

Fall Impact Report



Sobeys Inc. is igniting change and unlocking hope for Indigenous and Black youth from coast to coast to coast.

Kids Help Phone is incredibly grateful for Sobeys' generosity and commitment to supporting young people from coast to coast to coast.

Sobeys' contributions of more than \$1.25 million to our historic \$300 million Feel Out Loud movement bring us closer to a world where support is available to **every young person** in their time of need.

Thank you for igniting transformative change for Indigenous and Black youth across Canada. Every single day, your generosity is helping to create a more just, equitable and accessible e-mental health landscape — empowering thousands of young people to Feel Out Loud and unlocking the hope they need to thrive in their world.

We are delighted to provide you with a fulsome update on Finding Hope in this report, along with recent advancements in RiseUp, that build on the report you received in the Spring.

From all of us here at Kids Help Phone: thank you. We are so grateful for you.



Finding Hope: Kids Help Phone's Action Plan for Supporting First Nations, Inuit and Métis Young People

An overview of your impact

Through your commitment to Finding Hope, you have ignited tremendous progress in our efforts to break down barriers to mental health support for tens of thousands of Indigenous young people.

The impact of your support is truly immeasurable. For even if we serve one person at Kids Help Phone, that one person feels heard, supported and empowered. That one person knows that they are not alone, that help is always available. That one person can go on to make a positive difference in their community, spreading the impact of our work and your support.

The following provides a high-level overview of the work made possible since the launch of Finding Hope in 2019, thanks to you and our generous community of donors. Together, we have:

- Promoted help-seeking behaviour and empowered First Nations, Inuit and Métis youth with skills, tools and resources to support their well-being by launching [Brighter Days: An Indigenous Wellness Program supported by Sun Life](#)
- Enabled ambassadors in Indigenous communities and urban centres to connect youth to critical supports, as well as to shape Kids Help Phone's services, by launching [Weaving Threads: An Indigenous Engagement Program](#)
- Increased awareness of Kids Help Phone's services in rural and remote First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities by launching [New Trails: An Indigenous Outreach Program](#)
- Expanded support by increasing the number and breadth of Indigenous resources on [Resources Around Me, supported by The Grocery Foundation.](#)
- Improved access to care by providing support in two First Nations languages and adding an Indigenous queue to our phone counselling services.
- Enhanced services for Indigenous youth by expanding our network of crisis responders and growing our internal Indigenous initiatives team.

“Chi Miigwetch for holding space for me, at a time where I am alone without solid community connections, familial connections or friendships I can rely on.”

— Indigenous young person contacting Kids Help Phone



Finding Hope – Recent Advancements

Launching New Trails: An Indigenous Outreach Program

In March 2023, we launched **New Trails: An Indigenous Outreach Program** to increase awareness of Kids Help Phone's services in rural and remote First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities.

Through this program, we are providing Kids Help Phone billboards, road signs, arena boards and vinyl wall murals to rural and remote Indigenous communities. Communities can customize the signs using a range of options. Although this program is currently available to communities at no cost, once donor funding for the program ends there will be an associated cost after the first free sign.

The program aims to address the disparities in KHP service use which is disproportionately lower in rural and remote Indigenous communities. It also addresses inequities in media placement recognizing that billboard space is not available to rent in most small communities. To date, 45 signs have been ordered in 25 communities. We will continue building traction to ensure that young Indigenous folks – no matter their location – are aware of how they can access culturally relevant mental health support.

In addition to signage, Kids Help Phone outreach and information packages continue being shipped to organizations supporting Indigenous youth from coast to coast to coast to further promote support services. In 2023, over 14,574 young people have been reached through this initiative, so far.



Advancing access to support

To better evaluate outreach, understand Indigenous service use, and enhance the counselling experience, a dedicated Indigenous queue was added to our phone counselling. Young people can access support in Nēhiyawēwin (Plains Cree) and Anishiniimowin (Ojibwe) through a translator by “pressing 3” when they call. Counsellors responding to calls in this queue also receive additional training to connect First Nations youth and young adults with supports.

We now have over 5,000 Indigenous supports listed in **[Resources Around Me, supported by The Grocery Foundation](#)** – the largest interactive tool of its kind in Canada with inclusive youth mental health supports in communities from coast to coast to coast.

Brighter Days ahead

Since launching in 2021, 140 Indigenous groups have registered for [Brighter Days: An Indigenous Wellness Program supported by Sun Life](#).

Available to any First Nations, Inuit or Métis young person between the ages of six and 29, Brighter Days virtually engages youth with Kids Help Phone Indigenous Wellness Specialists. The Wellness Specialists advocate for help-seeking behaviour, reduce stigma associated with seeking mental health support and explain how young people can access services at Kids Help Phone in ways that work best for them.

To improve access to Brighter Days, we have launched a new format that allows individual youth to sign themselves up to participate. This eliminates the need for young people to first identify a teacher or community helper to register on their behalf.

To reach even more Indigenous youth across Canada, we also developed and circulated promotional materials to raise awareness of Brighter Days, including social media campaigns and flyers.



Weaving Threads of change



Through [Weaving Threads: An Indigenous Engagement Program](#), Kids Help Phone continues to grow its national network of volunteers, who are trusted leaders and members of Indigenous communities across Canada, and are committed to connecting young people with critical mental health resources from KHP and our partners. The volunteers also provide direction to ensure that our services are equitable and accessible for Indigenous youth.

We are thrilled to share that Weaving Threads now has 72 active volunteers across Canada and 36 more in the onboarding process (353 applications have been received to date). These leaders are essential to building robust engagement and connection between Indigenous communities and Kids Help Phone.

To engage existing volunteers and encourage feedback on how we can improve our Indigenous programs, we are preparing to host the second annual Weaving Threads Forum in Toronto on November 13th - 14th, 2023.

Building capacity for impact

In order to reach more Indigenous young people across Canada, we are growing our Indigenous Initiatives staff team. The team has expanded from three to seven dedicated positions, with additional Indigenous staff across Kids Help Phone also contributing to the advancement of Finding Hope. With more staff, we will have the capacity to expand our programs and services to better support Indigenous youth.

We have recruited and trained more than 100 First Nations volunteer crisis responders to interact with young people through our crisis texting service.

In 2022, 9.3 percent of all texters self-identified as Indigenous.

*In comparison, 5% of the population in Canada identify as Indigenous (adults and youth).

72% of Indigenous service users said they shared something with Kids Help Phone that they have never shared with anyone else.

Launching the next phase of Finding Hope

Thanks to your generous support, Kids Help Phone has made extraordinary progress toward our initial goals of Finding Hope.

Now, as we build on our extensive learnings and our commitment to Truth & Reconciliation, we are launching a bold new strategy. It will enable us to accelerate progress over the next three years toward a future in which every First Nations, Métis and Inuit young person is able to access the support they need to thrive, when and how they need it most.

Rooted in what we know and where we want to go, our courageous new plan has been designed under the leadership of the Kids Help Phone's Indigenous Advisory Council and informed by a wide range of Indigenous partners, champions, youth and stakeholders.

The six overarching goals of the new [Finding Hope](#) strategy are:

Build trust through meaningful partnerships with Indigenous people and organizations.

Increase access and awareness of Kids Help Phone programs and services.

Empower Indigenous communities through data.

Support skills development, knowledge and literacy that promotes the mental, emotional, physical and spiritual well-being of Indigenous young people.

Foster a workplace that is inclusive and informed on the realities of Indigenous youth.

Seek opportunities to support Indigenous peoples through advocacy and knowledge sharing.

We look forward to updating you on the progress of the new strategy as it's put into action.

RiseUp powered by Kids Help Phone

KHP prepares to launch We Rise: A Black Engagement Program

Recognizing that stigma, trauma and systemic racism often prevent Black youth from accessing mental health services, Kids Help Phone will be launching **We Rise: A Black Engagement Program** this Fall.

This community outreach program is made possible thanks to nearly 100 volunteer champions who identify as African, Caribbean or Black youth over the age of 15. The goal is to build awareness of Kids Help Phone's services, increase access to community resources, foster trusting connections between Kids Help Phone and Black communities and encourage more Black youth to reach out to Kids Help Phone and other mental health services.

Through information sharing and storytelling, We Rise strives to break down stigma around mental health and wellness, build resilience and increase emotional literacy. This program will also help develop and nourish important skillsets for volunteers so they can fully engage in this work and feel supported in their own personal and professional goals.



**When your feelings
need a place to go.**

Youth Text RISE to 686868	Call 1-800-668-6868
Adult Text RISE to 741741	KidsHelpPhone.ca/Rise

We're here for the Black community and all people of the Afro-diaspora. Connect with a crisis responder 24/7 by messaging RISE over text.

KHP KIDS HELP PHONE



Reaching more Black youth through the RiseUp outreach material program

To reach more youth who identify as African, Caribbean and Black in communities across Canada, we developed a set of RiseUp outreach materials. These materials, which include posters, wallet cards, informational pamphlets and more, will be distributed directly to community-based organizations serving Black youth in the months ahead.



“I love supporting Black youth because I get to provide something that I wish I had received when I was younger. My passion for philanthropy is aligned with RiseUp powered by Kids Help Phone, so joining the Black Advisory Council allows me to help support and bring that vision to life.”

— Black Advisory Council member

Kids Help Phone Thank you.™

Step by step, change is underway for Indigenous young people in Canada, and none of this work would be possible without you.

Empowered by your enduring generosity and shared belief that every young person deserves the chance to hope, to dream and to realize their greatest potential, we are building a more just and equitable mental health landscape — one that recognizes the unique needs and challenges of Indigenous youth and accelerates courageous, innovative solutions to ensure help is always available in the ways they need it most.

On behalf of youth across Canada and the entire team at Kids Help Phone, thank you.



“You were very kind, communicative, and helped me by listening openly. You are a great Crisis Responder and I’m glad that people like me have people like you as a resource. Thank you.”

— Indigenous young person contacting Kids Help Phone

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