

ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022



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Message from Management

Assalamu alaikum, May Peace be upon you,

By the grace of the Almighty we had an incredible year of new team members, new programs, and new collaborations. This was made possible by the support of the community, the dedicated team members, and volunteers.

Our focused mission has always been to provide programs and services based on identified needs of the community. This year we continued to advocate, expand, and increase the capacity of the organization while developing programs aimed at empowering and strengthening families around us.

This year we achieved a major milestone when we received a charitable status. This opened doors for us to start new programs and continue others. We were able to apply for more funds that were only open for charitable organizations. This made it possible to acquire a new space that will serve as a centre for the community to drop in to a welcoming space, find information or referrals, and make new friends.

As we open the doors of our new centre, we thank Allah *subhana wa ta'ala* for giving us the opportunity to serve and advocate for our community.

May Allah continue to bless the team, all the well wishers, and supporters of Healthy Muslim Families. Ameen!

Sincerely,
HMF Board Chair and Executive Director

Our Team

Sophia Ali

Hajira Wajid

Saima Mafat

Bushra Afaqui

Lateefa Oyefeso

Toni Cole

Eve Sotiriadou

Humaira Jaleel

Amna Iqbal

Sarah Arnous

Midhat Alam

Sumera Aurangzeb

Syeda Kainat Zia

Afsheen Siddiqui

Asma M. Ahmad

Atif Al Mannan

Moshera Zakaria

AbdiMalik Ali

Umaina Anwar

Ayesha Tasneem

Zahara Afzaly

Maria Islam

Fatima Jarid

Shifa Sohail

About Us

We are a charity dedicated to strengthening and uplifting our beloved Muslim community by bridging the gaps in essential services.

We believe in a society where we all have a high degree of social responsibility towards each other.

We operate from the belief in the saying of the prophet:

"The best of people are those that bring the most benefit to the rest of mankind" - The Prophet Muhammad



OUR MISSION

To strengthen and empower families through education, workshops, services, and support, in line with Islamic values.

WE NOW HAVE OFFICIAL CHARITABLE STATUS

Healthy Muslim Families is proud to inform everyone that our charitable status has been approved by the Canadian government.

This journey has taken us more than two years to achieve and we could not have done it without your support and heroism. We are finally past the major milestone that we set out to achieve and moving forward on the path to better serve our community.



Impact



Employed 11 youth



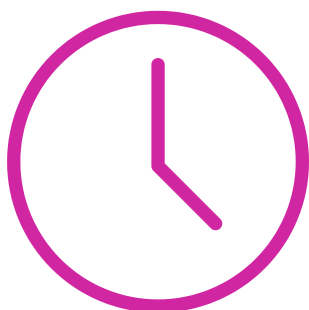
Conducted over **25** informative events and workshops.



Provided help to 100+ families



Assisted **190** clients with taxes, benefits, and financial counselling



3100+ hours of volunteer service to our community.



Provided counselling to more than **20** individuals.



Accomplishments

We have more than 45 volunteers and employees dedicated to serving our community.

Our staff and volunteers have worked voluntarily for more than 3000 hours in serving individuals and families with settlement, employment training, financial empowerment, English classes, support for domestic violence victims and individuals with disabilities.

We have an ever-growing social media following of more than 800 people.

In 2021, we held over 25 programs and virtual events that were open to people from all around Canada.

Our staff has helped over 50 families dealing with difficulties with their immigrant and refugee status and those facing family violence.

Our organization is women-led and more than half of our members are women of colour.

2021-2022 At a Glance

Financial Empowerment

Our financial empowerment programs included tax clinics, and money management training.

- Tax Clinic 2021-2022

Once again, Healthy Muslim Families provided free in-person and virtual tax filing and access to benefits services for our community members.

We successfully assisted and served 190 individuals and families with their tax filing. Over \$219,500 was returned back to the families as tax refunds from the CRA.

- Money Management Training

We organized money management classes in English, Urdu, and Arabic for our community members.

We had a total of 21 participants with 30 sessions.

These workshops are designed for newcomers who require assistance with navigating Canada's financial systems.

Our trainers educate participants on topics such as:

- How to build an asset
- Set goals and handle financial difficulties
- Make wiser financial decisions
- How to save and invest
- Credit and debit card management

Throughout 2021 and 2022, we offered a range of virtual and in-person activities and programs for our valued community members. These initiatives served to bring our community together and form lasting bonds while also delivering key services to our members.

These programs were made possible due to the contribution, collaboration, and support from SEED Winnipeg.

"I wish the MMT sessions never end, I'm really enjoying and learning from them" - MMT participant

"It really makes me happy to attend the MMT sessions, I recharge my energy and thoughts positively through these classes" MMT participant

"Thank you for the information, I am learning really important things that I wasn't aware of before" - MMT participant

Arts and Crafts

Children's Summer Camp

Our children's summer camp comprised of 7-week virtual sessions in which we arranged one activity for younger children and one activity for older children each week.

We gave our 27 participants activity bags each week that featured at-home activities that they could complete on their own, as well as activity bags specially for our online sessions that we conducted as a group through Zoom.

Arabic calligraphy, rock painting, an Urdu competition, and other activities were included in our summer camp.

The goal of this camp was to keep children and adolescents occupied throughout the pandemic by allowing them to participate in educational activities while also seeing their friends.



Children's summer activities

Urdu Speech Competition

The Urdu speaking competition was organized by HMF in order to keep Manitoban children linked to their Urdu language history and identity.

We discovered that in our study on Muslim mental health and well-being in Manitoba, people of Pakistani descent with children born and raised in Manitoba were concerned that their children would not be able to learn Urdu properly owing to a lack of exposure. As a result, several participants expressed for HMF to create more programs in this area.

Prior to the competition, HMF staff helped participants prepare their Urdu speeches by getting them familiar with different resources and enhance their Urdu vocabulary that they could use in creating their own speeches.

This competition served as a great learning experience for children who got to connect back to their roots and feel pride in their heritage.



Spell a Word Contest

Summer camp councillors along with the project leader planned, screened, and designed a word list for school going children up until grade 9.

Children improved their vocabularies, spelling, and learnt important concepts like synonyms and antonyms by participating in this contest.

We are pleased to have started this one-of-a-kind competition in our community and hope to make it an annual competition.

"That was amazing! so impressed by all of you!"- Teresa Burke from Manso

"I really enjoyed and felt proud today while attending the speech competition. Accept my gratitude to give my girls a chance to prove themselves once again Alhumdullilah" - Mother of children enrolled in Urdu competition

"We had fun and it was a huge learning curve for the kids" - Mother of child enrolled in Urdu competition

Community Gatherings

Eid Gathering for Senior Ladies in Winnipeg

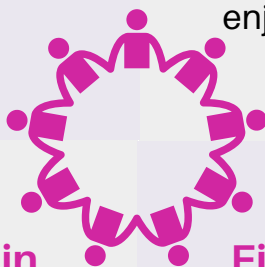
We held an Eid gathering in 2021 specifically for our senior ladies and their daughters or daughter-in-laws to come out and celebrate Eid together. We arranged games, tea, snacks, and other great stuff for our senior ladies in Winnipeg.

Get-Together for Mothers and Children with DisAbilities

This event was a great way for mothers and children with disabilities to come and have a good time.

Our research project called "Needs of Muslims with disAbilities" showed that mothers of children with disAbilities face stigma and feel excluded in public spaces.

This all-inclusive gathering was enjoyed by mothers and children with disAbilities.



Eid Gathering for Ladies in St. Vital

In the St. Vital neighbourhood, we hosted an Eid event for Muslim women. This gathering provided a wonderful opportunity for Muslim women to celebrate and mingle with their near and dear ones, which they had been unable to do owing to COVID-19 limitations.

Eid Gathering for Ladies in South Winnipeg

We arranged an Eid gathering for Muslim ladies in the Winnipeg South area to come and enjoy tea, snacks, games and activities.

Youth Programs

Physical Health Education on Human Sexuality

Dr. Aseel, a family physician who has lived in Winnipeg for over 20 years, spoke at two educational events for youth. One session was for boys and the other for girls. Participants were in grades 5 and up.

Dr. Aseel talked about physical health education and human sexuality from an Islamic perspective using the Manitoba curriculum.

This event was well-attended, and participants left with a lot of knowledge around human sexuality through an Islamic lens.

Thank you for the great organization, my son Hassan enjoyed the lecture and we are very grateful for all of you! - Mother of participant

Youth Hiring at HMF

We employed 11 youths from our community in 2021 and 2022. We assisted them in refining important leadership abilities and attributes.

Many beneficial experiences were obtained by our youth, including the development of interpersonal skills, organizational skills, experience in organizing events, social media, and much more.

Programs for Families

- ENGLISH CONVERSATION CLASSES

English conversation classes are designed keeping in mind the needs of our community. The participants learned & practiced basic communication skills which will help them in communicating and interacting with others in their daily lives. These classes were facilitated by an instructor.

- HOW TO GAIN HEALTH BENEFITS DURING RAMADAN

As part of its Ramadan preparations, HMF hosted Nida Ghazanfar, a functional nutritionist, to offer some tips and advantages of keeping a healthy fast throughout Ramadan. Our session was well-attended, and attendees learnt a lot about how and why it's important to keep a healthy and nutritious fast.

- RAMADAN KIDS PROGRAM

As a way to kick off the month of Ramadan a fun Ramadan preparation event was arranged by the team on March 27, 2022. The program was well attended by children and their families.

We set up activity stations where kids and parents could make Eid cards, Ramadan garlands, lanterns, as well as listen to stories about the importance of Ramadan and fasting.

"JazakAllah, Thank you to HMF team for offering such programs, kids enjoyed"

Programs for Families

- PRE-RAMADAN BOOTH

Our marketing team set up a booth at the Waverley Grand Mosque for a Pre-Ramadan event, where we distributed informative pamphlets and other materials regarding our programs.

Several new members of the community joined our official HMF group chat to remain up to date on our programs and events.

- RAMADAN GIFT BASKETS

The team prepared and distributed 34 gift baskets to several of our valued Healthy Muslim Families clients to help celebrate Ramadan and share happiness in the community.

This project was carried out in partnership of Molana Tariq Jamil Foundation Canada.

- KIDS FUN HOUR

The Kids Fun Hour program included a variety of creative and fun-filled activities for children aged 1-6 years. There were a total of seven sessions with a sum of twenty children who participated. Our Art instructor and team members designed and delivered this program.

The goal of this program was to provide a comfortable environment for young children who are not yet in school to develop fine motor skills and cognitive skills such as information processing, memory, and understanding.

HMF provided all participants with crafts and activity kits to utilize during the fun hour sessions.

Activities included:

- Snowflake making
- Life size drawing
- Hand painting
- Children's rhyme games
- Memory games
- Story time

*"All snowflakes look wonderful!
So nice to see all the kids proudly
showing their masterpieces" -
Mother of child enrolled in Kids
Fun Hour*

*"I just wanted to thank you
personally for the effort you and
your team put in to prepare this
class, the activities, and such
amazing supplies" - Mother of
child enrolled in Kids Fun Hour*

Programs for Families

- FAMILY LITERACY DAY

We celebrated Family Literacy Day again this year by crafting and distributing 20 crafts and activity bags for families to do at home with their children. Families were able to spend quality time together while also learning the value of literacy and education in this manner.

- BACK-TO-SCHOOL DRIVE

A Back-To-School drive was organized in collaboration with ICNA Sisters. We served a total of 44 students through this program. We provided children with a variety of back-to-school supplies, including lunch boxes, water bottles, lunch bags, stationery, and more.

- WELCOME PROGRAM

Through the Welcome Program, HMF welcomes newcomer individuals and families to Canada and assists them in integrating into the community. We provide our services to recently arrived immigrants and refugees and also direct them to other resources that are helpful in adjusting to life in Canada.

The main goal of this program is to promote community inclusion by supporting newcomers in feeling welcomed and building lasting friendships with other members of the community.

SENIORS PROGRAMS

Annual Islamic Art Gala

Seniors Calligraphy

A total of 24 persons from our community attended our Senior Arabic calligraphy workshop.

The goal of this gathering was to make our community's elderly feel less isolated after the pandemic restrictions were lifted. It allowed seniors to mingle and converse while participating in a delightful art activity of Arabic calligraphy.

In October of 2021, HMF hosted the first-ever Annual Islamic Art Gala in celebration of Islamic Heritage month.

This exhibition, drew more than 300 people. and proved to be an excellent opportunity to highlight Arabic calligraphy and other Islamic art styles, while promoting local artists.

Various artists from all over the city displayed and sold their beautiful master pieces.

At the event, our art instructor demonstrated live Arabic calligraphy, allowing participants to observe the process of art creation in person.

Seniors Gathering

Our Muslim community's elderly were invited to a gathering in the park.

This was a lovely opportunity for seniors to connect and mingle while enjoying tea and refreshments. We had sharing circles where the senior ladies shared their life experiences and advice with the younger group of attendees. It was overall a lovely and wonderful experience.

Support for Families during COVID-19

COVID-19 Vaccine Program

In our COVID-19 vaccine session, a member of HMF along with a facilitator provided valuable information on the COVID-19 vaccine including how long to wait between doses, where to acquire the vaccine, as well as addressing various questions and concerns about the vaccine that the attendees had.

COVID-19 Vaccine Awareness Videos

Our team at Healthy Muslim Families created Covid-19 awareness videos in English, Urdu, and Arabic to reduce the stigma and reluctance around vaccination.

These videos were made for our community's elders, breastfeeding mothers, and pregnant women who required more readily accessible information on Covid-19 vaccines.

Rapid Antigen Test Kits

A total of 50 bags of Rapid Antigen Test Kits were distributed in our community during tax clinics, MIA booth setup, as well as to whoever requested for one.



Research Work

Mental Health and Well-being of Muslims in Manitoba

Our research team conducted a community-based project on the subject of 'Well-being of Muslims in Manitoba'. The goal of this research was to explore and bring to light the mental health status of Muslims in Manitoba.

According to our study, the mental health of Muslims appears to be closely linked to family and friends, as well as participation in community events. Due to prevalent ethnocultural attitudes, seeking help for managing mental wellness while stressed is still a misconstrued and ignored issue in the Muslim community. In the months ahead, this research will assist Healthy Muslim Families in developing mental and general wellness initiatives for Muslims in Manitoba.

You can find the complete report on our website: healthymuslimfamilies.ca

Research Work

Needs of Muslims with Disabilities in Manitoba

Healthy Muslim Families undertook a research project into the obstacles and limitations experienced by Muslims who are living with a disAbility. We believe that this study will shed light on the daily struggles of those who are living with disAbilities, as well as provide recommendations for improving support and services for Muslims with disabilities.

According to our findings, Muslims with disabilities in Manitoba experience loneliness and face stigma in the community. The study highlighted that families with members who have disabilities feel there is a lack of adequate assistance. The needs of Muslims with disabilities are not being sufficiently addressed by the Muslim community leadership. Overall, there is an evident need to raise public awareness concerning disAbility issues and to provide accessible alternatives in community settings.

This research will assist us in developing relevant initiatives to support families and start relevant programs.

You can find the complete report on our website: healthymuslimfamilies.ca

Women's Support

Since the initial days of our organization, we have been implementing numerous women's empowerment projects to assist and support women in our community. The following are some of our ongoing projects:

- Helping navigate systems
- Peer Support during challenges
- Crisis intervention
- Culturally appropriate support to leave abusive relationships
- Financial aid and assistance
- Job referral and employment assistance
- Assistance in legal aid appointments
- Filing for eligible government benefits
- Help filing for divorce and acquiring Islamic divorce certificate.

Understanding Domestic Violence in Our Community

We held 2 awareness/informative sessions on Understanding domestic violence in the Muslim community which were delivered in English/Urdu and Arabic. Our Urdu session was attended by 38 participants and our Arabic session consisted of 24 attendees.

Organizational Capacity Building

In the years 2021-2022, HMF staff spent more than **3179** hours in training and seminars to improve our team's leadership skills, improve capacity, and get exposure to a variety of competencies that are critical to serving our community and the growth of the organization.

Looking Ahead

In the next year, we are dedicated to expanding our services and projects even more than we did last year. Among other things, we're planning a legal information and support program, citizenship classes, youth civic participation, job training, and domestic violence research and awareness. We hope that these initiatives will aid our valued community members in their efforts to build a better quality of life in Manitoba.

Our Funders

We would not have been capable of fulfilling our goals without the generosity of our sincere funders. Their financial contribution and support are deeply appreciated. Thank you for your continued support of Healthy Muslim Families!



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