



# ANNUAL REPORT

2022 - 2023

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# Message from the Executive Team

Assalamu alaikum (May Peace and Blessing be on you),

Over this great year of new projects and services, we have learned much as a team, developed capacity, celebrated successes, and taken lessons for improvement.

Our space at 117A St. Anne's Rd was furnished to make it a welcoming place for all. The new space enabled us to deliver much-needed sessions, workshops, and presentations for seniors, youth, and those seeking employment, throughout the year. Due to our collaborations in the community, the capacity to deliver Financial Empowerment initiatives and tax completion almost doubled from the previous year.

Our team members completed many hours of training including certifications to deliver First-Aid/CPR and Food Handling training to the community and started counseling and mental health services.

As an organization, this year, we concentrated our efforts on addressing Access to Justice issues in the community. We are leaning on our collaborators, partner organizations, legal professionals in the community, and our biggest asset, our team, to meet the needs of access to justice for vulnerable community members.

Research continues to be one of the areas of concentration. We continued to research the needs of the Muslim community by completing two studies that will guide us to develop and expand programs to support women and to meet employment needs. We thank the board members, team, and volunteers who share their expertise, knowledge, and wisdom to guide us. We also thank our friends, partners, collaborators, and donors who believe in us and help us to further our goals and purpose of strengthening and empowering families.

Sincerely,

**HMF Board Chair and Executive Director**

# Land Acknowledgment

In the spirit of building stronger relationships with Indigenous communities, we would like to begin by acknowledging that Healthy Muslim Families is situated on ancestral lands, Treaty 1 territory, the traditional territory of the Anishinabek, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene Peoples, and on the National Homeland of the Red River Métis.

## Our Team

Hajira Wajid

Humaira Jaleel

Bushra Afaqui

Amna Iqbal

Lateefa Oyefeso

Sarah Arnous

Toni Cole

Afsana Kishwar

Saima Mafat

Midhat Alam

Eve Sotiriadou

Sumera Aurangzeb

Iqra Tariq

Afsheen Siddiqui

Syeda Kainat Zia

Sameen Adnan

Umaima Anwar

Maria Islam

Mariyam Mohammad

Maryam Islam

Osama Fazal

Shifa Sohail

Yanit Endrias

Taqwa Ali

## About us

Healthy Muslim Families Inc. is a charitable organization that is devoted to strengthening and improving the Muslim community in Manitoba by providing services, training programs, tools for empowerment, research, multi-agency collaborations, and mentoring.

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

## Mission

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

# Exciting News

## Healthy Muslim Families Office Inauguration 2022

With the blessing of Allah SWT, we opened our office to community members and started our operations here. Since then, we have been serving the community by holding programs, providing useful information and services, and being an inclusive place where all community members are welcome to come and get assistance.

**Address:** 117 A St. Anne's Road Winnipeg, MB R2M 2Z1



# 2022–2023: Where we are now.

## FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT

### Tax Clinic

- ❖ For the tax season 2022, we continued the in-person and online tax filing and access to benefits services to our community members.
- ❖ Once the taxes were filed our experts assessed the applications of the tax clients and which current benefits the person could be eligible for.
- ❖ Our team assisted and successfully served more than 250 Individuals and families.
- ❖ Over \$277,835 was returned to our clients as tax refunds from the CRA.

### Money Management Training Sessions

Carrying on our financial empowerment initiatives for community members, we held another exciting round of Money Management Training courses in [English](#), [Arabic](#), and [Bengali](#) with a total of 30 sessions attended by 41 registered participants.

These sessions are carefully crafted to empower participants with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively manage their assets, establish financial goals, enhance problem-solving abilities, make informed financial decisions, and much more.

### Saving Circle Program

Upon successfully completing the money management training course offered by HMF, participants became eligible to enroll in the Saving Circle program in collaboration with our partner organization, SEED. By participating in the Saving Circle Program, individuals have the opportunity to receive a \$3 match for every \$1 they save. Specifically, saving \$250 within a span of 6

months qualifies them for \$750 in matching funds, resulting in a total of \$1000 that can be utilized to acquire an asset.

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*“Overall, it was a very good experience attending this program. The content was informative, and I got to build on my financial literacy skills and got used to the various financial terms used in Canada. I would love to attend more of these in an in-person setting.”*

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## EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

### Starting your Career in Canada

We organized an online workshop specifically designed for Muslim women attendees who are either planning to embark on their careers or are currently seeking employment opportunities in Canada. The workshop, conducted in Urdu/Hindi, attracted a group of nine enthusiastic participants. Our primary objective was to provide a comprehensive and practical approach to working in Canada, aimed at assisting the attendees in setting their goals effectively.

The workshop covered various aspects related to employment in Canada, equipping the participants with valuable insights and skills necessary to navigate the job market successfully. By offering guidance on setting realistic career goals, we aimed to empower the attendees and enable them to make informed decisions regarding their professional growth.

Due to the positive response and impact of this workshop, we are delighted to announce that we will continue hosting similar workshops in the future. Our commitment to supporting Muslim women in their career journeys remains steadfast, and we look forward to providing further guidance, resources, and networking opportunities to help them thrive in Canada's job market.



## Participants gained more knowledge about

- ❖ The Canadian Workplace Culture
- ❖ Rights of Employees
- ❖ Tips for Making a Resume
- ❖ Cover Letter or Preparing Yourself for an Interview
- ❖ Importance of Volunteering and Networking

## Resume Writing Workshop

We hosted resume-building workshops for the entire community, offering all members the opportunity to enhance their resume-building skills. These informative workshops equipped participants with valuable insights, practical tips, and a wealth of resources to help them construct a strong and compelling resume.

## English Conversation Classes

The course spanned ten classes, taking place from **January to March**, and attracted a total of **30 participants**. Its primary objective was to enrich individuals' English language proficiency by focusing on reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Through this program, students acquired numerous valuable language skills and developed their confidence in communicating effectively in English.

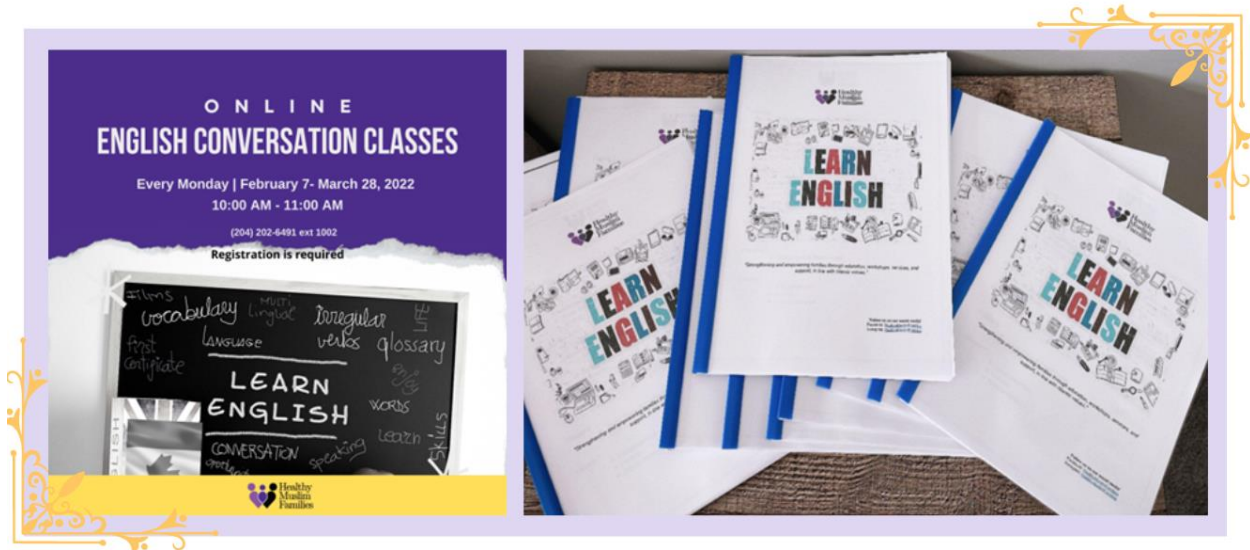
For many, English serves as a barrier preventing them from fully accessing available resources. The conversational abilities cultivated in this course aimed to aid students in securing employment, integrating into society and community life, and advancing their academic pursuits.

Class activities on the course are developed in response to the student's needs. Our instructors complete a needs assessment with students before the classes start so that relevant information is covered and taught in all the sessions.

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*"I am very pleased with these classes which helped me to build lot of confidence in myself when talking in English in front of others. Learning together in such a welcoming environment helped me build connections with my peers who are like family to me now."*

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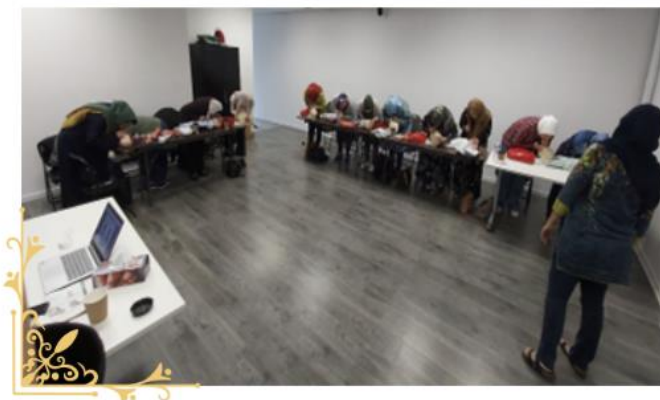


## **First Aid, CPR, and AED Training Classes**

The CPR training sessions, held at the HMF office, attracted a total of **30 registered participants**. These sessions took place in three separate intervals: **August 2022, October 2022, and February 2023**. The primary objective of these sessions was to provide comprehensive CPR instruction to all attendees, enabling them to earn their CPR certification.

The certified CPR trainer, who is a member of the HMF team, facilitated the training course. Participants received thorough instruction, equipping them with the necessary skills and knowledge to apply CPR techniques in various situations, whether at their workplace, at home, or in public settings.

By successfully completing all the required coursework, participants demonstrated their proficiency in CPR, first aid, and AED (Automated External Defibrillator) usage. As a result, they were presented with certificates issued by the Canadian Red Cross, attesting to their competence in these life-saving practices. The CPR training sessions provided participants with valuable skills that can be utilized in critical situations, potentially making a difference in saving lives. The HMF team remains committed to organizing such training initiatives to empower individuals with essential life-saving knowledge.



## Computer Classes for Women

With a total of 17 participants, this program was delivered through two sets of sessions with 10 classes each. The first session took place between September and November 2022, and the second from January to March 2023.

This course was intended for women who want to practice or learn essential computer skills, such as how to operate a laptop, use Microsoft programs, explore the internet, and send and receive emails.

As our society continues to rely on technology, the participants felt that these sessions were valuable and educational, and they will benefit them not only in their professional careers but also in their daily lives.

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*This was a great introduction to learning about how to work with basic computer functions. The instructors at Healthy Muslim Families make this a very welcoming and friendly experience where everyone is left feeling more informed and empowered.*

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## FAMILY PROGRAMS

### Eid Mubarak Banners

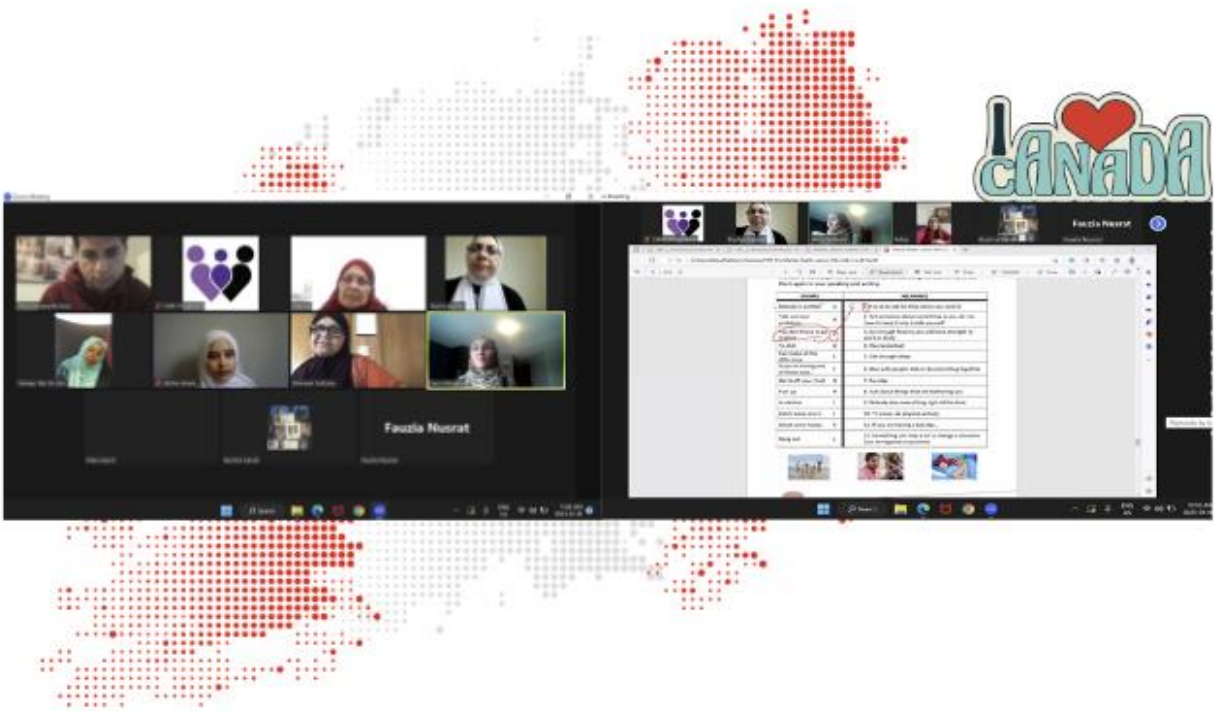
The art instructor at HMF crafted and distributed 20 Eid Mubarak banners to newcomer families. To make them feel welcomed in the community on a special occasion.



### Canadian Citizenship Classes

We designed specialized 10-session classes to assist individuals in preparing for their citizenship tests, particularly those who require additional guidance and support. The classes were scheduled in the evenings, ensuring that even those who are working can join and benefit from the program.

These classes offer a comprehensive understanding of the format and content of the citizenship test. To facilitate effective learning, we provide participants with helpful booklets and study materials. Our aim is to equip participants with the knowledge and confidence necessary to successfully pass the citizenship test and ensure an easy transition into their new citizenship. Aim is to equip individuals with the knowledge and confidence necessary to successfully navigate the citizenship test, paving the way for a smooth transition into their new citizen.



## Eid Get-together

A fun opportunity where community members got a chance to get together for Eid and celebrate the occasion with one another. There were 50 registered attendants in this outdoor gathering including families, elders in the community, and children.



## Welcome Program

This program aims to facilitate the integration of Muslim newcomers into the community. We are dedicated to supporting newcomers by providing a wide range of resources tailored to their needs. Our comprehensive list encompasses Muslim-owned and Muslim-friendly businesses, grocery stores, halal meat shops, pharmacies, and various essential services.

Additionally, we offer information about our organization's services and connect them with other relevant resources, fostering an easy integration into the community.

### Back-to-School Program

In collaboration with ICNA Sisters and we provide school going children and their families with back-to-school essentials: such as backpacks, notebooks, water bottles, lunch kits and more!

### Ramadan Baskets for Families and Seniors

**Ramadan Baskets for Families and Seniors**

Healthy Muslim Families intended to encourage and share the joys of the wonderful month of Ramadan by preparing and handing out Ramadan baskets filled with goodies and Ramadan essentials.

This effort, which involved distributing 61 gift baskets for Ramadan to community members including low-income and immigrant families and international students, was arranged by our community support coordinator.





*“Thank you so much for the Ramadan gift basket. This is so wonderful and useful, especially for single mothers who are struggling during this time.”*

*“The work you are doing for the community is important and much needed. Thank you for your effort and professionalism.”*



## **Ways to Improve Your Health and Well-being During Ramadan**

This session served as a pre-Ramadan preparation. Participants from the community learned useful information on how to observe Ramadan in an active manner while adhering to a balanced and nutritious diet. The workshop was attended by **15 residents of the neighborhood**.

## **Art Exhibition in Celebration of Islamic History Month 2022**

Our **2nd Annual Art Islamic Exhibition** took place on October 30th, in the Waverley Grand Mosque which was attended by close to **300 community members**.

**8 local artists** got the opportunity to display their magnificent artwork, from canvas to handmade accessories, resin-crafted items, henna, personalized calligraphy, intricate paintings and so much more.

In the summer program, youth participate in an art project where they create their calligraphic artworks in preparation for the exhibition. The exhibition gave the young people a chance to show off their artwork, and viewers had the opportunity to purchase the works if they were interested.

Attendees got a unique experience where they were able to appreciate the work and intricate beauty of Islamic art. This served as a great initiative to

raise more knowledge about Islamic History Month and appreciate the way art has played a role in Islamic history.

The exhibition ended with an auction of some of the great masterpieces. The money raised during the exhibition will be used to help community members with their basic needs. This event would not have been possible without our youth and volunteers who helped Thank you!



## Drop-In for Women and Mothers with Children

Every Thursday of the week, in the HMF office, we began a drop-in program for women and mothers with children from the community. Women from all backgrounds were welcome to attend and connect with one another in a setting that was inviting to young children. This program was created to serve women with young and non-school-going children who can come and mingle with other ladies. The goal of this program was to provide a safe space where mothers of young children can feel comfortable and chat together.

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*Happy Mom, Happy Family*

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**20 residents** of the area came to this session. It was a project started to help women and mothers who might require extra comfort and assistance in a secure environment and gain more insight into certain health concerns. This session was presented by a physician from the community.

Our research has shown that peer and community support can significantly assist newcomers including women who experience great isolation upon arriving in Canada.

Because this isolation has a negative impact on the entire family, it is crucial that women with families go out and be willing to build new friendships and bonds with other women from the community.



## Family Literacy Day

Healthy Muslim Families celebrated Family Literacy Day for the third year in 2023 and we had the great pleasure to host Sumaniya Lakhani as a guest author of the picture book "The Joys of Jannah" and have her give a presentation to our **24 attendees** with a read-aloud and the inspiration behind writing it.

Children loved the opportunity to learn more about Jannah in an immensely artistic way and share their thoughts with their peers. Additionally, we set up an arts and crafts table where the kids could create custom bookmarks out of popsicle sticks. This was a popular activity where the children got to show off their unique artistic talents. Following the arts and crafts session, everyone enjoyed some food and drinks.

Family Literacy Day is a significant annual event that promotes the importance of literacy and encourages families to engage in reading and learning activities together.

Overall, Family Literacy Day serves as a reminder of the importance of literacy in all aspects of life and encourages families to prioritize and celebrate literacy together. It is a day to recognize and promote the joy of reading, learning, and sharing stories within the family unit, fostering a culture of literacy that can have a lasting impact on individuals, families, and communities.



# SENIORS IN THE COMMUNITY

## Seniors Committee

To enhance support for elderly residents and foster a sense of inclusion within the community, we established a seniors committee comprising members from our Muslim senior community. The primary goal of this committee is to address the unique needs and concerns of our elderly population, ensuring their integration and representation in community affairs.

On a monthly basis, the seniors' committee meets to engage in thoughtful discussions centered around themes and issues directly impacting them. By actively listening to their insights, we aim to facilitate an environment where the voices of our senior community members are heard and valued.

## Senior Women's Day Out

To provide an enjoyable experience amidst pleasant weather, we organized a community outing at the park. This event was designed to create a welcoming environment for community members of all ages, including seniors, children, and their families.

The park outing served as an opportunity for individuals to gather and spend quality time together, fostering connections and building stronger community bonds. Participants were encouraged to bring their loved ones, ensuring a multi-generational experience that catered to the needs and interests of diverse age groups.

## Calligraphy for Seniors

It was a delightful occasion with a wonderful mix of familiar and new faces! We were thrilled to have 25 community members join us for an engaging event. Our skilled art instructor from HMF led an enlightening session focused on enhancing the artistic abilities of our esteemed seniors. This artistic workshop provided a unique opportunity for them to explore Islamic artwork and connect with fellow community members.

During the session, our talented instructor shared techniques and insights on calligraphy, an art form deeply intertwined with Islamic history. Calligraphy holds immense significance as it has been used to create exquisite Quranic scriptures. By delving into calligraphic techniques, the participants not only honed their artistic skills but also embarked on a meaningful journey connecting them with their cultural and religious heritage.



*“Alhumdullilah for such a fun and welcoming workshop where we got to make beautiful Islamic calligraphy with the help of the talented art instructor and connect with community members. I would love to attend more in the future.”*

## Chai and Chat with Seniors

In October, we organized a special event called "Chai and Chat for Seniors," an initiative aimed at bringing together seniors from the Muslim community for a cozy gathering over tea. This event provided a platform for **17 beloved seniors** to join in a warm and inviting atmosphere.

Recognizing that tea holds a significant place in the daily routines of many Muslim ethnicities, we wanted to create a welcoming environment where seniors could feel embraced by the community. By offering this familiar tradition of sharing tea, we aimed to foster a sense of connection, comfort, and camaraderie among the attendees. We are grateful for the opportunity to organize such an event and witness the positive impact it had on our seniors. The success of "Chai and Chat for Seniors" has inspired us to continue creating initiatives that celebrate the rich cultural heritage and foster a sense of belonging among the diverse members of our Muslim community.





## Yoga for Seniors

One of the best types of exercise is yoga. With the aid of the right classes, seniors may increase their strength, flexibility, and balance, as well as improve their mood. Our belief system places taking care of the elderly in the community at the very forefront, therefore we created an exciting yoga lesson opportunity. **With 30 participants and 6 fantastic sessions** that ran from December 2022 until March 2023, yoga classes were enjoyed by our lovely senior ladies.

Our yoga instructor was very well-informed about the cultural background of the seniors and crafted her lessons in a way that was comfortable and culturally appropriate for all senior ladies in attendance.

Our team is going to organize a lot more yoga sessions in the future after seeing how much everyone enjoyed the first one. Stay tuned!



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*“The yoga classes helped me to be more comfortable in my body and it's very energizing and relaxing. In such a short time I am already able to balance my whole body on just one foot now!”*

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# RESEARCH WORK

## Reports Released:

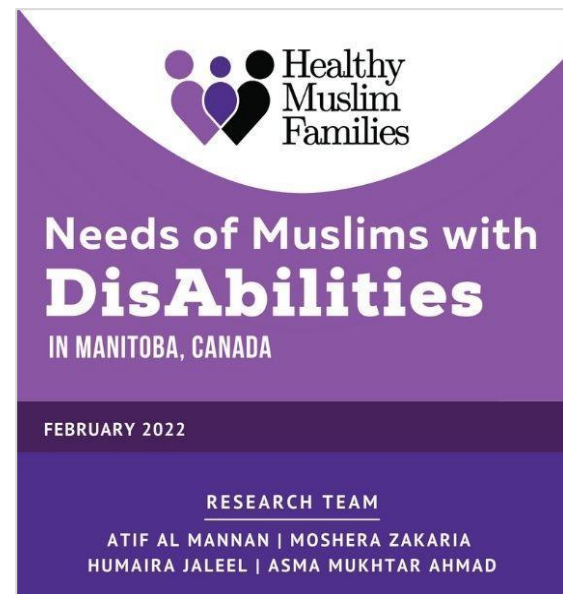
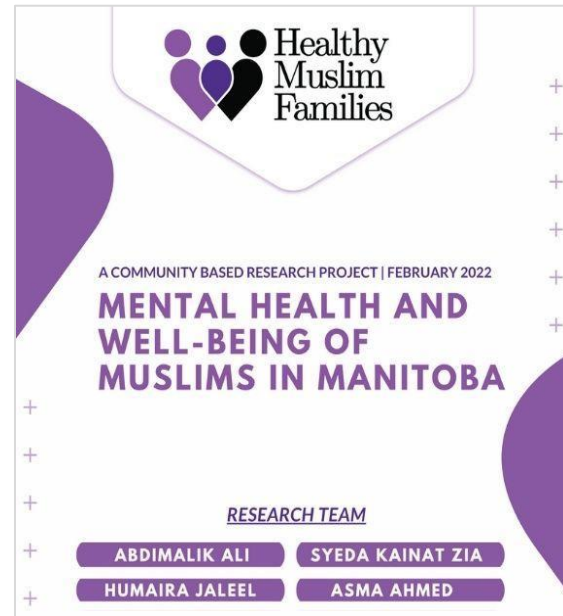
### Mental Health and Well-Being of Muslims in Manitoba

We launched a community research report which delved into the mental health and well-being of Muslims in Manitoba. The launch of the community research report marked a significant milestone in our commitment to understanding and addressing mental health challenges within the Muslim community in Manitoba.

We hope that the report's findings and recommendations will serve as a catalyst for meaningful change and inspire collaborative efforts towards building a healthier, and more supportive community for all.

### Needs of Muslims with Disabilities

The report on the Needs of Muslims with Disabilities was launched to the community which looked into the ways in which Muslims who are disabled face barriers in the community. We undertook and presented a comprehensive research report to the community on the needs of Muslims with disabilities, focusing on the barriers faced by members of the Muslim community who live with a disability. This report aimed to shed light and bring more knowledge and awareness to the unique challenges faced by Muslims with disabilities and to raise awareness within the broader community.



## Research Report on Domestic Abuse in the Muslim Community

This year, we completed our extensive research report into domestic abuse in Manitoba's Muslim community. Several professional stakeholders including psychotherapists, psychologists, marriage counselors, lawyers, imams, senior community members, and members of the community who had either personally experienced domestic abuse or supported someone who had, were invited for a one-on-one interview with our research team. We also released a questionnaire and received responses from more than 20 individuals. The report is currently being organized and soon to be released to the public.

### **Upcoming research project**

We have an upcoming research report on the employment journey of Muslim women in Manitoba which will be released soon. Please stay tuned.

## **ARTS AND CRAFTS / CHILDREN'S EVENTS**

### **Summer Program 2022**

The children's summer program started on July 6th, with a bunch of exciting art activities, a spell-a-word contest, an Urdu speech contest, and an adventurous trip to the Assiniboine Zoo. Around **50 children** from the community signed up for the summer program. Each workshop within each age group had **25 children attending and taking part in the activities each week**.

### **Arts and Crafts**

The art instructor planned out activities according to the two different age groups that we catered to in the program. Acrylic painting, pot painting,

painting on canvas, Islamic calligraphy, and different forms of art were part of the summer arts and crafts program.

The children's summer program started on July 6th, with a bunch of exciting art activities, a spell-a-word contest, an Urdu speech contest, and an adventurous trip to the Assiniboine Zoo. Around 50 children from the community signed up for the summer program.

**The Spell-a-Word Competition** gave the participants a chance to expand their English language vocabulary and bring out their competitive side in taking part in the contest as well as build valuable public speaking skills. 45 children registered for the contest.

*"The Spell-a-Word competition is an excellent program for an onlooker and a judge. Very well organized and wonderful to be a part of!"*

*"The kids were all fabulous and well-prepared for the competition. It was very well organized and a much-needed initiative for the community where kids can build on their vocabulary and stay occupied during the summer."*

We also organized an **Urdu Speech Contest** with around **18 registrations** where children picked a topic of their interest and prepared a speech on it in the Urdu language. This was a great initiative as it provided children a space to practice and hone in on their native language. For the competition, we invited two judges from the community Dr. Nabiha Faisal who is an academic hepatologist and a clinician scientist at the University of Manitoba at an assistant professor level, and Tania Ikhlaq who is an editor and writer who has made significant contributions to a UK based newspaper **“The Urdu Independent”** and has written columns for Australian newspapers.

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*“The Urdu Speech Competition is an excellent and unique initiative for community members. It enhanced my children’s Urdu skills, and they are more confident in speaking in their mother tongue.”*

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The summer program ended with a trip to the **Assiniboine Zoo** where around **100 individuals registered including families with children from the community** explored the zoo together and got to see many different attractions including Aunt Sally’s Farm, McFeetors Heavy Horse Centre, and the Dinosaur Uncovered. We would like to extend a big thank you to United Way and MANSO for providing the zoo passes and to the Assiniboine Zoo for taking steps to make our communities more inclusive. Children’s summer camp is an important effort at HMF that has a significant impact on children’s lives. While participating in recreational activities and exploring the great outdoors, this camp encourages children’s personal growth and development and creates lasting relationships! Overall, there was a lot of hard work, preparation, and planning that went into the summer camp, and this would not have been possible without the support and dedication of our experienced team members at HMF.



# Arts & Crafts



# ACCESSIBILITY

## Making Our Communities More Accessible to People with Disabilities

This workshop was presented through Zoom by guest speaker Rafia Haniff Cleofass. She has extensive knowledge and credentials in the subject matter through working with the DEEN support network, the Islamic Institute of Toronto, and helping to organize the annual global conference on disability and Islam and the international disability khutbah campaign. She covered the topic of accessibility for people with disabilities by discussing the importance of creating an accessible community in order to uphold human rights, promote inclusivity, and foster a society that values and supports the full participation and contribution of all individuals, regardless of their abilities. **The session was attended by 12 participants** who were engaged throughout, and we ended with a Q&A session where community members were encouraged to participate.



**Accessibility Signs:** As a part of the Manitoba Accessibility Fund program, HMF designed and developed accessibility signage in various materials and languages, which aims to make our workplace and community more accessible to individuals with disabilities. These signs were given away for free to various organizations and ethnic community shops to make our communities more accessible.

**Braille Business Cards:** Braille cards were introduced as a means of providing communication and information access for community members who are blind or have visual impairments. By incorporating braille, these cards ensure that individuals who read braille can independently read and understand the content, including messages, greetings, or instructions.

# MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

## Counselling and Help-line services

At HMF we continue to offer marriage, family, couples, and youth counseling to individuals who may need it. This initiative was taken as part of the mental health and well-being services.

Therapy and counseling provide a safe and supportive space for individuals to explore their emotions, thoughts, and challenges. This can be a useful outlet for better-coping strategies, guidance, and tools to manage mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, trauma, and stress. Therapy helps individuals improve their emotional well-being, gain self-awareness, and develop healthier ways of thinking and relating to others.

## Panel Discussion on Healthy Boundaries in Relationships

We held the very first online panel discussion on “Healthy Boundaries in Relationships” as part of our gender-based violence project where we invited two well-known Muslim psychologists from the local community, Sr **Saleha Al Shehri**, who is a registered psychotherapist, and Br **Hani A. Al Ubeady**, a cross-cultural family therapist, on **September 15, 2023**.

The session was informative and many insightful discussion questions were asked from the registrants. During the session, the guest speakers shared their knowledge on maintaining healthy boundaries from a general and an Islamic perspective and participants got the chance to ask questions at the end of the session and received knowledge-based answers for their questions. This panel was administered through Zoom and was attended by **20 participants**.

## Understanding Domestic Violence in Our Community

This online program was attended by **17 participants**, and it was introduced as an awareness session for community members. In the session, we discussed how you can help someone going through domestic abuse in the community at an individual level.



In our Gender-based violence research initiative, we learned that peer support is crucial for domestic abuse victims, especially for many Muslim women in the community who already find it hard to be able to trust the legal system. Peer support offers validation, understanding, emotional support, practical information, empowerment, and a sense of community. It provides survivors with a safe space to share their experiences, gain strength from others, and navigate the healing process with support from those who have walked a similar path.

### **Self-Care Workshop for Women**

It is crucial to set aside time to look after your physical and mental health because self-care keeps you centered, refreshed, stress-free, and sane. In this workshop, local women had the chance to assess their self-care practices and develop a self-care strategy that would be useful and doable. There were 23 attendees at the in-person workshop on January 8 at the workplace. We observed that the winter months are when community members are most at risk of isolation and low motivation; this is particularly true for immigrants to Canada. Our team at HMF created the self-care program for women in the community after realizing the need for more support.



## Understanding Our Role in Supporting Our Sisters

In November, Healthy Muslim Families held two online awareness events in Arabic and Urdu about our responsibility to support our sisters who are victims of domestic abuse. This program was launched as a component of our Gender-Based Violence project, and it represented one small effort towards creating a healthier community by recognizing the responsibility each of us can play individually in assisting and empowering immigrant women who are experiencing difficulties at home. There were 17 registered participants in the session.

## Adolescent Challenges (For Girls)

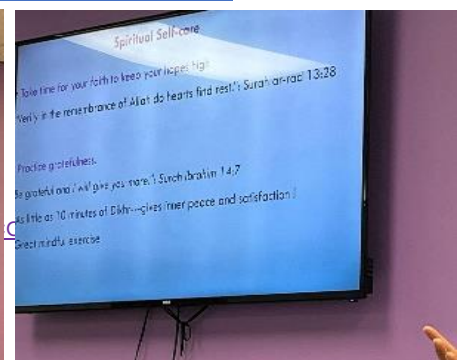
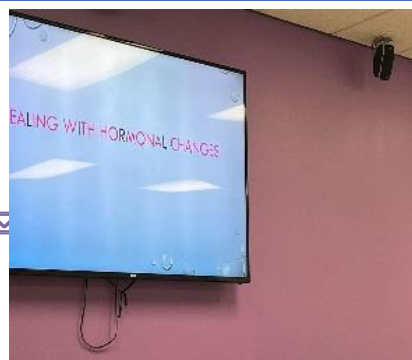
In order to educate young girls from the community on the physical, intellectual, emotional, and social growth of teenagers, we invited a doctor, Dr. Naveen Naz Syed, as a guest speaker who is also a member of the Muslim community in Winnipeg. There were 20 young women in attendance, and it was a participatory session where they all learned about the different obstacles that young girls face as they develop into adolescence, shared their experiences with those challenges, and learned healthy ways of coping. The unique feature of this session was that because Dr. Syed is a physician from the community, participants found it easy to discuss culturally appropriate issues and topics about cleanliness, hygiene, diet, and exercise.

Thank you, Dr. Naveen.

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*My daughter found this workshop to be very engaging and informative. It's important to hold these kinds of sessions for young girls to be able to learn more and comfortably share their experiences with growing up. We are eagerly looking forward to the next workshop.*

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# YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

## Conversation Session with Muslim Youth on the Topic of Maintaining Healthy Boundaries in Relationships

In November, we held the first-ever group discussion for Muslim youths in the community on the subject of maintaining healthy boundaries with respect to relationship dynamics as part of our Gender-Based Violence Awareness project. Participants shared and discussed their personal experiences while setting boundaries in a range of scenarios during the session, including their relationships with family members, friends, coworkers, social media platforms, etc. Participants expressed their personal experiences by creating boundaries and showed a keen interest in the subject. We look forward to planning these initiatives for the Winnipeg community in the near future.



***“This was a great presentation on a very important topic. It's very nice to see organizations shed light on this subject matter that could help individuals create stronger and healthier relationships with their family and friends which in turn fosters a resilient and mentally sound community.”***

## Tour of the Court

On February 21, the youth from the community took a trip to the Court of King's Bench where they got an incredible chance to tour and learn more about the Courts and legal system in Manitoba.

Our tour started by visiting the different types of courtrooms and learning about the different purposes they are used for. Youth also had the opportunity to sit on the Judge, Defense, and Prosecutor's chair. The tour concluded with the group attending a sentencing hearing where they saw an accused person plead guilty, and where they got to see how our legal system deliberates conflict as observers. Many youths came out of the tour inspired to become lawyers so you can say this trip was a success!

Youth developed leadership qualities such as effective communication skills, vision and goal-setting skills, and decision-making and problem-solving skills which all will help them in their future endeavors.



## Youth Summer Program

In a notable initiative this year, we introduced an exciting and engaging youth program. The primary objective behind this was to empower young individuals to actively contribute to their community.

Through a series of interactive sessions, workshops, and collaborative activities, our dedicated team endeavored to equip these young minds with the necessary skills, knowledge, and networks to navigate the complexities of community involvement effectively.

By nurturing their talents, encouraging their creativity, and instilling a passion to give back to their community, our goal is to shape the leaders of tomorrow and nurture a sense of collective responsibility toward building a better future for the community at large.

30 youths from the community, all between the ages of 15 and 25, were registered for the youth summer program, which ran from July to September. Every week, the youth gathered at the HMF office to participate in a variety of organized programs and activities. The five-week program included an **introductory week**, a **Sports Day**, a **Visit to the Legislature** and a meeting with an MLA, **Islamic calligraphy**, and a **hiking day**.



## Tour of the Manitoba Legislative Building

On August 18, the Youth Summer Program participants visited the Manitoba Legislative Building for an immersive tour where leadership and governance take place. They had the opportunity to engage with MLA Malaya, discussing their experiences as young Muslim students dealing with Islamophobia. The youth prepared statements and recommendations to address Islamophobia in Manitoba, marking an exciting moment of political engagement for them.



## Sports Day



## Islamic Calligraphy Session

The Youth summer program also offered a [workshop on Islamic Calligraphy](#) where our Youth created beautiful works of Art with tips and guidance from HMF's art instructor. These beautiful art displays were put on sale and available for purchase at [HMF's Art Exhibition in October 2022](#). The Youth Summer Program was designed to help young people build confidence and recognize their areas of interest while fostering relationships with their peers.



## Hiking Day

The Summer Program ended with a group Hike on the Seine River Greenways Trail for a relaxing day of sun and nature.

# YOUTH PROGRAMS

## Youth Homework Help and Tutoring

Another initiative that catered to the needs of the local kids was tutoring given in both French and English. This program was free of charge and ran from September through December. It consisted of 16-weekend sessions with an average of 6 participants per week. Anyone looking for homework assistance or additional assistance with their studies in grades 4 through 12 was encouraged to attend tutoring sessions. The older youth had a wonderful opportunity to get essential experience volunteering by serving as tutors.

## Youth Basketball Camp: Fall and Winter

The youth basketball camp provided excellent opportunities for young people to develop their basketball skills. 25 registrants attended the classes, which took place every Friday at the MIA Mosque gymnasium from October through December. The youths learned useful skills during the lessons, including dribbling, teamwork, confidence, sportsmanship, etc. Additionally, they were urged to try out for their school teams. We decided to organize another phase of this camp due to the success of this effort, and we will undoubtedly hold more in the future.



## HMF and MARL Youth Workshops

These two fun seminars for young people in the community were organized in partnership with MARL and had 28 registrants. The purpose of these workshops was to prepare local youngsters to lead similar workshops on subjects close to their hearts in their communities and neighborhoods. Participants got a chance to build on their leadership, facilitation, teamwork, public speaking,



and advocacy abilities. Those who attended both seminars are qualified to hold their own workshops and will be paid \$50 for each workshop they conduct.

## Access to Justice

### Refugee Claimants Legal Supports Project

In February, we launched a project for people who were requesting refugee status in Manitoba, where we provided assistance with system navigation, drafting their narratives, applying for legal aid, filling out the basis of the claim form, completing the online portal, and anything else they may have needed. We also provide bus tickets to the clients in order to help them access the location more easily. This is a community-led initiative that aims to address the gaps in services available to support refugee claimants. **So far, there have been 9 claimants in total.**

We held awareness sessions before we started the project for those who wanted to volunteer with the project. In the awareness sessions, we discussed how to facilitate someone to fill out a basis of claim form, navigate the IRCC portal, and more.



## LEGAL SERVICES

As part of our legal work, we also provided services through legal clinics which were held monthly at the office. With the initiation of this new project, we had 7 clients who took free consultations from Winnipeg's practicing lawyer Amado Claros on Immigration, Criminal defense, and family law issues. To date, we are continuing to hold legal clinics at the office where we have seen the number of clients growing with every clinic.

The purpose of this service was to offer individuals from the community in need of a one-on-one consultation with a lawyer. We also provide interpretation services if one is requested. A total of **25 individuals** have accepted services from the legal clinics. We will be holding legal clinics more often, seeing the need for it in the community.



## **Understanding the Legal Protections and Prevention Orders in Manitoba**

This session was part of our legal services and information initiative where we invited lawyer Omar Abu-Dahab from Dahab Law Office as a guest speaker. Participants gained valuable insight and information about the legal system in Manitoba and the ways that you can get legal protection if you are at risk of being harmed. Overall, it was an informative session.

## **Official Document Translation**

We provide professional translation services for official documents. Our dedicated team of experienced translators ensures accurate and reliable translations for a wide range of official documents, including legal, financial, medical, and educational documents.

## **Witnessing Documents for Commissioner of Oath**

We offer document witnessing services as authorized Commissioners of Oaths. Trust us to provide efficient and professional assistance in certifying and verifying your important documents.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

This year our staff at Healthy Muslim Families took part in various skill-building workshops, seminars, training sessions, and courses where they built on their skillsets and capacity level.

At Healthy Muslim Families we believe that building the staff capacity of our organization is vital for growth at an organizational level. Building staff capacity empowers our staff to excel in their roles, adapt to changing circumstances, deliver high-quality services, and drive positive social change in the community.

### Some training included:

- ❖ Staff "Emergency first aid & CPR
- ❖ De-escalation skills training
- ❖ Human Rights Advocacy Training
- ❖ Project Management Training
- ❖ Accessibility Service Training
- ❖ Office Administration Training
- ❖ Cyber Security for Non-Profits: Risks & Safety Measure
- ❖ Accessible Customer Service
- ❖ Accessible Recruitment
- ❖ Team-building workshop for staff at HMF

Our dedicated staff members have invested over **405 hours** in comprehensive training programs to enhance their professional development.

Through these extensive training efforts, we strive to maintain a highly skilled and knowledgeable team that is equipped to meet the evolving needs of our valued community members.

# Upcoming Programs & News

In the upcoming year we have many great events and opportunities planned for our community members in order to serve you better. We are working on improving these services for all our community members some of which include:

DV Report Released	Employment Research	Legal Services
Youth Programs	Children's Art & Crafts Workshops	Annual Islamic Art Exhibition
Seniors Programs	Mental Health and Well-Being	Food Handler Certification Training

# Our Funders

The accomplishments of Healthy Muslim Families would not have been possible without the generous support of our dedicated funders. We are immensely grateful for their financial contributions and unwavering support.

Their generosity has played a vital role in helping us achieve our goals and make a positive impact in the community.



Women and Gender  
Equality Canada

Femmes et Égalité  
des genres Canada



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