educator wellness for the educators themselves; and b) to study the downstream wellbeing and academic impacts for their students.

## **Understanding TRiP: A Cross-Sectoral Collaboration to Improve Outcomes for Children/Youth in Vulnerable Contexts**

TRiP (The Regina Intersectoral Partnership) is a collaboration across 6 human service organizations. Using TRiP as a case study, this research aims to investigate the formation and patterns of collaboration, factors influencing collaboration and service coordination across sectors, and processes and structures involved in building and maintaining a strong cross-sectoral collaboration.





# NEW PROJECTS (CONTINUED)

## **Creating a Trauma-Integrated Practices Knowledge Mobilization Series for Child-Serving Sectors in SK**

The objective of this project is to develop trauma-integrated practices (TIPS for...) knowledge briefs that will serve as a knowledge dissemination and mobilization initiative that touch on a variety of topics and audiences, assisting practitioners in different child-serving sectors.

## **Win With Wellness Presentation Series: Program Evaluation**

The Presentation Series is an interactive presentation designed for grades five to nine students. Topics of the series include understanding mental wellness, tips for managing anxiety and stress, supportive and healthy relationships, and various support and tools available for youth in Saskatchewan. The CTRC has been hired to research and evaluate the effectiveness of the Win with Wellness Player Presentations in schools.

## **PSPNET Families ([www.pspnetfamilies.ca](http://www.pspnetfamilies.ca)) Continuation**

We acquired additional funds enhance the PSPNET Families Wellbeing Hub, in its entirety, focusing on improving user experience comprehensively across the entire ecosystem, rather than in individual parts. Smoothing these experiential pathways will integrate the user experience within the whole ecosystem, and will also support the positioning of this Wellbeing Hub within the stream of public mental health services available in Canada. The additional project activities are summarized into three objectives. To accomplish these objectives, we will draw on the evidence-base cited above, and improve PSPNET Families Wellbeing Hub's capacity to best serve its users.



# NEW PROJECTS (CONTINUED)

## **Strong Minds Strong Kids Program Evaluation**

The CTRC has been brought on as the program evaluators for Psychology Canada's program Strong Minds Strong Kids.

## **Initiation of the Youth Engagement Speaker Series**

In partnership with the Canadian Mental Health Association - Regina Branch, we have begun the development work for offering a monthly speaker series for youth in Regina.

**For information on our projects from previous years, please visit the Connections Hub.**



2023

*Strategic Goals*



The CTRC's vision is anchored in the University of Regina's Strategic Plan (2020-2025), which foregrounds mental health and well-being.

The CTRC has already undertaken numerous research projects in relation with supporting those involved in child welfare and child well-being: teachers, school-based counsellors, trauma-informed practices, etc. It is our aim to continue to grow in these, and other, areas.

Our strategic research focus priorities include but are not limited to:

- Child and youth mental health and well-being
- Supporting practitioners
- Newcomer & refugee
- Education Research
- PSPNet Families
- Early Intervention & Prevention
- Climate Trauma

**The following section will show how we are achieving the goals we have set out in our strategic plan.**

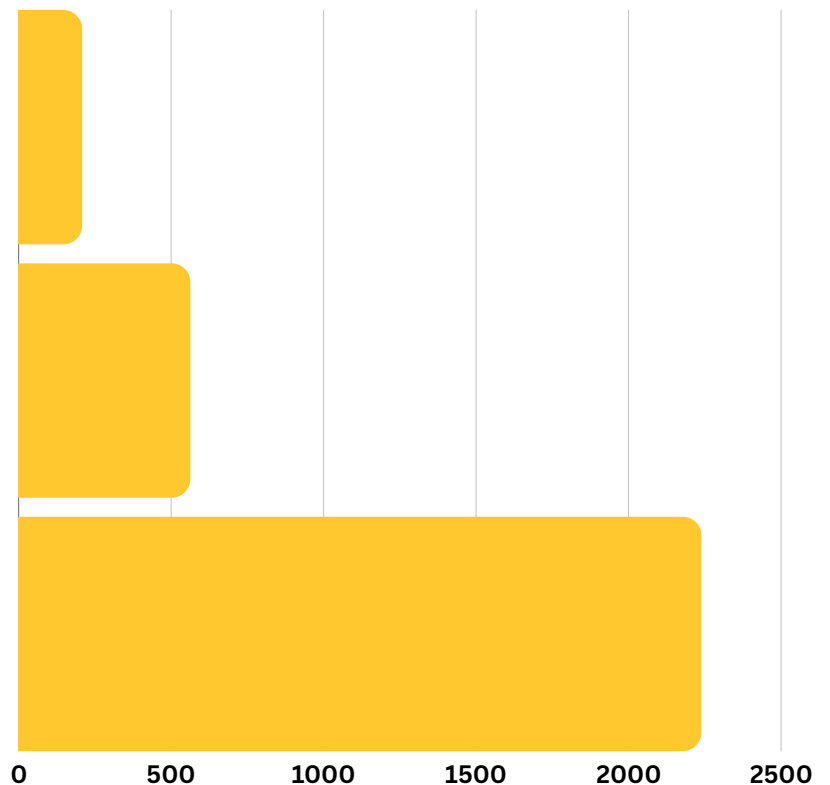


# 2023 IN REVIEW | STRATEGIC GOALS

## Goal 1: Strengthen the CTRC's leadership locally provincially, and nationally

### 1. Increased online presence through social media and websites.

2023 saw significant growth on our social media platforms, with our total number of followers growing by over 200% throughout the year, empowering our mobilization and recruitment efforts.



2130

New followers



## Goal 1 (Continued)

### 2. The Re-Vitalization of the Connections Hub

In 2023, we undertook the task of redesigning the CTRC's website The Digital Connections Hub to improve usability and navigation. We launched the Digital Connections Hub 2.0, now named the Connections Hub, in March of 2023.

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HOME ABOUT US RESEARCH RESOURCES & MORE

#### The Connections Hub

The Connections Hub facilitates access to strength-based research & resources for children and youth, and those who care for them.

READ MORE



## Goal 2: Increase community connectivity and partnerships

### Fostered professional partnerships and connections

Our growth continued in 2023, expanding our professional network across Canada and enabling us to further connect with the communities in which we work. We have now partnered with a total of 27 organizations and worked with

Here are some organizations we had the privilege of collaborating with in 2023:

- Saskatchewan Roughrider Foundation
- Psychology Canada (Strong Minds Strong Kids)
- Brainable (Women's Brain Health)
- Saskatchewan Prevention Institute
- Canadian Mental Health Association - Regina Branch
- TRiP – The Regina intersectoral Partnership
- Good Spirit School Division
- Saskatchewan Teachers Federation Professional Learning

**Thank you to all of our organizational collaborators and partners. Without you our work would not exist.**



## **Goal 3: Build relationships in rural, remote, and Indigenous communities**

### **Building relationships in Indigenous Communities**

The CTRC is committed to establishing an Indigenous Advisor to honour our commitment to the decolonization of trauma research and trauma resources, and to ensure we are attending to our treaty obligations and reconciliation. In 2023, the CTRC engaged Dr. Elizabeth Fast a researcher who examines both practice- and policy-related issues that impact Indigenous youth, their families and their communities, in order to shape the processes for ethical Indigenous engagement.

### **Area for further growth: Building relationships in rural and remote communities**

Much of our work is geared toward extending our reach beyond the urban municipalities and Saskatchewan. In order to do so, we have worked alongside a Facilitator Community drawn from across the province in the development of the microcredential. We have worked with scholars across the country on mental health supports for PSP family members who have told us that their access in rural locations has been very supportive. This will be an area in which we continue to grow in 2024.



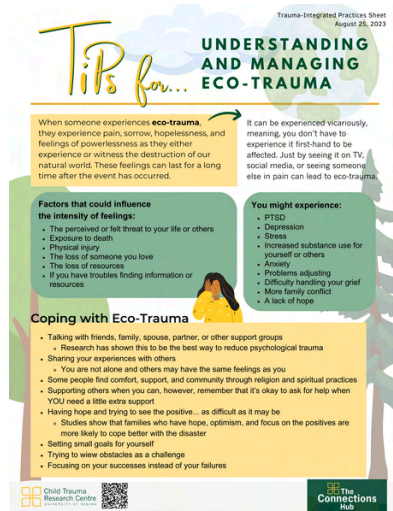


# 2023 IN REVIEW | STRATEGIC GOALS

## Goal 4: Provide timely, meaningful, and accessible research products

### 1. Trauma-Integrated Practices Sheets (Tips For...)

Through the SHRF Research Connections Grant, we were able to launch our Trauma-Integrated Practices Sheets, or Tips For... Series. This series is dedicated to creating timely, appropriate, and easily digestible knowledge products for children, families, and those in child-serving sectors such as teachers. Initially, **7** briefs were produced and published on the Connections Hub.



Since the launch of the project, we have partnered with both **Good Spirit School Division** and **Canadian Mental Health Association - Regina Branch** to deliver more Tips For... briefs.



## Goal 4 (Continued)

### 2. Updating COVID-19 briefs.

One of the first projects undertaken by the CTRC in 2020 was dedicated to managing the impacts of COVID-19 on the mental health of children, families, and workers. Following this project, the CTRC published 20 briefs posters and briefs related to Covid-19. Wanting to ensure the information we offered addressed the issues faced by the public today, we evaluated and updated the majority of the briefs and posters to have a wider application outside of COVID-19.

## Goal 5: Support student research and training



**+2 undergraduate student research assistants**



**+1 Undergraduate Intern**



**+2 Graduate student research assistants**



**Goal 6: Ensure the sustainability of the Centre and enable continuous growth**

## 1. Funding

### Total Research Activity Funding in 2023:

**\$974,491**

### Funding Sources:

- Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation
- University of Regina
- Psychology Canada
- Saskatchewan Roughrider Foundation
- Public Health Agency of Canada
- Canadian Institutes of Health Research



# PRESENTATIONS & MEDIA

## Highlights

The CTRC team had the pleasure of speaking about our work across the world, giving presentations in places such as Iceland, Japan, and ----- . Our knowledge mobilization efforts are at the heart of our work, and we hope continue to grow our impact across the world.

### Director - Dr. Nathalie Reid

- Saskatchewan Mental Health and Wellbeing Symposium - Shaping Trauma-Sensitive Schools
- Presentation to Good Spirit School Division - Supporting Shifts in Our Practices to Support a More Trauma Sensitive
- Canadian Institute for Pandemic Health and Education Collaboration Conference - PSPNet Families Wellbeing Hub

### Research Chair - Dr. Lise Milne

- Parliamentary Health Caucus Event - Reinventing Children's Health Through Game Changing Pediatric Research and Innovation
- European Conference on Domestic Violence - Advocating for a Proactive, Cross-Sectoral Approach to Intimate Partner Violence: Insights on How Child Protection Services Respond in Saskatchewan, Canada
- Canadian Consortium on Child & Youth Trauma - Canadian Initiatives on Trauma-informed Care Workers: Where Do We Go From Here?

### Post-Doctoral Scholar - Dr. Hang Tran

- Canadian Society for the Study of Education Conference 2023 - Making Kin with Multispecies' Flourishing in the Anthropocene: A Multiperspectival Narrative
- Youth Mental Health Gathering: Research, Dissemination, Advocacy, and Community: The Story of the Child Trauma Research Centre
- Lakehead University Education Seminar Series - Children's School Curriculum Making and Familial Curriculum Making



2023



Our Team



# 2023 IN REVIEW | OUR TEAM



## **Dr Nathalie Reid**

Director

Child Trauma Research Centre  
(CTRC)

Dr Nathalie Reid is currently the Director of the Child Trauma Research Centre at the University of Regina, and a lecturer in the Faculty of Education. Her current research is taking her in many directions including trauma-sensitive pedagogies, mental health and connectivity in rural and remote communities, and child trauma and climate change.

Her doctoral research, (defended successfully December 9, 2019) entitled Teachers' Experiences of/with Trauma and Trauma-Sensitivity sought to foreground the stories of trauma teachers live by, with, and in, and her career as a Secondary teacher, in three provinces across Canada, often alongside at-risk youth, laid the foundation for her passion inquire into the complexities of children's experiences as well the experiences of those entrusted with the care of children.

Her research has implications for program and policy development, teacher education, teacher retention, teacher, child, and youth mental health, and supporting all those living with trauma on school landscapes. Nathalie was born in Moose Jaw and as a member of a military family, moved extensively nationally and internationally. She graduated with a BAH and B.Ed. (Concurrent Education Program) from Queen's University. Nathalie went on to teach high school in Ontario, Nova Scotia, and in two communities in Alberta. She completed a M.Ed. in Curriculum Development from St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, NS, and her PhD at the University of Alberta.



## Research Chair - Dr. Lise Milne



### **Dr Lise Milne**

Research Chair, Child Trauma Research Centre (CTRC), University of Regina

Dr. Milne joined the University of Regina as an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Social Work (FSW) in 2018. For a decade prior, while completing her PhD at McGill University, she worked in the research-rich environment of the McGill Centre for Research on Children and Families as a project manager for multiple small- and large-scale university-community partnership projects. In her current role at the University of Regina, Dr. Milne has taken on leadership roles, been a participant on several academic committees at multiple levels, and contributed to the broader Saskatchewan and Canadian communities.

Dr. Milne's area of research focuses primarily on enhancing resilience to mediate the impacts of exposure to childhood traumatic experiences, including neurobiological impacts. Her work includes supporting child-serving organizations and staff who are often challenged to implement and evaluate effective interventions critical to children's wellbeing. In addition, Dr. Milne has made concerted efforts to form connections in Saskatchewan in a variety of contexts, with a view to developing meaningful, multi-disciplinary collaborations.

In this 3-year Research Chair term, Dr. Milne aims to develop a prevention and intervention program of research that brings benefit to children, youth, and their families within communities across Saskatchewan with regards to their mental health and wellbeing, with a particular focus on the neurodevelopmental risks for infants born to parents who themselves experienced childhood trauma.



## Post-Doctoral Scholar - Dr. Hang Tran



**Dr Hang Tran**

Post Doctoral Scholar, Child Trauma Research Centre (CTRC), University of Regina

Dr Hang Thi Thuy Tran joins the Child Trauma Research Centre as a Post Doctoral Scholar. Her area of focus will be understanding the mental health impacts of culturally relevant food offerings for refugee and newcomer families, children, and youth.

Dr Hang Thi Thuy Tran has worked in multiple areas: a lecturer, a researcher, a community facilitator, an interpreter, and a cultural broker. She completed her PhD in Elementary Education at the University of Alberta, Canada in 2021. Her doctoral dissertation entitled "Narrative Inquiry into the Experiences of Vietnamese Children and Mothers Composing Lives in Transition to Canada" received the 2022 Canadian Association for Teacher Education (CATE) Recognition Award for Theses and Dissertations on Teacher Education.

Her study highlights the importance of cultural ethics in doing research and everyday life-making, the "world"-traveling to better understand the experiences of newcomer children and families and their contribution to Canadian education and culture, and making kin with multispecies' flourishing as significant in the children's familial curriculum-making and school curriculum-making worlds. Dr Tran has a wide range of research interests including newcomer children and families, familial curriculum-making, cultural brokering, teacher education, and narrative inquiry.





**Sam Houston, CTRC**  
Research  
Coordinator

## **Research Coordinator - Sam Houston**

Sam Houston obtained a Bachelor of Arts with a major in Economics and Society from the University of Regina. With a background in the public sector, Sam obtained hands-on experience working directly with communities in vulnerable contexts. He hopes to utilize his research and analytic skills to support and strengthen communities in vulnerable contexts, specifically children and those entrusted with their care.



**Linzi Stoddard, CTRC**  
Research Coordinator  
& Assistant

## **Research Coordinator & Assistant - Linzi Stoddard**

Linzi obtained a Bachelor of Science with a major in Biomedical Neuroscience from the University of Saskatchewan and a Masters of Science in Organizational Leadership through Arizona State University. Linzi is the founder of a local Saskatchewan non-profit that works with individuals after experiences with sexual violence through body reclamation and community supports. With a background in neurobiology and trauma, Linzi hopes to use these areas of interest to help conduct research and provide services to help expand current resources and services to meet our communities' needs.



**Adrienne Ratushniak,**  
CTRC Research  
Coordinator & Assistant

## **Research Coordinator & Assistant - Adrienne Ratushniak**

Adrienne has a Bachelor of Arts Honours in anthropology from St. Francis Xavier University, and in spring 2022 completed a Master of Arts in medical anthropology from the University of Saskatchewan. A background in harm reduction, risk analysis, and qualitative research methods has translated well to her work as a research coordinator and assistant for the CTRC. Adrienne's anthropological training has enabled a critical and holistic perspective on social issues, and she is fascinated by the intersectional connections that complicate them. Along with the CTRC, Adrienne is involved in many other research projects with Lise Milne through the Faculty of Social Work.



**Steffi Oberthier,** CTRC  
Graduate Research  
Assistant

## **Graduate Research Assistant - Steffi Oberthier**

Steffi is a research assistant with CIPSRT and has primarily been involved on the PHAC Families Project. In spring 2022, she received a Bachelor of Arts Honours with Honours in Psychology degree through the University of Regina, and is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Experimental and Applied Psychology. She has worked in a variety of research settings, both professional and academic. Steffi has also been a part of many volunteer research projects and maintains membership in the Child Evidence Lab and the NELL Lab which are both located at the University of Regina. Steffi will be applying for Master of Science in Experimental and Applied Psychology in fall 2023 with the hope of one day acquiring a PhD.



## Undergraduate Research Assistants



**Jenni Martin**, CTRC  
Undergraduate  
Research Assistant

Jenni Martin is currently an undergraduate Psychology student at the University of Regina. Alongside her studies and research at the CTRC, she serves as a research assistant for PSP Net, channeling her dedication into initiatives aimed at understanding and addressing mental health challenges. In the future, Jenni dreams of becoming a licensed clinical psychologist, where she can continue her mission of promoting mental health and well-being for all.



**Raelynn Fohr**, CTRC  
Undergraduate  
Research Assistant

Raelynn Fohr is in her final semester of her Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Psychology degree at the University of Regina. Raelynn has worked with children in a variety of settings, such as assisting in classrooms and working as a math instructor. In the future, Raelynn hopes to pursue a Masters of Science in Clinical Psychology, focusing on how children learn, both in school and at home.



**Alishba Khan**, CTRC  
Volunteer

Alishba Khan is an undergraduate student at the University of Regina currently pursuing a BA in Psychology. She is interested in volunteering and giving back to her community, primarily focusing on youth services. In the past, She has worked with the Regina Open Door Society, and is now a volunteer research assistant at the CTRC. She is working on developing a larger background in community and social work and plans to gain more hands-on experience engaging with vulnerable youth.



2023



*Looking Ahead*



## **Agriculture.**

The CTRC is looking to collaborate with ongoing research being done in Saskatchewan to provide mental health & wellbeing support to farmers and their families.

## **Climate Trauma**

This project responds to past, current, and future ecological crises with an eye to understanding the impacts of these, and impending crises, on children and youth's perceptions of, and engagements with, their world. Intersecting ecological education with emotional experiences of teachers and students, this study atypically weaves climate change education with mental health scholarship. It will contribute to: nuancing climate hope alongside other emotional experiences; future curriculum and policy development; teacher education programming; in-service teachers' pedagogical practices; and, informing the ways in which teachers and schools shape multi-generational responses to climate change crises.



## **Indigenous Counsel**

As mentioned earlier, we are looking to practice Pimatisiwin by engaging in relationship-building through continuing to work alongside Dr. Elizabeth Fast who will guide us in our work alongside an Indigenous knowledge keeper or advisor to support, sustain, and guide all of the CTRC's work.

## **Additional Funding**

While the CTRC has been highly successful in securing research grants, most of these do not support salary costs for the principal investigator(s), nor do they keep overhead/operational costs. However, the CTRC is hugely grateful for the anonymous donation that has supported this significant growth in 2023. To ensure sustainability, the CTRC will continue to seek an endowment so that the salaries (or substantial portions thereof) of the necessary primary staff to operationalize the Centre will be guaranteed in perpetuity by the interest earned on the endowment.



# OUR CONTACTS

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University of Regina

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## **Dr. Chris Yost**

Vice President (Research)

University of Regina

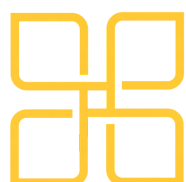
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## **Development Office**

University of Regina

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Child Trauma  
Research Centre  
UNIVERSITY OF REGINA

 The  
Connections  
Hub

