



STR8 UP: 10,000 Little Steps to Healing Inc.

2018/19 Annual Report

ADVOCATING FOR A PROVINCE-WIDE GANG STRATEGY

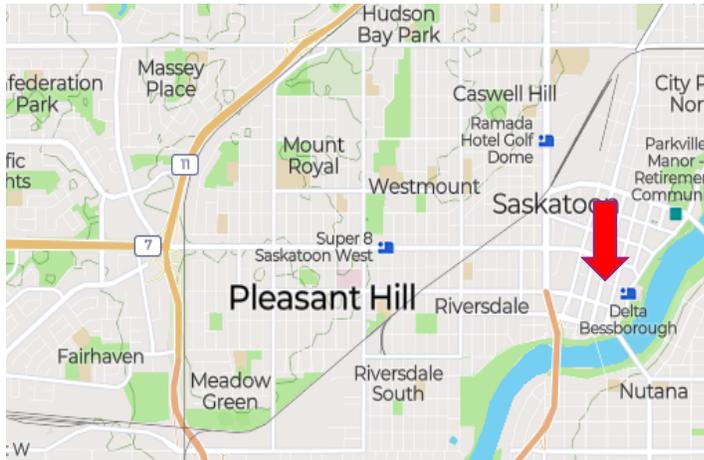
SERVING EX-GANG MEMBERS AND OUR COMMUNITY

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1. Contacting STR8 UP

FIND STR8 UP at 226 Ave V. S. Saskatoon



Visit us on

Website - str8-up.ca

Facebook

Twitter &

Instagram

Phone: 306-244-1771

2. ABOUT STR8 UP

MISSION

Assist individuals in mastering their own destiny in liberating themselves from gangs and criminal street lifestyles. STR8 UP builds healthy families and endeavors to provide individuals and their families with the skills and resources they need to become responsible citizens which will lead to a positive and gang-free lifestyle.

PRINCIPLES

- i** *It is necessary to offer alternatives to the negative and vicious stereotypes with which they too often have been labelled.*
- ii** *Healing of individuals and groups goes hand-in-hand.*
- iii** *The journey of healing begins where members find themselves, not where they want or are expected to be.*
- iv** *Healing comes from within, but a community of support is necessary.*
- v** *Healing is a long, difficult, and painful process, full of setbacks, failures and slips.*

- vi *Where the community offers appropriate programs and services, duplication is avoided.*
- vii *The goal is not to 'battle' active street gang members nor recruit new members.*
- viii *Intervention is accomplished through prevention of gang involvement among our youth.*
- ix *Recovery requires a positive spiritual life.*
- x *To begin a healing journey, it is necessary to possess a vision of changes and possibilities.*

5 CONDITIONS

- i Drop your colors
- ii Deal with addictions
- iii Be honest
- iv Be humble
- v Give 4 years

3 GOALS

- i Be a loving parent
- ii Be a faithful partner
- iii Be a responsible citizen

THE FOUR PILLARS

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Outreach</i></p> <p>Probation, housing, addictions, health, educational appointments, court attendances and case planning. . .</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Training</i></p> <p>Professional development, work readiness and placement, literacy and skill building.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Personal Development</i></p> <p>Personal, leadership and parenting skills, healthy relationships, strengthening and reuniting families, training / education for healthy lifestyle.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Community Education</i></p> <p>Presentations, seminars, workshops, projects and materials, building awareness and understanding.</p>
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STR8 UP is a non-profit organization with charitable status.

Want to know more? Contact:

Stan Tu’Inukuafe, President and Co-founder at: 306-229-8853 or

Susan Saville, Executive Director at: 306-244-1771

3. STR8 UP Board

Co-founder - Fr. André Poilièvre
President/Co-founder - Stan Tu'Inukuafe
Vice-President - Kearney Healy
Treasurer - Raymond Lepage
Secretary - Sheila Whelan
Director - Diann Block
Director - Brent Misener
Director - Kerry Lafreniere
Director - Sarah Gryba
Director - Shane Partridge
Member/Director - Devon Napope
Member/Director - Faith Eagle
Member/Director - Matthew Tobac

Co-founders Awarded

Father André Poilièvre

2008 recipient of the Order of Canada for his work with youth struggling to overcome addictions and gang violence.

Stan Tu'Inukuafe

2017 recipient of the Governor General's Meritorious Service Decoration - Civil for his work with former gang members.

Our Constitution requires that at least two board members be STR8 UP Members; those who have self-identified as former gang members or having been associated with the “criminal street lifestyle” and joined STR8 UP to participate in its programs.

Message from the President - Stan Tu'Inukuafe

LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND WITHOUT HOPE

During one of my early visits with Father André, he told me about an experience with a STR8 UP Member. With an air of excitement, he shared this conversation:

Fr. André asked the Member:

“What does STR8 UP do for you, that no one else does?”

After a few minutes of silence, he responded:

“What STR8 UP does for me, that no one else does. . . it gives me hope.”

STR8 UP is more than a “program” that seeks to help young men and women build safe and stable lives. STR8 UP is symbol of hope and relief for those gang members who are thinking about and wanting to leave a life that is filled with violence and dysfunction.

Community recommendations for a provincial gang strategy

Following the Forum and Reports concerning *The Provincial Gang Strategy*, STR8 UP endeavoured to promote these recommendations gathered from the widespread community consultations:

- localized approaches with a focus on education and training and training for community members;
- prevention implementation strategies with increased programming and education around healthy family dynamics;
- funding mental health, addictions and housing services, ensuring that the most vulnerable populations are cared for first;
- sustained funding for localized strategies; and
- incorporating the lived experience of those who have been involved in street gangs when developing and implementing a gang strategy.

STR8 UP will continue to work in Saskatoon and communities across the province to promote these recommendations. **For more information about the Provincial Gang Strategy go to: <http://provincialgangstrategy.ca/>**

A Very Warm Thank You

I would like to acknowledge STR8 UP's dedicated Board and STR8 UP Members who have worked tirelessly to improve upon and build our services, despite some serious challenges in the past year.

Thank you to the volunteers, community members and agencies who financially support the work we do. Without your support, we would not be able to work with those who have been left behind without hope.

I am honored to present our 2018/19 Annual Report, which highlights the work we have been doing to support gang members redirect their lives and become contributing members in their families and communities.

Stan Tu'Inukuafe

STR8 UP Members Give Back

Our STR8 UP members (former gang members) volunteer their time and experience for community presentations, mentoring and STR8 UP and other community initiatives.

Community Safety – More Than a Gang Problem

In March 2019, Shane Partridge, STR8 UP board member during our 2018/19 year, organized an emergency meeting to focus on community safety in six of Saskatoon's core neighbourhoods. In a March 18 CBC news article, Shane expressed his goals:

I hope that we can map out safe spots in our communities, not-so-safe spots in our community, and relay that information to our community associations and the city so that we can work towards some solutions for these areas that we may identify.

Shane said that it's important to not get caught up in a mentality of labelling it all a "gang problem." He says the picture is more complicated.

Pleasant Hill Free Barbecue

In April of this year STR8 UP organized a free barbecue to help build community pride in the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood, a community plagued by violence.



STR8 UP Members Shane Partridge and Chris Moyah were pictured in an April 26/19 CBC news story handing out free burgers and hotdogs.

Message from Faith Eagle, STR8 UP Board Member

I have been a STR8 UP member for 8 1/2 years. STR8 UP has changed my life and the lives of my family. It has brought structure, honesty, accountability and stability. STR8 UP has helped me and my kids regain confidence and hope in ourselves as well as the skills to be productive members of society.

I've been in jail, had my kids taken into care and been homeless. **My only hope, STR8 UP, walked with us through darkest times - we walked out of a hell we never thought we could . . .**

Today my hope is to SHARE THE HOPE that is STR8 UP with many others.

Faith Eagle

Message from Devon Napope, STR8 UP Board Member

A single father of three teens, I am a 2nd year student at First Nations University and proud to be studying for an Indigenous Social Work degree. I represent STR8 UP Members on the board and am the Social Work Representative at FNU. **I am empowered, confident, happy and well; having the strength to maintain an alcohol and drug free life.**

Now let's rewind 29 months. 2 years and 5 months ago I was broken; lost and unable to find any of the pieces to put myself back together. Sleeping on my Mama's couch - God bless her - and at numerous friends' homes; fighting to stay awake. My trust was damaged. I would drink to feel better but cry when I drank; feeling hopeless within the insanity of it all.

You see . . . what I'm getting at . . . there were several very instrumental circumstances that contributed to my transformation. Foremost on that list, **would be one choice that changed the course of my life from that moment on:**

THE CHOICE TO ASK STR8 UP FOR HELP

I knew this is what I needed most. I knew I didn't know a lot of things. Oblivious to the good life; STR8UP was there from that moment on to this day guiding me and I've been able to lean on it when times got hard.

Equipping me with a strong voice, confidence and strength. Immediate growth like the first flower in the spring ready to shine. I don't know what kind of change I'm going to bring forth, I just know STR8UP changed my life.

Devon Napope

4. Staff

Executive Director - Susan Saville

Outreach Worker - Emily Carr

Hiring

See website for Outreach Worker posting

Message from the Executive Director - Susan Saville

This is an organization I believe in as I know it works.

My association with STR8 UP began many years ago and included a stint as past-president. January 2019, I returned as Executive Director. The Board asked me to undertake the challenge of restructuring STR8 UP and I readily agreed. I have been inspired by STR8 UP's approach and the response of former gang members.

I see members helping other members; this is powerful. I like being attached to an organization that promotes helping each other in a positive, non-judging, practical way.

In 2018/19 reduced funding dramatically affected STR8 UP's ability to deliver programming consistently. Staff were laid-off. With the Board, I reached out to other community leaders for advice. We examined the needs of our stakeholders, studied other delivery models and established new internal policies and procedures. Throughout, we have been inspired by our Members and their drive to rebuild.

Member stories are difficult to listen to sometimes; it's painful to listen to people tell stories about pain, but it is also very real and very reassuring to see that taking 10,000 little steps can lead to healing.

STR8 UP has been greatly encouraged and is deeply appreciative of the timely financial support received from our Partners and private individuals. Their confidence in our organization and belief in STR8 UP's mission has sustained us and given us the opportunity to rebuild. This includes a new team.

We recently hired a new outreach worker, Emily Carr, a highly qualified and dynamic person who possesses the prerequisites for the job: skills, experience and compassion.

We are currently looking for a second outreach worker to help carry out STR8 UP's mission in Saskatoon's community.

Our future looks very bright! We have a committed board of directors, new staff and a group of members who never give up!

Susan Saville

5. STR8 UP Community Education and Advocacy

Community Education

STR8 UP is a recognized expert on gangs, the associated lifestyle and the conditions:

- leading young people to join gangs,
- experienced by communities and their institutions, and
- necessary to support individuals in leaving the gang life and transitioning into a contributing community member.

STR8 UP is frequently invited to speak in communities across the province and it involves STR8 UP members, who speak from personal experience.

Community Advocacy

STR8 UP and individual members are frequently approached by the media to lend expertise to the discussion of worrying trends associated with gangs in our communities.

In a 3-part series *The Struggle Inside*, launched September 5, 2019, which looked into addictions and drugs in provincial correctional facilities, the Saskatoon Star Phoenix and Regina Leader-Post, interviewed STR8 UP's Co-founder, Father André Poilièvre and a current STR8 UP Member.

1 Drugs inundate Saskatchewan jails - Saskatoon Star Phoenix

“There’s no easy solution, but the first thing that needs to happen is a vision of wellness rather than simply warehousing,” says Father André Poilièvre, the founder of STR8 UP, an organization that helps former gang members transition out of the lifestyle.

2 Punishment vs. treatment

The inmates who join STR8 UP do so voluntarily on their own and once they are there, they take part in a serious way. STR8 UP's programming includes a sharing and an educational component. Poilievre suggests the STR8 UP model is one that should be looked at by the ministry. . . **Every correctional centre should have a treatment centre, in Poilièvre's view.**

3. Faces of Recovery

STR8 UP Member, Owen Pelletier spoke about the conditions which contributed to his addictions and gang lifestyle. He also talked about the beginning of change in his life. (It) . . . didn't come through the programs offered in Saskatchewan correctional centres; **it began after another man . . . introduced him to STR8 UP, an organization that works to transition former gang members out of that lifestyle.**

Devon Napope is involved with STR8 UP and shares his story publicly. He was connected with Father André, when he was 15. Back then, he said he wasn't ready to change. . . Two years ago, Devon returned to Saskatoon, still using cocaine and drinking. . . **It was**

STR8 UP that helped him get into treatment and gain the confidence to find his voice. Devon has been sober for nearly two years.

Owen Pelletier is shown below participating in a community presentation.



It was Devon Napope (below) who introduced Owen Pelletier to STR8 UP.



6. The Provincial Gang Strategy

Research, Forum, Consultation and Reports

<http://provincialgangstrategy.ca/>



Forum

Following a literature review and community consultations, STR8 UP held a stakeholders Forum in May 2018 in partnership with: the Saskatchewan Ministries of Corrections and Policing as well as Justice, Canada's Ministry of Justice and the RCMP to discuss gang issues and develop recommendations.

Report

Building Healthier Communities, Report on Community Development of the Saskatchewan Prevention / Intervention Street Gang Strategy, by Robert Henry, PH.D., University of Calgary, August 31, 2018.

Community Consultation and Report

STR8 UP visited communities across the province again to obtain feedback on the Report's recommendations and this was further reported in ***Saskatchewan Communities Speak***, *Provincial Gang Strategy: Forum & Community Consultations Reports*, by Dave Shanks, The Students Commission of Canada.

Moose Jaw July 25 / 2018

It's very important for Moose Jaw to have a workshop like this, . . .we're a smaller city and we find we have a lot of the gangs coming from Regina and Saskatoon to Moose Jaw because it's the smaller place. We don't know enough about how they are run or anything about the gangs, really.

(Marlene Borthwick, Acting director Transition House - discovermoosejaw.com July 25/18.)

North Battleford Jan16 / 2019

When we are looking at addressing gangs, communities are saying: gangs struggle with addiction; they need employment; they need education, . . .

(Stan Tu'Inukuafe presenting *Building Healthier Communities* Report - *Battelfordsnow.com*)

Community Education Materials

Developed in response to the demand from communities across the province, these materials are designed to facilitate presentations about STR8 UP's Provincial Gang Strategy. They are available to download at <http://provincialgangstrategy.ca/>.

7. Programs and Services

Outreach Case Planning &

STR8 UP Member programs for youth and adults

- Advocacy in court proceedings, and with corrections, government agencies and community services,
- Case planning, support and referral during transition and reintegration from correctional facilities (remand or sentence) and in the community,

- Support and referrals for addictions, physical and mental health needs,
- Life skills and problem solving coaching and personal counselling,
- Tattoo removal,
- Family connections,
- Recreational activities,
- Cultural and spiritual opportunities, including sharing circles, cultural camps, referral,
- Training and education program placement and financial arrangement assistance,
- Mentoring, and
- Leadership training through community presentations.

When available, STR8 UP refers its Members to programs offered in the community. It also offers additional programs in house, when funding allows.

Presentations

Conducted in institutions and throughout the community on a regular basis; STR8 UP Members always participate. These presentations help to increase understanding around the causes and solutions with respect to gang involvement and they give the Members an opportunity to develop their communication skills. By sharing their personal stories of struggle and success, they build their confidence and promote compassion and understanding in the community.

Work Readiness and Placement

**A social enterprise in partnership with
Quint Development Inc.**



contact: info@buildupsaskatoon.ca

Build UP offers STR8 UP Members and others with the opportunity to develop work skills. It also offers the community an opportunity to participate in a business that prioritizes community benefits and social impact over private profit.

Build UP offerings: renovations, landscaping, demolition, mowing, fence repair and more . . .

8. Troubled Past or Healthy Future

A Social Media Project

Over the years, STR8 UP and its Members have participated in a number of projects which are designed to give expression to the Members and increase understanding in the public realm.

This summer STR8 UP launched. . .

STR8 UP & Gangs: Troubled Past or Health Future

It offers a space for STR8 UP Members to share their experiences and promote a better understanding of the challenges they've faced and overcome.

Follow us beginning on our web site:

<http://str8-up.ca/str8-up-gangs-troubled-past-or-healthy-future/>

View images and quotes for each theme.

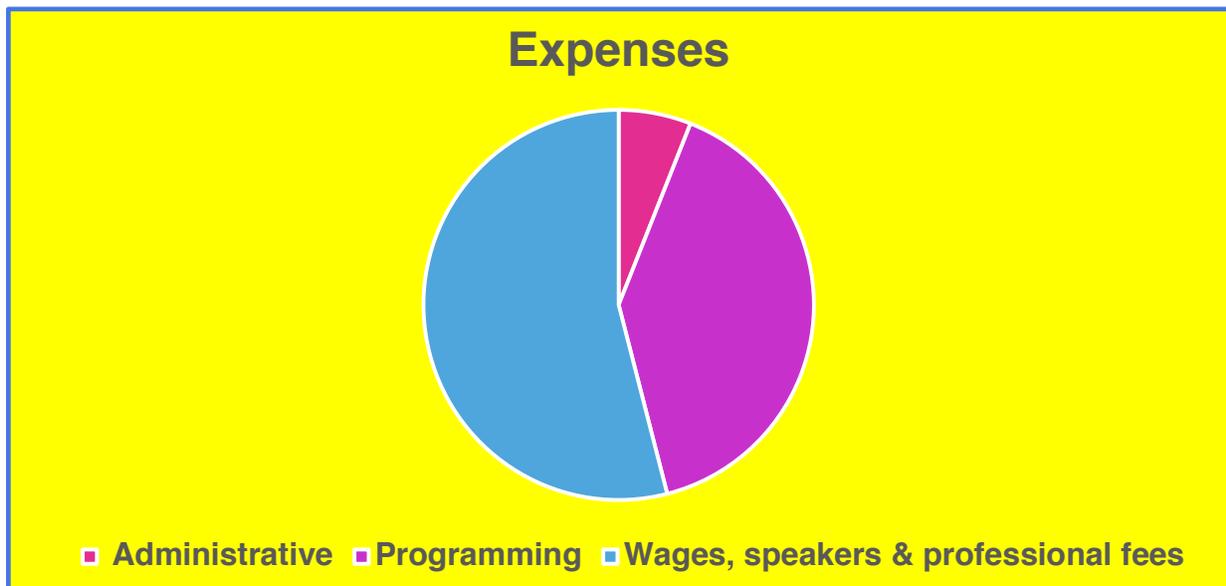
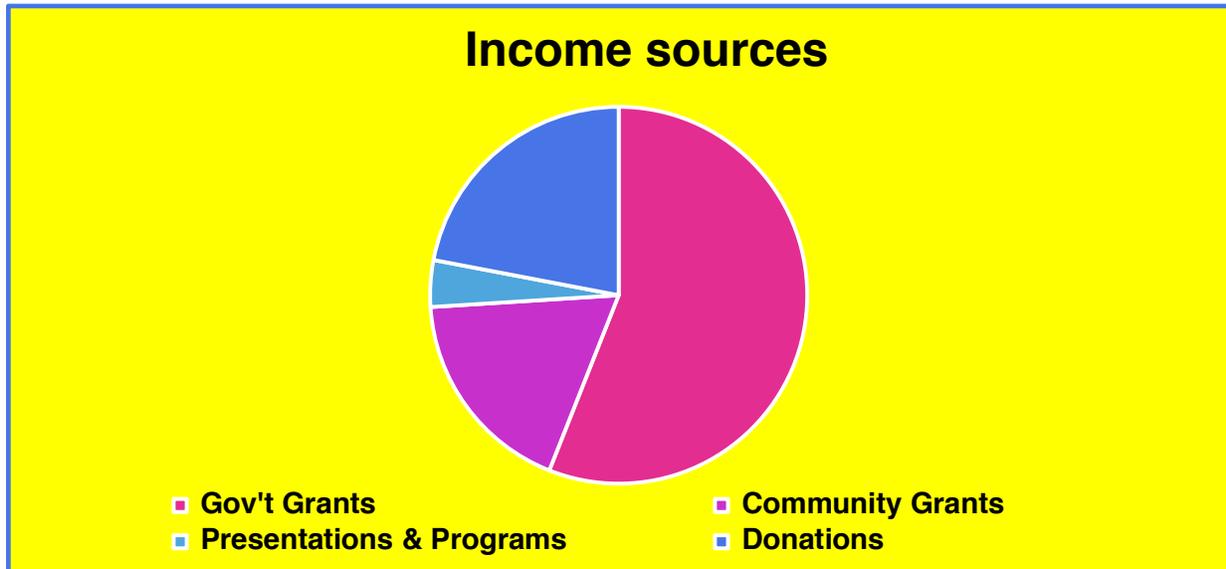
Post comments or questions.



9. Data Under Construction

As we prepare this Annual Report, we are reorganizing our data collection and recording procedures. Our goal is to report meaningful and reliable evidence-based data upon which our funders, the public and we may rely. Thank you for your patience.

10. 2018/19 Financial Overview



Speaker & professional fees are tied to government grant income and work undertaken in relation to the Provincial Gang Strategy report, consultations and presentation. Audited financial statements will be posted on our website.

11. Appreciation: Partners, Funders, Supporters

Financial and resource support from the following community leaders has been essential to STR8 UP's ongoing operations. We hope to earn your continuing support for future endeavours and hope to maintain an ongoing relationship with you.



AMISKUSEES:
SEMAGANIS WORME
FAMILY FOUNDATION



Thank You from the Bottom of our Hearts!