



**STR8  
UP**

**STR8 UP  
ANNUAL REPORT  
2020/21**



## **STR8 UP:**

STR8 UP assists individuals in mastering their own destiny and 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 positive and gang-free lifestyles.

### **PRINCIPLES OF STR8 UP**

1. It is necessary to offer alternatives to the negative and vicious stereotypes with which they too often have been labelled.
2. Healing of individuals and groups goes hand-in-hand.
3. The journey of healing begins where they find themselves, not where they want to be or are expected to be.
4. Healing comes from within but it is everyone's responsibility to support it.
5. Healing is a long, difficult, and painful process, full of setbacks, failures and slips.
6. STR8 UP does not duplicate programs and services available within the community.
7. STR8 UP is not battling the active street gang members and does not actively recruit new members.
8. STR8 UP Intervention is accomplished through Prevention of gang involvement among youth within the community.
9. STR8 UP is a Spiritual-based group.
10. It becomes necessary to possess a vision of new changes and new possibilities to begin the healing journey.

### **CONDITIONS OF STR8 UP MEMBERSHIP**

#### **1. DROP COLORS**

#### **2. DEAL WITH ADDICTIONS**

#### **3. BE HONEST**

#### **4. BE HUMBLE**

#### **5. GIVE 4 YEARS**



## GOALS OF STR8 UP MEMBERSHIP

### BE A LOVING PARENT

Most STR8 UP members are moms and dads. However, when gang banging, their gang and their drugs came first and they were too often not involved in their children's lives; if they were, it was often a negative involvement. Parents cannot give to their children what they never learned. They cannot manifest what they have never experienced. Rather, they will pass on what they have learned and experienced. The effort they put in to be moms and dads becomes a discovery of new ways of thinking, feeling, doing and believing in one's abilities to have a healthy relationship with one's children.

### BE A FAITHFUL PARTNER

We expect members to create and maintain a healthy and respectful relationship with their partners. Their past relationships were often dysfunctional, violent and promiscuous. For many, a complete transformation, a rebuilding and a reconceiving of their concepts of relationships and faithfulness becomes necessary.

### BE A RESPONSIBLE CITIZEN

Members must define what this means for themselves and the community in which they reside. This involves the belief that it is possible to be sober, to obtain a trade or an education. It is possible to obtain full-time employment and pay your bills.

## 4 PILLARS OF SUCCESS

These four pillars include training and support for STR8 UP members:

- **OUTREACH** (both while incarcerated and in the community)
- **PERSONAL HEALING**
- **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**
- **COMMUNITY EDUCATION**

# MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD



## BOARD MEMBERS

Board Chair – Brent Misener  
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Director – Diann Block  
Director – Sarah Gryba  
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Member/Director – Kim Regier

*Thank you to **STR8 UP Member Mathias Ballantyne**  
for all of the artwork featured in this year's Annual Report.*



Although 2020 was a year of Covid-19 related challenges, it was also a period of growth and optimism for the staff, participants and members of STR8 UP. In 2020, STR8 UP had over 130 referrals to the GVRs-CIM project to our offices in Saskatoon and Prince Albert. To meet this demand, our staff grew by over twenty in Saskatoon and Prince Albert. Our Transitional Housing program has allowed us to work intensively with 30 individuals and we plan to add another 7 suites to the program in the near future. STR8 UP also recently completed a review of its programs, funding, and a long term vision of how STR8 UP can improve the work it does.

Like many businesses and non-profits, Covid created some challenges for STR8 UP in 2020. Staff turnover and cases of Covid-19 created challenges, but our staff and Executive Director have been versatile and flexible in order to maintain contact and consistent service delivery. We were greatly saddened to lose our cultural advisor, Terry Atimoyoo, who passed away in January. Terry was a trusted mentor and friend to many. He will be greatly missed.

As we move through 2021, we are encouraged by the determination and dedication of our participants, members and staff. STR8 UP's reputation in the community remains strong and we are encouraged by the positive feedback we have been receiving from all levels of government and other community organizations. On behalf of the board, we would like to thank our donors, advocates, staff, and especially our members for your support.

Brent Misener  
Board Chair  
STR8 UP 10,000 Little Steps to Healing Inc.

# MESSAGE FROM THE STAFF

What a year this has been for us here at STR8 UP... with the roller coaster ride of Covid-19 we have seen many setbacks and challenges, but also some great successes and opportunities for growth. I would first off like to share how fortunate I am to have such an amazing group of staff to work with here at STR8 UP. Even with all the challenges we have faced this past year they have continued to put the participants and members first and have continued to find unique ways to provide much needed supports and resources, while working to keep everyone safe. This past year we have grown from a staff of just a few to now having over 20 individuals working at STR8 UP and offices in both Saskatoon and Prince Albert. In spite of the overwhelming challenges we faced, we have seen successful growth within the Gang Violence Reduction Strategy Community Intervention Model project, been able to successfully transition individuals through our Transitional Housing project, supported participants/members with a dedicated Covid 19 support worker, and have continued to build the Community Outreach program that supports our members.

I would also like to mention the members and the many challenges they have faced this past year. Covid-19 has changed the way we work, socialize and communicate with one another in ways we never could have imagined. The members and participants had to adapt and learn new technologies, deal with feelings of isolation, resource how to access supports that were no longer there or were limited, and navigate systems that were often confusing. Through this however, we saw resilience and resourcefulness from the group and a willingness to work together to overcome. They had patience with the new staff and worked with them to overcome challenges and continued to amaze us with their accomplishments and efforts.

We are very much looking forward to this next year at STR8 UP. Staff are eager to have more face-to-face interactions again and with the easing of restrictions get back to hosting groups and workshops. We are looking to expand our Transitional Housing to offer more housing suites and increase supports, continue to advance the GVRs-CIM project, and build on the Community Outreach supports being offered. Accomplishing all these things wouldn't be possible without the overwhelming support of our community and the donors who fund our programs. This support is at the heart of what we do here at STR8 UP and it is what makes these opportunities available to the members. For that, we are extremely grateful.

Russ Miskey  
Executive Director  
STR8 UP 10,000 Little Steps to Healing Inc.



# OUTREACH PROGRAMS



## BUILDING ENGAGEMENT

STR8 UP worked hard to connect with and build relationships between STR8 UP Members, new staff in Saskatoon and Prince Albert, new CIM Participants and Transitional Housing Participants. The Covid-19 Pandemic brought many challenges but we adapted and pivoted and continued to reach out, offer support and build new programs in 2020.

**OFFERED 9,549**  
**SUPPORTS & SERVICES**      **239 MALES**  
**TO 307 INDIVIDUALS**      **68 FEMALES**

## PRACTICAL SUPPORT

Along with activities to build engagement and offer healthy and positive opportunities for fun and connection with members, participants and their families we continued to provide the practical support needed. Rides, referrals, help with personal ID, cultural groups, housing, education and employment support are all part of the wrap around approach we take with those that reach out to us.

**85 SUPPORTS**      **PROVIDED 625**  
**TO EXTENDED FAMILY**      **ADDICTION SUPPORTS**





## PERSON TO PERSON

## INDIVIDUALIZED SUPPORT

STR8 UP is all about relationships and 2020 saw us unable to meet face-to-face as much as we would like. We adapted to new realities by offering all of our programs virtually and were able to set up Skype visits with individuals in correctional facilities and treatment centres.

Every healing journey is as unique as the person embarking on that journey. STR8 UP does not re-create what is already on offer in the community. We work with people where they are at and connect them to the resources that appropriate to their needs, while also providing internal programming specifically created for those that are leaving gangs.

**2,889**  
ONE-TO-ONE  
PHONE CALLS

**3,679**  
INDIVIDUAL  
CHECK-INS

**311 CONNECTED**  
TO COMMUNITY  
RESOURCES

**464 JUSTICE SUPPORTS**  
**286 CULTURAL SUPPORTS**



# TRANSITIONAL HOUSING



STR8 UP's Transitional Housing project is designed to provide housing for individuals transitioning out of custody and into the community.

A gap was recognized in the support available to individuals coming out of the correctional system and transitioning to a healthy and stable lifestyle. The Transitional Housing Project offers stable accommodation for up to two months, case planning, life skills and rehousing support. Individuals coming into the program often have no source of income, personal identification or bank accounts. We connect residents with medical care, nutrition, counselling, justice support, various addiction supports, education, employment, and community programming.

We also provide ongoing support once individuals transition into their new homes.



**ASSISTED**  
**73**  
**INDIVIDUALS**  
**WITH**  
**2,113**  
**SUPPORTS**

**PROVIDED**  
**30**  
**INDIVIDUALS**  
**WITH**  
**1,066**  
**DAYS OF**  
**HOUSING**

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH



Due to the global pandemic, STR8 UP was not able to provide one-to-one visits or facilitate programs in the correctional facilities. Traditionally, 95% of our referrals and contacts come through our presence in the facilities. Covid-19 has created a significant challenge for our membership base. As a result of this, we became creative in how we provided support to our Members while they were incarcerated. Some of the ways in which STR8 UP took on this challenge was by:

- **ADVOCATED SUCCESSFULLY FOR MEMBERS TO BE ABLE TO CONTACT THEIR STR8 UP WORKER AT NO COST TO THE INMATE.**
- **ADVOCATED SUCCESSFULLY FOR MEMBERS TO BE ABLE TO CONNECT WITH STR8 UP STAFF AND EVENTUALLY WITH FAMILY VIA SKYPE.**
- **STR8 UP STAFF REGULARLY SENT IN EDUCATIONAL LEARNING PACKAGES TO MEMBERS/PARTICIPANTS INSIDE THE INSTITUTIONS SO THEY CAN CONTINUE ON THEIR RECOVERY JOURNEY.**

Working in collaboration with the Saskatoon Correctional Centre, Saskatoon Men & Women's Reintegration Unit, Prince Albert Correctional Centre, Pine Grove Correctional Centre, Willow Cree Healing Lodge, Nancy Van Styvendale (University of Alberta – Faculty of Native Studies), Diann Block and the Inspired Minds Program to provide over 1200 Christmas packages.

**1200**  
**PACKAGES**  
**INTO**  
**CORRECTIONAL**  
**FACILITIES**  
**FOR CHRISTMAS**

**PROVIDED**  
**211**  
**INDIVIDUALS**  
**WITH**  
**3,375**  
**SUPPORTS**



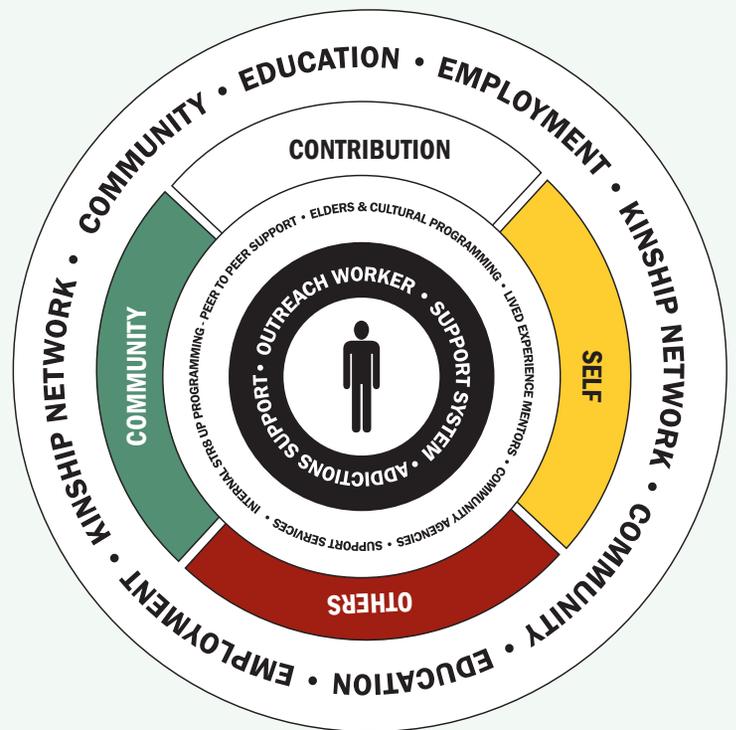
# COMMUNITY INTERVENTION MODEL (CIM PROJECT)



The Community Intervention Model (CIM) has been busy launching in Saskatoon and Prince Albert. The past year has been a whirlwind of hiring and training staff, building relationships with CIM Participants, developing processes and programming for the CIM Project, and continuously adapting to Covid-19 and its challenges. Despite constant change, CIM Staff managed to connect and work with over one hundred CIM Referrals across Northern and Central Saskatchewan in 2020/21.

CIM Participants are referred to STR8 UP through correctional facilities, community agencies, justice stakeholders and through word of mouth and STR8 UP's reputation. CIM Participants are in the early stages of their healing journey and the majority are still in facilities when we connect with them. Relationship building has been a challenge due to Covid-19, and this has forced us to be creative in the ways we offer support over the phone, virtual one-on-one meetings and weekly mail-ins.

Outreach Workers have also assisted CIM Participants with getting personal identification, stable housing after release, setting up bank accounts, referring and driving them to and from in-patient treatment and by connecting them to community resources appropriate to their needs. CIM Participants have attended in-house programming on culture, addictions, women's and men's group and sharing circles. CIM Participants were also able to take part in positive and family-friendly recreational activities and trips. Over the past year we have also supported CIM Participants get into school, offered homework help, employment support, and assisted them with referrals to other agencies and supports.



**135**  
REFERRALS

**75**  
PARTICIPANTS  
IN PHASE

**12**  
PARTICIPANTS  
IN PHASE

**1**

**2**



# LIVED EXPERIENCE MENTORS



In 2020, we walked through the doors of KAP House not only as members, but now as staff. CIM Lived Experience Mentors ... what did this mean? How did CIM fit into STR8 UP? Since then we have been blessed with many challenges and opportunities that have helped shape us. We have developed resource guides for individuals being released back into community, travelled with other mentors and members to give presentations to communities virtually and physically in Saskatchewan. We have learned the importance of virtual meetings, and the value of teamwork. We have set professional and personal healing goals and achieved many milestones. We have learned the meaning of putting our trust in others, and that by being completely honest, anything is possible.

One of the major projects that we as mentors have been working on has been writing out our personal sacred stories and experiences as gangsters and addicts and how we overcame these obstacles in our life. The purpose of these projects is to use our lived-experience to relate to, and connect with, individuals who are currently incarcerated or are just coming out of institutions. By sharing our sacred stories, we are showing people that others have also gone through these experiences, and there are ways out of the despair and hopelessness.

Some of the things we have learned include: time management skills, learning how to communicate in effective and healthy ways, as well as advancing our computer skills. We have learned how to set up and conduct meetings through TEAMS, public speaking, and as well as how to facilitate presentations. We have weekly programs at STR8 UP such as addictions group, culture group, sharing circle, as well as men's and women's group.

Looking to the future, we are excited about the coming year as mentors. We are going to be setting personal as well as professional goals that will assist us in our growth as individuals as well as mentors. We are very excited to be learning how work as a professional, as well as how to use our personal and professional experiences to be of service to and assist others on their healing journeys.



# THANK YOU

aneypiso  
Terry



**DEDICATION: ERLAND TERRANCE ATIMOYOO  
1952-2021**

STR8 UP Recovery: A Journey of Hope is dedicated to Erland Terrance Atimoyoo from Little Pine First Nation. Terry worked for STR8 UP as a Community Outreach Worker, until his retirement a few years ago, but then returned as a Cultural Advisor prior to his passing.

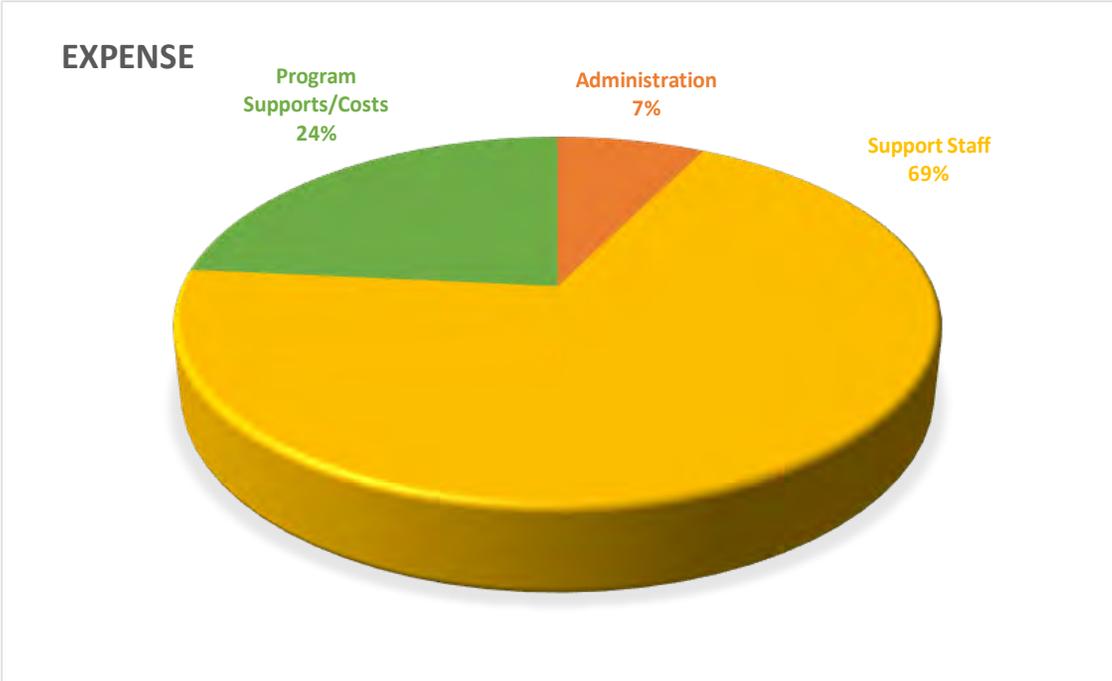
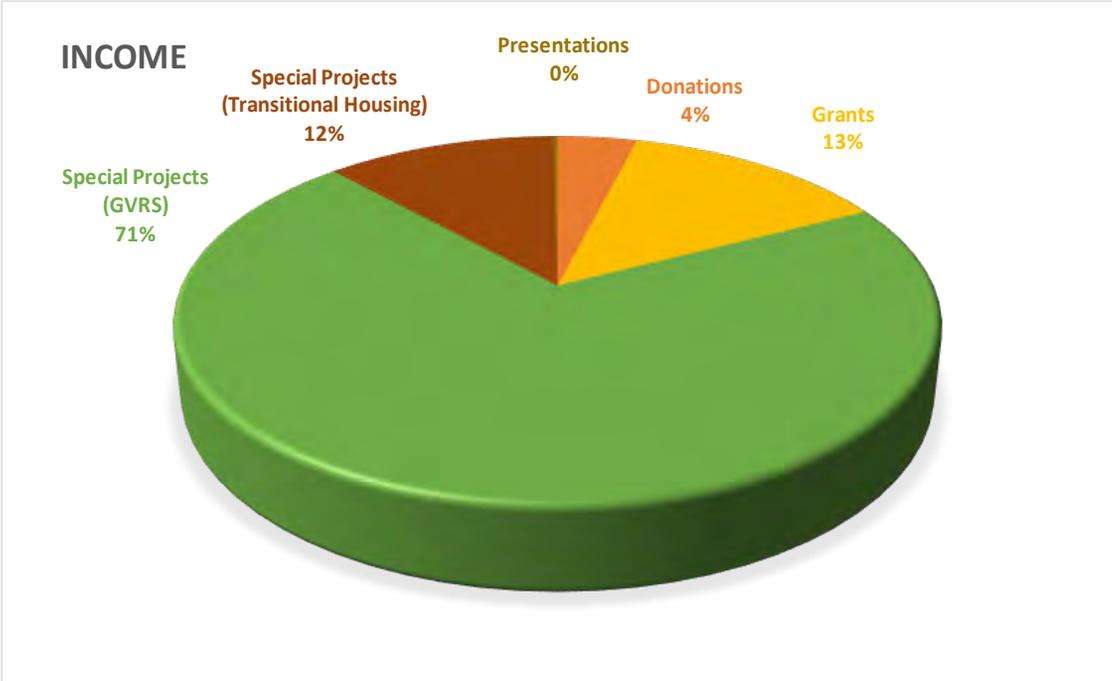
Terry's love and relationship with his Creator and all of his Creation was profound and real. He expressed that relationship in love and respect for traditional ceremonies and values in his daily lifestyle.

Terry's relationship to all STR8 UP members was that of a mōsom, a grandfather as well as other times, an Elder, in spite not wanting that role. He shared and taught us to live a Spiritual way of life.

His relationship with STR8 UP members was profoundly one of respect, caring and understanding. His presence and his words were always comforting and full of tenderness. A friend, but more as a mentor, a leader, his stories always connected with our struggles, hopes and achievements. He made us understand that there is no greater truth than the truth we learn from our own experiences. His hugs were of pure love, which he shared often and willingly. Terry, you will be greatly missed.



# FINANCIALS



# DONORS & SPONSORS

**STR8 UP: 10,000 Little Steps to Healing Inc.**  
**would like to thank our many supporters**

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- United Way Collaborative Funders
- City of Saskatoon Collaborative Funders
- University of Saskatchewan Social Accountability Fund
- Community Initiatives Fund
- Saskatoon Community Foundation Quality of Life Covid 19 Resilience
- United Way – Covid Relief Fund
- Affinity Credit Union Community Grant
- Donations from the community.

## TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

- SHIP through Government of Canada Reaching Home Funding

## GVRS-CIM

- Ministry of Justice Corrections and Policing



**United Way**  
Saskatoon & Area



**Canada**



*And to our many, generous private donors ...*  
*Thank you for your continued support!*



**STR8 UP - 10,000 Little Steps to Healing**

226 Avenue V South  
Saskatoon, SK  
S7M 3E3  
306.244.1771  
[www.str8-up.ca](http://www.str8-up.ca)

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