

# She Walks With Me: The Indigenous Doula Project

Presented by  
**Ashley Hayward**

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# Disclosures

## Presenter

Ashley Hayward

## Funding Sources

Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)  
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)  
Health Canada  
The University of Winnipeg

## Conflict of Interest

None

## Acknowledgements

Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre (AHWC)  
Mount Carmel Clinic (MCC)  
Women's Health Clinic (WHC)



## My Philosophy on Birthing Experiences:

*Valuing the importance of choice, I hope for my daughters to have empowering and safe birthing experiences aligned with their values*



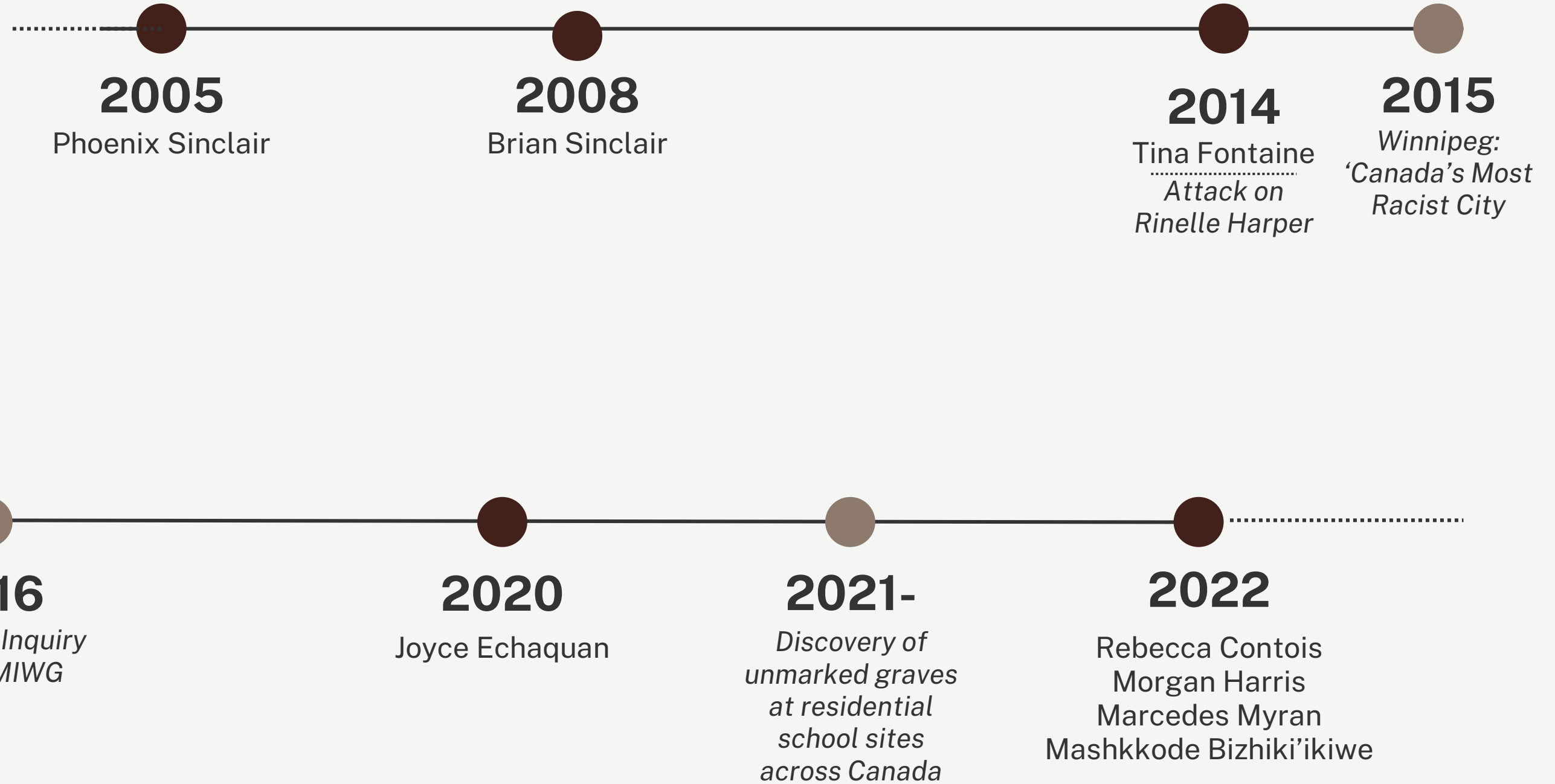
# What is the percentage of Indigenous children in foster care in Canada?

28.6%

43.7%

53.8%

An ongoing  
journey of  
heartache  
towards  
culturally  
appropriate care  
for Indigenous  
communities



## Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre's COVID-19 Response in Winnipeg



Culturally-Driven Operations

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Transportation & Family Accommodations

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Food Support

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Community Safety

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# Healthcare Delivery for Urban Indigenous Communities



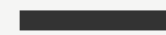
Childcare



Indigenous  
Languages



Elder and Cultural  
Support



Traditional  
Medicines



# Improving Support for Indigenous Birthing Individuals

## 4-Month Training Program

For AHCW community support workers to deepen knowledge and extend care scope.

## Critical Topics Covered

*... Gender diversity; **Cultural safety and anti-racism**; Body literacy; **Traditional medicines and healing practices**; Prenatal care; **Nutrition and exercise**; Navigating resources for housing needs; **Supporting survivors of sexual violence**; Substance use harm reduction strategies; **Labour and delivery**; **Newborn care and infant feeding, and postpartum care**; **Navigating CFS involvement**; Grief and loss; **Intimate partner violence ...***

## Essential Certifications

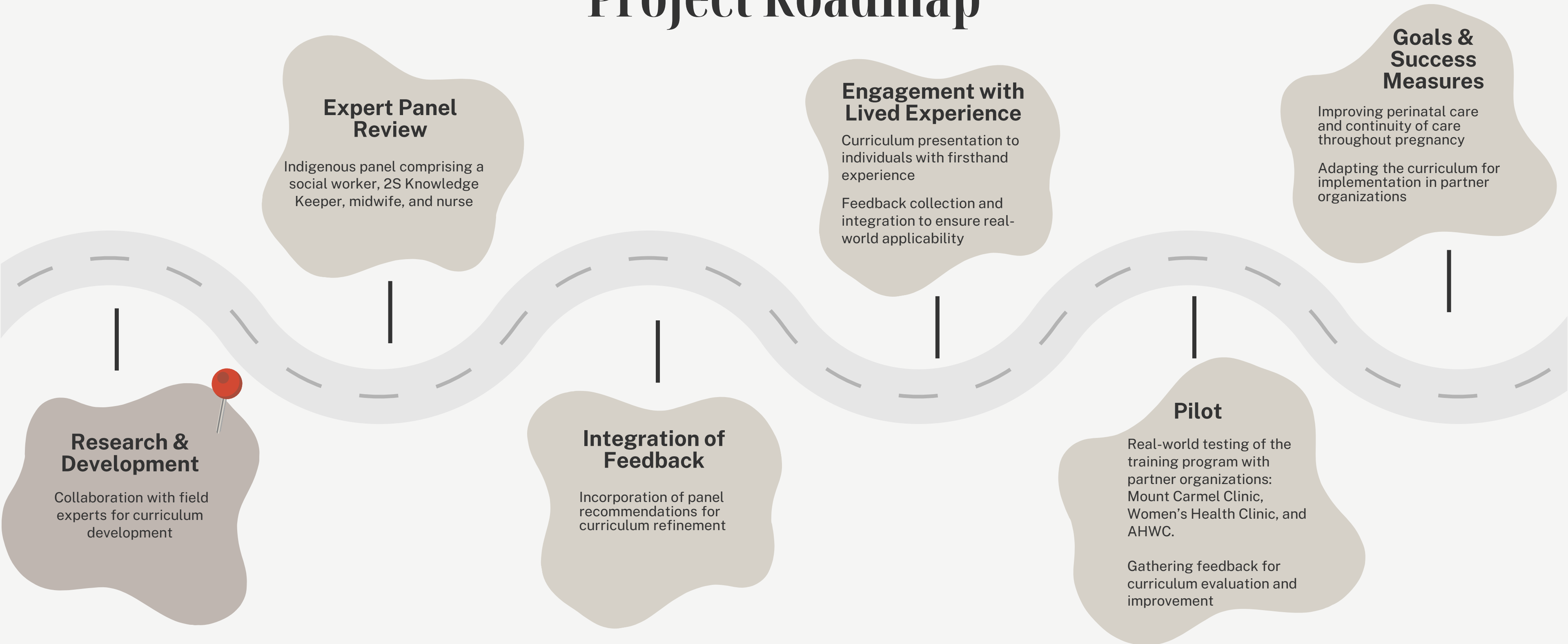
Motivational interviewing; Perinatal mental health; Infant CPR; First Aid; Naloxone Administration

## Well-Being of Support Workers

Integration of self-care and self-reflection practices.



# Project Roadmap



## Comprehensive Approach

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The curriculum is designed as a holistic journey that aims to empower, educate, and drive excellence in supporting Indigenous birthing individuals.

## Addressing Systemic Issues

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It highlights the systemic racism, cultural insensitivity, and negligence within health and social services as broader challenges that the program seeks to address within the Manitoba context, reflecting national concerns.

## Urban Indigenous Doulas

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They combine traditional birthing support with advocacy for body sovereignty and addressing the significant impacts of lost cultural traditions.



## Collaborative Effort

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This project is a partnership with local Indigenous health and social service agencies in Winnipeg, acknowledging the complex challenges in providing equitable and culturally appropriate care.

## Challenges Ahead

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Indigenous doulas are seen as a beacon of hope in advocating for Indigenous rights and improving care, yet face challenges in mainstream healthcare integration and systemic reform needs.

## Not a Cure-all Solution

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A promising step towards addressing systemic issues and supporting Indigenous birthing individuals but is not positioned as a singular solution to all challenges.

# What would you identify as the most critical area to emphasize or ensure inclusion in the curriculum?

## CURRENT TOPICS COVERED

- Gender diversity
- Cultural safety and anti-racism
- Body literacy
- Traditional medicines and healing practices
- Prenatal care
- Nutrition and exercise
- Navigating resources for housing needs
- Supporting survivors of sexual violence
- Substance use harm reduction strategies
- Labour and delivery
- Newborn care and infant feeding, and postpartum care
- Navigating CFS involvement
- Grief and loss
- Intimate partner violence

# Thank you

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*We extend our deepest gratitude to all our community partners who had a role in bringing this project to fruition!*

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*If you'd like to keep the conversation going, please do not hesitate to contact me at [a.hayward@uwinnipeg.ca](mailto:a.hayward@uwinnipeg.ca)*